

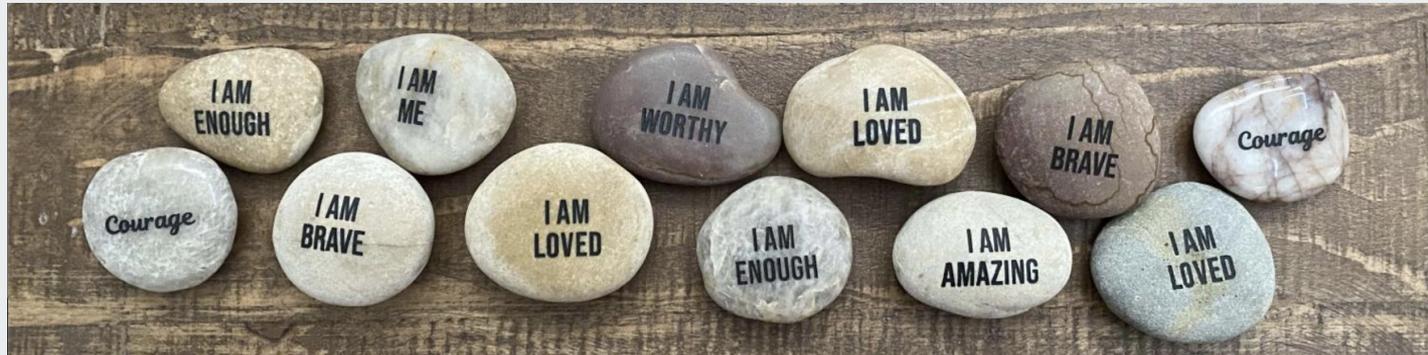


# Microaggressions Session #1: Foundations

Inclusive Community of Practice (ICoP)  
February 3rd, 2021

Guest Speaker: *Avondine Hill, Special Assistant to the Dean, Diversity & Inclusion, Leeds Business School*

*"We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people."  
—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*



The Power of Community: Courage, Healing and Unity with CISC → [get involved!](#)



# Please rename yourself

To change your name on Zoom:

Hover over your name in the “Participants” window.  
Click on “More”, and then click “Rename”.

Please change to your **first name, pronoun(s)** if you would like, **department, program, or unit**





## What is ICoP????

A [Community of Practice](#) (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern or interest and come together to fulfill both individual and group goals.

The [Inclusive Community of Practice](#) (ICoP), hosted by the Center for Teaching & Learning, provides a weekly meeting space to share best practices and create new knowledge on topics related to diversity, inclusion, equity, social justice, and human interaction.



## What are community meetings?

Faculty, staff and students gather weekly to network and talk openly about addressing issues of inequity and oppression. These brave spaces allow the community to work on developing inclusive practices for the classroom.



# Agenda

1. Fast chats
2. Overview: impacts of microaggressions on mental and physical health, dangers of addressing them, and the struggle to process the impact.
3. Large group dialogue -> *how can you create spaces of accountability?*



# Honoring each other today

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*Be curious and **listen** to understand.*

*Show **respect** and suspend judgment.*

*Note any **common ground** as well as any differences.*

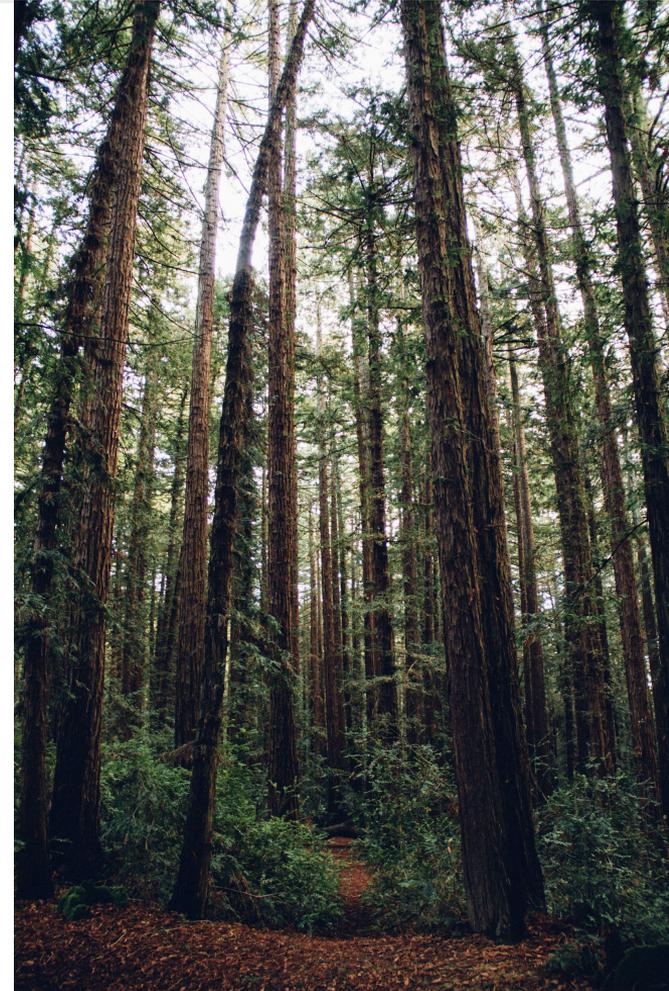
*Be **authentic** and welcome that from others.*

*Be **purposeful** and to the point.*

*Own and **guide** the conversation.*

[Living Room Conversations, Community Agreements](#)

Photo credit: Unsplash, [Kyle Glenn](#)





# Bias & Stereotype

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- Stereotypes are “pictures in our heads”
- Confirmation bias = seek out information to confirm our beliefs
- Developing intercultural competence by learning stories
- Colorblind theories backfire

***“Biased; Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We See, Think and Do”,  
Jennifer L. Eberhardt, PhD***



# Definition

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“Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights, invalidations, and insults to an individual or group because of their marginalized status in society.” ~ *Derald Wing Sue*\*

“I do not use ‘microaggression’ anymore. I detest the post-racial platform that supported its sudden popularity. I detest its component parts – ‘micro’ and ‘aggression.’ A persistent daily low hum of racist abuse is not minor. I use the term ‘abuse’ because aggression is not as exacting a term. Abuse accurately describes the action and its effects on people: distress, anger, worry, depression, anxiety, pain, fatigue, and suicide.” ~ *Ibram X. Kendi*\*



# Impacts on the body

## Violence of the situation/ Violence of a lifetime

- a. Dehumanization/Devaluation
  - i. Provides justification for treatment
- b. Subsequent insecurity around veracity and intentional aspects
  - i. Body knowledge
- c. Danger of addressing it
  - i. Ignorance of perpetrator
  - ii. Power and positionality of perpetrator
  - iii. Dealing with possible subsequent violence due to defensiveness
- d. Lack of ability to process



# LGBTQ+ scientists

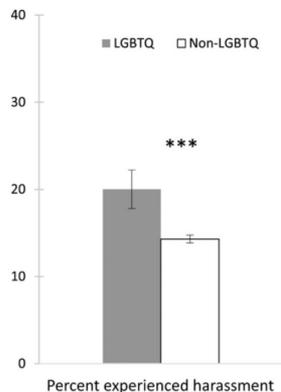


Fig. 4 Percent experiencing harassment, by LGBTQ status.

Predicted percentages for each category, holding constant variation by demographics, employment and job characteristics, and professional society. Scale represents percent of respondents in each category who experienced harassment at work at least once in the past year. Error bars represent 95% CIs.  $N = 25,324$ .

## STUDY DETAILS

- 21 STEM professional societies
- $N_{\text{sample}} = 25,324$ ;  $N_{\text{LGBTQ}} = 1006$
- **Controlling for variation by demographic, discipline, and job factors, LGBTQ STEM professionals were more likely to experience career limitations, harassment, and professional devaluation than their non-LGBTQ peers**

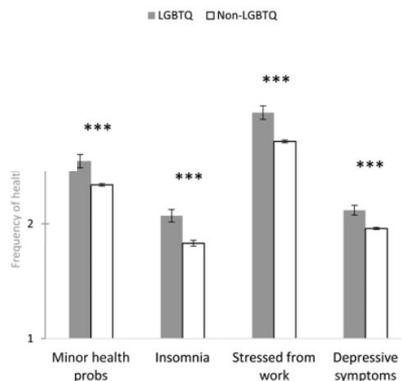


Fig. 5 Health and wellness difficulties, by LGBTQ status.

Predicted means for each category, holding constant variation by demographics, employment and job characteristics, and professional society. Scale ranges from 1 (never) to 5 (very often in the last year), with higher numbers representing more frequent incidence of each symptom. Error bars represent 95% CIs.  $N = 25,324$ .



# Native Americans

Table 3.

American Indian Patient's Self-Reported Experiences with Microaggressions in Healthcare Settings

My healthcare provider...	% Yes
Avoided discussing or addressing cultural issues	17.1
Sometimes was insensitive about my cultural group when trying to understand or treat my issues	17.3
Seemed to deny having any cultural biases or stereotypes	18.0
At times seemed to over-identify with my experiences related to my race or culture	16.0
At times seemed to have stereotypes about my cultural group, even if he or she did not express them directly	21.8
Sometimes minimized the importance of cultural issues	20.2

## STUDY DETAILS

- 2 American Indian Reservations
- Survey interviews with 218 American Indian adults
- Over 1/3 of the sample reported experiencing a microaggression in interactions with their health providers
- Reports of microaggressions were correlated with self-reported history of heart attack, worse depressive symptoms, and prior year hospitalization

**[Article: Unconscious Biases: Racial Microaggressions in American Indian Health Care](#)**



# Racial Battle Fatigue in Higher Education

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Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF) is often defined as “the exhaustion a person of color endures from constantly being positioned to interpret and negotiate microaggressions encountered daily through interactions with peers, authority or community members”

~ *“Racial Battle Fatigue in Higher Education; Exposing the Myth of Post-Racial America”*

Symptoms of RBF are suppressed immunity and increased sickness, tension headaches, trembling and jumpiness, chronic pain in healed injuries, elevated blood pressure, and a pounding heartbeat. And when people of Color with RBF anticipate racially motivated conflicts, they may experience rapid breathing, an upset stomach, or frequent diarrhea/urination.

~ *Racial Battle Fatigue, What is it and What are the Symptoms?*



# Writing activity

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*“When faced with this choice, most marginalized persons choose silence and self-harm. A year ago, I promised myself that when it came to racial comfort, I would stop prioritizing white comfort over my own comfort. Either we would all be comfortable together or we would all experience discomfort together. Either way, we would be in this together.”*

*~ Ajah Hales, [“There is no such thing as a microaggression”](https://ajahhales.medium.com/)*



<https://ajahhales.medium.com/>

**Reflection question:** Write about this quote. What does it mean to you?  
How can you create spaces of accountability?



# Required Vigilance To Protect Oneself

In concert with other forms of violence, victims often suffer from: **anxiety, stress, sadness, insecurity**

Kimberle Crenshaw on Intersectionality as a lens:

*“It’s a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What’s often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts.”*

Compounding nature of a lifetime subjected to such violence can manifest as: **depression, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes , shorter lifespans**

Source of Quote: <https://time.com/5786710/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality/>



# Interventions

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Studies indicate that instructors often utilize ineffective interventions that avoid the microaggression instead of addressing it directly. [Microinterventions](#) are specific practices that address microaggressions and support the student who has been harmed.

Microinterventions have been designed to:

- Validate the experience of the target of a microaggression
- Communicate their value as a person
- Affirm their racial or group identity
- Support and encourage their experience on campus
- Reassure them that they are not alone