

Bias

Language

Workshop

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Bias Language Workshop

Introduction

Who are you?	2
Facilitator Introduction	2
Brave Space	2
What is Going On?	2

Activities

Intent of Language vs. Impact	4
Why Do You Say 'That's So Gay'? Video	5
And You Say...? Advertisements	6
Raising the B.A.R.	7

Conclusion

What Can I Do?	9
Commitment to the Hall	10

Appendices

Facilitator Contact Sheet	12
Advertisements	13-14

Introduction

In the introduction period, it is important to get to know the audience and the area of concern that you will be addressing in this workshop. The audience will dictate its own needs and therefore the needs of the community.



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Introduction

This section will be split into four sections:

Who are you?

This is the chance for the students to introduce themselves to the facilitator. While this will vary for each facilitator. Some common introduction topics include:

Name

From (Place of Birth)

Major

Year at the University of Arizona

It would also be important to allow students to share 1-2 identities that are salient for him/her/hir. Salient identifies are those identities that the student most identifies with. It can be whatever they want to share.

Facilitator Intro

It is important for the facilitator to introduce themselves to the students. Purposefully, this is after the student has introduced themselves. While the student may need the behavior modeled, students may be afraid to reveal their most salient identities if those identities contradict those held by the facilitator. The facilitator contact sheet can be used as well (Appendix A)

Brave Space Rules

Let everyone know that what is said during the workshop will stay there. However, it is expected that whatever is learned here, goes out into the community. Ask the students what do they need from the group in order to feel free in sharing their stories.

What is going on?

Give students an opportunity to explain the situation in their own words what has been happening in their residence halls. While, you may have read about a situation and heard about it, it is important to understand how the students are feeling about the situation.

Activities

The following activities can be used during the workshop. It will be dependent upon the needs of the group and the audience that is participating. It is important to look over the activities and modify them as necessary.



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Intent vs. Impact (30 Minutes)

Adapted from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

<http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/ForEducators/GLSEN-EducatorsGuide.pdf>

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to help students understand that while language may be unintentional, the impact can be detrimental to the targeted students.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Paper for students to write on.
2. Pens

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin the activity by engaging participants in some reflective writing in response to the following prompt (5 Minutes):

Describe a time when you were insulted or hurt by another person and they brushed it off by saying something like, "I didn't mean it like that."

2. Ask for a few volunteers to share their example (5 Minutes).

3. Use the following questions to debrief (10 Minutes):

How did you react when others dismissed your feelings by saying they "didn't mean it"?

What mattered to you most in the moment, how the other person may have intended the comment or how it affected you?

What would you have liked the other person to think about before speaking?

4. Tell participants that you'd like them to consider what they have just discussed in relation to the following scenario (10 Minutes):

Two Students are in hallway of the residence hall talking. One student takes off his jacket and is wearing a very bright t-shirt with an unusual design. Another student remarks, "Oh, my god, that shirt is so gay!" Several students laugh. An RA, who is passing by and overhears the comment, tells the student who made the remark to cut it out. The student replies, "I just meant that it's a weird shirt." The RA walks away shaking her head.

5. Discussion Questions:

Though "gay" is often intended to mean "silly" or "stupid," is that the way it is heard or experienced by everyone?

How do you think it would feel to consistently hear "gay" used to describe something undesirable or stupid when that label also describes who you are or the identity of someone you care about?

When someone tells you that they are offended by this kind of language, is it okay to just say you "didn't mean it like that"? How else might you respond?

Why Do You Say That's So Gay? (15-30 Minutes)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to hear other peers talk about non-inclusive language and be able to place themselves in not only the oppressed group but the understand the power of change being in the privileged group.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Internet/Projector/Computer

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin the activity by watching the 5-minute video linked here:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDgSsiGG5PY>
2. Discussion Questions (10-20 Minutes)
 - A. What are your initial reactions to the video? Can you identify with any of the people in the video? Why or Why not?
 - B. Do you feel that the language will “naturally die down?” Like the student in the video suggests.
 - C. What is non-inclusive language that you have heard in the halls or in your classes? Was that language addressed by you or someone else?
 - D. How do you think it makes someone feel when they hear that language?
 - E. Are you able to put yourself in the shoes of another when it comes to the language you use?
 - F. Is there a word or a phrase that attacks or provokes one of the salient identities we discussed earlier? How would you feel hearing it in the place that you live?
 - G. Is there anything else that you would like to discuss from the video?

And You Say..? (15-30 Minutes)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to get students to realize their impact with the language they use and the variety of alternatives that can be used without demeaning others.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Ads at the back of this packet (Appendices B and C)
2. Paper
3. Pens

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin the activity by showing or projecting the advertisements in Appendices B and C.
2. Give students an opportunity to write down their initial feelings or reactions to the ads. (5 Minutes)
3. Discussion Questions (10-20 Minutes)
 - A. What are your initial feelings/reactions towards these advertisements?
 - B. How does biased language affect others that hear it?
 - C. For the groups particularly targeted in these ads, how do you think they feel when these phrases are used?
 - D. What other derogatory language that you have heard in the halls or in your classes? Did you do anything to address the language?
 - E. What would it take for you to address the language you hear in the halls?
 - F. What would you change in these ads to make them more inclusive?
 - G. Is there anything else that you would like to discuss that came up for you when you saw this ad?

Raising the B.A.R. (30 Minutes)

Adapted from *35 Dumb Things Well-Intended People Say* by Dr. Maura Cullen

REQUIREMENTS

1. The book, if available. (Optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin the activity by asking students what their usual reaction is what someone does or says something that makes them mad (5 Minutes).
2. Introduce Cullen's concept of dealing with emotionally charged incidents. (B.A.R. vs. R.A.B.)
3. Most people use R.A.B. when things happen. That is React, Attack and Breathe.
4. Ask the students the following (5 minutes):
 - Have you seen that sequence before? Was it in yourself, the halls or other situation?
 - Was that situation resolved? Why or Why not?
5. Tell the students that it is time to Raise the B.A.R (5 Minutes).

B is for Breathe

The same B in the R.A.B. sequence but it is first this time. Breathing relaxes you and gives you time to find the right reaction to the situation at hand.

A is for Acknowledge

Acknowledge what the other person is saying. It doesn't mean you have to agree with them. It is most important for the other person to feel like they have been heard and understood.

R is for Respond

Once the other people feels like they have been heard, they are more likely to listen to you. Also, you are able to make a better decision by making it the last step.

6. Discussion Questions (10 Minutes):

How does this information inform your decision making process?
How could this information help your experience in the halls?
Thinking of the experiences you mentioned earlier, how would they have changed had you used the BAR method?
Do you see yourself using this method in the future? Why or why not?

Conclusion

The following activities can be used to wrap up the workshop. Again these are dependents on what you feel works best for the students there. Now that you have done some activities with them. This section prompts the action that will continue after the workshop.



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What Can You Do? (15-20 Minutes)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is for students to personally reflect on their experience and formulate what they can do in the future.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Paper
2. Pens

DIRECTIONS

1. This activity is a personal reflection. It is great for groups that contain more introverts or students that just don't want to speak up.
2. Give the students paper and ask them to reflect on the following questions:
 - What am I willing to do to help the situation in my hall? How can I help?
 - What do I need from my community to succeed?
 - Who can I go to for help?
3. Give students ten minutes to answers those prompts in their own words.
4. Ask students to share. This is challenge by choice.
5. Let students know how to contact you as the facilitator if anything else comes up and dismiss them.

Commitment to the Hall (15-20 Minutes)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to connect students as they commit to making their living space more inclusive to all students.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Butcher Paper or Large Writing Surface
2. Markers

DIRECTIONS

1. This activity is a more engaged conclusion that could foster camaraderie on the floor and/or hall.
2. Lay out the paper and ask the students to write on the paper answering the following questions:
 - How can we make the community more inclusive?
 - What does a successful community look like?
 - What am I willing to do to make the community ideal for all?
3. Give students 10-15 minutes to answer those prompts in their own words.
4. Share the ones that stick out to you.
5. Let students know how to contact you as the facilitator if anything else comes up and dismiss them.
6. Give the butcher paper to the CD of the community.

Appendices

These are tools that will aid you in facilitation of the workshop.



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Appendix A: Facilitator Contact Sheet

My Name is:

My Email is:

My Office is located in:

My Office Phone Number Is:

Feel free to contact me by (Circle):

Phone

Email

Both

Stop by my Office

Appendix B

That's so...

heinous
hideous
dim
contempt
uncouth
hapless
foolish
corrupt
idiotic
unfortunate
trashy
deplorable
atrocious
nauseous
stupid
atrocious

...and
you choose
gay?

Buy a dictionary.

Appendix C

That's so...

childish
absurd
silly
ignorant
uncool
pointless
careless
irrational
irresponsible
senseless
unnecessary
trivial
fruitless
ill-considered
dull

...and
you choose

retarded?

Buy a dictionary.