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Inclusive Teaching and Learning for Occupational Therapy Experiential Education



College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences: Sargent College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Welcome to the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Document for OT Experiential Educators!

This document is a collective effort.

This document was adapted from an inclusive teaching document developed by the Department of Occupational Therapy at Boston University. It is based on feedback and insights from students and faculty past and present. In addition, several scholars have influenced the content and suggestions within this document. We consulted with past and present fieldwork educators from a variety of OT settings in constructing this document. We acknowledge that the group that developed this document does not hold all the answers, and includes privileged faculty and clinicians, and as such, this will be an evolving document.

- **Graphic design and editing**- Julia Lee
- **Graphic design**- Nicole Latimer
- **Contributors**- Authors of the BU OT Department Inclusive Teaching and Learning Expectations Document- Alex Brandell, Anne Escher, Oksana Litardo, Ariel Schwartz, and Jillian Zuck
- **Fieldwork Educator Reviewers**- Romeissa Selmane, Allison Osipow, Leanna Katz, Erin Fitzgibbons, Cynthia Barrows

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INTRODUCTION



**Welcome to the
Inclusive
Teaching and
Learning
Document for OT
Experiential
Educators!**

Welcome to the Inclusive Teaching and Learning for Occupational Therapy Experiential Education Resource!

The Boston University Department of Occupational Therapy encourages you to explore this resource as a guide to learning more about how to use an inclusive lens in experiential education (fieldwork, baccalaureate project and capstone).

The efforts outlined within this document are meant to inform continual efforts to promote greater equity and justice for all occupational therapy students. Creating equitable experiential learning experiences is not an isolated moment of education or an adjustment at a fixed point in time. It is not enough to say that policies support equity; rather, equity is a lifelong effort. Although this document was originally put together as a resource for fieldwork educators, we recognize that much of it applies to any experiential learning across occupational therapy curricula including baccalaureate OTA projects and doctoral capstones.

As we continue to learn from each other, students, and colleagues, this document will be updated and regularly reviewed.



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Section 1: Role of and Expectations for Fieldwork Education

Fieldwork experiences are an integral part of all occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant curricula. Fieldwork experiences allow students to apply knowledge, theory, and practical skills to a situation of practice. Through these experiences the occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant student gains confidence and competence in applying the occupational therapy process and using evidence-based, client-centered interventions to meet the needs of diverse client populations (1). These experiences also help the student in developing their own professional identity. Fieldwork educators are an essential component and set the tone for the learning experience.

References

1. American Occupational Therapy Association. (2022). Occupational therapy fieldwork education: Value and purpose. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76(Suppl. 3), 7613410240. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2022.76S3006>



Section 1a: Level I and Level II Fieldwork

Level I and Level II Fieldwork

Level I Fieldwork (LIFW) is meant to provide students with observational and, in select aspects, participatory experiences that enhance their academic coursework. LIFW are situated across an array of populations in an assortment of settings – including simulated environments. Site placements may not directly include occupational therapy, however they relate to the field by population or setting.

While LIFW educators do not need to be licensed occupational therapists, they do need to demonstrate a clear understanding of occupational therapy and LIFW objectives.

LIFW placements give students the opportunity to (1):

- Define occupational therapy in practice
- Develop professional behavior
- Consider theory within the scope of practice
- Exercise and develop therapeutic lens
- Develop observational, analytical, and clinical reasoning skills



Level I and Level II Fieldwork

Level II Fieldwork (LIIFW) is meant to provide students with an immersive experience to apply their knowledge and develop their therapeutic skills at the culmination of their educational experience. Students collaboratively construct their own learning through active engagement in the fieldwork setting and reflection. Boston University students complete two, twelve-week fieldwork experiences in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. LIIFW serves to develop clinical reasoning, reflective and ethical practice, and an identity/style as an occupational therapist (1).

References

1. American Occupational Therapy Association. (2022). Occupational therapy fieldwork education: Value and purpose. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76(Suppl. 3), 7613410240. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2022.76S3006>



Section 1b: Potential Fieldwork Structures

Potential Fieldwork Structures

There are a variety of fieldwork educator and student structures that can be utilized in LIIFW. Structures are selected according to the nature of the site, the preference of the educator, and the learning needs of the students. Some potential structures are as follows:

- 1 educator : 1 student
 - Traditional model; individualistic
- 2 educators : 1 student
 - Shared
 - Student may meet with one or both educators at a time
 - Increased responsibility on the student to communicate expectations and feedback between two educators
 - A meeting log or record could help clarify this without putting increased cognitive load on the student



Potential Fieldwork Structures

- 1 educator : 2 or more students (1)
 - Collaborative
 - Develops skills in education, advocacy, and teamwork
 - Students as peers with a shared responsibility to work together and provide one another with feedback
 - Should establish ground rules for feedback
 - Fieldwork educator maintains role as expert and facilitator
 - Move toward approaches emphasizing facilitating and mentoring
 - Move away from role as expert or authority



References

1. Hanson, D. J. & Deluliis, E. D. (2015). The collaborative model of fieldwork education: A blueprint for group supervision of students. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, 29(2), 223-239. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07380577.2015.1011297>

Section 1c: Supervisory Responsibilities

Supervisory Responsibilities

Fieldwork educators are responsible for facilitating student learning experiences and developing their competence and confidence as therapists. Fieldwork educators are responsible for orienting students to the fieldwork site and expectations (1) and developing students' abilities (2).

Orient Student (1)

Leading up to and during students' first week, fieldwork educators are responsible for orienting their students to the fieldwork site, departmental policies, and the established group norms within the site. In addition to this orientation, fieldwork educators should collaborate with students to establish strategies and measures to achieve the educational goals of the fieldwork setting. Developing these strategies and measures includes but is not limited to:

- Collaboratively develop a learning contract with measurable outcomes
- Discuss student learning needs and what teaching strategies best support them

Supervisory Responsibilities

- Define student learning objectives for the fieldwork site
 - What are the site's typical expectations?
 - What are the students' wants, needs, and expectations?
- Establish means of measuring and time frame for measuring goal progress
- Discuss feedback form and frequency preferences
- Establish set formal and informal meeting frequency and expectations

Develop Student Abilities (2)

After student learning objectives and feedback structures have been established, fieldwork educators are responsible for facilitating student learning. This facilitation and feedback include but is not limited to:

- Supervise student provision of OT service
- Supervise and adjust student documentation
- Facilitate and ask questions to direct student preparation for sessions
- Provide prompt, regular, and behavior-oriented feedback
- Recognize and adapt teaching strategies to student learning needs as the fieldwork experience progresses
- Grade the learning experience up and down as appropriate to match student skills and progress student skills toward entry-level practice

Learning Styles

"Each of us has a large basket of resources in the form of aptitudes, prior knowledge, intelligence, interests, and sense of personal empowerment that shape how we learn (3)."

Learning style refers to the particular way in which one prefers to or best collects, organizes, and transforms experiences into useful information. Students may be inclined to one or more particular learning modality. While the demands of the fieldwork site and learning objective require application in a particular form, fieldwork educators have the potential to introduce students to or further elaborate on a concept outside of time with clients through a format that matches the student's preferred learning style. For example, a student that is a tactile learner might practice a transfer with their educator prior to working with a client; whereas a student that is a verbal learner might discuss the steps of the transfer to better prepare themselves.

While students may have varied learning style preferences, there is increased research suggesting that certain concepts are best taught through particular modalities (1).

"When instructional style matches the nature of the content, all learners learn better, regardless of their differing preferences for how the material is taught (3)."

Supervisory Responsibilities

Potential learning styles and strategies for teaching in these modalities are listed below.

Learning Style Preferences	Strategies in this Format
Visual/nonverbal learner	Pictures or designs; charts; videos
Visual/verbal learner	Written words; handouts; note-taking
Tactile/kinesthetic learner	Hands on
Auditory/verbal learner	Oral strategies; tape recorder; discussion

Source: content adapted from Brown et al. (3)

Teaching Strategies

Teaching style refers to the form of fieldwork educator behaviors that are consistent across the placement, even though particulars of clients and content may vary. Teaching strategies refer to the specific examples of educational facilitation described above—for example, sharing a chart or asking questions to spur discussion. Teaching strategies also refer to the greater, overarching style that fieldwork educators use to educate students. Each style has an educational objective but achieves it through varied focuses and forms. It is likely that fieldwork educators will cycle through many of these teaching styles over the course of the fieldwork placement. It is important to be mindful of these strategies and what promotes the best fit with the student's current abilities and experience.



Supervisory Responsibilities

The strategies are as follows:

Teaching Style	Description	Example	When This May Be A Good Fit
Expert	Teacher possesses knowledge and strives to maintain expert status. Focus on transmitting information.	Fieldwork educator explains an assessment to LIFW students.	LIFW.
Formal authority	Teachers possess status among students. In this role they provide structure and standards. Directive.	Fieldwork educator outlines schedule for the day and/or session plan to students.	LIFW and beginning of LIIFW when a student is familiarizing themselves with expectations.
Personal model	Teacher educates by example, encouraging students to observe and then do.	Fieldwork educator leads a session, asks student questions on what they observed, and then has students assist in a similar session following observation.	Initial phase of LIIFW once a student is familiar with what is required.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Teaching Style	Description	Example	When This May Be A Good Fit
Facilitator	Teacher guides and directs. Facilitates students in fully exploring options available to promote informed decision making.	Fieldwork educator has a student plan a session for a client. Before the session with the client, the fieldwork educator goes over the plan with the student asking why they planned what they did and explores what other options or routes they could have taken.	Generally, at the midpoint of LIIFW.
Delegator	Teacher delegates tasks to the student, promoting autonomy and independence.	Fieldwork educators give students a caseload. Students run sessions with and document their caseload. Work is reviewed by fieldwork educator.	Final stages of LIIFW.

Source: content adapted from Johnson & Stutz-Tanenbaum (5)

Learning Theory

In structuring fieldwork experiences and developing student's skills, it is recommended to take an interleaved approach, as opposed to a massed practice approach. Massed practice refers to rapid-fire repetition, for example, practicing the same transfer over and over again before moving onto the next learning objective. This practice has been shown to produce feelings of fluency in material but has not been shown to produce actual mastery (3).

"Practice that's spaced out, interleaved with other learning, and varied produces better mastery, longer retention, and more versatility (3)."

The fieldwork structure facilitates these learning strategies. By spacing practice, a student will continue to revisit a practice over the course of their placement. This repeated practice requires recall and re-consolidation of information that strengthens long term memory storage. By interleaving practice, students will practice multiple skills at a single time. This might look like taking lead on multiple aspects of a session, as opposed to doing a single aspect until they get it just right.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Lastly, varied practice calls for practicing skills in a variety of contexts to improve flexibility and adaptability of knowledge. This is facilitated by working with multiple clients with different characteristics. Maintaining this spaced, interleaved, and varied structure of fieldwork will facilitate greater consolidation of memory (3).

Reflect



1. What, if any, responsibilities you feel as a fieldwork educator are not listed here?
2. What responsibilities are most challenging for you as a fieldwork educator?

Supervisory Responsibilities

Additional Resources

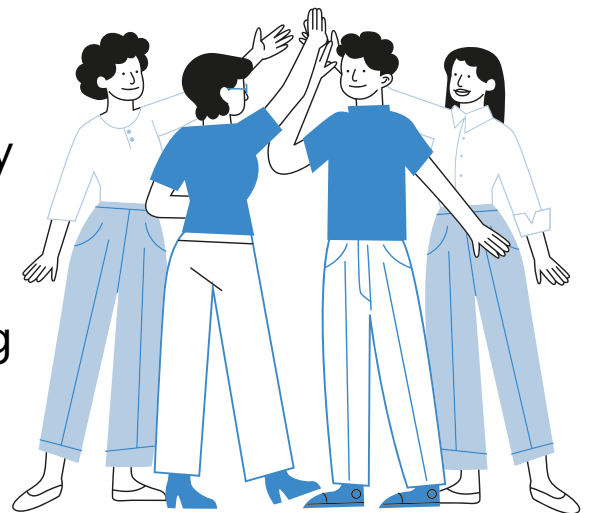
Resource	What is it about?
<p>American Occupational Therapy Association. (n.d.). <i>Importance of level II fieldwork</i>. https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Fieldwork/LevelII.aspx</p>	<p>AOTA website linking to information on LIFW, LIIFW, and resources for fieldwork educators.</p>
<p>Department of Occupational Therapy. (n.d.). <i>Fieldwork policies & procedures</i>. Tufts University. https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Educators/Fieldwork/Supervisor/Samples/Tufts-Policies-Procedures.pdf</p>	<p>Tufts University sample document that outlines expectations of fieldwork placements and role of fieldwork educator. We recommend pages 5, 9, 27-28, and 73-81.</p>
<p>Hanson, D. J. & Deluliis, E. D. (2015). The collaborative model of fieldwork education: A blueprint for group supervision of students. <i>Occupational Therapy in Health Care</i>, 29(2), 223-239. https://doi.org/10.3109/07380577.2015.1011297</p>	<p>Article outlining the structure of collaborative fieldwork model. Outlines an example of the model, as well as ways to implement the model at fieldwork sites. (Full article available free of cost.)</p>

References

1. Hanson, D. J. & Deluliis, E. D. (2015). The collaborative model of fieldwork education: A blueprint for group supervision of students. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care, 29*(2), 223-239. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07380577.2015.1011297>
2. Department of Occupational Therapy. (n.d.). *Fieldwork policies & procedures*. Tufts University. <https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Educators/Fieldwork/Supervisor/Samples/Tufts-Policies-Procedures.pdf>
3. Brown, P. C., Roediger III, H. L., & McDaniel, M. A. (2014). *Make it stick: The science of successful learning*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
4. Johnson, C., & Stutz-Tanenbaum, P. (2009). *Fieldwork Educator Certificate Program Manual*. American Occupational Therapy Association.

Section 2: Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Experiential learning provides students the opportunity to apply didactic learning to a clinical context or a focused area of skill or knowledge development (capstone focus areas). These experiences often place significant demands on time and physical and mental energies for both the student and experiential educator (1). Creating an environment of mutual respect and support promotes the student's ability to a) apply classroom learning to the clinical environment, b) develop critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills, and c) establish their own professional identity (1).



A study by Bolding et al. (2), found that many students on Level II fieldwork were exposed to work related and personal related negative acts or incivility, with some students reporting daily exposure to these negative experiences. In addition, 16% of students reported experiencing bullying while on their fieldwork. These experiences impede learning and impact student outcomes.

Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

A lack of a supportive environment can lead to anxiety, challenges in work completion or work performance, difficulty with critical thinking and clinical reasoning, and decreased overall quality of life or perceived quality of the clinical experience (2,3).

Growth Oriented Language

By modeling and promoting growth-oriented language, experiential educators may encourage students to adopt a growth mindset of knowledge. Under this mindset, knowledge is something that is cultivated over time, whereas a fixed mindset suggests that skill and knowledge is innate, and one can only do so much to change things (4). Mindsets have the ability to influence achievement over time and may explain discrepancies in the achievements of marginalized populations.

Describe student goals in growth-oriented language. In formatting objectives as a learned and developed skill, experiential educators can aid in students feeling supported in their fieldwork and capstone experiences. This language structure orients growth and development of skills as the objective, as opposed to perfection. Recast concerns or challenges that students share in terms of a growth mindset.



Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Lastly, providing feedback and praise that is effort oriented as opposed to intelligence oriented promotes growth-oriented mindsets and resilience in the face of challenging tasks (5). The structure of praise has been shown to influence the way that people respond to challenges.

Examples:

Growth Mindset 	Fixed Mindset 
"What did you learn from that session?"	"What did you do wrong?"
"Client evaluations have been challenging for me"	"I'm not good at client evaluations"
"We should work together and practice ----- transfers to develop your skills."	"----- part of the transfer was incorrectly executed."
"The session went well; you were highly engaged and made an effort to make it meaningful."	"The session went well; you are great at this."

Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Teaching Strategies to Encourage Reflective Thinking



Asking questions is an important means of spurring critical thinking and reflection. The structure of these questions impacts not only the way knowledge is measured, but also the students' sense of self confidence. In asking questions, one may inadvertently engage in a form of “guess what I’m thinking”. This form of questioning challenges the student to come up with a predetermined—consciously or unconsciously—answer in their educator’s head. These questions increase the likelihood that a student will not answer or will not answer correctly, as well as increase the likelihood that educators will be disappointed by the answer they get.

Instead, experiential educators should pose open-ended questions that offer an array of opportunities for knowledge application and development. Asking open-ended questions creates a learning environment that calls the student into deeper application, as opposed to calling them out for not knowing the material.

Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

University of Central Florida School of Medicine outlines the following questioning strategies (6):

Align

Ask questions that assess the students' skills with the basic objectives for their fieldwork placement.

Scaffold

Start with an open-ended question. If the student answers correctly, challenge them by asking them to explain further. If a student answers incorrectly, pose questions that facilitate the student thinking through the concept.

Reassess

If a student answers a question incorrectly, tell them that you will follow up with them on it tomorrow and do so.

Rephrase

If a student answers a question incorrectly, consider if rewording the question to ensure students' understanding.

Encourage

Remind students that both asking questions and answering questions incorrectly is an active part of the learning experience.

Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Normalize Difficulty with the Transition

Fieldwork, baccalaureate projects, and capstone experiences require students to apply semesters of academic material into practice. This process, while of immense importance to the educational experience of students, is quite challenging. Students will face a variety of challenges and growth opportunities during their time at their experiential education sites. It is likely that many students find similar adjustments to a setting challenging. By acknowledging common challenges or sharing personal stories about adjustment difficulties, fieldwork educators and capstone mentors can reassure students that these challenges can be met and surpassed by the collaborative student-educator relationship.

Additionally, this practice serves to combat experiences of imposter syndrome amongst students. Imposter syndrome refers to feelings of doubt and uncertainty surrounding one's qualifications for a certain educational or vocational environment. Individuals may report feeling like their presence in these spaces is a mistake or a stroke of luck, not a result of their own accomplishments (7).



Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

By naming common challenges in adjusting to a new setting, fieldwork educators can normalize difficulties. This normalization may serve to assure students that challenges are not a result of them being underprepared or ill fit for the setting, but an inevitable part of the process of them stretching their skills to meet the demands of this new fieldwork environment.

Practice Cultural Humility and Value Diversity

"[Cultural humility] is defined by flexibility; awareness of bias; a lifelong, learning-oriented approach to working with diversity; and a recognition of the role of power in health care interactions (8)."

Practicing cultural humility applies to working with both clients and students. These practices alter the greater culture within the experiential learning site. Cultural humility improves client-centered care. By modeling these practices, fieldwork educators and capstone mentors will prepare competent and confident clinicians to enter the field. In addition to the educational benefit, practicing cultural humility as an educator will also increase feelings of inclusions within the site.



Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

In practicing student-centered teaching with cultural humility, experiential educators should:

No. 01

View the student as an expert on their own culture

No. 02

Self-reflect on one's interactions with the student

No. 03

Practice mutual respect

No. 04

Continually search for knowledge of other cultures

No. 05

Be flexible and humble to recognize what one does not know

By utilizing such practices, fieldwork educators and capstone mentors will promote greater feelings of respect and inclusion for students of all backgrounds. These practices will also facilitate a community within the experiential learning site that values the diverse contributions of students and employees of all backgrounds. Celebrating the value of diversity amongst students and staff will not only improve student learning experiences, but also improve the quality of client care.



Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Reflect



1. What might an example of a strategically structured question that is applicable to your setting be?
2. Was getting started at your current experiential education site difficult for you? What eased this transition? What made it harder?
3. What is a personal story or anecdote you could share to normalize difficulty with the transition?
4. How would you define cultural humility in your own words?

Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Joly-Lowdermilk, C. (2022). Cultivating Clinical Readiness & Professional Identity. Boston University Clinical Education Webinar Series, Boston, MA. https://drive.google.com/file/d/13VAeKMbQTudQIIF4QPS38dyZdr70ui5A/view?usp=sharing</p>	<p>Preparing graduate students for experiential learning in the helping professions, it is essential we prioritize helping them build skills to develop a resilient professional identity and maintain optimal, positive health. This webinar provides attendees with diverse perspectives on clinical and fieldwork readiness as well as ideas for curriculum-integrated interprofessional development opportunities for cultivating health-promoting communication, self-efficacy, realistic optimism, empathy, and emotional agility.</p>
<p>Piemonte, N. (2022). Cultivating Compassion and Vulnerability in Healthcare Practice and Education. Boston University Clinical Education Webinar Series, Boston, MA. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1c1luImFwwBs94U9j9RAtQI2LiDdqm827/view?usp=sharing</p>	<p>The best clinicians know that caring for patients requires more than technical skill, however these "something more" skills (empathy, vulnerability, and connection) are often overlooked. This webinar aims to show how compassion, humility, and vulnerability are not mere "add ons" to clinical care, but are essential to the everyday practice of assessing, diagnosing, and treating patients—and asks us to consider whether and how these habits can be cultivated among current and future clinicians.</p>
<p>Johns Hopkins University Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation. (2023). <i>Equitable and inclusive teaching practices</i>. https://ctei.jhu.edu/teaching/equitable-and-inclusive-teaching-practices</p>	<p>Ideas and resources for inclusive teaching and learning. Primarily focused on the classroom, but some items also applicable to experiential education.</p>



Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). The Association—Educator’s guide for addressing cultural awareness, humility, and dexterity in occupational therapy curricula. <i>American Journal of Occupational Therapy</i>, 74(Suppl. 3), 7413420003. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S3005</p>	<p>Written to help guide curriculum development, there are helpful explanations of terms and ways of understanding the application of cultural awareness, humility and dexterity to students and clients.</p>

Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

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1. LaRocco, D. J., & Fanelli, L. L. (2021). Universal design for learning for clinical educators: Design thinking in clinical settings. In F. Fovet (Ed.), *Handbook of research on applying universal design for learning across disciplines: Concepts, case studies, and practical implementation* (pp. 389-411). IGI Global.
2. Bolding, D., Dudley, T., Dahlmeier, A., Bland, L., Castro, A., & Covarrubias, A. (2020). Prevalence and types of incivility in occupational therapy fieldwork. *Journal of Occupational Therapy Education, 4*(3). <https://doi.org/10.26681/jote.2020.040111>
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Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

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5. Brown, P. C., Roediger III, H. L., & McDaniel, M. A. (2014). *Make it stick: The science of successful learning*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
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7. Weir, K. (2013). *Feel like a fraud?* American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2013/11/fraud>
8. Agner, J. (2020). Moving from cultural competence to cultural humility in occupational therapy: A paradigm shift. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 74(4). 7404347010-7404347010p7. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.038067>



Section 2a: Interactions with Students – Setting the Stage

Approaches to Introductions

If asking the student to introduce themselves, allow them to offer their name (which may be different than what is in your records), and invite them to provide their pronouns (keep in mind that if someone doesn't say their pronouns, don't probe; there may be several reasons why students don't want to share). Fieldwork educators and capstone mentors should model sharing their pronouns as they are comfortable.

If experiential educators are unfamiliar with how to use some pronouns in a sentence (e.g., they/them/theirs or ze/zir/zirs), we recommend practicing outside of the fieldwork/capstone hours in order to correctly address and refer to students in the educational setting.

When writing documents with instructions or expectations for students, avoid binary pronouns, e.g. he/she. Instead, use they/them/theirs or avoid pronouns entirely. Consider this for all developed educational materials as an inclusive practice.

Interactions with Students – Setting the Stage

Learn your students' names and how to pronounce them correctly. If a student's name is unfamiliar, practice using the name with colleagues, and there are many helpful online resources for pronunciations, such as Google pronunciations.

Setting Clear Expectations and Being Transparent

Our academic system is entrenched in an oppressive system, in which particular forms of communication and unwritten social rules may leave some students behind. Establishing clear communication norms between the student and experiential educator may address these social rules and forms of communication. Clear and explicit expectations from the start of the experiential learning experience can also help mitigate the effects of unconscious bias. For example, norms could include a discussion of how and when to seek help, how best to communicate, when it is appropriate to ask for breaks, expected professional attire, phone use policies, and an introduction to the unspoken cultural norms of the unit (such as where people eat lunch, how professionals collaborate, how decisions are made regarding patient care, etc.) (1).



Respectful Language

It is critical that we acknowledge and teach students about the heterogeneity within groups. Within marginalized groups, individuals may have diverse preferences for words that describe themselves (2). For example (2):

- Some people with disabilities use identity-first language and refer to themselves as “disabled” to call attention to the ways in which the environment causes disability. Others prefer person-first language emphasizing the person before diagnosis, for instance stating “person with depression.”
- Some LGBTQ+ individuals have reclaimed the word “queer” to describe themselves, but many LGBTQ+ people find this word offensive.

These examples demonstrate how “respectful language” can shift across people, contexts, culture, and time (2).

Accordingly, it is important to be accepting of the



language choices students and clients make. If students use unexpected words, it may be helpful to have an open discussion (i.e., “I have not heard that group voice a preference for that language before. Can you please explain why you chose [word]?”) about the word choice, rather than an immediate correction.

Interactions with Students – Setting the Stage

Below are some additional language considerations.

Instead of using...	Try
Old person, young person	Person
The elderly	Older adults
"Hey guys"	"Hi, all"; "Hi everyone"; "Hi folks"
Suffering from	Living with; being treated for; experiencing
Disadvantaged community	Community with high poverty rates; under-resourced
Working poor	Working to make ends meet
Homeless people	Unhoused; people experiencing homelessness

Interactions with Students – Setting the Stage

Instead of using...	Try
Special needs	Person with a disability; disabled person
Stupid	Awful
Crazy/insane	Unbelievable; wild; unreal
Minority	Minoritized; marginalized; refer to specific group you are talking about
I'm OCD	I'm precise/picky
Language related to suicide Committed suicide Failed suicide attempt	Death/died by suicide Suicide attempt

Source: content adapted from Counseling@Northwestern
(3)

Interactions with Students – Setting the Stage

Reflect



1. Do you currently use pronouns in introducing yourself to others? Why or why not?
2. What, if any, language considerations were new to you?
3. Are there any respectful language considerations you make that aren't reflected in the list above?

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Nesbitt-Johnston Writing Center. (2021). <i>Writing about race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and disability</i>. Hamilton College. https://www.hamilton.edu/documents/Writing%20Race,%20Ethnicity,%20Socioeconomic%20Status,%20and%20Disability.pdf</p>	<p>The website page outlines recommendations for language when writing about race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and disability. These recommendations can be applied to inclusive language in spoken conversation and in documentation.</p>

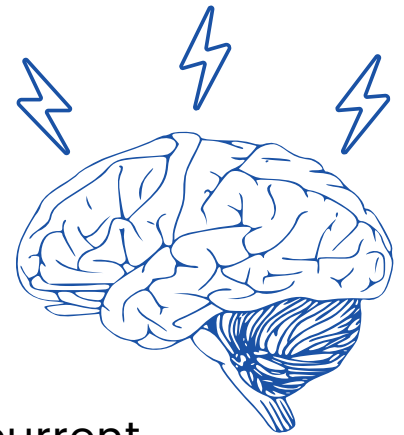
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1. Hanson, D. J. & Deluliis, E. D. (2015). The collaborative model of fieldwork education: A blueprint for group supervision of students. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care, 29*(2), 223-239. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07380577.2015.1011297>
2. Rowan University. (2021, March 29). *The language of identity*. https://sites.rowan.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/_docs/the-language-of-identity-032921.pdf
3. Counseling@Northwestern. (2019, October 16). *Inclusive language guide*. Northwestern University. <https://counseling.northwestern.edu/blog/inclusive-language-guide/>

Section 2b: Reducing Cognitive Load for Students

Why Reduce Cognitive Load?

Students from marginalized backgrounds are often disproportionately balancing multiple demands and stressors while in school (e.g., multiple jobs, financial insecurity/stress, familial stressors, physical discomfort/pain) and may be disproportionately impacted by current events. As an experiential educator, one can reduce task-irrelevant cognitive demands to support all students. Consider what the essential tasks of the work and environment are, and what tasks are optional learning activities. During orientation, take the time to provide clear and explicit expectations to students' roles and responsibilities. By being explicit about expectations, students are able to concentrate their efforts on the essential tasks of the practice environment. (1)



Take Action

Some examples of ways to reduce task-irrelevant cognitive demands include:

- Providing clear expectations from the start of the affiliation

Reducing Cognitive Load for Students

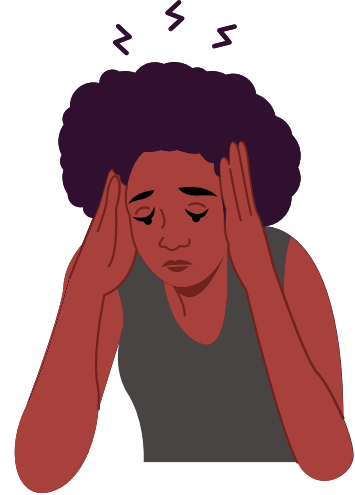
- Taking time to understand the multiple demands students may be experiencing while completing their fieldwork/capstone (e.g., caring for others at home, part time employment, etc.)
- Constructing a written schedule for the day (some settings are more predictable than others, as such the specificity of the list may vary)
- Organizing spaces so materials are easy to find and in consistent locations, or provide space/time for students to organize materials in an accessible way for them
- Providing clear instructions and expectations for tasks
 - While fieldwork educators and capstone mentors may want to leave room for student creativity, many students find increased structure helpful
- Helping students prioritize their efforts and identify the “most important” information to which they need to attend from an evaluation, intervention session, or for documentation
- Assisting students to identify and prioritize the tasks for the day
 - Arranging tasks or clients for the day (e.g., “must do,” “should do,” “could do”)

Reducing Cognitive Load for Students

Reflect



1. What are current ways that you reduce cognitive load for your students?
2. What are some additional ways you can do so?



References

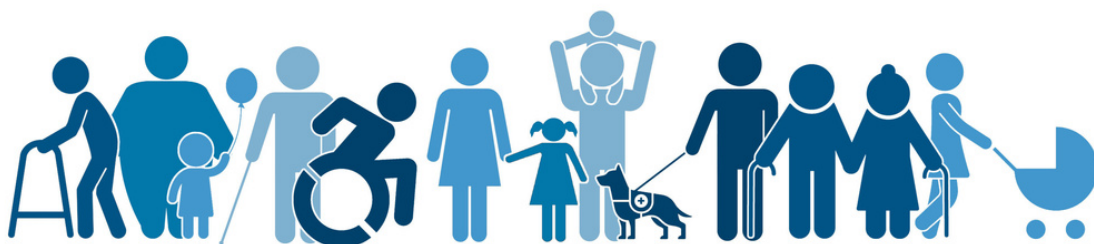
1. Shay, J. E., & Pohan, C. (2021). Resilient instructional strategies: Helping students cope and thrive in crisis. *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*, 22(1). <https://doi.org/10.1128/JMBE.V22I1.2405>

Section 2c: Universal Design in Experiential Education Settings

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

Universal design (UD) refers to the process of constructing the physical and non-physical aspects of an environment to facilitate usability for all people to the greatest extent possible (1). Unlike an environment made accessible by additional adaptations, UD is meant to be structured in such a way that there is a reduced need for specialized adaptations (2). With this in mind, UD has applicability to fieldwork and capstone sites as a means of diminishing potential difficulties students may face due to singular or multiple aspects of their identity.

Universal design in fieldwork and capstone settings serves to promote equitable access for all individuals. In establishing equitable systems of support for all individuals, the expectation of disclosure or a need to ask for adaptations is diminished. This reduces potential feelings of fear, embarrassment, and



The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

stigma. Universal design does not eliminate the need or the availability of individualized adaptations, but it does aim to facilitate and normalize features that support access. In having this equitable structure in place, experiential education sites can also save time in having to plan and implement adaptations on a student by student basis. Overall, UD serves to save time and enhance the learning experience of students from all backgrounds.

Looking specifically at the application of UD to educational settings, a framework of universal design for learning (UDL) was created by CAST, an education research and development group (3). UDL focuses on enhancing inclusivity to the instructional environment by eliminating potential obstacles. This approach offers three guidelines to increase accessibility in the teaching and learning experience for all people.

Principles of Universal Design for Learning

Provide multiple means of engagement (3)

People learn and engage with content in a variety of ways. With this diversity in mind, experiential educators should consequently integrate diverse modalities, structures, and methods into their interactions with students. This may look like providing visual supplemental materials, asking scenario-based questions, or encouraging autonomy in the student's setting of their learning goals. By including options to



The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

accommodate different learning styles, fieldwork educators can motivate students to be purposeful and motivated.

Provide multiple means of representation (3)

In order to address the many ways in which individuals perceive and process information, fieldwork educators and capstone mentors should aim to present content in a multitude of ways. Some students may comprehend information best with detailed text, while others may find visual or auditory media more effective. Overall, learning is enhanced when multiple representations of the information are used. This allows students to make connections between concepts, as well as tailors some of the information in a way most optimal for the individual. Providing options for representation encourages students to be resourceful and knowledgeable.

Provide multiple means of action & expression (3)

Educators can apply principles of UDL by recognizing that the way in which students take action and express themselves varies. Therefore, experiential educators should provide opportunities for students to pursue topics, activities, and outcomes that are of personal interest and preference. By helping students develop ways to demonstrate their feelings and desires as it relates to their educational and professional development, fieldwork educators can encourage students to be strategic and goal-directed.



The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

Expanding on Universal Design

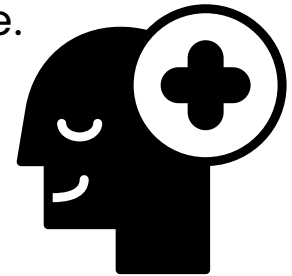
Create a welcoming and positive environment (4)

In order to create a welcoming environment, experiential educators should strive to place students at ease.

Establishing rapport with students will enable fieldwork educators and capstone mentors to best address students' uncertainties. One strategy for doing so is experiential educators

sharing personal experiences from their time as a student.

These anecdotes serve to address the inherent power dynamic between educator and student, aiding the student in seeing the educator as someone who has been in their position.



Potential conversation topics for establishing rapport include:

- What led you to OT?
- Why did you choose to do fieldwork in this setting?
- What was your favorite thing to learn about in grad school?

Implementing a site policy that structures systems for students to share and discuss their learning needs with their educator creates an opportunity for disclosure, should students choose to do so. This conversation establishes the tone that student learning is a shared undertaking of both the student and the experiential educator.

Questions should include not only the particular needs or style of the students, but also the ways in which the educator can best support the student.

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

Potential questions include:

- What strategies have worked best for your learning in school?
- Do you prefer visual or verbal information?
- What can I do to best facilitate your learning?
- What communication style best encourages you?
- How do you like to receive feedback?

These questions require open communication between students and educators. Additionally, it requires students to critically reflect on prior learning experiences and their own learning preferences. Students should be encouraged to answer as many of the above questions as they can, as well supported in expressing changes in their learning preferences over the course of the fieldwork and capstone experiences.

Educators might establish a more welcoming environment by taking students' physical comfort into consideration as well. By acquainting students with the facilities—where the bathroom is, where to get water, where people tend to break for lunch—educators can provide information without placing the pressure on the student to ask. This orientation to not only the formal, work-related spaces, but also the informal break spaces, may provide students with a sense of comfort that will improve their ability to succeed in the experiential setting.

Define essential components (4)

In defining essential components, fieldwork educators and capstone mentors can separate the outcome from the approach. In doing so,



The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

experiential educators must consider what the desired result is, for example, documentation. They must then piece apart what has been the customary approach to achieve this result versus what aspects of the process are essential. In keeping with the example of documentation, utilizing the appropriate location for filing documentation and achieving it by the set deadline are essential practices. That being said, therapists choosing to complete all of their documentation in an hour at the end of the day may be a customary practice.

In thinking through these differentiations, educators can better facilitate students making personal alterations to how they execute documentation.

For example, a student might be able to come in early or stay late to complete their documentation without judgment for their personal time frame. Clear separation and distinction of customary practices may provide students with greater comfort in modifying their approach to a task. Making adaptations to a customary approach suggests a personal preference; making adaptations to an essential task may create feelings of not being enough.

Even a personal adjustment to a customary practice may require a student to express when they are experiencing a barrier to task completion. In the event that a student is challenged by a task, experiential educators can encourage students to reflect on the potential source of that challenge. In order to create a space where students feel comfortable

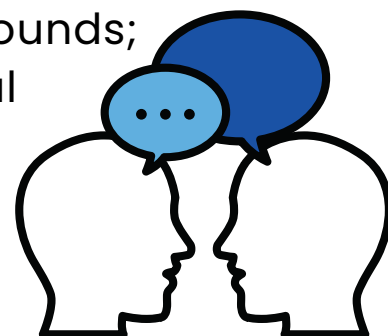


The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

openly discussing difficulties, experiential educators can normalize the topic. This can be done through sharing stories of personal challenges in adjusting to the site or population, as well as encouraging the student to engage in daily reflection on what tasks they found challenging.

Communicate clear expectations (4)

Providing students with clear expectations will better equip them to succeed. By clearly communicating what specifically they will do, students can better prepare to meet expectations. A major component of outlining expectations is differentiating between those tasks that must be performed at a set time or within a specific time interval, from those that are flexible in timing. This information will enable students to develop their skills in planning their day and/or week. To further aid students in meeting expectations, it is beneficial to share ingrained knowledge explicitly. Students come from a variety of academic, professional, and personal backgrounds; their knowledge of abbreviations, foundational vocabulary, procedures, and skills likewise differs. This will look different in different settings.



Communicating clear expectations also applies to the social culture of the site. Clearly outlining the hierarchy within the setting, social norms, boundaries, and the different roles of team members will contribute to a student's understanding of their role within a site. This information will enable students to navigate the fieldwork or capstone site without collecting the information through unnecessary trial and error. Experiential

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

educators play a vital role as a student's guide into the space and culture of a particular site.

Provide constructive feedback (4)

In discussing student learning style, experiential educators and students can also discuss what feedback system is preferred. Providing students with a degree of say in their feedback structure re-emphasizes the shared relationship of student and educator in developing the learning experience.



Effective feedback is provided promptly following an incident without judgment. In order to limit feelings of judgment, feedback is best oriented towards the behavior or action, not the individual. For example, one might say “at times, giving too many instructions at one time might overwhelm clients and reduce their ability to follow instructions” instead of “you gave too many instructions at once”. In providing feedback, one should strive to be concrete, constructive, and specific. Feedback should focus on both successes and areas of improvement. There are specific resources on feedback structure in the additional resources section of this document.

In considering the provision of feedback, it is important to consider both the structure of the feedback, as well as its timing and environment. While prompt feedback is important, it may be most appropriate to provide feedback in an environment where one can make eye contact and reduce the need to multitask. For example, a supervisor working in a travel

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

setting may find it easier to provide feedback in driving between home visits; however, a student may benefit more from going through feedback at the end of the day. This does not apply in the event of feedback regarding safety, which should not be delayed.

Student performance may be indicative of the effectiveness of student-educator collaboration. If an educator finds themselves providing the same or similar feedback repeatedly, it may be beneficial to reassess the match between teaching strategies and learning style. Through discussion and reflection, the student and educator can theorize potential strategies and alterations to address this performance goal.

Incorporate natural supports and community for students (4)

If the experiential education site has multiple students at a time, from either the same or different professions, establishing communication amongst these students may improve their experience. Establishing a community amongst students will provide them a sense of support and belonging amongst people going through a similarly challenging experience. Within this community, students may find both emotional support, as well as assistance with skill development.



This might not be applicable to all settings and could be impacted by current events (for example, the COVID-19 pandemic).

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

Reflect



1. What are some additional conversation topics or ways you can go about establishing rapport with your student?
2. What are some things that are not covered in fieldwork student orientation that would aid in a smooth transition for a fieldwork student?
3. What are the essential practices at your particular site?
4. What supports do students have beyond you at your particular site? How are students made aware of these supports?

* Consider writing out answers 3 & 4 to share with students for transparency

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
Center for Applied Special Technology. (2018). <i>The UDL guidelines</i> . http://udlguidelines.cast.org	As leaders in the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, this CAST resource provides both general overview and a more comprehensive description of UDL.

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Coelho, L. S. (2018, March 10). <i>Start-stop-continue feedback model</i>. LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/start-stop-continue-feedback-model-luis-seabra-coelho.</p>	<p>One potential feedback structure is the start, stop, continue feedback model. This model provides a comprehensive view of one's performance and is best when someone expects to receive feedback (for example, during mid-fieldwork evaluations or scheduled, weekly feedback sessions). Using this model you will provide 3 types of feedback:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Start: these are the things that someone should start doing to improve their performance2. Stop: these are the things someone should stop doing because they are not supporting an effective session3. Continue: these are things someone should continue doing because they are working well <p>Providing feedback in all areas provides a holistic view of student performance with actionable items.</p>
<p>Renninger, L. (2020). <i>The secret to giving great feedback</i> [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/leeann_renninger_the_secret_to_giving_great_feedback/up-next?language=en</p>	<p>This brief 5-minute video provides four, chronological tools for the structuring of feedback. These four tools involve the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Micro-yes: short, but important transition into a feedback conversation by asking if it is an okay time to talk; provides feeling of autonomy (e.g. "Do you have 5 minutes to talk about how today's client sessions went?")2. Express observations: be objective and reference specific data points (e.g. "When you were measuring Mrs. X wrist extension, you're directions had some jargon")3. Express impact: clearly connect the previous data point to the resulting effect (e.g. "Because she was unsure of what to do, the measure took longer to complete")4. End with a question: create an environment of joint problem solving (e.g. "How do you see it?")

The Applicability of Universal Design to Experiential Education Settings

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Sharby, N. & Roush, S. E. (2008). The application of Universal Instructional Design in experiential education. In J. L. Higbee & E. Goff (Eds.) <i>Pedagogy and Student Services for Institutional Transformation: Implementing Universal Design in Higher Education</i> (pp. 305-320) Regents of the University of Minnesota. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503835.pdf</p>	<p>This document outlines the principles of universal design and their implications for experiential education settings (see pages 305-320). Sections that are particularly applicable to the fieldwork environment include the following: “create a welcoming environment”, “defining essential components”, “providing clear expectations”, “providing feedback”, and “creating natural supports for learning”. Read this document for further information on the applicability of UDL for experiential learning.</p>
<p>Stone, D., & Heen, S. (2014). <i>Thanks for the feedback: The science and art of receiving feedback well</i>. Viking.</p>	<p>A book that describes all the ways we receive feedback in our daily lives and why it’s sometimes so hard to hear. The book has a focus on how to receive and process feedback which in turn helps to reflect on how we give feedback.</p>
<p>Williams, S. (2018). <i>Why you should use a strainer instead of a sponge to process feedback</i> [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/shanita_williams_why_you_should_use_a_strainer_instead_of_a_sponge_to_process_feedback/up-next</p>	<p>This video provides perspective on how to process feedback effectively. This resource differentiates taking feedback like a sponge versus a strainer; essentially what you hold on to. This video is a helpful resource to support students in how they process feedback, as well as support educators in processing feedback they receive.</p>



Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment

References

1. Goff, E., & Higbee, J. L. (2008). Introduction. In J. L. Higbee & E. Goff (Eds.) *Pedagogy and student services for institutional transformation: Implementing Universal Design in higher education* (pp. 1-8). Regents of the University of Minnesota. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503835.pdf>
2. Indar, G. K. (n.d.). *An equity-based evolution of Universal Design for Learning: Participatory design for intentional inclusivity*. The Universal Design for Learning and Implementation and Research Network. https://www.learningdesigned.org/sites/default/files/Done_INDAR.EDIT_.DH_.JEG%20copy.pdf
3. Center for Applied Special Technology. (2018). *The UDL guidelines*. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
4. Sharby, N., & Roush, S. E. (2008). The application of Universal Instructional Design in experiential education. In J. L. Higbee & E. Goff (Eds.) *Pedagogy and student services for institutional transformation: Implementing Universal Design in higher education* (pp. 305-320). Regents of the University of Minnesota. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503835.pdf>

Section 3: Supporting Students from Marginalized Backgrounds

The AOTA Centennial Vision for 2025 emphasizes the pillars of equity, inclusion, and diversity (1). This vision calls for greater equity and justice within the field of occupational therapy. In order to work towards this goal, the field of occupational therapy must work to encourage educational environments that support students from marginalized backgrounds. Fieldwork educators and capstone mentors are expected to effectively work with all students, creating a learning environment that is responsive to each student's learning style and needs.

Additional means of supporting students include using respectful language, mitigating one's own unconscious biases, and facilitating education in ways that reflect cultural humility and value diverse contributions.



Acknowledge Intersectionality

The term intersectionality names the overlapping experiences of individuals who identify with multiple marginalized identities (2). Originally coined by Kimberly Crenshaw, the term was used to explain the compounded discrimination that Black women working at a car company experienced (3). Now applied more widely, intersectionality refers to those with identities including but not limited to one's race, gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, and age. Both in and out of areas of education and practice, it is valuable to reflect on how these intersecting identities might impact a student's experience. Individuals with multiple intersecting, marginalized identities may experience discrimination or otherizing on account of one or more of their identities at any given time.



In language and practices, it is important to consider not only how the needs of a singular identity are met, but rather how students who are at these intersections are supported.

"Meeting the needs of the multiply disadvantaged (e.g. African American, female, disabled) would inherently address the needs of the singularly disadvantaged (4)."

Supporting Students from Marginalized Backgrounds

This document aims to provide experiential educators with resources and information to better support students from all backgrounds; it does not have one-size-fits-all solutions. In implementing supports for students and addressing barriers, one must acknowledge a student's multi-dimensional identity and the compounding barriers and experiences of discrimination that they might face.

Reflect

1. Have you heard of intersectionality in other contexts? How might the information from these other contexts relate to students' experience in fieldwork and capstone?

Supporting Students from Marginalized Backgrounds

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Crenshaw, K. (2016, October). <i>The urgency of intersectionality</i>. [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw</p>	<p>TED talk video provides an overview of intersectionality through a focus on race and gender.</p>
<p>Indar, G. K. (n.d.). <i>An equity-based evolution of universal design for learning. Participatory design for intentional inclusivity</i>. The Universal Design for Learning and Implementation and Research Network. https://udl-irn.org/</p>	<p>This reading explains the potential for and importance of implementing equity in universal design for learning. Explores historical and social roots of inequities in education.</p>

References

1. American Occupational Therapy Association. (n.d.). *Mission and vision*. <https://www.aota.org/about/mission-vision>
2. Crenshaw, K. (2016, October). *The urgency of intersectionality*. [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw
3. Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, Iss. 1, Article 8. <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>
4. Indar, G. K. (n.d.). *An equity-based evolution of Universal Design for Learning: Participatory design for intentional inclusivity*. The Universal Design for Learning and Implementation and Research Network. https://www.learningdesigned.org/sites/default/files/Done_INDAR.EDIT_.DH_.JEG%20copy.pdf

Section 3a: Supporting Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines disability as a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits engagement in one or more life activities; it also applies to someone that has a record of a disability but does not currently have a disability (1). This legal definition attempts to encompass the broad range of experiences categorized under disability. The Postsecondary National Policy Institute reports that nationally 19% of all enrolled undergraduates, and 12% of all enrolled postbaccalaureate students reported having a disability (for the 2015–2016 academic year) (2). Considering these statistics, and that disability includes both physical and mental impairments as well as individuals with a record of impairment, it is likely that fieldwork educators and capstone mentors will work with students with disabilities at some point in their facilitator role.

Disability serves as an umbrella term for an expansive assortment of lived experiences, skills, and adaptations. In considering the accessibility of a space, one must not only consider the physical space itself, but also the social and attitudinal inclusivity of the space. This section aims to familiarize experiential educators with potential barriers to student learning and ways to combat said barriers.

Identity First and People First Language

One major consideration in establishing an environment that is inclusive and supportive of students, coworkers, and clients with disabilities is considering the language that one uses to refer to others. In discussing disability there are two predominant schools of thought: person first language and identity first language. While there are a variety of arguments for using either form of language, it is important to acknowledge that there is not a singular correct choice. In talking about and referring to others, one should strive to reflect the language structure each individual uses in describing themselves. The easiest way to find out what language structure an individual uses is to ask them.

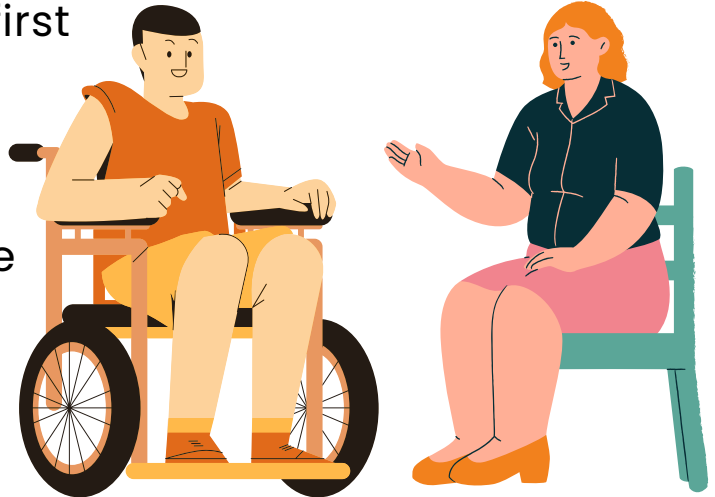


Person first language refers to semantic constructions that position the individual before the disability (3). For example, one might say “a person with a disability” or “a person diagnosed with autism.” Person first language aims to emphasize the person before the disability to counter historical and current stigmatization of those with disabilities (4). It conveys that disability is a singular aspect (among many other identity characteristics and experiences) within the individual's identity and/or life.

Identity first language, alternatively, refers to semantic constructions that acknowledge and emphasize disability as a

Supporting Students with Disabilities

valid aspect of one's identity that cannot be separated out (2). For example, one would say "a disabled person" or "an autistic person". Advocates for identity first language have argued that person first language aims to distance people from disability, adding to the negative narrative around disability (4).



As a healthcare professional, one may find that particular communities or settings tend to use either person first or identity first language. In practice, reflect the language structure of the individual.

Ableist Terms and Alternatives

The Center for Disability Rights defines ableism as the following:

"Ableism is a set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against people with physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities and often rests on the assumption that disabled people need to be 'fixed' in one form or the other (5)."

The following are examples of ableist terms and potential alternative word choices. The compiled words and explanations are a collection of commonly referenced terms. That being said, it is neither concrete nor comprehensive. Many

Supporting Students with Disabilities

terms might be used by individuals within the disability community or being actively reclaimed by disability pride movements. This list is not meant to facilitate one's regulation of disabled individuals' language, but rather to serve as a resource for fieldwork educators and capstone mentors to be mindful of the terms they choose to use and the implications of said terms.

Be aware that certain derogatory terms previously used to refer to different subsets of the disabled community are actively being reclaimed by the disabled community. You may come across usage of these words, for example "crip" or "mad", being used by disabled individuals to refer to themselves or others within the community. This is "insider" language and should NOT be used by non-disabled individuals.



Supporting Students with Disabilities

Word	Origin, How it is Used, and Why it is Harmful	Alternative Word Choices
<p>“ ___ is wheelchair bound” or “ ___ is confined to a wheelchair”</p>	<p>These means of referring to someone who uses a wheelchair suggest that the wheelchair is negative or confining in and of itself. These word choices minimize the freedom and mobility that wheelchairs can provide to people.</p>	<p>“ ___ uses a wheelchair”</p>
<p>“Special needs” or “handi-capable” or “differently-abled”</p>	<p>These terms are euphemistic approaches to referring to disability. These “nice words” reinforce stigmatizing ideas of disability as a negative thing that should be diminished or hidden.</p>	<p>“Disabled” or “has a disability”</p>
<p>“ ___ is being crazy” or “ ___ is a psycho” or “that was insane”</p>	<p>These terms are words either historically or still currently used within mental health that have been colloquially adopted to refer to events or people that are unexpected, bizarre, or different from what we are used to. Use of these terms adds to the stigmatization and otherization of individuals with mental health diagnoses. Other terms like this include: loon, lunatic, mad, manic, maniac, nuts, and wacko.</p>	<p>“That was unexpected” or “that was wild”</p>

Supporting Students with Disabilities

Word	Origin, How it is Used, and Why it is Harmful	Alternative Word Choices
"Retarded"	<p>This term was previously used to refer to those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It has now been colloquially adopted as a negative term used to refer to a host of things. The use of this term adds to the stigmatization and otherization of those with cognitive disabilities. As does the use of any other variant with the -tard suffix (e.g. libtard).</p>	N/A
"Manic"	<p>This term was used to refer to a manic episode experienced with bipolar disorder, specifically describing manic depression. It has now been colloquially used to describe someone who is extreme or unpredictable and uncontrollable with their emotions. Utilizing this term can be offensive and adds to the stigmatization of the mental health community.</p>	"That was unpredictable"
"Lame"	<p>This term was historically used to refer to individuals with physical or mobility disabilities. This term carries negative connotations that could be deemed offensive. More colloquially this term is used to describe anything unpleasant or undesirable. Therefore by using this word it further stigmatizes individuals with disabilities.</p>	N/A

Supporting Students with Disabilities

Word	Origin, How it is Used, and Why it is Harmful	Alternative Word Choices
"Dumb"	Historically, this term refers to deaf or hard of hearing people. This term has been deemed offensive and more colloquially refers to lacking intelligence or good judgment. Utilizing this term further condemns these communities.	N/A
"Cripple/ Crippled by ___"	These means of referring to an individual with physical mobility disabilities suggest negative connotations towards the disabled community. By using these terms it further adds to the stigmatization of individuals with disabilities.	"Disabled" or "has a disability"
"Suffers from ___"	This phrase was used to refer to anyone with a disability. Often this phrase is seen in the mental health settings when describing individuals with mental health disabilities. Yet this term infers that these disabilities are always negative implying that they are unhappy and unwell.	N/A

Source: content adapted from Smith, L. (5) and California Institute of Technology Center for Inclusion & Diversity (6)

Anti-Ableist Practices

Anti-ableist practices are those that incorporate “strategies, theories, actions, and practices that challenge and counter ableism, inequalities, prejudices, and discrimination based on any type of disability—including visible, invisible, learning, developmental, physical, or mental health” (7). These practices would benefit all since they promote an equitable environment that counters the societal power structure that devalues those with disability. There are several anti-ableist practices that would promote an equitable environment, some of which are conveyed in this document, such as normalizing features of accessibility and reducing stigma around disability accommodations. Other than these recommendations, this list provides further strategies for engaging in anti-ableist practices that encourage self-education and reflection on these topics (7):

- Actively listen to stories and lived experiences of the disability community and further amplify their voices
- Challenge the representation of people with disabilities by non-disabled people by critically analyzing forms of media such as: books, movies, podcasts, etc.
- Acknowledge that people with disabilities are experts at living with their impairments; therefore, they should be included in all conversation around increasing access \
- Adhere to identity first or person first language accordingly (further described in this document)
- Remove barriers that create inequitable experiences to people with disabilities through means of providing features of accessibility (further described in this document)

Supporting Students with Disabilities

- Strive to be empathetic, compassionate, and unafraid to have uncomfortable conversations to further educate yourself
- Engage in self reflection and ask yourself: What have you been doing to help people with disabilities? How can you improve?

Normalize and Provide Features of Accessibility

Students that choose to disclose their disability will go through a formal process through their university to secure reasonable accommodations for their fieldwork and capstone placements.

This process will not be explored within this document; however, there are generalized accessibility features that experiential educators and sites can implement for all students, employees, and clients. This list is not comprehensive, but is a starting point.

- Utilize image descriptions on all documents and exercise worksheets
- Utilize high contrast images and graphics
- Utilize simple fonts in large size
- When sharing resources send PDFs or documents that are screen reader compatible



Reducing Stigma Around Disability Accommodations

While physical access and technology are considered to be among the most significant barriers to inclusion, negative attitudes are among the most frequently reported (8). This indicates the necessity in addressing the attitudes surrounding disability at experiential learning sites. It is vital to assess the culture and atmosphere of the site for such beliefs, and work to shift them towards normalizing and embracing disability as an accepted part of many people's lived experiences. In fact, one's disability identity may actually be a source of strength for an individual. Disability may be an aspect central to a person's identity as a whole and empowering for their abilities as a healthcare professional (9).

Distinguishing between essential and customary practices will aid in reducing stigma surrounding accommodations. Normalizing the use of alternative means to complete tasks will aid in the normalization of accommodations—reducing potential attention around or denial of necessitated accommodations.

Supporting Students with Disabilities

Reflect



1. What are your own biases and ideas about disability?
2. What are biases and attitudes around disability at your particular site? How might these impact a student with a disability's experience?

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>ADA National Network. (2022, December). <i>What is the definition of disability under the ADA?</i> https://adata.org/faq/what-definition-disability-under-ada</p>	<p>ADA National Network website briefly explaining definition of disability under the ADA.</p>
<p>Brasher, J. (2019, April 23). <i>Disability is not a dirty word; 'handi-capable' should be retired.</i> Vanderbilt University. https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2019/04/23/disability-is-not-a-dirty-word-handi-capable-should-be-retired/#:~:text=Terms%20that%20are%20used%20or,%2C%E2%80%9D%20Forber%2DPratt%20says</p>	<p>This brief article outlines the efforts of a disabled, assistant professor at Vanderbilt to normalize the usage of the word disabled. The article dissuades the use of "euphemistic" terms to refer to disabilities.</p>

Supporting Students with Disabilities

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Campbell, B. (2019). <i>Confronting ableism</i> [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/brendan_campbell_confronting_ableism?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare</p>	<p>This is a TED Talk on the importance of confronting ableism in our modern society. This video outlines the history and prevalence of ableism in our society. It further provides concrete examples of how our society has functioned with ableism to adhere to societal power structures that stigmatize disabled communities.</p>
<p>Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence. (2018, May 25). <i>Person first or identity first language</i> [Video]. Youtube. https://youtu.be/-LX0KI4xkco</p>	<p>This informational video distinguishes the differences between identify first and person first language. By watching this video, it provides further examples to why one may choose one language versus the other.</p>
<p>Sharby, N., & Roush, S. E. (2008) The application of Universal Instructional Design in experiential education. In J. L. Higbee & E. Goff (Eds.) <i>Pedagogy and Student Services for Institutional Transformation: Implementing Universal Design in Higher Education</i> (pp. 305-320). Regents of the University of Minnesota. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503835.pdf</p>	<p>This document outlines the principles of universal design and their implications for experiential education settings. The applicable aspects of universal design have been summarized in the section above discussing UDL. Read this document for further information on the applicability of UDL for experiential learning.</p>



Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Byrne-Haber, S. (2020, December 10). <i>Are you ready to be anti-ableist in 2021?</i> Medium. https://sheribyrnehaber.medium.com/are-you-ready-to-be-anti-ableist-in-2021-239103637949</p>	<p>This is an article that discusses the importance of practicing anti-ableism and the steps one should take to best do this. This article provides concrete examples of how to best practice anti-ableism, as well as its benefits to our society.</p>
<p>Seale, A. (2019, April 13). <i>Purposeful steps away from ableism</i> [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/alyson_seale_purposeful_steps_away_from_ableism</p>	<p>This TED Talk encourages people to critically appraise systemic ableism in the structures around us, as well as introduces some ways in which one can take steps in being more inclusive in their own interpersonal interactions and the language one chooses.</p>
<p>Young, S. (2014, April). <i>I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much</i> [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much?language=en</p>	<p>In her TED Talk, Young challenges society's objectification of disabled people as stories of inspiration and bravery for non-disabled individuals. She explains that it has become normal for many to equate disability with inherent exceptionality. Rather, she urges that disability should be a normalized aspect of daily life.</p>

References

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3. Haelle, T. (2019, July 31). *Identity-first vs. person-first language is an important distinction*. Covering Health. <https://healthjournalism.org/blog/2019/07/identity-first-vs-person-first-language-is-an-important-distinction/>
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8. Sharby, N., & Roush, S. E. (2008). The application of Universal Instructional Design in experiential education. In J. L. Higbee & E. Goff (Eds.) *Pedagogy and Student Services for Institutional Transformation: Implementing Universal Design in Higher Education* (pp. 305-320). Regents of the University of Minnesota. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503835.pdf>

Supporting Students with Disabilities

9. Epstein, I., Stephens, L., Serevino, S. M., Khanlou, N., Mack, T., Barker, D., & Dadashi, N. (2020). "Ask me what I need": A call for shifting responsibility upwards and creating inclusive learning environments in clinical placement. *Nurse Education Today*, 92, 104505. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2020.104505>



Section 3b: Supporting LGBTQ+ Students

Defining Key Terms

Below are a selection of basic terms and their definitions. This list is in no way exhaustive. It is meant to provide a brief introduction to terms relating to sexuality and gender.

Term	Definition
Sex	Sex assigned at birth based on visible biological characteristics
Gender	Characteristics, behavior and roles of men and women as defined by society. Gender expression is the communication of gender through outward expression.
Gender Identity	Self-concept of gender
Sexual Orientation	How one defines their own physical/emotional attraction to others (internal, not necessarily who one engages in romantic relationships with)

Source: content adapted from (1)



Proper Language and Affirming Identity

One aspect of effective communication that affirms identities is to avoid assumption making. Anytime one makes assumptions about another person's gender identity, sexual orientation, and self-descriptors, one runs the risk of making the person feel unwelcome and unacknowledged as who they are. One can use the following practices to avoid making assumptions:

- Use gender neutral terms (e.g. partner or in a relationship, as opposed to girlfriend or wife)
- Avoid pronouns until you have an opportunity to ask the individual what pronouns they use
 - Feminine: she/her/hers
 - Masculine: he/him/his
 - Neutral: they/them/theirs
 - Neutral, all gender, no gender: ze, hir, per
- Ask someone what name they would like you to refer to them as



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A student may choose not to disclose, or they may not feel it necessary to disclose a part of their identity. With this in mind, supporting LGBTQ+ students is not a solitary effort used with particular students, but rather a continual effort to create a client that affirms and respects LGBTQ+ students, coworkers, and clients. By integrating practices that ask about, do not make assumptions on, and respect individuals' identities, experiential educators can establish a community that is supportive to people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

Addressing Observed Biases

Bias surrounding gender diversity and sexual orientation promote negative assumptions or stereotypes and reinforce prejudicial systems. When these biased assumptions influence actions or statements, LGBTQ+ individuals experience a risk to their safety. These instances of safety risk include marginalization, stigmatization, and discrimination.

While fieldwork sites may already have or are beginning to take steps toward promoting respectful language, mitigating one's own unconscious biases, and facilitating education in ways that reflect cultural humility and value diverse contributions, these practices do not eliminate all instances of harassment. While structural and cultural changes are necessary to promote equity and justice, experiential educators can take action on the individual level in the face of discriminatory events and intervene to prevent the individual experiencing

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the event from undue harm. This process follows the principles of bystander intervention. In the face of discriminatory events, experiential educators can respond to the event in one of three ways (2):

- **Direct:** The experiential educator addresses the situation directly. For example, interrupting and bringing the individual experiencing the harm away from the situation. This is the most immediate means of addressing the situation, but requires that the situation be safe to do so.
- **Distract:** If the situation does not seem safe to directly intervene, the experiential educator might diffuse the situation by offering a break in the situation through distraction. For example, asking one of the parties involved for help with something. This break should offer an opportunity for the individual experiencing the harm to get away from the interaction.
- **Delegate:** If for some reason the experiential educator cannot intervene or cannot do so alone, enlist the help of others.

Bystander intervention serves to intervene on incidences of discrimination or harassment and get the individual experiencing the harm away from the event. Once the situation itself is no longer active, it is important to first address the individual that experienced the harm and support their needs. Additionally, it is important to address the harmful event itself to prevent future recurrences and enforce that discriminatory actions and statements are not tolerated within the setting.

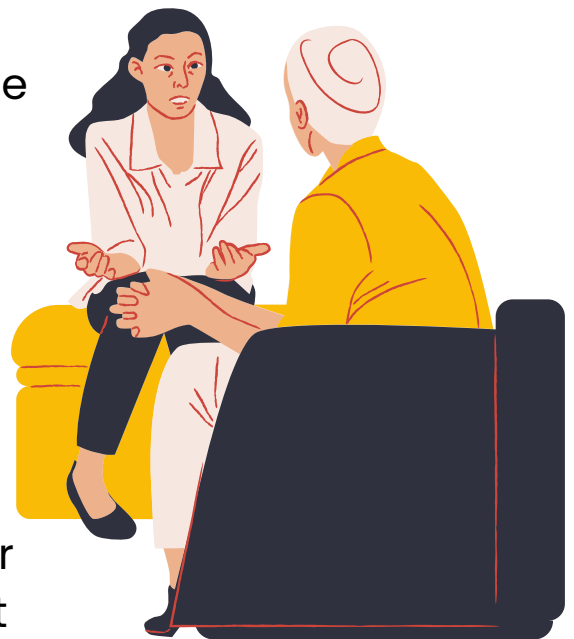


Addressing Perpetrated Biases

It is not uncommon for individuals to subconsciously or inadvertently disrespect another person's identity or propagate stigmatizing ideas. As fieldwork educators and capstone mentors strive to support their students, they may make mistakes and do unintended harm to their students. Mistakes happen; the response to a mistake substantially impacts the overall experience. If an experiential educator happens to make such a mistake, their response to their error is of key importance.

What to do: The experiential educator should apologize directly to the individual. This apology should include an acknowledgement not only that the educator is aware of their wrongdoing, but more specifically that they are aware of what actions or words were harmful and why that was. This interaction should include the educator asking the student how they can better respect them and their identities, as well as promise to do better. This promise must be followed by a sustained effort to do better and should not be meaningless. Following this interaction, the educator should move on from the instance unless later brought up by the student (3).

What not to do: The experiential educator should not try to compensate for their mistake by explaining all of the reasons



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that they are not discriminatory. Mistakes happen; apologizing when they are made matters. The educator should not try to tell the student how to feel or share the educator's own "similar" experience that allows them to understand why it was harmful. The instance is not about one speaking for the student or sharing about one's self, rather it is about acknowledging one's error and an effort to prevent future harm. The educator should not pretend the event did not happen. Lastly, the educator should not continually bring up the event or ask the student to make them feel better. By continually referencing the event, one might place the student in a position to comfort the educator—putting undue emotional burden on the individual that experienced the harm (3).

Reflect



1. Are there any other ways you might affirm someone's gender identity at your particular site?
2. How might you go about deciding how to intervene on an instance of observed bias?
3. Is there an instance you can recall where you knowingly or unknowingly perpetrated biases? How would you respond to this situation given what you know now?

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Brown, M. L., & Rounsley, C. A. (1996). <i>True selves: Understanding transsexualism – For families, friends, coworkers, and helping professionals</i>. Josey-Bass.</p>	<p>A somewhat dated book. That being said, it offers insight into the experience of trans individuals across the life course through lived experiences.</p> <p>* The word transsexual is contentious and should not be used to refer to someone unless they themselves tell you that they label themselves as such.</p>
<p>Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). <i>Injustice at every turn: A report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey</i>. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.</p> <p>https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/NTDS_Report.pdf</p>	<p>This online publication portrays the results of a study on the injustices faced by transgender and gender diverse individuals. The results outline discrimination experienced across the United States within homes, at stores, in medical settings, in the workplace, and beyond.</p>
<p>National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center. (n.d.). <i>Learning resources</i>. https://www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org/resources/</p>	<p>This website offers a variety of free webinars on an assortment of topics related to better supporting clients, students, and co workers within the LGBTQ+ community. Certain webinars qualify for continuing medical education credit.</p>

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Sycamore, M. B. (2006). <i>Nobody passes: Rejecting the rules of gender and conformity</i>. Seal Press.</p>	<p>This anthology compiles a collection of essays on the concept of “passing”. The essays challenge the notion of belonging or appearing to be the “right” identity. These essays will provide an array of perspectives and experiences to greater develop one’s understanding of the complexity of gender.</p>
<p>Teich, N. M. (2012). <i>Transgender 101: A simple guide to a complex issue</i>. Columbia University Press.</p>	<p>This book was written by a social worker within the transgender community. It explores the experience of transgender individuals across the lifespan.</p>

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Section 3c: Supporting Students of Color

Anti-racism

Anti-racism is an active effort to go against the racist systems that oppress historically marginalized and minoritized communities (1). Anti-racism emphasizes personal action against the oppression and otherization of persons and communities on account of race (1, 2). These actions include, but are not limited to: critical reflection, proactive learning, listening, and asking questions.



Racial Equity in Healthcare

Anti-racism in the healthcare industry serves to benefit clients receiving services, underrepresented healthcare students and workers, and future healthcare workers. Racism in healthcare has deep historical roots. The propagation of false, and bias-ridden perceptions have been so deeply shared that they have been held as truths without evidence-based grounding (2). These false perceptions remain engrained today and are continuing to be challenged and slowly reversed. Racism in the healthcare

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system is not limited to the past; current research and evolving practices still sometimes hold false beliefs about race.

While institutional level change is key, this document focuses on individual level changes that can be made in the experiential educator role. Individual level changes include reflection for self awareness, educating oneself from assorted viewpoints, acting in solidarity with underrepresented colleagues, and actively naming injustices in the workplace.

Naming Injustices

As clinicians, it is important to work on interpersonal experiences that can encompass the principles of anti-racism to promote racial equity in health care fields. By actively being anti-racist, fieldwork educators and capstone mentors can take action on the individual level in the face of discriminatory events and intervene to prevent the individual experiencing the event from undue harm.

Sue and colleagues (2019) scoured the literature to identify microintervention strategies to address racial microaggressions, defined as “everyday” interpersonal acts of discrimination or bias (3). The strategic goals include:

- **Make the ‘invisible’ visible:** This includes naming the act which may be an underlying message or communication. An example provided by Sue et al is a well-meaning teacher complimenting an Asian American student on their English language proficiency. The student replies “Thank

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you. I hope so. I was born here” (3).

- **Disarm the microaggression:** This can be done by deflecting or challenging what has been said, or interrupting the comment, for example a racist joke, by saying something like “Woah. Why don’t you stop there. I don’t want to hear the punch line.”
- **Educate the offender:** Ideally microinterventions plant the seed for well meaning but naive people about the impact of their comments on those around them.
- **Seek external reinforcement or support:** Sometimes seeking outside reinforcement is necessary. This can include community groups, professionals, etc. (3).



Additionally, the section titled [“Supporting LGBTQ+ Students”](#) outlines the three forms of bystander intervention. The linked section can also be reviewed for the discussion of addressing one’s own implicit biases.

The Importance of Diversity and Mentorship Structures

Mentoring structures, particularly those structured to support the development of people of color, can positively impact the movement of employees into higher leadership roles (4). According to Dr. Parker, mentorship can be divided into the



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following categories (5):

- Coaches: highly skill focused
- Mentors: involves a personal connection
- Sponsors: someone that puts sponsored individual in a position with opportunities to succeed

Dr. Parker emphasizes that these categories do not exist in isolation, but often occur in some overlapping combination (5). Mentorship structures support student achievement. Creating a welcoming learning environment that facilitates students approaching members of the staff beyond their direct experiential educator may facilitate students ability to identify a mentor that shares a similar culture, race, and gender—a commonality shared in many informal mentoring relationships (4). Mentorship structures in which the mentee identifies with the mentor facilitate the students ability to identify potential challenges they may encounter in their career (5).



Action Items for Supporting Students of Color

1. Educate oneself on the practice of cultural humility and cultural inclusivity
2. When making decisions regarding student mentorship and/or client services, consider how one's action plan is impacted by structures that uphold white supremacy
3. Be vocal when one sees or hears of any racism occurring
4. Help in the process of reporting the racism
5. Be there to listen to the person impacted by the racist act
6. Acknowledge and apologize if one has said anything racist, even if they did not know it was racist
7. Promote and value all diversity in the healthcare field
8. Educate oneself on the history of racism in healthcare



Supporting Students of Color

Reflect



1. What action items do you already do on a regular basis? Any that your department does? Are there any items you can add to your own “tool box”?
2. What key takeaways from the articles below would you consider implementing as an experiential educator?

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Kendi, I. X. (2020, June 9). <i>The difference between being “not racist” and antiracist</i> [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/ibram_x_kendi_the_difference_between_being_not_racist_and_antiracist?language=en</p>	<p>TED talk emphasizing the difference between “not racist” and being anti-racist. This resource aids in the discussion of racism in the US, as well as provides information on how to acknowledge racism and be a vocal advocate for anti-racist practices.</p>
<p>Kozman, M., & Gaines, D. J. (Hosts). (2020, March 31). Mentorship and recruitment of URiMs (Season 1, No. 3) [Audio podcast episode]. In <i>The DEI Shift</i>. https://www.buzzsprout.com/840664/3196732-mentorship-and-recruitment-of-urims</p>	<p>Podcast discussing the importance of mentorship for students from marginalized backgrounds in healthcare. Transcript available here: https://www.thedeishift.com/uploads/1/2/9/5/129598271/dei_shift_episode_3_transcript_final.pdf</p>

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Kozman, M., & Gaines, D. J. (Hosts). (2020, December 1). Anti-racism in healthcare education (Season 2, No. 3) [Audio podcast episode]. In <i>The DEI Shift</i>. https://www.buzzsprout.com/840664/6644245</p>	<p>Podcast discussing the term anti-racism, the history of racism in the healthcare industry, and strategies for change in healthcare institutions. Transcript available here: https://www.thedeishift.com/uploads/1/2/9/5/129598271/s2e3_transcript.pdf</p>
<p>Lavalley, R., & Johnson, K. R. (2020). Occupation, injustice, and anti-Black racism in the United States of America. <i>Journal of Occupational Science</i>, 29(4), 487-499. https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1810111</p>	<p>This article outlines the history of anti-Black racism in the U.S. through an occupational lens. This article emphasizes the power of occupation to enforce injustices and calls for reflective and critical practices to best serve clients.</p>
<p>Olson, D. A., & Jackson, D. (2009). Expanding leadership diversity through formal mentoring programs. <i>Journal of Leadership Studies</i>, 3(1), 47-60. https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.20095</p>	<p>This article stresses the importance of having a structured mentorship program that promotes racial diversity. It also provides how to structure a formal mentoring program that will benefit the mentees whom are people of color. It discusses the strengths and limitations of the structure for the mentorship program, and how to further improve them.</p>

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2. Kozman, M., & Gaines, D. J. (Hosts). (2020, December 1). Anti-racism in healthcare education (Season 2, No. 3) [Audio podcast episode]. In *The DEI Shift*.
<https://www.buzzsprout.com/840664/6644245>
3. Sue, D. W., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M. N., Glaeser, E., Calle, C. Z., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming racial microaggressions: Microintervention strategies for targets, white allies, and bystanders. *American Psychologist, 74*, 128-142.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000296>
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<https://www.buzzsprout.com/840664/3196732-mentorship-and-recruitment-of-urims>

Section 3d: Supporting Students at Different Life Stages

Students enter the BU program with a vast array of differing life experiences and backgrounds. While some of our students are recent graduates, others are changing careers. Additionally, while some students may have few commitments outside of school, others have children, and/or family obligations that they are juggling during their educational experiences. Both fieldwork educators and capstone mentors will teach students at a variety of life stages with a variety of past experiences. While the following practices are important for all students, they are particularly applicable to students with increased responsibilities or career changes.

Theoretical perspectives on teaching adult learners—including andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformative learning—propose the following teaching practices (1):

- Facilitate self-direction in learning
- Consider past experiences in constructing learning experiences
- Capitalize on adult desire to learn out of a need to do something and intrinsic motivation
- Structure learning opportunities in a problem- or task-oriented approach



Supporting Students at Different Life Stages

- Structure activities that challenge student assumptions and promote critical reflection

In working with students at different life stages, it is important to provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge from past experiences where appropriate (2). Learning about a student's past studies, work experience, and interests will give experiential educators an opportunity to draw on this expertise in their respective environments. In soliciting contributions when there is an opportunity, experiential educators have the opportunity to learn from their students, as well as integrate material that furthers student learning. An alternative means of connecting past expertise is through structured reflections that guide the student to connect their past knowledge to fieldwork tasks and capstone projects (2).

Note: Drawing on expertise is not the same as tokenizing or singling out students' identities. One should be sure that their connections or questions do not further marginalize the student.

It is important to mitigate unconscious biases and stigmatizing ideas within the experiential learning community. Students at different life stages might feel stigmatized or distressed about asking for help. These feelings create both an intrapersonal and interpersonal cost in seeking support. This deterrent for seeking help can be combatted through mitigating the impact of unconscious biases and normalizing difficulty with the transition, as discussed in the section titled "Creating a Supportive Experiential Learning Environment".



Supporting Students at Different Life Stages

Reflect



1. How might responsibilities outside of the experiential education environment impact a student's performance at fieldwork or in capstone?

Additional Resources

Resource	What is it about?
<p>Hall, E. D. (2018, June 30). <i>The challenges of parenting while in college</i>. Psychology Today. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/conscious-communication/201806/the-challenges-parenting-while-in-college</p>	<p>This article outlines challenges faced by parents in higher education.</p>
<p>Johnson, S. M. (2017). <i>Teaching adult undergraduate students</i>. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-adult-undergraduate-students/</p>	<p>This article outlines potential considerations in instructing mature learners in the undergraduate environment. While the context is quite different from fieldwork and capstone, some of the considerations are applicable to these environments.</p>
<p>Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2011). Research on adult learners: Supporting the needs of a student population that is no longer nontraditional. <i>Peer Review: Emerging Trends and Key Debates in Undergraduate Education</i>, 13(1), 26.</p>	<p>This brief internet article outlines theories of learning for adults.</p>

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1. Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2011). Research on adult learners: Supporting the needs of a student population that is no longer nontraditional. *Peer Review: Emerging Trends and Key Debates in Undergraduate Education*, 13(1), 26.
2. Johnson, S. M. (2017). *Teaching adult undergraduate students*. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-adult-undergraduate-students/>

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