

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce Purpose Statement

In alignment with The Institute for Clinical Social Work's [mission](#) the DEI Taskforce is committed to expanding the diversity of marginalized perspectives and voices within the psychodynamic community with special attention to the intersectionality of race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, age and ability.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Guide

Prepared by members of the DEI Taskforce Subcommittee on Student Support

The purpose of this guide is to provide recommendations for both faculty and students regarding the creation of a safe environment and brave spaces within the classroom, while being true to our commitment to challenge social injustice while affirming the dignity and respect for all members of our community.

Part I. Commitments, Aspirations, and Encouragement

A. Commitments

As social workers and clinicians, we at the Institute for Clinical Social Work are guided by the ethics and values of the social work profession. It is from this perspective that we are committed to:

1. Challenging social injustice and seeking to promote sensitivity to, and knowledge about oppression.
2. Affirming the dignity and worth of the individual and treating one another in a caring and respectful fashion while being mindful of individual cultural and ethnic diversity.
3. Recognizing the importance of human relationships and engaging one another as respectful partners.

We embrace these values in our work with our clients, in our relationships with one another at ICSW, and in the larger context of the world.

B. Aspirations

As social workers and clinicians we aspire to be antiracists, and inclusive of the diversity of all perspectives through:

1. Our commitment to fighting all forms of discrimination wherever we find it, even in ourselves.
2. Our recognition that any attempt to undermine the effects or impact of discrimination undermines efforts to dismantle systems of oppression and disregards and invalidates the racialized and other discriminatory experiences all of us navigate daily.

C. Encouragements

As Faculty we must encourage our students and community members to encourage each other through:

1. Engaging in open and respectful dialogue and to question the world around them to raise awareness of and address racialized and other discriminatory experiences to mitigate their impact and influence in ourselves and in others.
2. Recognizing that to understand racialized and other discriminatory experiences, we approach them humbly and with curiosity and are not there to convince others or prove something.

Part II. Recommended Protocols for Safe and Brave Classroom Spaces

The principles we rely upon to create a place of safety, respect and acceptance with our clients so that they can experience a renewed sense of discovery, personal growth, and esteem; are the same principles we rely upon to create a safe learning environment. We are committed to their value as a foundation to create a learning community where the relationships we develop are accepting, understanding, creative, enriching and grounding.

A. Protocols

Undergirded by our professional ethics and values, the following protocols are recommended as useful methods to help facilitate a sense of safety and mutual understanding and respect:

1. Each classroom should agree upon a set of norms for how the class will function and engage with each other. These norms should be established at the course's start. The norms should be gathered with input from all class members, but as faculty you should have some core values for your class.
2. This task of working together to establish agreed upon norms is the first step toward a safe, cooperative and respectful learning environment.

B. Core Norms, Values and Agreements

1. Below are some core norms/values/agreements that faculty might want to establish.
 - a. Assume good intentions.
 - b. Listen to each other with respect and investment in understanding the experience of the other.
 - c. Everyone has an equal voice.
 - d. Agree to use failures and misunderstandings as ways to grow and learn.
2. Here are some additional norms to consider for agreement:
 - a. Agree to acknowledge/identify issues as they arise.
 - b. Agree to speak one's truth honestly, without judgment.
 - c. Agree to listen to others' opinions and experiences.
 - d. Let someone else speak if you have already spoken.
 - e. All voices should be heard, and space actively created for them.
 - f. Listen to each other with respect and interest in understanding the experiences of the other.
 - g. Acknowledge our differences make us stronger.
 - h. Agree to focus on what will make things better and address individual needs.
 - i. Agree to learn through failures and misunderstandings.
3. Recommended Norm Agreement Activity

An activity that might be helpful in identifying agreed upon norms:

First, ask each member of the class to identify a time when they felt aggressed upon and why.

Next, ask the class how they'd wished this had been addressed or handled.

Class Incorporation, use this information as a foundation for your classroom norms and how they will treat each other.

Part III. Maintaining a Safe and Generative Environment

A. Faculty Role

Faculty has the responsibility to create an environment where all students feel comfortable and able to learn.

1. A fundamental aspect of a learning environment is creating safety, which is an active process created within the classroom.
2. To optimize the feeling of safety and mutual respect, students must feel seen and if/when they feel tokenized, this must be addressed actively and immediately.
3. We as faculty must remind ourselves before every class that we teach highly evocative material and we need to be prepared and think about how we will respond to the potential emotional responses to this material including resistance, fear, discomfort and denial/disavowal of white students of white privilege, as well as the impact of these dynamics on students of color and the class as a whole.

C. Recommendations for addressing Microaggressions (unintended hurts) or other Disruptions

1. A microaggression or disruption should be identified as quickly as possible and addressed BEFORE proceeding with the class.
2. Anyone can ask for the class to address a rupture or unintended hurt.
3. Acknowledge the moment and immediately take the lead in addressing the situation (slow down or stop the conversation).

Breathe. Pause. Stay as calm as possible.

4. Acknowledge the emotions in the room, both visible and invisible.

5. Review the agreed upon class norms for having a difficult conversation.
6. Remind everyone to assume good intentions and the relevant class norms.
7. Ask students if they are okay with processing the classroom disruption.
 - a. If students don't want to stay in class, arrange a future time to have this conversation.
 - b. If students don't want to discuss the disruption with the class, let the students know their options for following up outside of class (Dean of Students, Academic Dean) and what will be shared with the class.
 - c. Let everyone know there will be a follow up with the class, so issues don't go underground.
8. Identify factually what happened, what was the observable event.
9. Have all participants identify how this event felt to them and what this event meant to them- acknowledging that individual experiences may be/are different.
10. While acknowledging the impact of this event on individuals, make sure to validate and support the significance of their experiences.
11. Have key participants request/clarify how they would want this experience/event to be handled in the future.
12. Review why the incident was problematic and how the individuals/group agree to handle similar moments in the future.
13. Support students to engage in critical reflection about the situation .
14. Follow up as needed but be sure to check in at least once to be sure that agreements are being followed.
 - a. Options for follow up:
 - o revisit in next class;
 - o sees individuals after class; and
 - o identifies other people as sources of support.

Part IV. Anonymous and Confidential Reporting Policy

Students can make an anonymous report by submitting an email about the incident to: DEI@icsw.edu

Students can submit a confidential report by contacting one of the following individuals:

1. Ms. Ashley Ellis, Interim Coordinator of Enrollment Services and Academic Support
2. Dr. Karen Bloomberg, Dean of Students
3. Dr. Denise Duval Tsioles, Academic Dean

Glossary of Terms

Ascription of intelligence (e.g. unintelligent or smarter than average based on appearance or accent)

Assumption of criminality (e.g. guarding belongings more carefully when around certain groups or expressing fear of certain groups)

Assumption of immorality (e.g. assuming that poor people, undereducated people, LGBTQ people, or people of color are more likely to be devious, untrustworthy, or unethical)

Denial or devaluing of experience or culture (e.g. ignoring the existence, histories, cultures of groups of people – assuming that others are like you)

Denial of racial reality (e.g. dismissing claims that race was relevant to understanding a student's experience)

Making judgments about belonging (e.g. assuming people are foreign or don't speak English well because of their appearance; questioning someone's membership status such as "you don't look disabled" or "you don't seem that gay to me" or "if you were Jewish, wouldn't you do x?")

Additional Resources

Additional resources are available through the Teaching Learning Commons (TLC)

The Teaching Learning Commons (TLC) – to access: go to our website (www.icsw.edu) and under the Resources tab click Teaching Learning Commons. *You will need to be logged into your ICSW email account to access the materials.

The TLC is also available in Blackbaud.