Implicit Bias: #Hashtags and Wordclouds
Strategies for Building an Inclusive Classroom

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Today’s Overview

• Impacts of Perceptions
• #Hashtags and Wordclouds
• Implicit Social Cognition/Implicit Bias
  – Key characteristics
• Stereotypes (cognition), prejudice (emotion) and discrimination (behavior)
• Microaggressions
• Tips for building and inclusive classroom
• Questions
Impolite Questions

• Do you discriminate?
• Do you think that you perceive everyone the same?
  – What are some of the similarities you are aware of in people you think are the same as you?
  – What are some of the differences you are aware of in people you think are different than you?
• How do you think these differences impact your interactions?
#Hashtags and Wordclouds

Our mental word cloud of others consists of:

- Stereotypes of the things we see or notice.

- How did your hashtags of me impact the wordcloud that you created about me?
  - White
  - Male
  - Professor
  - Social Worker
  - Gay
Lets Create Word Clouds!

What three words do you think students will use to describe you?

- E.g. Welcoming, female, intimidating, prepared, accent, warm, reserved

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Implicit Social Cognition/Implicit Bias

• Attitudes or Stereotypes that affect our:
  – Understandings
  – Actions
  – Decisions in an unconscious manner

• Encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments

• Activated involuntarily and without an individuals awareness or intentional control

• Resides deep in the subconscious, and are different from known biases

• Not accessible through introspection
Implicit Bias Key Characteristics

- Implicit biases are **pervasive**
- Implicit and explicit biases are **related but distinct** mental constructs
- Implicit associations we hold **do not necessarily align** with our declared beliefs
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that **favor our own ingroup**
- Implicit biases are **malleable**
- Happens within **.08 seconds** of meeting someone
Affect

Prejudice and ingroup favoritism

Cognition

Stereotyping

Behavior

Discrimination
Microaggressions

- Brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities
- **Intentional or unintentional**
- Communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward any marginalized group
- Hard to detect by dominant culture as they may be unaware they are causing harm or exclusion
"Can you see as much as white people? You know, because of your EYES...?"

"The limited representation of my race in your classroom does not make me the voice of all Black People."

"No, where are you REALLY FROM?"

"So what does your HAIR look like today?" She said as she pulled off my hat without MY PERMISSION.

"When I gave a speech about RACISM, the emcee introduced me as "Jaine Garcia". My name is Jaine Rodriguez, not all Latinos have the last name GARCIA.

"When people think it's weird that I listen to Carrie Underwood"

"You're Really Pretty... FOR A DARK SKIN GIRL"

"This girl sitting next to me makes, to sit closer to someone she's talking to, and this White guy whispers loudly that she moved back because I smell like rice."

"Why do you sound White?"

"Can you read this?" He showed me a Japanese character on his phone.

"Courtney I never see you as a black girl."

"So... YOU'RE CHINESE... RIGHT?"

"So, what do you guys speak in Japan ASIAN??"

"You don't act like a normal black person, ya' know?"
Building Classroom Inclusivity

• Build an inclusive syllabus
  – Be sure to use readings, video clips, images, music selections that represent a variety of perspectives

• Foster inclusive discussions
  – Use examples that highlight diverse people and perspectives

• **Listen and be open to feedback about who is left out**
  – Asking about this as a course reflection can be uncomfortable, yet eye opening.
Building Classroom Inclusivity

• Be mindful that students may feel that they are marginalized or have to hide their identities in the classroom
  – Particularly true for “invisible minorities”
    • E.g. Sexual orientation, gender identity, disability
      – Provide opportunity for students to identify gender pronouns they prefer
  • Be wary of presupposing heterosexuality or ability
Building Classroom Inclusivity

- Women and students of color encounter biased evaluations and assumptions about their ability.
- Deactivate your bias wherever possible
  - Grade anonymously
  - Rely on tools like turnitin.com that apply the same objective metric to every student’s work
  - Establish clear criteria for grading. Avoid haste
  - Establish clear guidelines for absences, late work, classroom behavior, etc
  - Apply these guidelines consistently to everyone
Building Classroom Inclusivity

• Minorities are often singled out in discussions pertaining to groups they belong to
  – but may feel excluded otherwise

Don’t single out
  – Don’t treat any student as a spokesperson for a whole group
  – Make it clear that issues of race and gender are relevant to everyone

Get everyone involved throughout the semester
  – Signal that you value every student’s contribution. Reframe student comments in a way that makes the contribution obvious to all
  – E-mail students who are silent to let them know you’d really like to hear their contributions to discussion. Praise their written work
  – Make eye contact with every student, look at all parts of the room, etc
Building Classroom Inclusivity

- It’s not easy to speak out against ableism, racism, sexism and heterosexism
  - Your silence will be interpreted as acceptance or agreement
  - Think in advance about possible responses
    - “You may not have meant X, but your comment could be understood that way. Would you like to clarify?”
    - Stunned silence can be part of your response: taking time to collect your thoughts signals the seriousness of the situation
    - Wow!

Own your mistakes

- If you have said something ableist, racist, sexist or heterosexist (or something that might be construed that way), clarify and apologize.
- If someone calls you out, listen without defensiveness. It’s okay to say, “I need some time to think about this.”
Building Classroom Inclusivity

• You may experience bias because of your membership in an underrepresented group
  – **Seek help**
    • Let your faculty supervisor and/or department chair know what is going on. Ask them for support and resources you can use to cope with the situation
    • Identify trusted mentors: faculty, staff, or more advanced students in your own or other departments
  – **Be aware that this experience doesn’t mean you aren’t doing a good job!**
    • Students sometimes lash out when they are being challenged, even if the challenge is beneficial to their intellectual development
Questions

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