



## **2015-2016 Risk Management Series**

Inclusion + Diversity Toolkit

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# What is Diversity + Inclusion?

Diversity and inclusion exists when members of an organization act in a manner that recognizes and respects individual similarities and differences such that people feel they are valued and meaningfully important to the success of the group. Differences in age, race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation to name but only a few, influence what makes individuals feel valued.

## Why is the important?

Embracing diversity is initial for building successful groups. Every team building theory states that to form a great group, there must be a diverse group of people on the team, that is, you must avoid choosing people who are only like you. Diversity is what builds teams- a collection of individual experiences, backgrounds, and cultures that can view problems and challenges from a wide-variety of lenses. Diversity is about empowering people. It also leads to personal growth and intellectual enrichment. Learning with people from a variety of backgrounds encourages collaboration and fosters innovation, thereby benefitting all students. Research shows that the overall academic and social effects of increased diversity on campus are likely to be positive, ranging from higher levels of academic achievement and preparation for the workforce.

# Stereotypes, Prejudice & Discrimination

**Every minute** a college student somewhere sees or hears racist, sexist, homophobic, or other discriminatory words or images.

— [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org)

- Being the target of prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination manifests itself negatively in both the mental and physical health of those who experience it.
- According to a survey, almost 70% of students have witnessed discrimination in some form over the last year:
  - 96% are bothered by it.
  - 99% believe something should be done.

**Stereotype**: An oversimplified generalization about a person or a group of people without regard for individual differences.

Stereotypes can be positive (e.g., “Men are naturally gifted athletes”) or negative (“Student-athletes are not serious about school”). Stereotypes are often based on a “kernel of truth,” (e.g., observation of group tendencies). However, they are often applied inaccurately when making judgments about an individual or a set of individuals from that group.

**Prejudice**: An attitude, opinion or feeling without adequate prior knowledge, thought or reason.

**Discrimination**: Differential treatment based on unfair categorization. It is a denial of fairness prompted by prejudice.

- Specific forms of discrimination: racism, sexism, classism, ageism, homophobia, etc.
- People can discriminate because of prejudice, stereotypes, or both.

# Issues to Consider Before Intervening

**Identify the bias:** Is it prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, or a combination?

**Form a goal based on the source of bias:**

- Change negative beliefs (stereotypes).
- Change negative attitudes/emotions (prejudice).
- Change discriminatory behavior (with or without changing stereotypes or prejudice).

**Determine the safest and most effective way to address the bias:** Decide when and where to try and address the bias (in private not in public).

*\*\* When considering how to proceed, always consider the costs and consequences for long-term relationships with everyone involved.*

**Choose a strategy to Step UP!**

**Reduce the tension:**

Form a goal based on the source of bias: Before addressing the bias more explicitly, you can try to reduce the tension at the start:

- To lighten the mood, tell the person a funny story about something unrelated.
- Compliment the person or share something you have in common with him/her.
- Ask the person to talk positively about him/herself.

Research indicates that such strategies can start to reduce the biases that people hold and will make them more open minded about discussing the issues with you.

**Individuation approaches:**

Try to get the person to see others as individuals rather than as members of a disliked group:

- Highlight things about a targeted group's member that are different from most people's perception.
- Volunteer information about a targeted group's member so that the person could get to know them as an individual.

**Recategorization or Common Identity approaches:**

Try to get others to see that the targeted group is similar to others and shares similar goals:

- Highlight traits and interests that the person and the targeted group share in common.
- Discuss issues that affect both the person and the targeted group to create perception of a "common enemy" and to view the targeted group in terms of a greater common group.
- Think of other ways to get the person to see the situation from a different perspective.

**Confrontational approaches:**

You can directly address the bias by making the individuals aware of how their statement represents a bias or is inconsistent with their egalitarian values.

**WARNING:** Confrontation can make the biased person angry and may cause him or her to lash out or seek revenge. This approach should RARELY be used.

- Identify a statement as a potential bias.
- Ask the individuals if they value diversity and then remind them of ways in which they might unfairly stereotype others.
- Ask the persons if they believe that all people should be treated equally and then point out how their views contradict these values.
- Ask: Did you really mean what you just said? (Also see Action Steps listed below).

## Action Steps to Intervene

1. **Be Ready** – You know at some point you will hear or see something that is inappropriate or discriminatory. Think of yourself as the one to Step UP! prepare yourself for it and know what you will say. “Why do you say that?” or “Do you really mean what you just said?”
2. **Identify the Behavior** – Point out someone’s behavior to help them hear what they are really saying. “So, what I hear you saying is that all student-athletes don’t care about academics?”
3. **Appeal to Principles** – Call on a person’s higher principles. “I’ve always thought you were fair-minded. It shocks me to hear you say something so biased.”
4. **Set Limits: Draw a Line** – You can’t control others but you can make others aware of what you will not tolerate. “Don’t tell racist jokes or use that language in my presence anymore. If you do, I will leave.” Follow through.
5. **Seek out like-minded people and build strength in numbers.**

## Coming to Terms with Your Own Biases

1. Be respectful of all individuals and their viewpoints.
2. Listen to what individuals’ lives are like and the experiences they’ve had in the world.
3. Accept that you are responsible for any of your negative reactions.
4. Don’t rush the process of trying to understand a person’s experiences or identity.
5. Don’t criticize people for being different.
6. Don’t force your values on others.
7. Develop trust and openness and allow people to be who they are without pressure or judgment.

It is inconsistent to suffer the consequences and want to fight prejudice from a race/class/gender standpoint but then to practice it yourself against any others.

## How to Promote Diversity

1. **Encourage Ongoing Dialogue About Diversity and Inclusion to Promote Critical Self-Reflection.** Promote dialogue about diversity and inclusion through the facilitation of formal and informal discussions. Facilitated discussions allow members to share unique perspectives on issues surrounding diversity and inclusion.
2. **Seek Organizations that Offer Unique Cross-Cultural Experiences.** Seek cross-cultural experiences and interaction with diverse populations on campus. Student group partnerships provide cultural experiences while allowing students to gain diverse perspectives and grow.
3. **Keep an Open Mind when Recruiting.** Only looking for people essentially just like you will deprive opportunities for growth and development.

# Diversity + Inclusion Exercises

## Scenarios to Discuss Diversity + Inclusion

1. You are looking through Twitter and notice a tweet from a chapter member stating, "Leave it to an Asian to cross the street when he doesn't have the cross walk signal, into oncoming traffic #pleasegethit #gobacktochina" You find this comment offensive, how do you respond?
2. During a meeting about recruitment there is continual conversation about how it is smart to only recruit people that current members know from high school or from other personal connections to avoid liability issues. As a member of the recruitment team, your opinion about this matters carries more weight- how would you go about speaking up?
3. You hear the word "fag" being thrown around fairly regularly within your circle of friends. Although nobody in the group had publically identified as being homosexual, it still makes you uncomfortable every time you hear it. Do you do anything?
4. You are hanging out with a chapter member and one of them makes a very insulting and derogatory remark about someone's alleged sexual orientation. They go on to sarcastically say that they definitely won't be rooming with *them* on road trips. You find it inappropriate. What do you do?
5. You go to a party with your roommate. The living room is filled with people dancing. As you make your way through the crowd, you notice a Middle-Eastern-looking couple nearby. Your roommate mutters loudly enough for them to hear, "I didn't know they let terrorists come to the party!" What do you do?
6. You are in the chapter house hanging out with people on your floor. You are in a group conversation when one of them starts referring to women as hos and bitches. You know he really doesn't mean it literally but others look uncomfortable with the language as they don't know him as well. What do you do?

## Questions to Discuss Diversity + Inclusion

1. When people first meet you, what assumptions do they normally make?
2. Do you think Greek members are discriminated against? How? Why? Do they also sometimes experience reverse discrimination (i.e., preferential treatment)? How? Why?
3. Do you think people sometimes discriminate more based on their perception that individuals had a choice in their condition as opposed to something that was out of their control (e.g., genetics)? Discuss.
4. Is the criticism against rap music/lyrics, justified? Do you use similar language? If so, have you considered what impact that might have on younger members who view you as a role model or others who hear it?
5. Do men or women talk about other genders in negative/derogatory ways in public?
6. Has society changed its attitudes toward same sex relationships? If so, in what ways? How is discrimination against a LGBT student different from other forms of discrimination?

7. To what degree and in what ways do you think international students experience prejudice and discrimination? What other groups may experience discrimination? How so? Give examples.
8. Have you ever said something you didn't mean? Did you consider how someone else might take it (Perspective Taking)?
9. How does a power differential (e.g., coach/professor) affect how or if you approach an individual?

### **Boundary Breaking**

You are now going to respond to a series of questions. Every answer you give is absolutely right. No one will question it; simply respond to what you hear. You may say any answer you want, as long as you choose an answer. You may pass at first, and we will come back to you. This is an activity designed to lead to a better understanding of each other when we are through. There will at all times, from here on, be only one person speaking at a time. You may ask to repeat the question or for someone to speak louder. Please try to speak so everyone can hear you. The key to this activity is to listen, if you do, it may change the way you think about the people in this room and the way you think about yourself. This is a safe place to share anything. Anything said in this room will stay in this room and not be shared with anyone unless it concerns your or someone else's immediate health or safety.

Please speak honestly and truthfully. There is no need to discuss or debate answers, whatever you say is absolutely correct. Stick with your first answer; don't change to what you may think others want to hear. Please also disregard anything you may have heard about this activity – it is different absolutely every time because every group is different. This is not a sad or dreary, tear-filled activity. In fact, we often learn more from laughter than we do from tears or sadness. This activity is what you make it, and will be different than any other time you may have done it. You may temporarily excuse yourself at any time, but please do so very quietly and respectfully. If you do leave for any reason, please return as soon as possible. We will begin with a different person each time, and rotate clockwise until everyone has answered. The person who finished answering can decide who starts the next round. Are there any questions before we begin?

1. What comes to your mind first when you hear the word reality?
2. What is the most significant book you have ever read?
3. What physical thing do you want to build more than anything else?
4. What is the most honest thing you have ever done?
5. What is the most entertaining movie you have ever seen?
6. What is the most beautiful quality about people?
7. What do you like to do most with a free hour?
8. What is the most overwhelming thing you know?
9. What is the greatest problem in your school?
10. What thing makes you feel most humble?
11. If you could choose to be an animal other than a person, what animal would you be?

12. If you could smash one thing, and only one thing, what would you smash?
13. What is the greatest crime one person can commit towards another?
14. If you could tape-record the ugliest thing you know, what would it be?
15. Choose a word which best describes your total life up to this moment.
16. What do you think of when you think of tragedy?
17. When do you sense being most alive?
18. What television show do you like the most?
19. Choose a word which you feel describes old people.
20. What is the biggest waste you know of?
21. What future discovery do you most anticipate?
22. Who do you love most?
23. When you think of children less than three years old, what comes to your mind?
24. What one day in your life would you like to live over?
25. What is the most powerful force in the world today?
26. What is the best thing your student council has ever done?
27. What three things would you change in your city?
28. What is the worst thing your student council has ever done?
29. What is most valuable about the work your group does on campus?
30. What kind of leadership makes a difference in the world?
31. What is one thing you can guarantee about yourself?
32. Who do you respect the most in your family?
33. What is one thing that drives you crazy about the opposite sex?
34. What is your first thought in the morning?
35. If you had to pick one physical thing from your room to save from a fire, what would it be and why?
36. What is the coolest car on the road today?
37. In one word, what is your purpose?
38. Who is the cutest celebrity ever?
39. What is your best talent?
40. What is your greatest fear?
41. What makes you most self-conscious?
42. What color is hope?
43. What do you want to accomplish while here?
44. Who is the most influential ethnic advocate?



45. What is your favorite animal?
46. Coke or Pepsi?
47. Winter or summer?
48. What is the most awkward first impression you have ever made?
49. What is your most embarrassing moment?
50. If you were going to have lunch with the president tomorrow, what would you discuss?
51. If you could give your principal one piece of advice, what would you offer?
52. What about you makes you most proud?
53. When you are upset, who or what cheers you up most?
54. What is your favorite fast food place?
55. Favorite vacation spot?
56. What is your long term goal?
57. Who is a new friend you met here?
58. When do kids become adults?
59. What is the benefit in being honest?
60. How do you make others feel welcome?
61. What do you hope people remember most about you?
62. Who is the most extreme person you know?
63. What time of day do you prefer?
64. Country or Rap?
65. What is your biggest achievement?
66. Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck?
67. What is your most feared bug?
68. Dogs or Cats?
69. If you had to rename Ghandi, what would you change it to?
70. As you age, what physical trait do you wish to maintain?
71. When is it OK to lie?
72. What are your plans after high school?
73. Mountain or Beach?
74. Favorite scent to a candle and why?
75. What is the best thing our president could do right now?
76. Describe your day with no technology whatsoever.
77. I wish my school taught more (Blank) and less (Blank).

78. What has changed you the most?
79. How would you describe the stars to someone who has never seen them?
80. Describe your identity.
81. What should you know before making a decision?
82. What is the most disgusting food in the world?
83. What is the best trick you know for calming nerves?
84. What is the best breakfast cereal and why?
85. How would you explain the feeling of music?
86. What makes someone attractive?
87. How do you define respect?
88. What makes you uncomfortable?
89. If you could spend a day with anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?
90. How many children are in the ideal family?
91. What is one view others have of you, that you wish you could change?
92. What person would follow you the farthest?
93. What word best describes your age group?
94. What emotion is strongest in you?
95. What is the best gift you could give to someone on campus?
96. Who would you be most nervous to talk to and why?
97. What event in the last three months stands out in your mind the most?
98. What is the most powerful song ever written?
99. What state does the most for the nation?
100. When are you most vulnerable?

With 5-10 minutes left to go please end on one of these questions to help synthesize the exercise:

- From this experience I learned...
- After this I will change...
- I now know...
- The most valuable thing I will take from this is...
- In the future, I will apply this information to my life by...

Be sure to thank everyone for sharing, and remind them that nothing is to be shared from this experience with anyone else!

## Diversity + Inclusion Resources at UNL

ASUN Committee for Diversity and Inclusion | Paula Sandoval - asun1@unl.edu

Diversity at UNL | <http://diversity.unl.edu/diversity-home>

LGBTQA Resource Center Liaison | Dr. Scott Winrow - swinrow2@unl.edu

Multicultural Greek Council | Alfonzo Cooper – alfonzo.cooper@huskers.unl.edu

National Pan- Hellenic Council | Alfonzo Copper – alfonzo.cooper@huskers.unl.edu

OASIS (Office of Academic Success and Intercultural Services) | Jake Kirkland - jkirkland1@unl.edu

Leadership Program

DreamZone

Peer Mentors – for more programs go to: <http://www.unl.edu/oasis/academic-excellence-programs>

Women’s Center | Jan Deeds - Jdeeds1@unl.edu

## Resources

<http://stepupprogram.org/topics/discrimination/>

<http://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources>

<https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/student-affairs-forum/custom/2013/08/measuring-and-promoting-diversity-on-campus>