



Intercultural Campus Dialogues that Lead to Institutional Change

Leading for Change: Diversity Practices in Higher Education

August 13, 2013

Sabrina Gentlewarrior, PhD, Barbara Bond, EdD & Joyce Rain Anderson, PhD

BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY



Dialogue

- “The goal is to deepen understanding and judgment, and to think about ways to make a difference on a community issue you care about. This can occur in a safe, focused discussion when people exchange views freely and consider a variety of view points. The process – democratic discussion among equals – is as important as the content”
(Everyday Democracy, *Toward a More Perfect Union*, www.everyday-democracy.org).

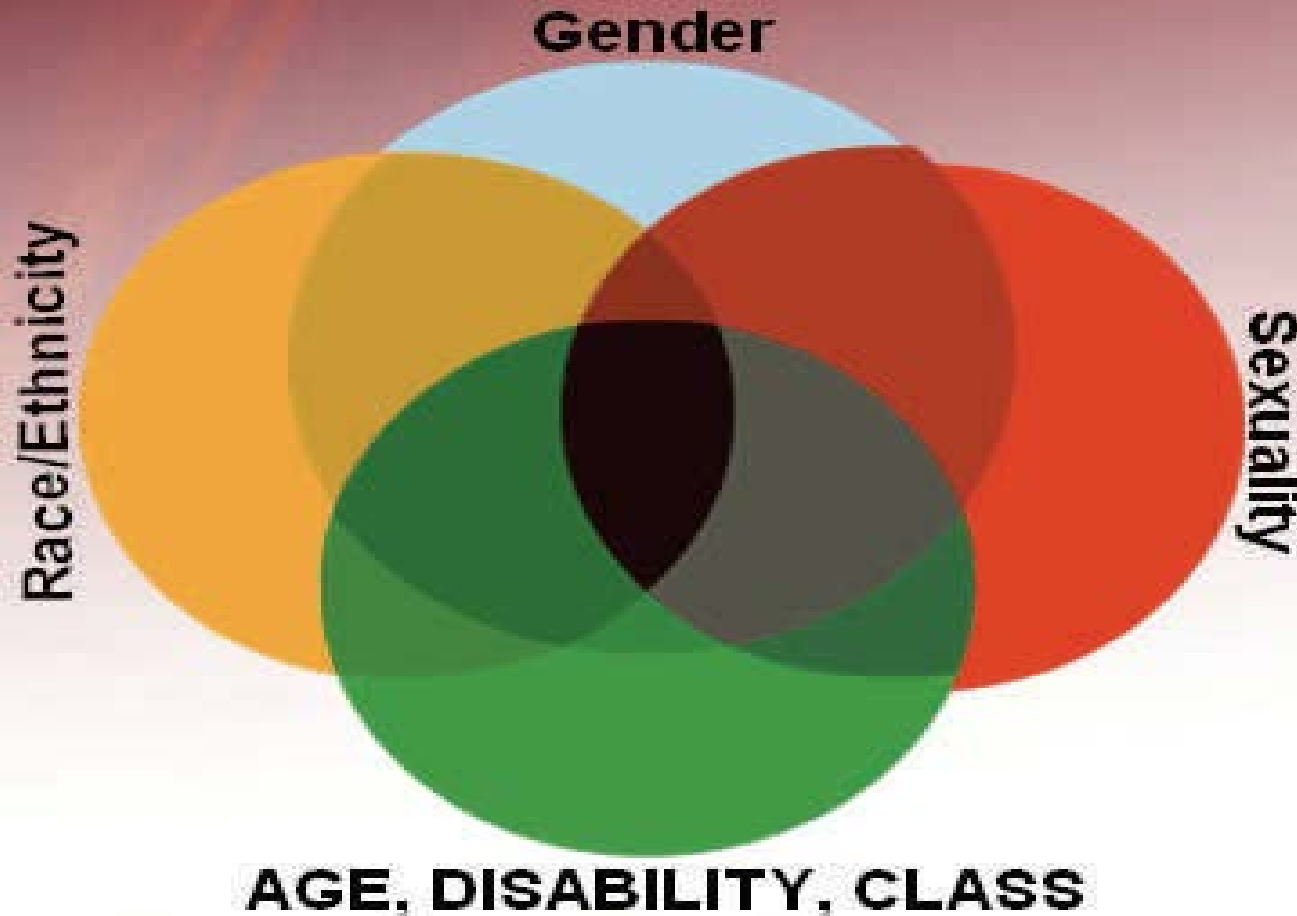
Privilege

- We cannot assume that everyone comes to these discussions on a “level playing field.”
- Privilege is defined as unearned benefits afforded to some at the expense of others (Case, Iuzzini & Hopkins, 2012; Sanders & Mahalingam, 2012).



- Those with privilege are considered the norm; those without privilege are viewed as deficient (Pieterse & Collins, 2007; Stewart, Latu, Branscombe, Phillips & Denney, 2012).
- Those with privilege typically are not aware of it; those without privilege are typically very aware of their lack of privilege – as they must create and consistently utilize -- strategies to cope with oppression (Ferber, 2012; Zúñiga, Nagada, Chesler & Cytron-Walker, 2007).

- Some of our social identities are privileged – and others are not. Intersectionality helps us consider the intersections of the totality of our social identities (Crenshaw, p. 3).



Power and Privilege Checklist

- In your folders, you will find a salmon-colored piece of paper called the “Power and Privilege Checklist.”
- Please complete this sheet.



Discussion: Exploring Our Privilege

- What surprised you about this exercise?
- Which identities on the Checklist are included in your campus diversity efforts?
- Who is not being included in your diversity efforts that you think should be?
- How does your campus address issues of privilege? Be as specific as possible here.

BSU's Use of the Privilege Model

- Since 2008, the Office of Diversity and a range of other offices and individuals have been utilizing a broad definition of diversity as well the model of privilege to discuss issues of diversity and social justice.
- Privilege is not “our fault.” Guilt must be openly and safely challenged (McIntosh, 2012).
- It is emphasized that systems of privilege are established by the cycle of socialization (Harro, 2013).

Cycle of Socialization

- Go into your folders and get the cream-colored paper.
- “We are born into a specific set of *social identities*... and these identities predispose us to unequal *roles* in the dynamic system of oppression.” Powerful sources in our world socialize us into these roles.
- “We get systematic training in ‘how to be’ ...”
- However, we can interrupt the cycle by questioning the status quo and taking action (Harro, 2000).

Intercultural Dialogue

- “Encourages direct encounter and exchange about contentious issues, especially those associated with issues of social identity and social stratification” (Zúñiga, 2013, p. 635).
- Use campus climate data to guide topics and their order for campus dialogue processes.

Key Aspects of Intercultural Dialogue

- Genuine listening and thoughtful speaking are taught, practiced and used (Zúñiga, Nagada, Chesler & Cytron-Walker, 2007).
- The group co-creates guidelines to use to help guide their process (Zúñiga, Nagada, Chesler & Cytron-Walker, 2007). Confidentiality is key to the success of the group.

- Conceptual and experiential tools are used to increase members' self-awareness and knowledge about issues of diversity, privilege and social change (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Lopez & Zúñiga, 2010; Nagada, Gurin, Sorensen, Gurin-Sands, Osuna, 2009; Zúñiga, 2013).
- Sharing of personal stories about privilege and oppression deepens awareness, empathy and the motivation to create change (McIntosh, 2012).

Intergroup Dialogue Facilitators

- Ideally, facilitators are from diverse social locations and model intercultural relational and communication processes (Sanders & Mahalingam, 2012).
- Facilitators are not experts, but are guides who act as imperfect rolemodels (Zúñiga, Nagada, Chesler & Cytron-Walker, 2007), as well as visionaries of what is possible.

- Use the premise that privilege can be used to help end privilege; the responsibility for ending oppression rests with those experiencing privilege (Case, et. al., 2012).
- Emphasis is placed on identifying real-world actions that can be undertaken to increase equity and social justice (Freire, 1971; Lopez & Zúñiga, 2010; Nagada, Gurin, Sorensen, Gurin-Sands, Osuna, 2009; Sanders & Mahalingam, 2012 Zúñiga, 2013).

Cycle of Liberation

- “As people come to a critical level of understanding of the nature of oppression and their roles in this systematic phenomenon, they seek new paths for creating social change and taking themselves toward empowerment or liberation” (Harro, 2000, p. 463).
- One can enter the cycle at any point; there is no specific beginning or end point. One is never “done” working to end oppression.
- Change is Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Systemic.

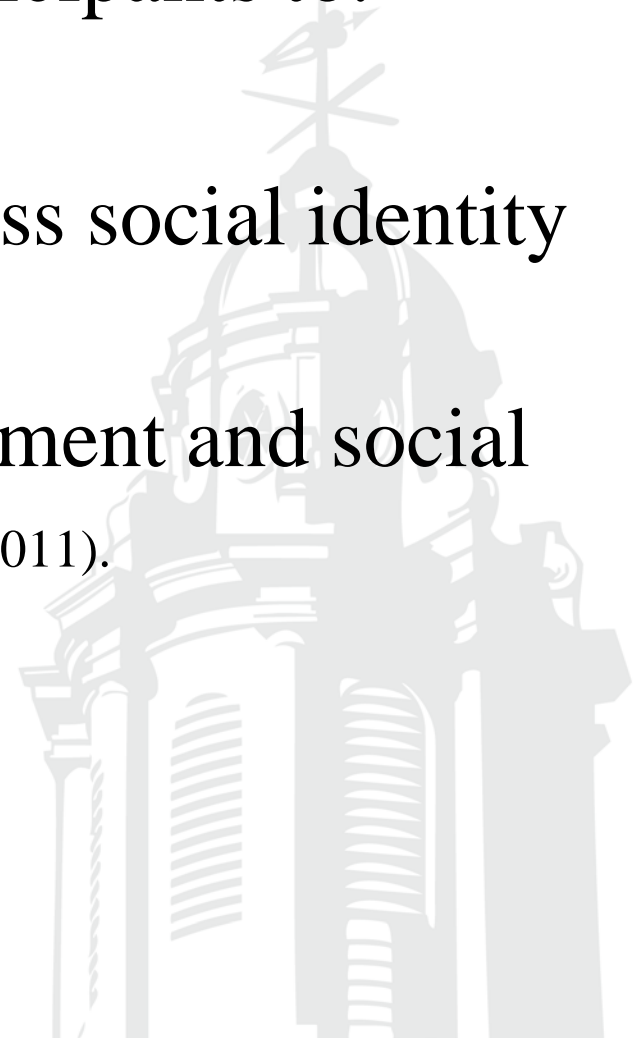
Intercultural Dialogue is a Long-term Process

- Intercultural dialogue is developmental in nature (Waters, 2010). Capacity must be built (in terms of personnel, programs, as well as the dialogues themselves) for sustained and deepening communication (Zúñiga, Nagada, Chesler & Cytron-Walker, 2007).
- Over time, intercultural dialogue deepens communication and also creates honest and deep intercultural relationships (Ayvazian & Daniel Tatum, 2013).

Intercultural Dialogue Supports our Educational Mission

Intercultural dialogue helps participants to:

- think more complexly;
- relate and collaborate across social identity differences;
- participate in civic engagement and social change (Gurin, Nagda, & Sorenson, 2011).



Power and Privilege Series

- Campus-wide series began in 2007, with increasing complexity in model over time.
- Began with confronting individual issues such as race, gender, sexuality, and differing abilities; moved to intersectionality model (ex. Race/Gender and Class/Race, Gender and Popular Culture).
- 2011 Deepening Dialogue: Our goals are (1) to listen and speak, (2) to look at ourselves and change where necessary, and (3) to take action from our own position on campus.

OID Lunchtime Employee Series

- Group of approximately 40-50 employees who come together to discuss issues of diversity.
- 2008-2010 Self-awareness work was emphasized;
- 2010-2012 Self-awareness and knowledge was focused on in the series;
- 2012-present Self-awareness, knowledge *and* skill-building are integrated in the sessions.

Leadership for Diversity Training

- The training was designed for employees who wished to actively participate in diversity and equity work and felt they would benefit from additional training and support to continue developing their leadership skills.
- The goals of the training were to provide opportunities to:
 - Learn how to take action against oppression and inequality with support from colleagues.
 - Be an active participant in BSU's diversity work.
 - Enhance leadership skills and document this advanced preparation as part of their cv.

Days of Dialogue

- Spring 2011 -- *Race Matters: Racism and White Privilege*
- Spring 2012 -- *Making Connections: Racism, White Privilege, Gender Bias and Transphobia*
- Spring 2013 -- *Building Skills for Diversity and Social Justice*

Evolution of the Student Diversity Coalition

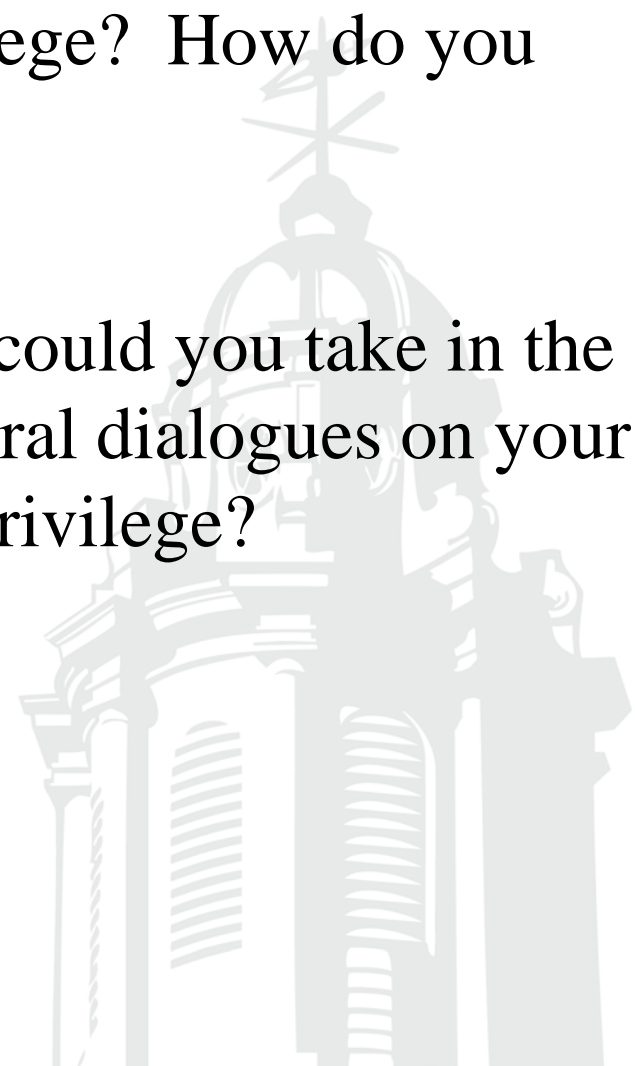
- During academic year 2010-11, the OID sponsored a series of intercultural dialogues with students about race and racism.
- They then told their personal stories of struggle and triumph to an audience 300+ students, faculty, staff and administrators in the Spring 2011 *Day of Dialogue: Race Matters*.
- One outgrowth of that event was the evolution of the student diversity coalition and the coalition of employees who mentor them.
- Students recognized the need not just for safe and supportive spaces for students from marginalized groups but also for spaces where all students could come together and bridge the differences that divide us all.

Discussion Questions

- How do your current diversity efforts support the building of community and intercultural coalitions and relationships?
- How do your current diversity efforts help campus members prepare to create personal change? (Cycle of Socialization work)
- How do your current diversity efforts help campus members prepare to create social change? (Cycle of Liberation work)

Lunch Discussion: Addressing White Privilege at Predominantly White Institutions

- What work still needs to be done on your campus regarding racism and white privilege? How do you know this?
- What is one step your institution could you take in the next year to expand the intercultural dialogues on your campus about racism and white privilege?



References

- Ayvazian, A. & Daniel Tatum, B. (2013). Women, race and racism: A dialogue in black and white. In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, C. Castañeda, H. Hackman, M. Peters, X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (third edition) (pp. 127-132). New York: Routledge.
- Case, K., Iuzzinni, J., & Hopkins, M. (2012). Systems of privilege: Intersections, Awareness and Applications. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68 (1) 1-10.
- Crenshaw, K. (n.d.). A primer on intersectionality. Available from the African American Policy Forum: <http://aapf.org/>
- Dessel, A. & Rogge, M. (2008). Evaluation of intergroup dialogue: A review of the empirical literature. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 26 (2), 199-238.
- Everyday Democracy (n.d.) *Toward a more perfect union in an age of diversity: A guide for building stronger communities through public dialogue*. Available from: <http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Resource.12.aspx>
- Ferber, A. (2012). The culture of privilege: Color-blindness, postfeminism and Christonormativity, *Journal of Social Issues*, 68 (1), 63-77.

- Freire, P. (1971). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (New York: Continuum.
- Gurin, P., Nagda, B., & Sorenson, N. (2011). Intergroup dialogue: Education for a broad conception of civic engagement. *Liberal Education* 97 (2).
- Harro, B. (2013). The cycle of liberation. In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, C. Castañeda, H. Hackman, M. Peters, X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (third edition) (pp. 618-624). New York: Routledge.
- Harro, B. (2013). The cycle of socialization. In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, C. Castañeda, H. Hackman, M. Peters, X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (third edition) (pp. 45-51). New York: Routledge.
- Lopez, G. & Zúñiga (2010). Intergroup dialogue and democratic practice in higher education. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 152, 35-42.
- McIntosh, P. (2012). Reflections and future directions for privilege studies. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68 (1), 194-206.
- Nagda, B., Gurin, P., Sorensen, N., Gurin-Sands, C., Osuna, S. (2009). From separate corners to dialogue and action. *Race and Social Problems*, 1 (1), 45-55.

- Pieterse, A. & Collins, N. (2007). A socialization-based values approach to embracing diversity and confronting resistance in intercultural dialogues. *The College Student Affairs Journal*, 26 (2), 144-151.
- Sanders, M. & Mahalingam, R. (2012). Under the radar: The role of invisible discourse in understanding class-based privilege. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68 (1), 112-127.
- Stewart, T., Latu, I., Branscombe, N., Phillips, N. & Denney, H. (2012). White privilege awareness and efficacy to reduce racial inequality improve White Americans' attitudes toward African Americans. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68 (1), 11-27.
- Waters, R. (2010). *Understanding allyhood as a developmental process*. *About Campus*, 15 (5), 2-8.
- Zúñiga, X. (2013). Bridging differences through intergroup dialogue. In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, C. Castañeda, H. Hackman, M. Peters, X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (third edition) (pp. 635-637). New York: Routledge.
- Zúñiga, X., Nagda, B., Chesler, M., & Cytron-Walker, A. (2007). *Intergroup dialogues in higher education: Meaningful learning about social justice*. ASHE Higher Education Report, 32 (4).