



Cultivating Cultures of Belonging

Strategies for Fostering Inclusive Virtual and
In-Person Classrooms

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Bhattar

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Breathe.

You are HERE.

Acknowledgements

- Land Acknowledgement -
<https://land.codeforanchorage.org>

We are on Ho-de-no-sau-nee-ga (Haudenosaunee),
Odq̄hweja:de[?] (Cayuga), and Susquehannock land.

- #BLM, Anti-Asian Violence, Natural Disasters
- COVID-19
- And EVERYTHING ELSE

Outcomes

- Reflect on personal growth areas around inclusion, equity and belonging strategies
- Increase awareness of personal identities and impact of student identities on classroom climate and culture
- Develop assessment, engagement and implementation strategies for virtual and in-person contexts

Who are you?

- What are some of your salient identities?
- Which identities are seldom part of awareness?
- When have you felt mattering?
- When have you felt marginalized?

Who are our students?

- Race/Ethnicity
- Nationality/Documented Status
- Sexuality
- Gender Identity/Expression
- Traditional and Non-traditional students
- Community College graduates
- Socioeconomic Status
- Regional/State Background
- Students with children
- Veterans
- Employed Full-time (or more)
- First-Generation
- Physical/Psychological Disabilities
- And more...

What are some strengths and barriers to their success?

- Strengths
 - Smart
 - Invested
 - Family
 - Perseverant
 - Navigators
 - Diverse
 - Global Minded
 - Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005)
- Barriers
 - Disparities in access
 - Money
 - Pipeline/Pathway
 - Standardized Tests
 - Classroom and Campus Climate
 - Stereotype Threat
 - Unconscious Bias

◆ Faculty-interactions are a key determinant of overall campus sense of belonging

Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat refers to the risk of confirming as a self-characteristic, negative stereotypes about an individual's racial, ethnic, gender, or cultural group.

- Steele & Aronson, 1995

Equity vs. Equality



Diversity is a baseline
Equity is a choice
Belonging is a perception
Inclusion is an outcome

Equity-Mindedness

“Equity-Mindedness” refers to “the perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by practitioners who **call attention to patterns of inequity** in student outcomes. These practitioners are **willing to take personal and institutional responsibility** for the success of their students, and **critically reassess** their own practices. It also requires that practitioners are **race-conscious** and aware of the **social and historical context of exclusionary practices** in American Higher Education.”

Cultural Humility

How would you describe an elephant to someone who has never encountered one before?

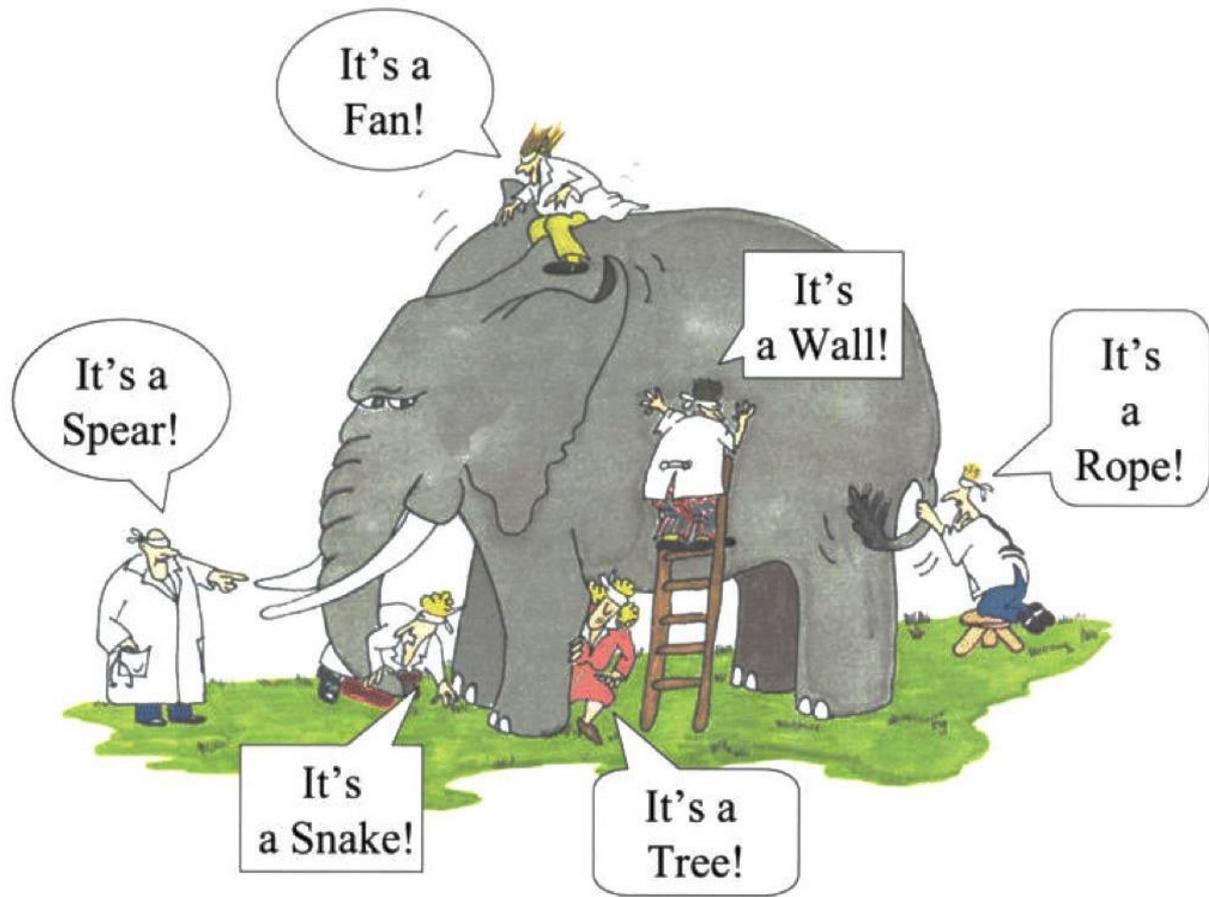


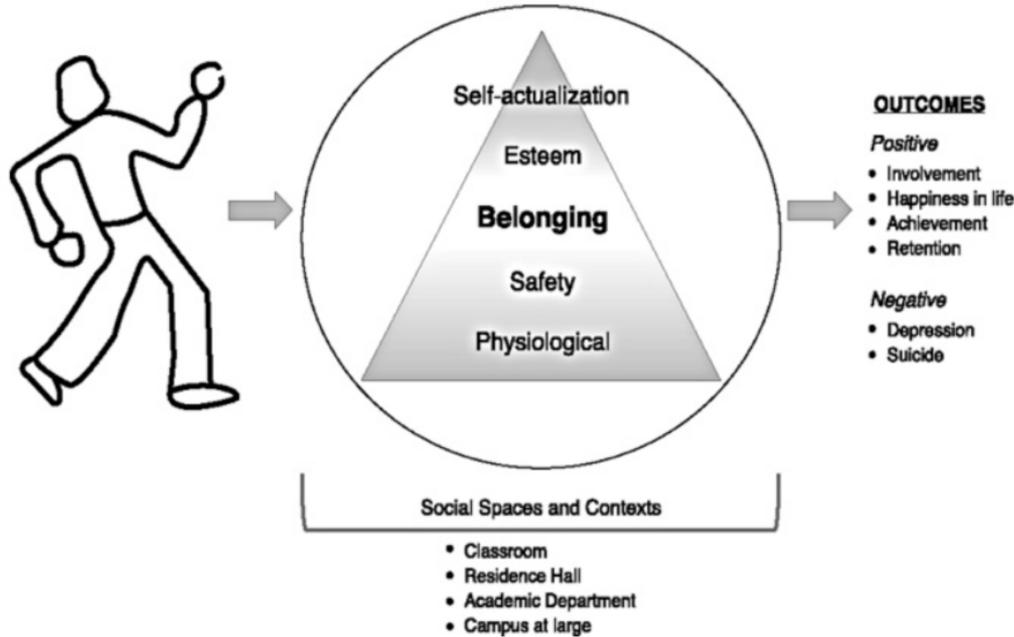
Image: five people blindfolded and only making assumptions based on partial understanding of what they are observing

Cultural Humility

“a **lifelong commitment** to self-evaluation and critique, to **redressing power imbalances . . .** and to developing **mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships** with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations”

- Tervalon & Murray-Garcia (1998)

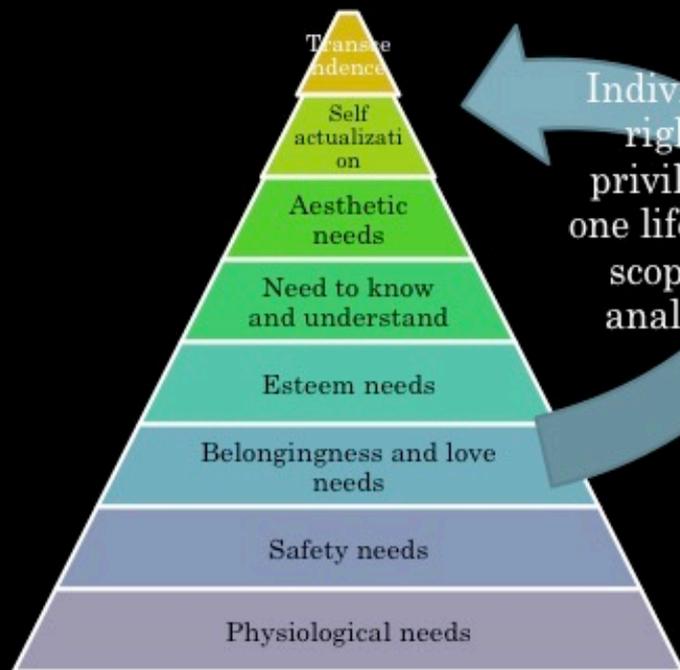
Sense of Belonging



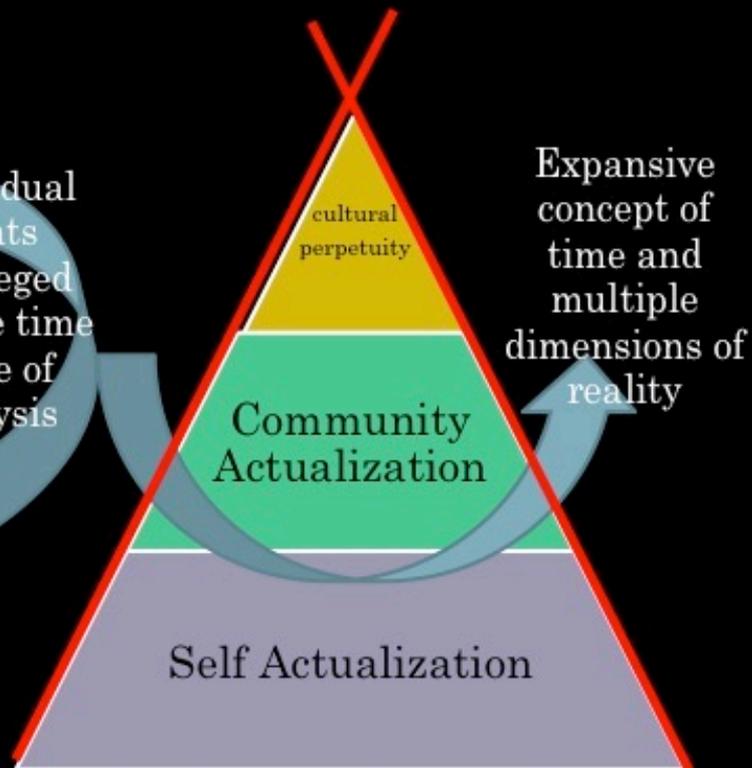
- Sense of belonging is a basic human need;
- Is a fundamental motive, sufficient to drive human behavior;
- Takes on heightened importance in certain contexts at certain times in certain populations;
- Is related to, and seemingly is a consequence of, mattering;
- Social identities intersect and affect college students' sense of belonging;
- Engenders other positive outcomes; and
- Must be satisfied on a continual basis and likely changes as circumstances, conditions, and contexts change

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (INFORMED BY BLACKFOOT NATION (ALTA))

Western Perspective



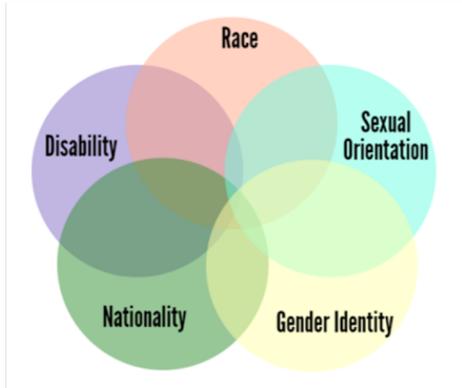
First Nations Perspective



Individual rights privileged one life time scope of analysis

Expansive concept of time and multiple dimensions of reality

INTERSECTIONALITY (CRENSHAW, 1989)



“Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects.”

~ Kimberlé Crenshaw

“When we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find our opportunities to make real change.”

~ Ijeoma Oluo

Individual, Interpersonal and Structural Levels

Image: Venn Diagram of social identities to demonstrate intersectionality

How do we show up?

Intent vs. Impact

Identity vs. Perception

Spheres of Influence:

What does it mean to hold our
identities in context:

Individual/Self

Interpersonal

Institutional

Societal/Structural

How do our students receive us?

What is our role in the system?

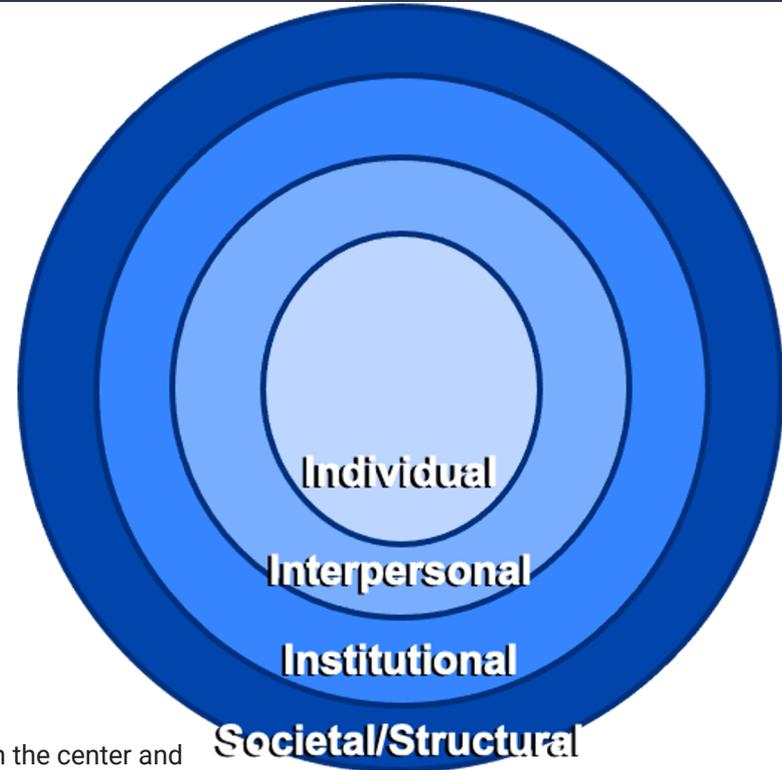


Image: Concentric circles of spheres of influence: starting with Individual in the center and expanding with interpersonal, institutional and societal/structural

Privilege

Having greater access to power and resources than a marginalized identity [in the same situation] do; (i.e. while a white person may face other struggles, race will not be one of the things limiting power and resources)



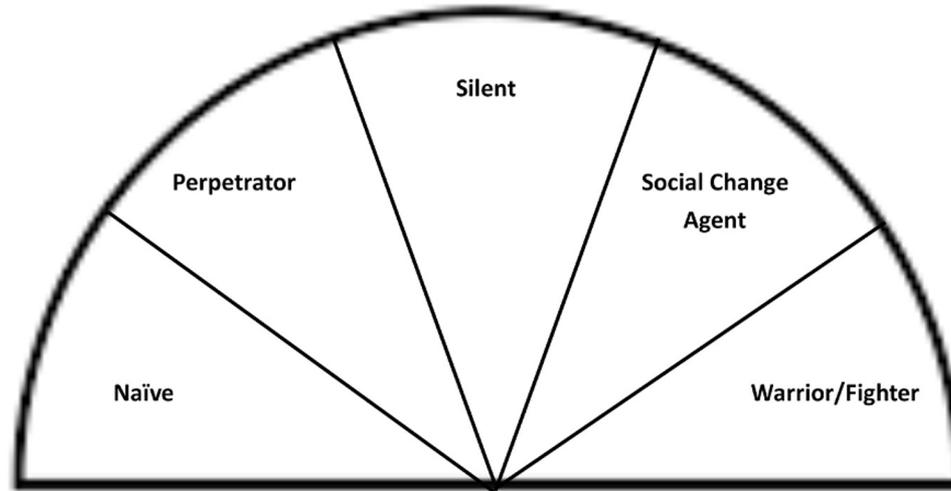
Image: Moving walkway at an airport with the words Walk and Stand separated by a yellow line

- Why is focusing on Race important right now?
- Focus does not mean other identities don't matter, but we can't fully talk about identity and access without recognizing impact of race.
- George Floyd is not unique
- Recognizing historical and current contexts
- Disproportionate impact, media reporting, etc.
-

	<p>AP Associated Press AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET</p> <p>A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it</p> <p>Email Photo Print Photo</p> <p>RECOMMEND THIS PHOTO » Recommended Photos Average (Loading) ☆☆☆☆☆</p> <p>RELATED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looting Takes Place in View of La. Police AP - Ti
	<p>AFP Getty Images - Tue Aug 30, 3:47 AM ET</p> <p>Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)</p> <p>Email Photo Print Photo</p> <p>RECOMMEND THIS PHOTO » Recommended Photos Recommend It: Average (257 votes) ☆☆☆☆☆ ★★★★☆</p> <p>RELATED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katrina's Effects, at a Glance AP - Wed Aug 31, 11:11 AM ET <p>Hurricanes & Tropical Storms</p> <p>ADD SLIDESHOW TO MY YAHOO! OR RSS READER XML MY Y! (About My Yahoo! and RSS)</p>

Image: Media portrayal of Katrina victims and word choice of “looting” vs. “finding”

Aligning Intent with Impact:



“Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.”

- Winston Churchill

Questions to Consider

- **Whose perspectives are not at the table? (instead of tokenizing)**
- **Perspective taking (what influences even this?)**
- **What is my own framework?**
- **Where is my learning edge/blindspot?**
- **Why is important to my own liberation?**
- **How am I entangled in anti-Blackness?**
- **How am I colluding with systemic inequity?**
- **How can I foster a community guided by the an equity framework?**

Courageous Dialogue Principles

- Know Yourself
- Be Clear of Your Intentions
- Listen to Understand, Not to Reply
- Be Honest and Authentic
- Commit to Being Uncomfortable
- Practice Humility
- Honor Multiple Truths
- Everyone is an Expert of Their Own Story
- Try Not to Take It Personally
- Take Responsibility for Your Words
- Stay in Process and Progress



Actions for Equity and Inclusion

Understanding your students – When possible engage student agency

- Demonstrate Empathy and Commitment to their growth
- Make time to name global happenings or a highs/lows check in
- Assess student engagement –meeting them where they are
- Being comfortable with the uncomfortable
- The campus is a microcosm of society
- Embracing Both/And
- Naming microaggressions
- Developing skills to have difficult conversations
- Mirroring Language (name pronunciation, family status, pronouns etc.)
- Utilizing pronouns on emails (symbols of consciousness)
- Standardizing Closed Captioning and Interpretation Services
- Not conflating race, class, ability, intellect and academic interests
- Recognizing students or communities are not monolithic in experience and identity

- Not assuming accessibility needs
- “What do we NEED to do for you?” vs. “How can we enhance your access to engagement and experience?”
- Being intentional in hiring a diverse team in your department
- Honoring community as a key stakeholder at all steps of the process
- Establishing longitudinal relationships at all levels of influence
- Hiring and retaining representative employees

Virtual Classroom Inclusion Strategies

- Be you
- Name the current political context
- Accommodation Statement in Syllabus
- Include pronouns in your introductions or Zoom ID
- Use intentional and diverse examples
- Assign diverse texts
- Allow for various text editions
- Incorporate diverse learning/teaching strategies (groupwork, poetry, polls, etc)
- Be intentional in recognizing contributions
- Synchronous and Asynchronous Classtime

Virtual Strategies Continued

- Virtual Office Hours
- Accessible material (no scanned articles)
- 7 second rule
- Engage campus resources/Increase access and awareness
- Be present/vulnerable, share your authenticity
- Make time for student check-ins/mindfulness activities
- Name the chaos/changes
- Be flexible when possible
- Advocate on behalf of students

Common Pitfalls

- Recognizing, but not taking action
- Asking inappropriate questions and not spending enough time listening
- Being uncomfortable with being uncomfortable
- Assuming resource needs
- Confusing intention and impact
- Self-centered perspective-taking
- Expecting those from the community to speak for the entire community/educating them
- Getting stuck in shame/blame

Thank you!
Gracias
Nandri
Danke
Obrigada



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