A Deeper Dive Into Intersectionality

**Presenters**

- **Anthony Garrison-Engbrecht**
  Vice President for Student Life, Saint Mary’s College of California
- **Suzie Gonzalez**
  Presidential Spouse, Kalamazoo College
- **Brian Mikesell**
  Presidential Spouse, Bard College at Simon’s Rock
- **Telly Wright**
  Presidential Spouse, Eureka College

**Chair:** Carol Bruess
Presidential Spouse, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University; and Chair, Presidential Spouses and Partners Task Force

**Let’s Get Ready to Share**

- Open a web browser on your phone (e.g., Safari, Chrome)
- In the URL field type vevox.app
- Wait for instructions on the session ID
How can we better understand and support our diverse student populations? This session will feature an engaging presentation from a senior higher education leader with extensive experience in the areas of educational equity and access, student success, and the development of inclusive campus environments. In response, presidential spouses and partner panelists will offer reflections from their personal experiences as well as insights gained from their roles at their respective institutions.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Welcome & Framing
Presentation
Small Group Discussion & Share Out
Panel Discussion
CONVERSATION EXERCISE: WHAT ARE YOUR IDENTITIES?

FRAMING OUR CONVERSATION
VEVOX.APP
#183-894-172

Institutional Questions:
• Religious Affiliation (Yes or No)
• Location (City (50,000 or more), Town (10,000-49,999), Rural (under 10,000))
• Region (Northeast, South, Midwest, West, Southwest)
PERSONAL COMFORT

VEVOX.APP
#183-094-172

Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

- I feel comfortable talking about topics related to race and ethnicity
- I feel comfortable talking about topics related to gender
- I feel comfortable talking about topics related to sexual orientation
- I feel comfortable talking about topics related to historically marginalized communities

WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?

- A quarter have an immigrant parent.
- Most do not have a biological sibling, though many have stepsiblings.
- Most did not grow up with two biological parents.
- Only two-thirds describe themselves as exclusively heterosexual.
- Most believe that there are more than two genders.
- Most didn’t date regularly or have sexual intercourse while in high school.
- Few regularly read a newspaper, and most learn about the news through smartphone notifications, tweets, social media, internet news aggregators or late-night television shows.
- Most do not consider themselves religious and are largely unfamiliar with biblical references.
WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?

- College students have never been more diverse — but the degree of diversity varies widely depending on the institution.
- The traditional college-going experience is both an existing and a changing one.
- College students lead very demanding lives.
- Mental health disorders and learning disabilities are far more visible than in the past.
- Student activism is resurgent.
- Students are more outspoken about slights and inequities that they experience.
- Our students are increasingly interested in change-making, innovation, leading a healthier and greener life, and making a positive impact.

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that was developed to address the ways in which people’s experiences are shaped based on their intersecting social identities (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, class, age, etc.).
Social issues and the experience of social identities cannot be understood by focusing on one aspect of identity, or multiple identities considered independent of or added to each other. Instead, identity is complicated, as individuals embody multiple identities simultaneously that interact and influence each other.

- Connects dimensions of identity to larger structures of oppression and privilege.
- Examines the lived experiences of individuals within interlocking systems/social structures of domination and inequality.
- Highlights the voices of previously excluded groups.

- Links holistic and more complex understanding of identity with movements for social justice.
- Intersectionality helps us understand how individuals see themselves and how they are treated by others.
- Recognizes that individuals can simultaneously experience oppression and privileges.
- Intersectional analysis considers the micro (individual) level and macro (societal/structural) level.
- Highlights the diversity within socially constructed groups.

In summary...

- How an individual can face multiple threats of discrimination when their identities overlap a number of minority classes, such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, health, and other characteristics.
- The simultaneous experiences of categorical and hierarchical classifications include but are not limited to race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality.
- A perspective that examines how two or more social constructions of oppression and/or privilege intersect to shape people's social locations and cumulative lived experiences, which then affects the discrimination and oppression of marginalized groups.
WHY INTERSECTIONALITY MATTERS

CONVERSATION EXERCISE: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Self-actualization
desire to become the most that one can be

Esteem
respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

Love and belonging
friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

Safety needs
personal security, employment, resources, health, property

Physiological needs
air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction
ACADEMIC JOURNALS AND BOOKS


QUESTIONS?

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