

## INTERRUPTING BIAS in the faculty search process

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### Key Concepts

Reviewing the following concepts will help familiarize your audience with an effective language in which to frame inclusive ideas and interventions. The concepts are ordered so that each one builds from the prior one, providing necessary context to understand why it is important that higher education be diversified and how to make it a reality.

*Facilitation Notes: All key concepts described below should be discussed in the full 90-minute session. If facilitating an abbreviated 40-minute session, some concepts may be omitted (as noted below).*

#### UNEXAMINED BIAS:

A form of stereotyping that is often unintentional, automatic, and outside our awareness. Often contradictory to our conscious beliefs. Also called subtle or implicit bias. Framing it specifically as “unexamined” puts onus for change on the person who harbors or acts on bias, holding them accountable.

#### DIVERSITY:

When we talk about diversity, often we are talking about social identities, groups to which we belong that are meaningful to us and give us a source of identity. Often our social identity can make us appear different from others. Diversity goals are intended to make difference acceptable and to reverse patterns of discrimination which result in underrepresentation in academia.

#### INCLUSION:

Valuing differences in social identities and cultural backgrounds. Working towards not only acceptance of these differences but celebration of them as well. In inclusive environments, faculty, chairs and deans are accountable for diversity and for actively fostering welcoming climates.

#### UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS:

People from groups who have historically been denied access or faced steep barriers to accessing higher education in the US, including women of all ethnicities, men of color, and people with disabilities.

#### MERITOCRACY:

***(This concept can be omitted during abbreviated 40-minute session.)***

An ideology that there is a level playing field in the US and people can advance as far as their hard-work and abilities allow. Ignores long-standing discriminatory practices against women, people of color and people with disabilities in the United States.

#### PRIVILEGE:

***(This concept can be omitted during abbreviated 40-minute session.)***

Systemic form of advantage for those who have it. Because it is invisible, it is taboo to even name or identify it, and therefore much more difficult to challenge. We are all both afforded and denied privilege based on our various group memberships.

#### MICRO-AGRESSIONS:

Everyday acts of exclusion against underrepresented groups that attempt to denigrate their capabilities. Micro-aggressions include: interruptions, translations, misidentifications (called the wrong name or have one’s name repeatedly mispronounced), exclusion (when one is ignored and left out of networks) and marginalization (one’s contributions are ignored or discounted).

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### ALLY:

***(This key concept can be omitted during abbreviated 40-minute session.)***

Someone who advocates for underrepresented group members but does not share their social identity. Offers micro-support that counters the micro-aggressions listed above by:

- Providing others with full attention
- Acknowledging others' contributions
- Recognizing strengths
- Respectfully asking questions for clarification
- Holding others accountable when seeing micro-aggressions taking place
- Breaking the silence around these micro-inequities and developing personal and group strategies to deal with them when they arise.

### CHANGE AGENT:

A prime mover in an organization who bucks the status quo, risking criticism to create change in an organization. A change agent learns to speak differently (not necessarily argue well) and frames issues of diversity in a refreshing way.

### ACCOUNTABILITY:

Organizations leaders who make accountability central to their diversity efforts have more effective results than those that do not (Kavil et al. 2006). Incorporate the concept of accountability throughout the presentation to stress its critical role in diversity efforts.