

ABSTRACT

IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING TRAITS OF ACTIONABLE RACIAL ALLYSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE AT MIAMI UNIVERSITY

by Jessica Lynn Staubach

Discrimination toward people of color has a deep-seated past in American culture and workplaces, resulting in racial inequality rooted in systemic racism. While it became illegal for employers to discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, some work environments evolved into covert racist practices. This research study explores ways to question institutional processes, systems, and programs to fight systemic racism within the workplace at Miami University. It looks to challenge racial majority employees to examine their privilege by addressing bias, unconscious bias, microaggression, and micro-inequities through modern diversity training techniques. This modern diversity, equity, and inclusion training includes intergroup dialogue, perspective-taking, and goal-setting insights personal reflection. Combining these techniques generates thought-provoking discussions that have the ability to produce personal growth, revising institutional practices, and perpetuate social movement. This study holds significant implications for modern workplace models that wish to create a culture of actionable allyship, address institutional racism, and reduce discrimination. By building empathy toward people of color, work environments can grow into being supportive and inclusive places of opportunities for all.

IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING TRAITS OF ACTIONABLE
RACIAL ALLYSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE AT MIAMI UNIVERSITY

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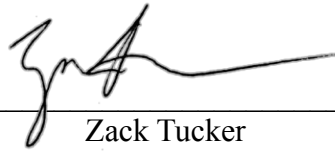
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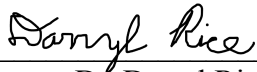
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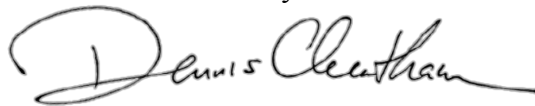
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Dennis Cheatham

Table of Contents

List of Figures	v
List of Abbreviations	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	7
Chapter 3: Methodology	14
Chapter 4: Results and Findings	16
Chapter 5: Discussion	21
Chapter 6: Design Intervention	24
Chapter 7: Design Research Conclusions and Discussion	48
References	51
Appendices	58

List of Figures

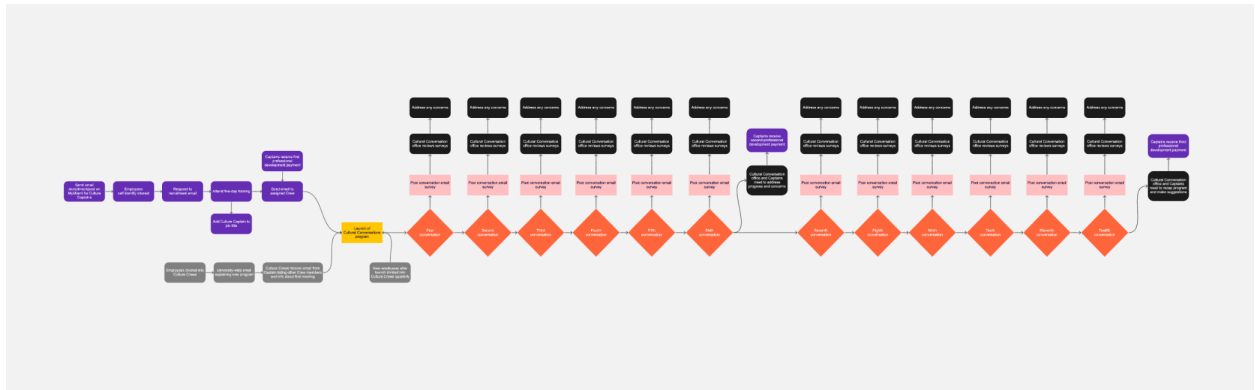


Figure 1

List of Abbreviations

BLM – Black Lives Matter
DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
IGD – Intergroup dialogue
MU – Miami University
POC – People of color
UA – University Advancement
UCM – University Communications and Marketing
UM – University of Michigan

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Becoming an actionable ally has been my goal for a few years, but it was not until I began working on my master's in experience design that I started this journey toward allyship. The thought of putting myself out there and potentially saying something wrong was terrifying. I feared speaking my mind and was taught that confrontation was disrespectful; however, while completing this research, I have found that "allyship is having the difficult conversations, the ones that we are taught are rude and avoid at all costs (Williams, 2021, p. 35)." I hope this research will encourage others to speak out and amplify the voices of marginalized communities.

Over the past five years working at the university within two different departments, University Advancement (UA) and University Communications and Marketing (UCM), I have found each department struggles with racial bias, discrimination, and white privilege. Both departments are overwhelmingly white, with a high turnover rate for employees of color. To give context, for the entire university, 18.6% of faculty and 10% of staff are racially diverse, and the student population is 15.6% racially diverse (Data, Reports, and Demographics, 2019). A former employee of color in UA stated, "Once I started my position in UA, I immediately started looking for a new job. I quickly found that I was the only person of color in a department of 125. Leadership was unwilling to address the hostile work environment and were not open to constructive feedback to create positive social change." Raising awareness of issues experienced by marginalized people needs to be encouraged and addressed wholeheartedly. Blaming the person for calling attention to the issue rather than fixing it is a characteristic of white supremacy culture (Jones & Okun, 2001). Though the university requires faculty to participate in bias training, it is not a requirement for staff. With an overwhelmingly white population, the university needs to make significant changes to evolve the institutional culture, develop empathy and adapt to the modern understanding of inclusivity.

After the public slaying of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, MN, on March 25, 2020, conversations about systematic racism and social justice filled my workplace in UCM. Moreover, alumni and Oxford community members placed pressure on Miami University to address long-standing racism issues present on Miami University's campus. The Miami Student editorial board wrote, "If Miami as an institution and we as its community is stopping at written statements and social media posts, we have failed (Board, 2020)." When the university posted a response on social media to George Floyd's murder and the Black Lives Matter (BLM), it was met with immense criticism from commenters who called it lip service and complete inaction.

At the same time, the white employees at UCM looked for the few employees of color to lead the conversations about race and white privilege. These actions made me wonder, how can the script be flipped, and how can we educate the white majority about race, discrimination, and privilege in a safe environment? How can individuals make real change and the privileged majority be responsible for closing the gap of race inequality—instead of the burden to educate and foster change falling onto the shoulders of people of color?

Discrimination toward POC has a deep-seated past in American culture, resulting in racial inequality rooted in systemic racism. While it became illegal for employers to discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, in 1964, some work environments provide opportunities for racism, including unfair treatment and other forms of microaggression and micro-inequities (Pierce, 1970; Rowe, 1990). This research study explores ways to challenge institutional processes, systems, and programs to fight systemic racism within the workplace at Miami University. It will also look to challenge racial majority employees to examine their privilege by addressing bias, unconscious bias, microaggression, and micro-inequities in the workplace. This research will improve the ways co-workers communicate, collaborate, and understand each other's differences, resulting in a positive, supportive and inclusive work environment. Critical Theory and Black Feminist Thought will be used to better understand employees at Miami University's Oxford, OH, campus. Qualitative research is used to explore the views and experiences of employees of color at Miami University and how systems, tools, and training can reduce or eliminate discrimination and bias within the workplace and culture.

Statement of the Problem

Racial equality has made strides since the Civil Rights movement, but POC continue to experience discrimination, prejudice, and systemic racism. The Civil Rights Act in 1964 made it illegal for employers to discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Though blatant discrimination has been outlawed, POC still encounter biases and discrimination, often even before they are hired and simply based on their names. People with white-sounding names are 50% more likely to receive interview callbacks than those with traditionally Black names (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). When hired, POC earn less than their white male counterparts—black men 87 cents for every dollar, Hispanic and Native American men 91, and Pacific Islander 95 (Miller, 2020). The pay gap reinforces that businesses and society value POC as less than the white majority, making it almost impossible for underrepresented people to move up in socioeconomic class and continuing the cycle of inequality.

According to the College and University Professional Association for Human Resource's 2020 report, less than 8% of administrators are POC. POC are underrepresented in higher education, especially in leadership positions (Whitford, 2020). They are less likely to be internally promoted and have little job mobility (Rowe, 1990). The lack of diversity causes workplaces to be less productive and have low employee retention (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). This could indicate that investing in the professional and personal growth of employees of color could increase employee retention and productivity while also increasing the number of POC in administration and leadership positions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study aims to identify and implement traits of actionable racial allyship at Miami University to create an inclusive, safe work environment.

Research Questions

How can a culture of allyship be introduced to make an inclusive work environment at Miami University?

Significance of the Study

Miami University is a more than 200-year-old institution in southwestern Ohio with a history of cultural appropriation, cultural racism, and prejudice. The university takes its name from the Myaamia, a sovereign nation recognized by the United States of America as the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma (Weingartner, 2020). The university did not consult the tribe to receive approval of the name or racially insensitive mascot usage. It was not until 1972 when Chief Forest Olds of the Miami Tribe heard that a university shared the same name as his nation (Weingartner, 2020). Chief Forest Olds then visited the university, and the relationship with the Miami Tribe began. In 1990, the relationship evolved into focusing on the education of Miami University students about what it means to be a Native American Tribe in the United States, and the first Miami Tribe member enrolled at the university (History of the Relationship between Miami and Tribe, 2020). With a new connection with the Miami Tribe, the university leaders gained a new perspective and understanding of the Miami Tribe. In 1996, the Miami Tribe requested the university drop the race-based nickname and mascot because it is now considered a slur by the Miami Tribe, Miami University, and society-at-large (Weingartner, 2020).

Over 25 years after changing the mascot to “RedHawks,” some alumni remain upset about the change and vocal about their disapproval. Posts on the Miami University social media accounts often receive comments such as, “I will always be a *****,” “Like it or not, I will always be a *****,” “Love and Honor from a former *****.” Alumni take pride in their Miami University education and college experiences, though this pride is deeply connected to a problematic mascot that objectified the Miami Tribe’s culture. The university’s institutional culture and long-standing traditions celebrated by alumni need to adapt to the modern understanding of inclusivity.

Discrimination and hate speech toward POC persists as a common experience at Miami University. A group of students became frustrated with the university’s inaction and created an Instagram account named “Dear Miami U” on June 28, 2020. The account was created to share stories of discrimination against marginalized students at Miami University. One of the posts reads, “I’m an Asian American who recently graduated from Miami University. Every time I went out on the weekend, I was approached by individuals who asked how I was so fluent in English and if I would teach them Chinese swear words so they can say them to the international students. Other students would exclude me from group projects, thinking I couldn’t speak English or wouldn’t participate. Staff members would tell me to tell my Chinese friends to stop speaking Chinese while they’re in America. A group of frat guys approached me one night, spit on the ground in front of me, and called me a “*****.” During my four years, I spent every day feeling less confident, motivated, and hoping for change that never happened” (Dear Miami, Here Are Our Stories). As of March 12, 2021, 774 stories have been shared with the “Dear Miami U” community. University administration has yet to address the account or stories posted, affirming the university’s inaction and suggesting avoidance and tolerance of hatred.

In June 2020, Miami University President Gregory P. Crawford created a task force of faculty, staff, and students to advance diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) (DEI Task Force Recommendations Overview, 2020). The students from the task force used the “Dear Miami U” account to resign publicly, stating, “We will not work for free” (Dear Miami U, 2020). The students felt that the task force did not include faculty and staff members knowledgeable of DEI; some members displayed condescending behaviors when addressing the university’s past testimonials of racism, sexual harassment, hate speech, and discrimination. Many students want the university to take action to create an inclusive environment for everyone, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, or disability.

This study holds significant implications for modern workplace models that wish to include actionable allyship, address institutional racism, and reduce discrimination. 2020 was an unprecedented year with the world in the midst of a pandemic and the increased momentum of the BLM movement, and America was forced to confront racism while reconciling the past and the present (Chavez, 2020). In late December 2019, the first case of SARS-CoV-2, or COVID-19, was detected in Wuhan, China. Later, the United States’ first case was confirmed on January 21, 2020, which began the global lockdowns. During the lockdowns, essential workers, doctors, nurses, first responders, and grocery store workers were the only people to continue working among the public. At the same time, the majority of the workforce began to work remotely, and 22 million people lost their jobs (Long, 2020). It was not until March 11 that COVID-19 was declared as a global pandemic. Days later, President of the United States Donald Trump tweeted about the “Chinese virus” (Salcedo, 2021). This comment likely accelerated Xenophobic comments and attacks toward Asian Americans, blaming them for the global pandemic.

With the world shut down from the pandemic, stories of racism and police brutality toward Black and African Americans flooded social media, news channels, and interpersonal communications. The deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd shook the country, bringing conversations of race, police brutality, and inequality to the forefront, resulting in worldwide protests and support of the BLM movement. Understanding the forms of discrimination and bias POC experience within the workplace informs what needs to change to foster an inclusive work culture while addressing white privilege and white supremacy culture.

I hope to challenge white people to develop a deeper understanding of allyship toward oppressed or marginalized groups and positively impact their work environment by being more inclusive. Inclusive work environments recognize the need for DEI training, identify bias, promote and hire diverse leadership, create mentorship programs and hold their leaders accountable (Jain-Link, Kennedy & Bourgeois, 2020). Diverse teams bring a wide variety of backgrounds, which allow for increased creativity, productivity, and professional development. Building a better understanding of discrimination and oppression will help majorities advocate for change while becoming allies. To change this systemic problem will require dedication from the organization, leadership, and all team members.

Definition of Terms

Allyship – refers to members of advantaged groups engaging in committed action to improve a disadvantaged group's treatment and status (Droogendyk, Wright, Lubensky, & Louis, 2016).

Bias – the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things.

Microaggression – are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color (Sue, 2007).

Micro-inequity – the subtle, often unconscious, messages or actions that single out, overlook, ignore, or otherwise discount based on an unchangeable characteristic such as race or gender.

Performative allyship – when organizations or organizational leaders denounce racism or discrimination through broad gestures while enabling its effects in their organizations (Yuan, 2020).

Social justice – the concept of fair and just relations between the individual and society, as measured by the distribution of wealth, opportunities for personal activity, and social privileges.

Systemic racism – is a form of racism embedded as an everyday practice within society or an organization. It can lead to discrimination in criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power, and education, among other issues.

Tokenism – is the practice of satisfying the moral requirement for the inclusion of members of structurally disadvantaged people in groups that are better placed in society (Grant, 2017).

Unconscious bias – is prejudice or social stereotypes of a group of people outside their own conscious awareness.

White privilege – is the expression of power and social dominance of white people over non-white people through the attainment of unearned immunities and benefits (McIntosh, 1988; Neville, Worthington, & Spanierman, 2001).

Xenophobia – the fear of others, and in particular, the fear of foreigners (Sundstrom & Kim, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Before completing any research, I assumed that many employees, alumni, and students felt that Miami University was doing too little to fight racism and racial inequality. After five years of service to the university, I think the university uses freedom of speech as an excuse to allow hate speech. For example, on June 4, 2020, Douglas Brooks, a retired Miami University faculty member, called BLM demonstrators racist slurs during a peaceful protest. At this time, Brooks

was teaching online courses for the College of Education, Health, and Society; the university acknowledged that Brooks's behavior was unacceptable but took no action to remove him, citing the use of his First Amendment rights (Mitchell, 2020). On June 3, 2020, Xavier University in neighboring Cincinnati, OH, posted a statement that they became aware of "offensive, racially-charged social media posts by current and future members of our student body," and as a result, Xavier revoked its offer of admission to the incoming student (Xavier University, 2020). Moreover, the student who had his admission revoked from Xavier is currently enrolled at MU (Miami University, 2021). The Douglas Brooks' event and the post from Xavier, which took place one day apart, contrast two local universities' responses to incidents involving hate speech. MU's willingness, in contrast to Xavier, to allow hate speech while citing the First Amendment right could be perceived as tolerance of hate speech.

When conducting surveys, interviews, and co-design sessions, I assumed that all races and ethnicities, including the white majority, would respond to the invitations. I found from the stratified sample of employees based on ethnicity, more employees of color were willing to participate and wanted their stories to be heard. I assume that white employees that did not participate because they felt that they were not a part of the solution, did not want to say the wrong thing or were not ready, or did not want to take a stance on the topic.

Limitations of the research include the sample sizes—using a stratified sample divides a population into subpopulations. The lists provided from The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness included an equal number of participants from each ethnicity, limiting the number of participants based on the smallest group at the university. Lack of funding, limited responses from participants willing to provide their time for free, especially when completing the co-design process.

Delimitations of this research included speaking with Miami employees who work on the main campus in Oxford, OH. This choice was made based on the dramatically different student and employee demographic between the Main and Regional campuses.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Conceptual or Theoretical Framework

This study uses Design Justice to challenge workplace culture, structure, and cultural assumptions toward people that are most harmed by dominant structures and systems (Costanza-Chock, 2020). By challenging the status quo of the workplace, we can begin identifying white supremacy culture. White supremacy culture is the ideology that white people and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions are superior to POC and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. It manifests in all the institutions of society, such as government, economy, education, media, healthcare, and workplaces (Jones & Okun, 2001). Workplaces often display one or more characteristics of white supremacy culture: perfectionism, the sense of urgency, defensiveness, quantity over quality, valuing writing over any other form of communication, believing there is only one right way, paternalism, either/or thinking, hoarding power, fearing open conflict, individualism, not considering long-term effects, objectivity and valuing logic over emotion (Jones & Okun, 2001). These characteristics are not perceived as aggressive behaviors but support the dominant culture.

Design Justice uses two core beliefs. Those who are directly affected by an issue that a project aims to address must be at the center of the design process. Secondly, anyone can participate meaningfully in design (Costanza-Chock, 2020, p. 43). This knowledge led to incorporating co-design into the primary research process.

Design Justice uses the key tenants of Black Feminist Thought, including the Matrix of Domination and Intersectionality. The matrix of domination is the social paradigm within which intersecting oppressions originate, develop, and are contained (Collins, 2000, p. 228). It can help us realize how power, oppression, resistance, privilege, penalties, benefits, and harms are systematically distributed (Costanza-Chock, 2020, p. 72). Acknowledging the Matrix of Domination's severity is the first step to make significant institutional and systemic change.

Black Feminist Thought addresses many of the same injustices of a hostile working environment: bias, discrimination, cultural assumptions, and exclusion. Often African American and Black women have been left out of feminist conversations, resulting in white women dominating the conversation (Crenshaw, 2018). Many white feminists neglect to address their privilege and dominate the conversation while not allowing Black women's voices to be heard (Crenshaw, 2018). White feminist allies need to be more observant of issues that impact women of color, but to become fully aware, allies must address their own white privileges. This reflection allows for continuing personal growth and awareness that people of color need to be seen, heard, and feel empowered, not oppressed.

Intersectionality refers to particular forms of intersecting oppressions, such as race and gender, or of sexuality and nation (Collins, 2000, p. 18). Discrimination toward each marginalized person could be different, based on their combination of social disadvantages. Kimberlé Crenshaw's article "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics" shares how Title VII of the Civil Rights Act has repeatedly failed to protect Black women workers. For example, Black

women workers at General Motors were told they had no legal grounds for a discrimination case against their employer. Anti-discrimination law only protected single-identity categories, either being a woman or black, not both (Costanza-Chock, 2020, p. 65). Using intersectional analysis allows for products, services, and systems to be designed for marginalized people that experience multiple burdens within the matrix of domination (Costanza-Chock, 2020, p. 72).

Without intervention, institutional and organizational leaders will default to a way of thinking based on their own experiences, which results in the cis-male, white, heterosexual, able-bodied, literate, college-educated point of view (Costanza-Chock, 2020). This indicates, to change institutional and social structures, education and training could be used to alert the majority members to the issues the marginalized communities face.

This research focuses on workplace discrimination, institutional behaviors, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and building interpersonal allyship skills. Defining various forms of personal, interpersonal, and institutional discrimination provides clarity to the issue at hand, a hostile work experience for POC. Through the lens of Design Justice and Black Feminist Thought, this study was designed to learn from experiences of institutional racism, discrimination, and injustice toward POC, listen to their concerns and needs and then incorporate those learning into a design solution that educates the white majority. The outcome of this research was developed to advance equality, diversity, and inclusion through participatory design. Co-design is a form of participatory design where designers and non-designers work together in the design development process. This process empowers the person being served to become the expert of their experience, playing a role in knowledge development, idea generation, and concept development (Sanders & Stappers, 2018, p. 24-25). In this research, co-design is a crucial step to create the best and most informed design solution.

Review of Research

The United States became the epicenter of racial reckoning in 2020; there was no way to ignore it (Chavez, 2020). Social media was flooded with new stories of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd's racist killings, which forced Americans to address the depths of police brutality, systematic racism, and race inequality. According to a recent study, hostile race crimes and actions have risen for "four straight years to the highest level in a decade" and comprise nearly 60% of overall crimes (NAACP, 2018). Race conversations trickled into my home, workplace, and social media feeds, showing that people wanted to improve racial justice but lacked the knowledge or bravery to make it a reality. This literature review reveals the deep-seated effect of discrimination in the workplace, illuminating the struggles POC still face and how allyship can affect change. Four themes address the current dialogue: workplace discrimination, institutional behaviors, diversity and inclusion in the place, and building interpersonal allyship skills.

Workplace Discrimination

Stereotypical and discriminatory beliefs have led to thoughts and actions rooted in racism, sexism, homophobia, and ethnocentrism. These beliefs are developed from someone's upbringing and are subconsciously ingrained in someone's thoughts and actions. It can be

challenging to open oneself up to personal prejudices and privileges and to take responsibility for social change (Collins, 2000). Generating social change starts by building a better understanding of the history of racial discrimination and oppression.

Some work environments provide opportunities for racism, including unfair treatment and other forms of microaggression and microinequities (Pierce, 1970; Rowe, 1990). Even though laws and social norms no longer condone overtly racist behaviors such as physical violence, unfair treatment, stereotypical negative representation, and unjust organizational or systemic policies, racial discrimination still affects many employees, in more covert ways, and their ability to succeed and move up in their field (Pierce, 1969; Pierce et al., 1977). White males take most leadership positions, and racial inequality issues may be simply looked over since they often do not affect those in positions of power personally. Even when mistreatment of POC is unconscious, it can be more damaging than overt discrimination (Alonso et al., 2017). The constant burden of racism has been found to increase stress, reduce emotional and physical well-being, obstruct learning and problem solving, and undermine work performance for POC (Sue et al., 2019). Employees who feel unequal or discriminated against because of their race are likely to find different employment opportunities that see their diverse set of skills, knowledge, and perspective as assets.

Racial discrimination can take place at any stage of employment; applying, interviewing, hiring, compensation, promotion, and termination can be full of forms of discrimination. White applicants with a degree from an elite university are more likely to hear a response from the employer than any other candidate (Gaddis, 2015). Black applicants must have credentials from elite universities to get a job over white candidates from less selective universities, which results in Black applicants being paid less and holding lower job positions (Gaddis, 2015). This indicates that race is still factored into job qualifications and cannot be equalized by education, skills, experience, or ambition (Whitaker, 2019). POC are less likely to hold leadership positions even though white colleagues support POC in leadership positions. (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019; Bobo, 2001; Dupree & Fiske, 2019). Institutional racism is still deeply rooted in hiring practices, internal promotions, and workplace culture.

When people misunderstand the magnitude of racial discrimination, they may subscribe to problematic DEI approaches such as colorblindness and multicultural ideology. Colorblindness is a racial ideology that believes that all individuals are equal regardless of their race or color—denying the existence of racial inequality and white privilege (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). Some majority group members may endorse this approach because they feel it is more inclusive of their group. (Stevens et al., 2008). This devalues racial differences, frustration, dissatisfaction, particularly for POC who take pride in their racial identity (Chrobot-Mason & Thomas, 2002). The multicultural approach emphasizes the benefits of a diverse workforce and explicitly recognizes employee differences as sources of strength (Cox, 1991). Minorities may find this ideology attractive because their diverse backgrounds are recognized as different, such as race, ethnicity, and religious affiliation (Plaut & Markus, 2007; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2006; Verkuyten, 2005). Multiculturalism ideally fosters inclusion and acceptance, though it may not connect with majority race members because they feel excluded and devalued (Brief et al., 2005; Kalev et al., 2006; Mannix & Neale, 2006; Thomas, 2008). The multicultural framework sees racial and cultural differences as a defect. The goal for any institution should be to provide an

environment that is anti-racist and multicultural; racial and cultural differences are seen as assets (*Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist, Multicultural Institution, n.d.*). Education about race inequality and discrimination is necessary to connect with the most majority members in order to change an institution's culture and to become fully inclusive.

Institutional Behaviors

Institutional practices and behaviors, such as policies and procedures, set the tone of the work environment. Changing a workplace culture requires an increased level of employee commitment (Lambert 2000; Zhao et al. 2013) and the full support of organizational leaders to reiterate the importance of inclusivity (Nembhard and Edmondson 2006). After collectively acknowledging the need for change, a step-by-step action plan to develop DEI initiatives and adopting inclusive hiring practices should be developed.

Esi Minta-Jacobs, vice president of human resources at Concord, a California-based money management firm, states “You can mandate diversity, but you can not mandate inclusion. Inclusion is about behavior, relationships. You have to change hearts and minds” (Agovino, 2020). Diversity and inclusion programs can create empathy toward POC, as well as encourage internal dialogue and reflection on how it feels hidden or not heard. These programs flourish in institutions where leadership is enthusiastic about the cause (Cañas & Sondak, 2014) and emphasizes mentorship and sponsorship (Bolino & Grant, 2016). When leadership takes time to mentor a minority manager or executive, other leadership members notice. For example, after one IBM executive leadership started mentoring minority managers, several executives were struck by the interest and involvement in the employee's success (Cañas & Sondak, 2014). Mentorship programs create a safe space to ask questions or advice, resulting in minority team members feeling a part of the team quicker (Lieberman, 2013). Using different types of DEI programs in a company, bring the ability to make lasting change in institutional practices and personal growth.

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act made it illegal for employers to discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Based on statistics from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, in 2015, almost 100,000 Americans are still confronted by unfair practices limiting their ability to participate in the workforce at levels they aspire and deserve (Whitaker, 2019). POC earn significantly less money; on average, black men earn 87 cents for every dollar (Miller, 2020) and tend to be unemployed at higher rates (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). They also face employment discrimination in the hiring and promotion process and do not receive the same opportunities as other employees. (Khosrovani & Ward, 2011; Ortiz & Roscigno, 2009). Suppose companies adapt their hiring and promotion practices to support racial equality. In that case, employees are likely to feel valued, excel in their positions, move up into higher roles, and improve employee retention.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace

The U.S. workforce is in a state of change. Fostering and celebrating diversity has become essential to build a positive workplace culture; the promotion of organizational change increases individual and organizational performance. Employees can use their own diverse experiences to

develop strengths, a climate of respect, compassion, and openness (Stevens et al., 2008). While creating a diverse group, there will be growing pains based on all of the different lifestyles, cultures, and ages. Teammates might make cultural assumptions based on the lack of understanding of culture, creating tension, hostility, disrespect, and discrimination. Organizations must promptly address these issues so that they can see a diverse team's long-term benefits (Cletus, Mahmood, Umar & Ibrahim, 2018). Long-term, diverse, and inclusive teams expand productivity and efficiency, increase employee retention, lower production costs, and higher revenue and sales growth (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019).

When creating company policies and initiatives to improve workplace culture, all groups should be considered (Stevens, 2008). Diversity task forces, councils, and resource groups should comprise both minorities and nonminorities. When everyone feels included and heard, companies will get better engagement from their employees (Pope, 2019). Employees of color want to be treated the same as the other teammates. Employees want to be equal team members, with the same support and acceptance—and reassurance their job is not at risk because of their race, age, sex, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disability.

Building Interpersonal Allyship Skills

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, allyship emphasizes social justice, inclusion, and human rights by members of a minority to advance an oppressed or marginalized group's interests (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It is a common belief that not being racist is equivalent to allyship. While not being racist is a good start, it is a passive measure. In contrast, allyship is actively being anti-racist (Williams, 2021, p. 11). The term “ally” is not self-given but one that is earned. It requires internal reflection on their own privilege, which may be painful and require a commitment to external action (Sue et al., 2019). Privilege is unearned benefits given to people of a specific social group based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, geographic location, ability, or religion (Catlin, 2019). Acknowledging this privilege can be eye-opening and can challenge what majority members take for granted as fundamental human rights and the severity of systemic oppression.

The decision to take action to become an ally can be intimidating. Some people experience paralysis of not knowing what to do (Sue et al., 2019) and are afraid to insert themselves into conversations that some may consider “none of their business,” thinking it could result in repercussions (Williams, 2021, p. 77). Potential allies may worry about ruffling feathers or saying the wrong thing. Making mistakes is inevitable; apologize and use it as a learning moment (Williams, 2021, p. 95). Systemic oppression can not be dismantled just by the oppressed; successful social movements require support, education, and action from allies. Allies have played crucial roles in a social movement, such as the Civil Rights movement. Social psychologist Robb Willer studied what attracts and repels allies and the different responses to moderate and extreme tactics. Extreme tactics involve significant disruption of the social order and may involve violence or inciting violence. This tactic tends to lead people away from identifying with that group (Boyle, Schmidt, Shah & Vedantam, 2019). Moderate tactics such as intergroup dialogue use facilitators and safe spaces to allow new levels of understanding, relating, and action (Voices Intergroup Dialogue). Using moderate tactics, connect with potential supporters by building empathy, understanding, and awareness for a cause. Celebrating differences and finding shared values creates a connection with the story, reality, and how all

human beings should be treated (Boyle, Schmidt, Shah & Vedantam, 2019). Flipping the perspective and putting oneself into someone else's shoes brings to light the severity of racial injustice.

In many businesses and companies, one group will have privileges over others. In Karen Catlin's book, *Better allies: Everyday actions to create inclusive, engaging workplaces*, there is a list of fifty potential privileges, just in the work environment. Privileges include being white, male, straight, cisgender, similar in age as coworkers, without disabilities, a college graduate, or a United States citizen, as well as speaking English as your first language. Addressing privilege can be a sensitive topic, resulting in a person becoming defensive. This defensiveness comes from the fear of losing power, comfort, and privilege that stems from white supremacy culture (Jones & Okun, 2001). The majority members who have benefited from privilege in the past may feel that they are being called out, as if they have not worked hard and have led an easy life, forgetting that privilege is a system of advantages for particular groups (Catlin, 2019). Delicately addressing privilege is the only way to connect with people who become defensive.

Allies can serve many different roles in the workplace. These roles can include the sponsor, champion, amplifier, advocate, scholar, upstander, or confidant (Catlin, 2019). Sponsors vocally support marginalized people, especially when it will improve standings and reputation, while champions support the cause, but in a less public setting (Catlin, 2019). The amplifier uses its voice to boost marginalized voices, and advocates use its power to include them in exclusive circles (Catlin, 2019). Scholars specialize in completing their own research. Upstander speaks out against wrongdoing. A confidant provides a safe space for marginalized people to express their concerns (Catlin, 2019). These different allyship roles serve as the link between dominant groups and "others," advocating for oppressed groups' causes to build socially just workplace communities.

An ally's objective is to create opportunities for supportive, educative dialogues to educate individuals about differences regarding power and privilege, build coalitions around common causes, and develop empathy (Collins, 2013). POC and allies can fight microaggressions by using micro-interventions. Micro interventions are words or actions that validate a minority's reality, value as a person, the affirmation of their racial or group identity, support and encouragement, and reassurance that they are not alone. It is important to develop responses and tactics that can be used to disarm a microaggression; address the action or comment, display disagreement, and educate the offender (Sue et al., 2019). These actions may seem small, but these interactions can profoundly create an inclusive and welcoming environment (Aguilar, 2006; Houshmand, 2017; Jones & Rolon-Dow; Mellor, 2004; Scully & Rowe, 2009). Unless adequately armed with strategies, microaggressions may occur so quickly there may not be time to think of a proper response. Interventions can vary in degree of subtlety or directness, ranging from being passive, striking back at the aggressor, deflecting, educating the perpetrator, validating and supporting the targets, acting as an ally, finding institutional intervention, or a combination of actions. (Aguilar, 2006; Brondolo et al, 2009; Houshmand et al., 2017; Joseph, & Kuo, 2009; Mellor, 2004; Obear, 2016). It may be uncomfortable to disarm microaggressions, especially if you dislike confrontation, but it is important to remember that it provided an opportunity to teach people about social justice.

In conclusion, this literature review addresses four themes that need current dialogue: workplace discrimination, institutional behaviors, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and building interpersonal allyship skills. This review emphasized how prevalent white supremacy culture is intertwined in workplace culture and institutional behaviors. This culture affects how comfortable a person of color is in their workplace environment, job responsibilities, and professional growth. It is undeniable how crucial allies are when creating a successful social movement, making a more inclusive environment, and ensuring everyone has a seat at the table.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This research was conducted under the direction of Critical Theory and Black Feminists Thought. These theories challenge the current workplace culture, structure, and cultural assumptions toward minority groups based on race and ethnicity and fighting institutionalized racism, social, and economic injustice. Conducting interviews and co-design sessions allows people of color to share their experiences of institutional racism, discrimination, and injustice, have their concerns and needs to be heard, and then incorporate that information in the design solution. I aim to create a research study that provides a better understanding of discrimination forms in the workplace, what institutional behaviors need to be addressed, and how allies can take action.

Research Design

This research study used qualitative research to gather general thoughts of the current climate on racial discrimination in the workplace at Miami University through surveys and personal views and experiences through surveys, interviews, and co-design.

Survey

The online survey was designed to build a greater understanding of the MU employee opinions, viewpoints, and experiences with diversity and inclusion, racial injustice, and allyship. The survey consisted of 25 multiple choice and open-ended questions and was built in Google Forms. Stratified sampling of MU Oxford employees was provided from The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and recruited participants by their MU email addresses. There were no incentives for completing the survey. The survey resulted in 17 responses between December 3 and December 10, 2020. More than half of the participants were POC, and participants that identify as male or female were almost equal.

Interviews

Virtual one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted from December 17, 2020, to February 1, 2021, using Google Hangout. A stratified sample of MU Oxford employees was used to recruit participants by MU email. There were no incentives for completing the interviews. Five interviews were conducted with staff and faculty members from five different departments within the university. Participants were all POC and most were females. The interview consisted of 22 open-ended questions that averaged 45 minutes to complete. The interview script was developed to encourage an in-depth conversation about racial inequality, discrimination, allyship, and the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Co-design

At the end of the survey, participants self-identified if they would be interested in completing the co-design process. There were no incentives for completing the co-design process. Co-design is the process where designers and non-designers work together in the design development process. This process flips the typical role of the research and person who will be served by giving the person being served the position of being the expert of their experience, playing a role of knowledge development, idea generation, and concept development (Sanders & Stappers, 2018, p. 24-25). These co-design sessions included the use of the “make” method. The “make” method allows people to express their thoughts and feelings through a carefully developed toolkit (Sanders & Stappers, 2018, p. 70), allowing for qualitative results. Make sessions give participants the ability to express in different ways to recall memories and interpreting emotions.

Three participants journaled for about 10-15 minutes a day, for five consecutive workdays, about challenges they face with racism or allyship in the workplace. After that week was completed, they were asked to complete an experience map about an allyship action that they saw or took part in. Once they completed the journaling and experience map, participants sent an email to alert me that they had completed the tasks. All journaling participants were POC, with one male participant and two females. Only one participant completed both the journaling and the co-design process.

Data Analysis

I conducted the surveys, interviews, and co-design independently. Using Google Sheets, I calculated the quantitative results from the survey. The survey data compares racial minorities and majority responses, showing the level of awareness they have toward racial discrimination and room for growth. Qualitative responses from the survey, interviews, and co-design were transcribed and coded in Google Sheets. The transcriptions revealed seven sub-themes and three main themes. Themes are often abstract and may be difficult to identify but can be established when reviewing data, such as text, images, sounds, and objects (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 87). Themes can be identified by uncovering patterns of repetition, indigenous categories, metaphors and analogies, similarities and differences, linguistic connectors, and missing data (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 89-93). These discoveries built the foundation for the design intervention and prototype.

Chapter 4: Findings and Results

Introduction

The results of this study revealed that participants felt that the university, colleagues, and community members do not recognize the extent of discrimination that people of color experience within the workplace. The qualitative data created a broad overview of their general views and also provided insight into personal experiences. Three themes and seven sub-themes emerged, which all pointed to the need for education, training, and change, which will be used to inform possible design interventions.

Results

Survey

Survey data revealed that the vast majority of respondents felt that the university and colleagues did not understand the severity of racial injustice. All employees of color surveyed are concerned about racism at Miami University, they feel misunderstood and ignored, and that their colleagues didn't know enough about racial injustice to engage in discussions. This assumption is found to be true based on the responses from the white employees surveyed; they all felt that they did not know enough to have informed discussions. These conversations about race often turn political, so they felt discouraged from starting a discussion.

Since employees of color still experience oppression and feel misunderstood within their work environment, they were asked what could help them when facing challenges related to racial injustice and racism. Many of the responses were similar, and the following highlights or summarizes these answers.

- “I'd feel better if I were taken more seriously. I'm female and non-white, so while people are polite, they don't seem to get what I'm saying. I get shut down because they think I'm angry.”
- “Many things are brushed aside to make it harder to talk about it in the workplace.”
- “There needs to be better communication from the President's Cabinet members when things arise.”
- “[It would be helpful if the university would] focus on recruitment, enrollment, and retaining diversity.”
- “[It would be helpful by] making people aware of the diversity of individuals.”
- “[It would be helpful if there was an opportunity for] more personal experience, education, and growth.”
- “[It would be helpful] if co-workers or management would recognize that race is an issue. I don't believe they are racists, but they are definitely not “anti-racists.” They are mostly people who “don't see color,” as the saying goes. Any conversation about race seems to turn political, and we all try to steer clear of talking politics, especially these days when everything and everyone is so polarized.”

Participants felt that it was important to make changes to the institutional culture and that the university needs to invest more time and money into the cause. When participants were asked, what could the university do to help with the challenges they face related to racial injustice and racism, the following summarizes the responses collected.

- “[The university should] educate students and employees.”
- “[The university should] help facilitate discussions, share educational resources, offer training, etc.”
- “[The university should] make resources available to faculty and staff more accessible.”
- “More than a paragraph added to Miami job ads which clearly read meaningless. More scholarships for minority students. More representation as executives. Equal pay for all.”
- “The university needs to be more timely and more complete; consistent.”
- “[The university should] help ALL understand that race is an issue. Help them in a way that it does not feel like a burden to talk about it. Everyone in the office is completely overloaded with work; any required discussions will be seen as a burden, which will, in turn, cause resentment for having to do it. EVERY staff who works in the building needs to be involved, not just unclassified, not just managers, but building and grounds workers, etc. too. MOSTLY it would help if upper-level management got involved and helped to get buy-in from ALL staff below.”
- “[The university should] support people who do report and have real consequences when cases end and there is retaliation.”
- “[The university needs to] hire and promote more women and POC; now, all the power resides with white men. To me, that explains why nothing really changes. Of course, they are politically correct, but they do not really want any changes that might impact their positions of power.”
- “Equal pay; foster culture of equity and justice; continue conversations over time (not just when it feels relevant).”

Making institutional change requires the support of allies. Seventy-two percent of participants of color feel that their colleagues share the same ideas of allyship and have a positive working relationship with their colleagues. Survey participants felt that allyship meant:

- “[An ally is] a person who is not directly affected by a systemic issue but still works to dismantle the systemic problem.”
- “It means raising the issues that will ultimately advance women and POC in organizations and society.”
- “Working on behalf of, and advocating for, equal access and treatment of peers experiencing social injustice, leveraging privilege on their behalf, and prioritizing their voices, lived experiences, and perspectives in spaces that have conventionally marginalized them.”
- “An ally is someone you can trust.”
- “It means turning an environment into a net positive through working together regardless of socioeconomics and relentlessly changing or removing elements that would cause otherwise.”
- “An ally is a person who commits to working with other people who have been oppressed and/or come from marginalized communities. They understand that it is in everyone’s best interest to end all oppression and are not defensive about their own identities.”

- “An ally is someone who does not suffer directly from disenfranchisement—because they do not have the characteristic that is being discriminated against. However, an ally recognizes the wrongdoing and wants to support those who are being mistreated and/or marginalized.”

Interviews

Interview participants provided a comprehensive range of perspectives, knowledge, and experiences from employees of color across campus. When participants were asked to define the term, the answers were very similar; a person who may not be a part of a certain group but is supportive, collaborative, and overall helpful towards that affinity group. They feel allies add validity to social movements and are more likely to reach other people who may not necessarily understand. One example that a participant provided when allies helped runaway slaves reach safety along the underground railroad in the late 18th century.

According to the interview data, participants of color have experienced a variety of challenges within the workplace. Stereotypical attributes often get tagged to people based on their race or ethnicity, such as being quiet and not being assertive. These stereotypes hinder employees from earning promotions and moving up in their field. Leaders of color are few and far between and often do not stay at the university for long.

Another challenge participants face is being ignored or not being invited or being told not to attend meetings. One participant said, “I will say something and be completely ignored, no one reacts. I know they heard me, but they go on. A few minutes later, a white colleague says the exact same thing I did, and the response is, oh, that's a great idea.” As a female of color, they are concerned about being “the angry black woman,” they are forced to balance their attitude and personality to avoid negative stereotypes. While another participant said, “I’ve literally been told, not to attend meetings anymore, because of questions that I would ask about projects or themes that are happening.”

Employees are not only concerned about the racism at Miami that faces faculty and staff but also the students. Participants felt when the university did not address the “Dear Miami U” Instagram account, it was a missed opportunity to take a stance against harassment, and ignoring the existence of these behaviors results in a hostile environment. The hundreds of posts about oppression and harassment on campus are likely only the tip of the iceberg. Based on this instance and other personal experiences, one participant felt that they could not wholeheartedly recommend the university to students of color. The participant stated that “there are many benefits to attending the university; it is a great education, but it can be really difficult”.

Participants feel that their colleagues could make or break if the work environment is positive or negative. They feel that the majority members are often nervous about interacting with someone they do not know and do not want to say the wrong thing and be offensive. With that being said, participants said they appreciate having honest conversations with their colleagues about the current world, national, and campus events that affect employees and students. One participant said, “having a safe space to talk about current events and issues, addresses the ‘elephant in the room,’ creates a place of personal learning and growth.” They also expressed that it is also

important for supervisors to be empathic to an employee's experiences and to demonstrate that POC are personally valued along with their work and role at the university improves morale.

Co-design

Those who participated in the co-design sessions indicated that employees of color at Miami are used as tokens. Employees of color are asked to participate in every DEI initiative, task force, or project, and it is assumed that they want to partake in this work on top of all of their other job responsibilities. One example of a microaggression and tokenism that was experienced by a participant was when “the most vocal person was the least diverse person, and at one point turned to the one person of color in the group and said aggressively, ‘you’ve been quiet, what do you have to say?’ This did not give the person any space or a way out of the conversation.” The participant was frustrated by this situation and that the dominating person did not give space for the POC in the group and allow them to have a voice. The participant added, “I wish this was uncommon, in society as well as at Miami, but it is not. It is just one example of what minoritized individuals have to deal with on a daily basis.”

Another example of a microaggression and tokenism that a participant witnessed was when “a coworker was talking about a project that was sent only to a part of the group because it was in a different language, and no actions were taken to try to get it translated.”

A participant also found that “colleagues assume everybody has the same traditions during holidays and were surprised and confused when I explained the differences.” They have also experienced instances where white people thought themselves to be white saviors or completing social justice work as a service project.

Findings Summary

When reviewing the answers from the surveys, interviews, and co-design process, three themes and seven sub-themes emerged.

The three major themes are

- Building social justice,
- Current institutional culture,
- And the opportunity for personal and institutional growth.

Building social justice

Employees of color said there is a need for **continued learning and communication about racial discrimination and oppression**, no matter their racial identity or ethnicity. They expressed that there is an opportunity for employees to unpack their privilege based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or physical ability.

Employees of color want all cultures to be considered in the workplace—not just those based on the white majority—to create an inclusive environment. They stated that the university and their coworkers need to **work on building racial equality and support**.

Current institutional culture

For years, employees of color have felt misunderstood and that they are being used to fill a diversity quota. The hostile work environment and **negative institutional support** have made it difficult to recommend other POC to work or attend the university.

Multiple departments, divisions, or offices have started their own diversity programs, initiatives, or task forces. While leadership intends these initiatives to be **positive departmental and divisional support**, the efforts lack a centralized message or direction from university leadership.

Employees of color feel that the **need for institutional changes** is evident based on slow and problematic responses to racism and oppression experienced by students and employees. Measurable change can begin when the university listens to the needs of workers, supports marginalized communities, and creates a better education or system of training for all employees.

And the opportunity for personal and institutional growth.

Employees of color communicated that the university as a whole has a long way to go in terms of **racial bias and discrimination**. Departments and divisions individually have created their own initiatives to address racial justice but could benefit from a centralized approach.

Employees of color also feel that the university **lacks diverse representation in leadership, faculty, and staff**. They would like to see an investment in the recruitment, retention, and mentoring of employees of color.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

Emerging themes from the research indicate there needs to be significant redevelopment to the university work culture. Employees of color still experience bias, discrimination, and oppression within the work environment. Making changes requires the white supremacy culture to be addressed and starts with education and interpersonal dialogue for people of privilege. These conclusions present opportunities for a design intervention that utilizes perspective-taking discussion, education, and goal setting to affect social change.

Conclusions

After completing interviews with faculty and staff across the university, evidence shows that marginalized employees experience a range of forms of discrimination. This inequality is based on a combination of social disadvantages, unfair treatment, and other forms of microaggression and microinequities. One participant stated that “I just can't help but question if race has hindered my ability to gain a promotion. I also have had conversations with a white male colleague, and he has never had to complete an application process to be promoted at that university, while I had to apply and interview to be considered for a promotion.” This experience highlights an example of unfair treatment between white employees and those of color.

Employees of color who feel mistreated are likely to find different employment opportunities that see their skills, knowledge, and perspective as assets. From talking to employees, retention for faculty of color at Miami is also a major problem. One participant watched a colleague leave the university because they did not feel supported in their department. “They were a very talented woman of color and felt they had to leave the institution to receive better opportunities to excel in their career.” Policies, procedures, hiring, and promotion practices set the tone of the work environment. It is necessary to adopt practices to support racial equality. Employees want to feel valued and be given the ability to excel in their positions and move into higher roles.

After speaking with employees, MU displays many characteristics of white supremacy culture. Experiences from current and former employees of color confirm there is a fear of conflict and that the marginalized people are blamed for raising awareness of issues instead of welcoming constructive criticism. At MU, the university and many employees take an either/or way of thinking; they assume if they are not saying something overtly racist, then they are not a part of the problem. Inaction is the same as acceptance, and being passive allows the spread of racist actions and speech. Through the surveys, interviews, and co-design process, I found that systemic and institutional racism still plague employees of color at the university. One participant shared a story about their colleagues being dismissed when they stand up against inequality in meetings and later face repercussions. Changing a workplace culture requires all employees to be committed (Lambert 2000; Zhao et al. 2013) and have the full support of organizational leaders (Nembhard and Edmondson 2006) to challenge the dominant culture.

Exhibiting the personal, professional, and institutional investment alludes to whether the campus community is actually committed to making change.

Discussion

The findings of this research hold significant implications for building racial justice, equality, and allyship. Just as questions are necessary to find answers and problems are necessary to find solutions, identifying the extent of systemic racism and discrimination in the beginning to create an inclusive solution (Jean-Baptiste, 2020). The co-design shaped the way that the design solution will be developed, implemented, and reviewed. Results of this research could shape how white people understand the severity of racial injustice, shift how they interact with others, and speak about people of different ethnicities and cultures.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study has several opportunities for future research. One way to expand on the findings would be to test on a cohort of employees who more accurately represent the makeup of the MU population. Participants in this study were primarily people of color. It would be interesting to test on a group that more accurately represents the university employee demographic: 0.08% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 0.29% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.08% Multi-Racial, 2.2% Hispanic/Latino, 2.58% Non-Resident Alien, 3.57% Asian, 4.81% Black or African American, and 85.37% White (Data, Reports, and Demographics, 2019).

Another way to expand findings is to leverage the knowledge from faculty and campus centers while creating the course materials. Including these experts would expand on the curriculum and make for the best possible learning experience.

Recommendations for Possible Design Interventions

Based on feedback from participants, they would be interested in completing DEI training if it was completely reimagined from typical virtual learnings. One participant stated that “everyone laughs at online diversity training, I’m supposed to complete it, but I have so much other work I haven’t had time to complete it.” A possible solution would be to add this new training into their job responsibilities. It would not be expected to add more to their already busy plates but allow other projects to be put on hold to learn about diversity and inclusion. Another participant suggested adding a class that teaches faculty and staff about the Miami Tribe and its relationship with the university.

There are many options for design interventions that educate white employees about allyship. One possible solution could educate employees about race with a weekly informational digital newsletter or social account. After reading the newsletters, employee discussions would lead to dedicated Miami slack channels. This solution would focus on race issues in a modern digital setting and allow employees to decide how actively they would like to participate.

Another possible design intervention could use small group training, with a group leader, and employees from across various divisions, job responsibilities, ethnicities, and cultures. They would use intergroup dialogue with perspective-taking and goal-setting training techniques to discuss predetermined session topics about race.

Chapter 6: Design Intervention

Introduction

Over the years, diversity training has received a bad reputation for being preformative. However, research shows that over 40 years of diversity training evaluations diversity training can work, especially when it targets awareness and skill development and occurs over a significant amount of time (Lindsey, King, Membere, & Cheung, 2017). Based on primary and secondary research findings, I was led to explore design concepts related to fostering empathy and education about race through intergroup dialogue, perspective-taking, and goal setting.

Rationale for Intervention Design

Intergroup dialogue is a facilitated conversation between two or more social identity groups that strives to create new levels of understanding, relating, and action (Zúñiga, 2003). Intergroup dialogue has been developed and researched for more than 30 years at the University of Michigan (UM). UM's research found that through sustained dialogue with diverse peers that integrates content learning and experiential knowledge, participants are likely to be intellectually challenged and emotionally engaged (Voices Intergroup Dialogue). These interactions influence participants' understanding of their own and others' experiences, which can cultivate allyship and collective agency to affect social change.

Perspective-taking is another technique to build empathy toward others. Taking the perspective of another person is the ability to understand how a situation appears to another person and how that person is reacting cognitively and emotionally to the situation. It is the ability to put oneself in the place of others and recognize that other individuals may have points of view different from one's own (Johnson, 1975). Perspective-taking can broaden a person's understanding and awareness of the daily oppression and inequality that people of color encounter.

Setting goals to improve someone's job performance can be adapted to diversity training by asking participants to set specific, measurable, and challenging yet attainable goals related to diversity in the workplace (Lindsey, King, Membere, & Cheung, 2017). Setting goals encourages individuals to step out of their comfort zone, and encounter new experiences.

Design Form and Operation

Participants from the survey, interview, and co-design process were recruited through their Miami email accounts. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the prototype was virtually tested through Zoom. Based on the structure of the prototype and the use of the perspective-taking technique, the test encouraged dialogue and sharing of perspectives, experiences, and emotions. The intervention's learning goals were based on Bloom's Taxonomy framework which consists of six major categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and

evaluation (Armstrong, 2010). This framework believes knowledge and understanding is necessary for putting learned skills and abilities into practice.

The modern diversity program developed for this research, “Cultural Conversations,” is a virtual or in-person program that is guided by a trained employee leader that follows a templated lesson plan to educate employees on how to be culturally conscious. This model uses intergroup dialogue, perspective-taking, and goal-setting techniques to prompt participants to imagine themselves in another person’s shoes, listen to others’ experiences, and establish empathy toward others, with the goal for this program to be a meaningful and lasting learning experience. Conversations range in topics such as cultural consciousness, bias training, importance and history of allies, racial injustice and social movements, current world events, institutional racism, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, current Miami Events, cultural celebrations, and continued progression.

“Cultural Conversations” is a 12-month employee-required program to encourage conversations about race, culture, and inequality in a safe and controlled environment. Because all employees are brand ambassadors, this required program will prepare them to be culturally conscious colleagues, leaders, and global citizens. Employees will be divided into a “Culture Crew” consisting of 8-10 people from across campus.

A trained volunteer leader, known as a “Culture Captain,” will facilitate the monthly Cultural Conversation. Each “Culture Crew” is a stratified sample of employees, classified, unclassified staff, and faculty. The stratified sampling will ensure diversity of race, ethnicity, and background among “Culture Crew” members. Any employees hired after the launch of Cultural Conversations will be assigned a “Culture Crew” quarterly. The Cultural Conversations team is located within the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, which conducts “Culture Captain” training, assigns employees to “Culture Crews”, conducts participant surveys and addresses any concerns with “Culture Captains”.

The “Culture Captains” are certified employees recruited across campus to guide “Culture Crews” in their culturally conscious journey. University employees will be notified of the opportunity to become a “Culture Captain” through a university-wide email and post on MyMiami, the university’s employee portal. Employees who express interest in becoming a “Culture Captain” will be required to participate in a five-day training on the university's “Cultural Conversations” initiative. Once they have completed the required training, the title “Culture Captain” will be added to their job title and responsibilities, to ensure this important activity is adapted to their current workload. In return for their leadership and time commitment, Captains will receive professional development funds from the university for training and subsequent sessions. The user flow and logistical process is visually explained in Figure 1.

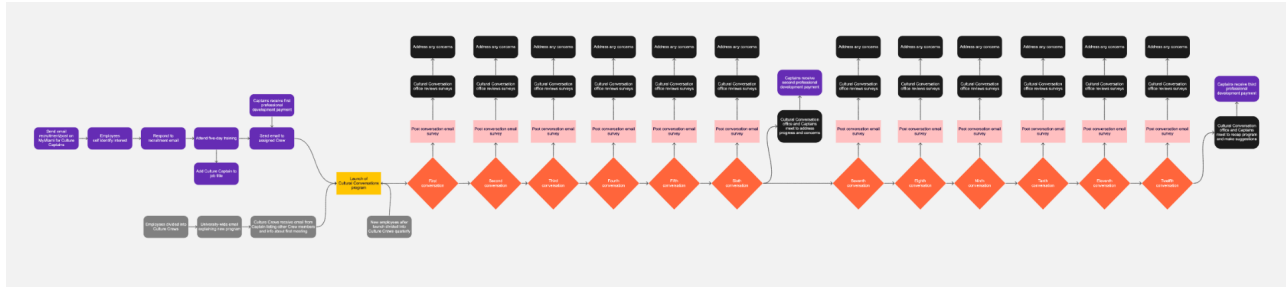
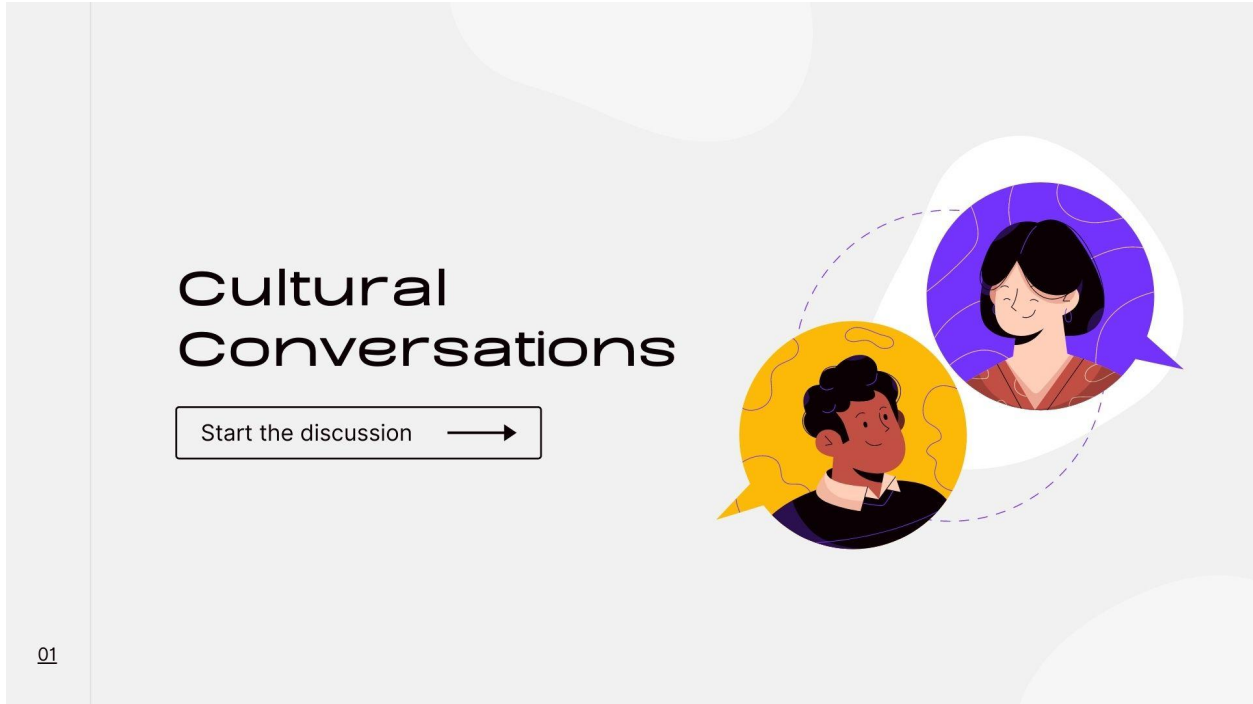
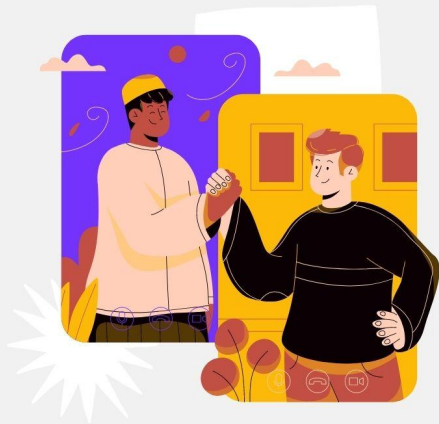


Figure 1. Cultural Conversations logistical process

Ivouma N. Onyeador stated, while “in training, it is important not to assume that everyone in the audience is a potential perpetrator of prejudice, but acknowledge that some people are targets” (Carter, Lewis, & Ngozi Onyeador, 2021). It is important to reiterate this statement throughout training, since crew members are vulnerable while sharing and discussing challenging topics. During the sessions, participants will be given the option to complete a survey to give feedback on the program and Captains, to ensure they are effectively leading and providing a safe environment. If there is any misconduct, participants can report an incident by online form or in person. Below is the overview presentation of the program.





What **is** "Cultural Conversations"?

Miami University is reinventing itself to become a global brand and institution for faculty, staff, and students to thrive, no matter their race, culture, or background.

"Cultural Conversations" is a 12-month, employee required initiative to encourage conversations about race, culture, and inequality.

All employees are brand ambassadors. This initiative will prepare them to be culturally conscious leaders.

02



How does the initiative **work**?

Employees will be divided into a **Culture Crew** consisting of 8-10 people from across campus. A trained leader "Culture Captain", will help facilitate the monthly Cultural Conversations.

Each Culture Crew is a stratified sample of employees (classified, unclassified staff, and faculty). The stratified sampling will ensure diversity of race, ethnicity, and background among Culture Crew members.

Employees hired after the launch of Cultural Conversations, will be assigned a Culture Crew quarterly.



03



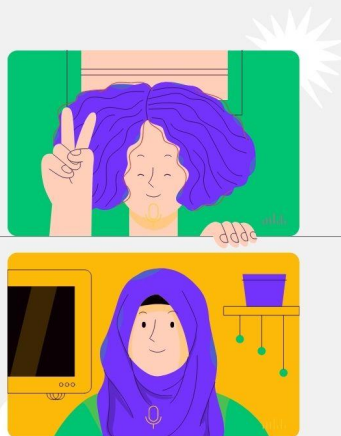


Who are Culture Captains?

Culture Captains (Captains) are certified employees recruited across campus to guide Culture Crews in their culturally conscious journey.

Captains will participate in a five-day training on the university's Cultural Conversations initiative. In return for their leadership and time commitment, they will receive compensation for training and subsequent sessions.

04



What makes this training different?

Monthly Conversations are guided by Captains using intergroup dialogue and an ongoing course schedule.

- Conversations use perspective-taking and goal-setting techniques
 - prompting participants to imagine themselves in someone else's shoes to make a more impactful and lasting learning experience.

05



Conversation 1: Introduction

- Building relationships with your crew
- Why is diversity and inclusion important at Miami?
- Getting comfortable with discomfort
- Setting ground rules for positive group discussion

+ Set monthly Culture Crew goal

06



Conversation 2: Cultural consciousness

- Monthly goal discussion
- Cultural differences and commonalities
- Unpacking privilege and oppression

+ Set monthly goal

Conversation 3: Bias training

- Monthly goal discussion
- Talk about conscious bias (explicit bias), unconscious bias (implicit bias) and microaggression.
- Dialogue about real world examples in the classroom or workplace.

+ Set monthly goal

07



Conversation 4: Importance/ history of allies

- Monthly goal discussion
- What is an ally?
- Allyship is active anti-racism
- How allies support social movements

+ Set monthly goal

Conversation 5: Racial injustice and social movements

- Monthly goal discussion
- Segregation and Jim Crow laws
- Civil Rights movement and Freedom Summer
- Current social movements and #BlackLivesMatters

+ Set monthly goal

08



Conversation 6: Current world events

- Monthly goal discussion
- Review and discuss current events

+ Set monthly goal

Conversation 7: Institutional racism

- Monthly goal discussion
- Institutional racism and pay inequality, discriminatory hiring and promotion practices
- How to become an inclusive workplace

+ Set monthly goal

09



Conversation 8: Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

- Monthly goal discussion
- History of the Miami Tribe
- Relationship between the Miami Tribe and Miami University
- Efforts of the Myaamia Center

+ Set monthly goal

Conversation 9: Current Miami events

- Monthly goal discussion
- Review and discuss current events
- Creating content for crew led conversation

+ Brainstorm conversation
topics for conversation 11

10

Conversation 10: Cultural celebrations

- Select conversation topic
- Why are cultural celebrations important?
- Respecting cultural celebrations
- Miami sponsored celebrations
- Celebration calendar and resources

+ Set monthly goal



Conversation 11: Crew Content

- Monthly goal discussion
- Set by crew

+ Set monthly goal

11

Conversation 12: Continued progression

- Monthly goal discussion
- Tangible accountability
- How and when to report an incident to Miami
- Looking back



“In training, it is important not to assume that everyone in the audience is a potential perpetrator of prejudice, but acknowledge that some people are targets.”

— Ivouma N. Onyeador

12

What is being cultural conscious?

Cultural consciousness is a lifelong journey to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures. Cultural consciousness requires:

- A basic understanding of your own culture
- A willingness to learn about the cultural practices and worldview of others
- A positive outlook toward cultural differences and a readiness to accept and respect those differences (Preemptive Love, 2020)



13



Why is it important at Miami?

- Miami is a global brand and is preparing students to be contributing global citizens
- Miami strives to be a model of inclusivity
- Working with people from different cultures and backgrounds expands effectiveness, creativity, and innovation within the workplace
- Miami seeks to create a safe workplace regardless of culture or background (Enhancing Cultural Competence)



14

Design Intervention Development Process

This intervention was directed by existing research and techniques. Research on intergroup dialogue (IGD) shows that technique fosters honest and educational dialogue to build an understanding of people from different backgrounds. These dialogues began with socio-political issues such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Peace Movement, the Feminist Movement, the Gay Rights Movement, and the Disability Rights Movement (Maxwell, K. & Thompson, M, 2017). The IGD technique has been adapted to promoting understanding of racial inequality and oppression within workplaces. Within group discussions, participants are enabled to explore their social identities and critically examine structural inequities, develop meaningful cross-identity relationships, and apply content and process learning to promote alliance building and social action (Ford, 2018). IGD has been proven to work based on a multi-university study (Gurin, Nagda, & Zúñiga, 2013), where data indicated a number of attitudinal and behavioral changes in participants, including increased self-reflexivity about issues of power and privilege, heightened awareness of the institutionalization of race and racism in the U.S., improved cross-racial interaction, diminished fear about race-related conflict, and increased participation in social change actions during and after college (Ford, 2018). This previous research and proven results were instrumental while developing a solution that could make an impact at MU.

Research has found that perspective-taking has been a successful technique to build empathy toward people of other cultures and backgrounds. One study had participants write a few sentences imagining the challenges marginalized members might face. Results found that participants had an improved pro-diversity attitude and behavioral intentions toward people of different backgrounds and cultures (Lindsey, King, Membere, & Cheung, 2017). These results

indicated that the perspective-taking technique, combined with IGD, would foster positive conversations about challenges and assumptions.

Lastly, adding a goal-setting element into diversity training creates an opportunity for lasting or increased information retention after training sessions have concluded (Latham, 1997). Goals have been found to have a positive effect on people by driving motivation and guiding behavior (Locke and Latham 1990). This information has led me to believe that setting a collective group goal would likely build understanding and bond between participants when creating shared or similar experiences.

Research Design

The prototype, Cultural Conversations, was guided by Bloom's Taxonomy framework to test the learning of the focus group. The three participants began by completing a pre-training audit, gauging their own cultural competency. They used the scale: 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neutral, 4-disagree, 5-strongly disagree, to determine where they excelled or had room for improvement. The following 14 prompts were used in both the pre-training and post-training audits:

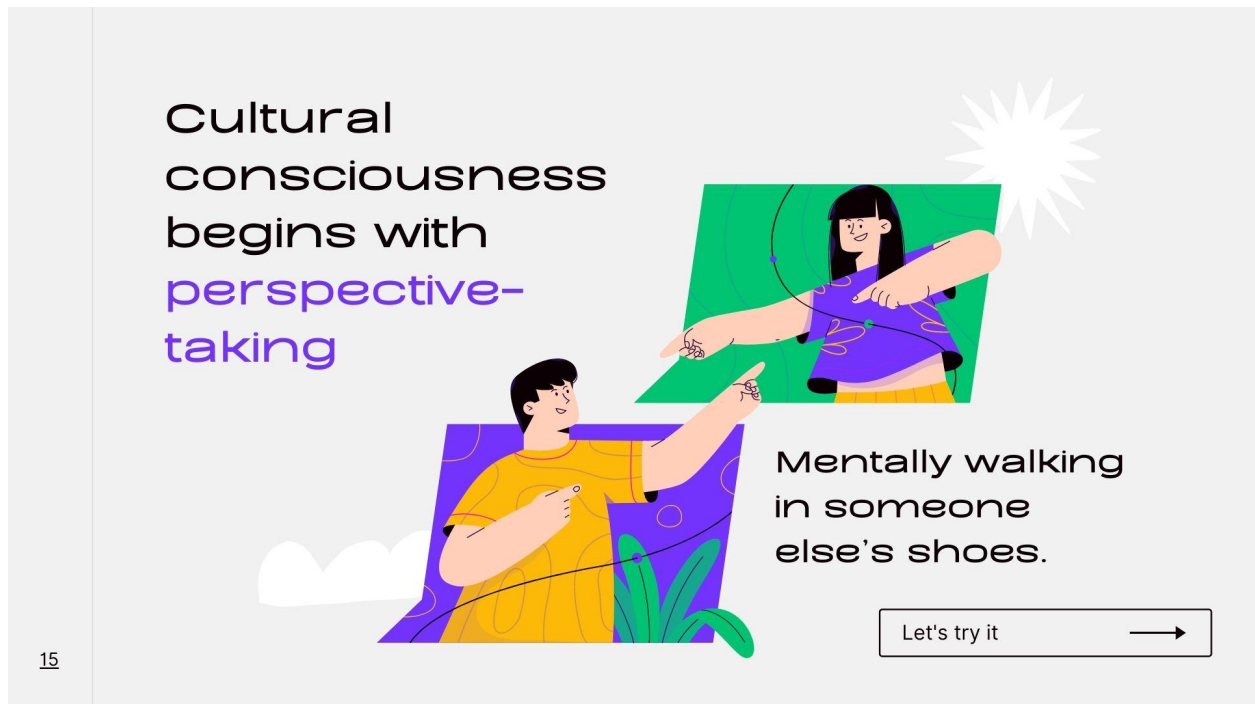
- "I am willing to learn about the cultural practices and worldviews of others.
- I have a positive outlook toward cultural differences, and I accept and respect those differences."
- I try to relate to the values and concerns of other cultures.
- I ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings, projects, or programs.
- I actively avoid using and believing stereotypes.
- I work to prevent imposing my beliefs and value systems on people from different cultures and backgrounds.
- I am likely to address insensitive comments or behaviors made in the workplace.
- I try to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds.
- I respect differing cultural norms that may influence communication styles.
- I respect differing cultural norms that may influence how someone deals with conflict.
- I respect differing cultural norms that may influence working styles.
- I respect differing cultural norms that may influence decision-making styles
- I respect differing cultural norms that may influence attitudes about expressing emotion and personal matters
- I respect differing cultural norms that may influence approaches.

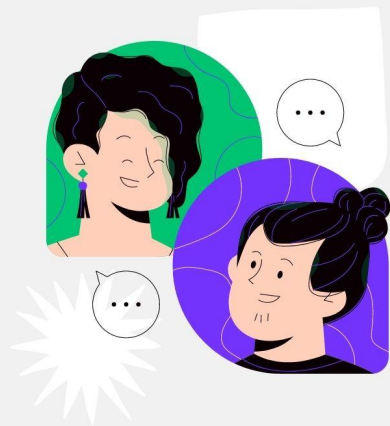
After completing the audit, the sessions begin with a short lesson and progress into a guided group discussion. Members were asked questions about cultural consciousness and then prompted to think how they would feel in someone else's shoes. The questions were as follows:

- Do you ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings, projects, or programs?
 - How would you feel if you were excluded?
- Do you use inclusive language?
 - How would you feel if some used language that excluded your identity?
- Do you actively avoid stereotypes?
 - How would you feel if someone believed stereotypes about your culture?
- Do you try to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds?

- How would you feel if no one tried to learn about your culture or background?
- Do you try relating to the values and concerns as other cultures?
 - How would you feel if your values were overlooked?
- Do you avoid using slang?
 - How would you feel if you didn't understand your co-workers?

Below are images from the presentation that led conversations about cultural consciousness.





Use perspective-taking to **better** your work environment.

16



Q: Do you ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings, projects, or programs?

P: How would you feel if you were excluded?

Q: Do you use inclusive language?

P: How would you feel if some used language that excluded your identity?

Q: Do you actively avoid stereotypes?

P: How would you feel if someone believed stereotypes about your culture?

Q: Do you try to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds?

P: How would you feel if no one tried to learn about your culture or background?

Q: Do you try relating to the values and concerns of other cultures?

P: How would you feel if your values were overlooked?

Q: Do you avoid using slang?

P: How would you feel if you didn't understand your co-workers?

17

Secondly, participants are provided six categories of social norms. They are encouraged to discuss with their crew members, first-hand experiences where your social norm did not match your co-workers. How did the interaction unfold? Would you approach the situation differently? The categories were:

Communication styles

- Language (formal, slang)

- Non-verbal communication (eye contact, gestures)
- Tone expressed (assertive, authoritative, analytical, direct, passive)

Decision-making styles

- Team
- Delegating
- Consultative
- Autocratic

Dealing with conflict

- Positive or negative
- Face-to-face or less direct methods of resolution

Expressing emotions and personal matters

- Variations in comfort level in disclosure (willingness to talk about self or relationships)
- Need for privacy or preference for openness
- Inclusion of emotion or personal issues in decisions

Working styles

- Positive or negative
- Face-to-face or less direct methods of resolution

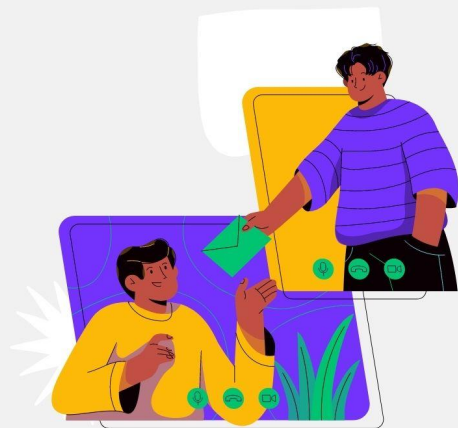
Processing information

- Analytical (head, thinking) or intuitive (heart, feeling)
- Statistics, facts, and science; or symbols, stories, and spirit

Next, participants were asked, “how could the university improve its cultural consciousness?”

- In what ways could the university better acknowledge the experiences, beliefs, values, and norms of MU community's cultural groups?
- In what ways could the university adopt policies and practices to assure safety, equal rights, and respect for all regardless of culture or background?
- How could university leadership (executive leaders, department heads, managers, and supervisors) prioritize cultural consciousness and inclusion?
- How can the university encourage curiosity and a commitment to learning about other cultures?

Below are images from the presentation that led conversations about other cultural norms.



Consider the possibilities of other cultural norms.

18



Communication styles

- Language (formal, slang)
- Non-verbal communication (eye contact, gestures)
- Tone expressed (assertive, authoritative, analytical, direct, passive)

Decision-making styles

- Team
- Delegating
- Consultative
- Autocratic

Dealing with conflict

- Positive or negative
- Face-to-face or less direct methods of resolution

Expressing emotions and personal matters

- Variations in comfort level in disclosure (willingness to talk about self or relationships)
- Need for privacy or preference for openness
- Inclusion of emotion or personal issues in decisions

Working styles

- Orientation toward the task (focus on getting things done)
- Orientation towards relationships (focus on how people are feeling)

Processing information

- Analytical (head, thinking) or intuitive (heart, feeling)
- Statistics, facts, and science; or symbols, stories, and spirit

19

At the end of the session, crew members determined a collective goal for every member to focus on until the next meeting. The goal will be the same for each member but can be done individually. At the beginning of the next conversation, team members will dialogue and reflect on similar or different experiences, hopefully leading to increased allyship and desire to affect social change. Below are images from the presentation that led discussions into establishing a crew goal.

Goal setting

Aim to improve diversity in the workplace

Let's try it →

22

Set a monthly goal with your crew.

Advocate for expectations for cultural consciousness in job descriptions

Review and eliminate prejudice and discrimination in department policies and practices

Join the Miami mentorship program

Complete Miami's Green Zone and/or Safe Zone training

Research other cultures, customs and histories

Watch documentaries on racism to better understand systemic racism

Attend Miami's DEI events and/or rally/march in your community or on campus

→

23

After these discussions, they completed the post-training audit, consisting of the same questions from the pre-training audit, to self-determine if they made progress in their cultural competency. These responses will only be seen by that individual, and the organizers of the Cultural Conversations program to use for evaluation of the program and level of learning.

Research Question

How can a modern diversity program use intergroup dialogue and training techniques such as perspective-taking and goal setting to educate university employees about DEI and build a culture of allyship within the workplace?

Setting and Sample

Participants from the survey, interview, and co-design process were recruited through their Miami email accounts. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the prototype was virtually tested through Zoom. Based on the structure of the prototype and the use of the perspective-taking technique, the test encouraged dialogue and sharing of perspectives, experiences, and emotions.

Participants

The test group consisted of three women who work in different departments and positions at Miami University. The participants had completed at least one form of my primary research, either survey, interview, or the co-design process. All three identify as women of color and did not know each other.

Data Collection

Data was collected quantitatively by completing a pre-training and post-training audit. The focus group discussion was recorded on video and transcribed.

Focus group

Participants took part in a one-hour session that used modern training techniques in intergroup dialogue, perspective-taking, and goal setting. The following quotes are derived from the dialogue between participants in response to six prompts.

In response to the first prompt, “Do you ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings and projects? How would you feel if you were excluded?” participants had the following discussion:

Participant 1: “I think sometimes people just have a natural tendency to hang out or gravitate towards relationships with like-minded people. There are times that they informally discuss things that are applicable across the entire staff. At these informal discussions, they end up making decisions even though everyone should have been in the know or at the table. This blur of friendships and colleagues blur the line and can exclude people from the discussion process.”

Participant 2: [In response to Participant 1’s quote above.] “Yeah, when I’ve seen that happen, it causes strife if it’s not named and dealt with right away. I appreciate how [Participant 1] named it, strife. If it isn’t dealt with, and the lack of having everyone’s

input creates a higher and higher barrier between people. When that has happened to me, it makes me feel like there are greater places that my input is not wanted, or that I'm being uninvited intentionally, whether that's due to happenstance, or whether that's due to gender or any of the other reasons that can happen to us; gender, race, culture, socio-economic status, ability or etc. I think sometimes that has greater consequences than we would think, it's just a group of people who are chit-chatting about work, and don't think about how far that can get out of hand. The other thing I wanted to say is I'm aware of a situation that did not happen to me, but where there was a group of people that were making assumptions about what people would like to do to have fun. And the particular division, they decided that they would all go and socialize centered around alcohol. And did it find a way to include the people who were uncomfortable by that and when someone identified and said, I'm not comfortable socializing with alcohol, and this is a work required event and the person, the lead individual said something to the effect of, well, you're really not one of us if you're not going to come party with us? And that sent a very clear message to that individual that they have to share with me that, "Yeah, they're not considered one of them because of their cultural tradition to not consume alcohol."

Participant 3: [In response to Participant 2's quote above.] "Yeah, both [Participant 1] and [Participant 2]'s comments make me think just how much I don't know. Sometimes we get used to our condition to just not being included and don't even necessarily think about it being a slight, necessarily or even that you know, unintended consequences or unconscious bias that might be behind it. I feel like that happens a lot at work. In terms of, you know, people starting a conversation with each other. And then, you know, like [participant name] said, it's kind of like some of the folks that are the ones that speak with each other the most end up together and speaking, and then all of a sudden, some decisions have been made, and other people are not in it."

The second prompt, "Do you try relating to values and concerns of other cultures? And how would you feel if your values were overlooked?" began the following discussion:

Facilitator: "[Participant 2] brought up an example of people that do not consume alcohol and assume that everyone does. If it's a required work event, how uncomfortable that would make someone feel."

Participant 3:[In response to the facilitator's quote above.] "Right, and that situation doesn't even take into account if someone is an alcoholic, or, regularly goes to Alcoholics Anonymous, and should not be around those kinds of situations."

Participant 2: "I would say as a person who practices a minority religion, that can be problematic in terms of celebrations that aren't intended to be dominant to want to the majority religion in this country. It's something I've dealt with, I can't remember a time I didn't deal with it. And that's just being a minority with other kinds of privilege that I try to recognize. But sometimes it feels sometimes I work hard to remember that people are not trying to make me feel not included, unrecognized, or unacknowledged, they really just want to share in a holiday. "

Participant 3: [In response to Participant 2's quote above.] "I feel like I do try to consider other cultures, but I fail sometimes. It'll be something that I'm like, oh, wow, I didn't consider that at all, you know, that, you know, perhaps someone can't come to an event because of a holiday. I feel like for the most part, I do attempt to kind of see things from other people's perspectives and I will speak up if something arises and I feel like other people are not taking those things into consideration. You know, could be as simple as you know, we've kind of revised our policies for people coming into the Goggin Ice Center. We were talking about rewording how many guests they can have. And I was surrounded by people who kept wanting to say, you know, their parents can come, they can have two parents, and it just kept, you know, it's just parents, and I'm like, not everyone is coming with their parents. You know, sometimes it's a grandparent. Not everyone's family is the same. But, um, so you know, just helping them word it like, you know, parent or guardian."

Facilitator: [In response to Participant 2's quote above.] "I feel like I'm very conscious that not everyone celebrates Christmas, but not so much Easter. I don't know, like, that just doesn't automatically come to my mind. But of course, if you don't celebrate Christmas, then you don't celebrate Easter. So I think that's something that I could personally work on."

Participant 1: "I do appreciate colleagues, hypersensitivity, and this air of cultural consciousness. They have been more aware of the little things that they would say, and like, automatically correct themselves, or kind of like taking a step back and saying, like, 'Oh, I'm sorry. I said something at a meeting and like, I need to jump back and just apologize because I can see where that comment might have offended you.' Um, so I can appreciate that on behalf of other colleagues, we're getting better at it. And I think it's just a matter of creating spaces where you don't feel like, like, it's an educational moment versus like, I'm going to pounce on you because you said something wrong."

Participant 3: "The only thing I would say that I've noticed about the Miami community is that especially in all that's happened in 2020, and especially after the killing of George Floyd, people say, 'I'm not racist, don't accuse me of that.' I was having a conversation with someone about the DEI efforts on the task force and he said, 'well, I just get so fed up with people trying to accuse me.' I said, 'no one is accusing you, but it is important to know that having a different perspective is ok, but also they should recognize that there are people who are threatened just because of appearance. It's not about accusations, but we need to be aware of just how dire this is for other people. And I think it's so hard to set aside our own feelings of being judged as a person with the privilege of being white."

The third prompt asked for the participant to, "Share a time that maybe you misjudged someone or you felt misjudged for the way you communicate. How did the interaction unfold? How would you approach the situation differently?" Participants answered:

Participant 1: "Working in the career area, I think there's like definite communication styles that are preferred when engaging with employers and trying to work with students

from other cultures to assimilate to the business culture of America can be really difficult. And so coaching the students on posture, eye contact, especially when it's like, you know, a gender-related situation, and you know, their culture traditionally does not, like keep eye contact with a woman and they're male. Talking through those kinds of cultural norms with the students. Like, I kind of go back and forth, because you want to honor what is comfortable to them, and you want them to bring their culture and their identity to the table. But I think it's difficult when trying to mesh that with either the Miami culture or the business culture. I almost feel like I'm trying to, like dissuade a student from bringing their authentic self because I want them to, like make a good impression when they speak, with an employer.”

Facilitator: [In response to Participant 1’s quote above.] “I would have never thought about this sort of situation, and how that could be challenging to try to implement, especially in a job interview situation.”

Participant 3: “It's been a while since I took the bias training, but I thought I remember that our brains are kind of automatically trying to categorize people from the moment we start talking to them. At some point I'm sure I fall into the same trap, I guess when I hear people talk, and don't use English the way I do, because they use slang or have an accent or something”.

Another cultural norm is working styles, i.e., if someone likes to work singularly or they like to work as a collective. In response to the prompt, “Is there a time that you felt that you could approach? So is there a time that you differed in working styles from someone else? Is there something that you could have approached differently? How did something unfold? How did you resolve it?” Participants stated:

Participant 2: “I think this is an important question, especially for situations where people work in open workspaces, especially if they're small, open workspaces. The team that I'm on, prior to COVID, there are four of us in a room where it is probably eight feet. It's a very small square space. So how people work has a big impact on one another. So it's something where I think you need sometimes it's a good thing to bring up and just kind of have a routine way that you bring it up, you know, every quarter, let's talk about are we going to shift this or we're gonna be chatty one part of the day and not another part of the day where if you want to be chatty, be in a different physical space, or something because it can be challenging when styles don't mesh.”

Participant 1: “It’s just something that I think is interesting to explore, just in terms of work style and what you bring to work. I saw a thread on Facebook, someone had posted anonymously to like people working in a college environment, higher education scenario. And they said, do you feel like a lot of the university like, messages are more progressive, and when you know that, like in your work environment, for example, you need to be supportive of LGBTQ+ students, but in your personal life, you don't, how do you like reconcile that? And I just thought that was an interesting juxtaposition, then people may feel like they have to act one way in this work environment in order to get the work done, but may not feel that way.”

The final perspective-taking questions are, “How could the university improve its cultural consciousness? How could the university encourage curiosity and commitment to learning about other cultures? Do you think there's a way that they could do that better? What are some things that you've experienced?” Participants responded:

Participant 1: “Thinking of early on, when Miami made a conscious decision to recruit more international students, I felt like there was a movement amongst different departments to do some educational sessions around the pronunciation of student names. They also made an effort to understand what it is like to come to America. I personally found it interesting to watch videos from the students and what their perception was, and what they wanted to get from the learning environment. I know that was specifically directed at faculty and staff, but I also wish that some education was a part of the students’ experience and that forefront because the student experience probably causes the most strife when it comes to feel belonging to the campus.”

Participant 3: “It seems like the million-dollar question, which is what prompted the task forces and the commitment to just trying to move the needle on campus. Our campus, and especially our student body is just so homogenous. They come here because of that. People want to be around people that are just like them. So, I guess, you know, increasing diversity on campus, because once you have more diversity, then you can have more educational opportunities for people to get to know people of other backgrounds and cultures.”

Participant 3: “We just need to get more diversity on campus, and it can be really subtle. I visited Ohio University's campus three years ago and was in a coffee shop, just sitting watching students walk by, and I was just amazed. I was like, wow, it's not so much that there's diversity and you know, skin color, but just the difference in the students the way they looked. They had piercings, and tattoos, and people that were dressing differently. I was amazed that they're not all wearing the same clothes. That was kind of like an awakening for me”.

Participant 2: “I think the university needs to find some means to do more. It's nice if you're welcoming to everybody, especially where one POC is the only diverse staff member in the department. Those employees don't stay more than, I can tell you the number of months for the particular department, and they've all reported to one particular individual. So it's very hard to nurture our diverse students when faculty and staff were just not there. The people who continually leave just happened to be minorities in one of the various ways. There seems to be no willingness to do anything about it, or maybe the ones who could do something about it have noticed, or maybe they don't feel they're empowered to.”

Finally, the group discussed possible collective goals. They determined a few ideas that could be considered by themselves or others. The ideas are:

Participant 3: “I like the idea of a mentoring mentorship program, but I also feel like I don't necessarily have time to do anything.”

Participant 3: “I feel good about when I can sign up for one of the webinars or workshops that are being offered. Like I get that from the Miami Alumni email. They talk about upcoming presentations that are happening. One was ‘Are you as woke as you think you are?’”

Participant 1: “I recently participated in AAAFSA (Asian/Asian American Faculty and Staff Association) networking program with the undergraduate student organization. I was really excited about that because I like the idea of bringing together the community, because I think, especially in this COVID time, we haven't had that opportunity as much. I thought the discussions were great. So I appreciate that conversation and hope to continue in that type of engagement, specifically with students to help support their endeavors.”

Data Analysis

Focus group data was analyzed by myself through transcription of discussion and coding themes.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the focus group indicated that participants self-identified as more culturally conscious after completing the sample training. The following themes emerged from the conversation from the focus group:

Clique Culture

The Miami work culture operates like a clique; participants are excluded because they are not in the “popular” group. The group often makes decisions based on conversations that not everyone was included in. Participants are so used to not being included they do not even necessarily think about it as a slight, but there are unintended consequences or unconscious bias that might be behind the action.

Trying to be inclusive allies

Participants shared that they have tried their best to be inclusive, and when they make a mistake they learn from the situation. They also know that everyone makes mistakes, and appreciate when colleagues stop and correct themselves or later apologize for their comments or actions. It shows that their colleagues are trying to be more culturally aware and make people feel comfortable in the workplace.

Assumptions leading to strife

Religious and cultural assumptions have led participants to struggle with being excluded. Their work environments have made them feel ignored or less than other colleagues.

Conclusions

How can a modern diversity program use intergroup dialogue and training techniques such as perspective-taking and goal setting to educate university employees about DEI and build a culture of allyship within the workplace?

Based on the conversations within the focus group, participants gained understanding or saw situations in a new perspective. They were able to empathize with each other and build conversations from the prompts. From the results of pre and post self audits slightly improved their understanding of cultural consciousness or realized that they are doing a better job than they originally thought.

Discussion

The “Cultural Conversations” prototype shows the importance of discussion and learning from other people’s perspectives, experiences, and cultures. Through IGD, perspective-taking, and goal setting, participants were able to empathize and hear about other experiences from across campus. Hearing from employees from across the university brought to light the common struggles divisions, departments, and offices experience as well as, building new relationships with employees from other parts of the university.

Suggestions for Future Research, Testing, and Design

Suggestions for future testing would be to test on a cohort of employees that more accurately represent the makeup of the Miami population. The participants in this focus group were POC and self-reported themselves to already have a high sense of cultural consciousness, to begin with.

Based on recent discoveries of a new intergroup dialogue program that is being rolled at Miami, I would suggest joining forces with this initiative. They also use intergroup dialogue, but it could benefit from including Miami specific content, such as the relationship between the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and the connection to Freedom Summer, a voter registration drive sponsored by civil rights organizations that took place on what is now Miami’s campus in 1964 (Celebrating Freedom). The intergroup dialogue program is not required, which misses the opportunity to reach the employees who could benefit.

Chapter 7: Design Research Conclusions and Discussion

Introduction

This research revealed the current workplace culture, oppressions that employees of color face, and the need for a culture of allyship at MU. The findings of this study could be applied to other higher education institutions to improve workplace culture for underrepresented populations.

Summary of Project Findings

The findings of this research project revealed the following:

- The work culture at MU perpetuates inequality, exclusion, and a hostile work environment.
- Employees of color want colleagues and university leadership to recognize that race is an issue.
- Employees want better and timely communication from the university leadership when issues arise.
- There needs to be a centralized message, direction from university leadership, and an unified training program.
- Conversations about race seem to turn political, so people avoid talking about it at work.
- MU needs to educate students and all employees about race issues.
- White employees feel they do not know enough to engage in discussions about racial injustice effectively.
- Allies are essential and have played crucial roles in past and current social movements.
- MU should help facilitate discussions, share educational resources, offer training, etc.
- Employees want more accessible resources available to both faculty and staff.
- IGD, perspective-taking, and goal setting effectively made an impact on participants' understanding of cultural consciousness.

Conclusion

Research shows that systemic oppression can not be dismantled just by the oppressed but requires support, education, and action from allies. Since many white people feel that they do not know enough to engage in discussions about racial injustice, it is essential to create an education program in the workplace. Based on the importance and sensitivity of the topic, innovative and modern techniques have to be used to make a lasting impact.

Discussion

The “Cultural Conversations” prototype demonstrated that participants had the ability to grow greater understanding and empathy toward people from different cultures and backgrounds. IGD and perspective-taking allowed for discussion, connection, and validation with other participants.

Using collective goal setting allows for continued learning outside of the workplace and gives the opportunity for participants to share similar experiences with other crew members.

Suggestions for Future Research

Further research is necessary to replicate and expand on the findings of this study. A larger and more accurate representation of the university employees' would allow for a deeper understanding of issues or struggles that could arise in the "Cultural Conversations" program.

Further development of the courses is needed to test a full cohort of employees. As current events happen, it is important to regularly add topics of discussion to ensure the best possible learning.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Survey Questions

1. I feel that Miami University is creating an environment for racial minorities to succeed?
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
2. My department, division, or college within Miami University is dedicated to diversity and inclusion.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
3. How much of a priority is diversity and inclusion to your direct manager?
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Somewhat not important
 - Not important
4. How much of a priority is it to yourself?
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Somewhat not important
 - Not important
5. I am satisfied with the culture at my workplace.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
6. Miami University operates in a socially responsible way.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - N/A
7. Miami University positively impacts people's lives.
 - Strongly disagree

- Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - N/A
8. How concerned are you about the impact of racism on you, personally?
- Very concerned
 - Concerned
 - Somewhat concerned
 - Not concerned
9. How concerned are you about the impact of racism at Miami University?
- Very concerned
 - Concerned
 - Somewhat concerned
 - Not concerned
10. What are the top three challenges you are facing when it relates to racism?
- My physical safety outside of work
 - My psychological safety outside of work
 - The economic impact of racial bias in the workplace (pay inequality, job security)
 - My colleagues don't know enough to engage in discussions about racial injustice effectively.
 - I don't know enough to engage in a discussion about racial injustice effectively.
 - My physical safety inside of work
 - My psychological safety inside of work
 - Microaggressions from team members
 - I do not face any racial injustice or challenges.
11. Have you had conversations about race at work?
- Yes
 - No
12. At work, with whom have you had conversations about race?
- Colleagues
 - Managers
 - Executives
 - Other
13. How do you feel after having these conversations?
- Very positive
 - Somewhat positive
 - Neither positive nor negative
 - Somewhat negative
 - Very negative
14. Do you feel comfortable bringing up topics related to race with the following? On a scale of 1-5 (1 is low and five is high)
- Executive
 - Human Resources
 - Manager
 - Reports

- Colleagues
15. What could help you with facing challenges related to racial injustice/racism?
 16. What can Miami University do to help with the challenges you face related to racial injustice/racism?
 17. I have heard of the term “ally” or “allyship”?
 - Yes
 - No
 - If yes, what does it mean to you?
 18. I have coworkers or colleagues that share the same ideas about allyship? (For this research, allyship is the practice of emphasizing social justice, inclusion, and human rights for members of a racial minority. Allyship in the workplace is broad but can include structured bias training for staff, policies that hire diverse candidates for teams.)
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 19. I feel that I have a positive working relationship with my co-workers.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 20. I feel that my coworkers treat each other with respect.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 21. I can count on getting useful advice on your career; or have a mentor within the university?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
 22. Have you mentored a junior coworker?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
 23. I have felt that my race or ethnicity has played a role in missing a raise, promotion, lead a project, or chance to get ahead?
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 24. I think Miami University is doing enough to bring racial diversity?

- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral/Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
25. Does Miami University offer diversity training programs?
- Yes
 - No
 - N/A
26. Would you be willing to complete a co-design session to share more about racial injustice and building a culture of allyship workplace?
- Yes
 - No

For statistical purposes only

- a. What is your gender identity?
- Male/man
 - Female/Woman
 - Nonbinary
 - Other
- b. What best describes your race/ethnicity?
- American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Black or African American
 - East Asian
 - Chicano/a, Hispanic, or Latina/o/x
 - Middle Eastern
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - South Asian
 - White
 - Other
- c. What is your job role?
- Leadership
 - Executive
 - Middle-level management
 - First-level management
 - Senior staff
 - Intermediate staff
 - Associate staff
 - Faculty
 - Other
- d. How long have you worked at the university?
- 1-5
 - 6-10
 - 11-25
 - 2

Appendix II: Interview Questions

Before we start, could you remind me again:

What is your job title?

1. Have you always been in this role? If not, what other positions have you held?
2. How long have you worked at the university?

Do you identify as a member of a racial minority population?

Allyship:

3. Have you heard of the term “ally” or “allyship”? If yes, what does “allyship” mean to you? (For this research, I have defined allyship as the practice of emphasizing social justice, inclusion, and human rights for members of a racial minority. Allyship in the workplace is broad but can include structured bias training for staff, policies that hire diverse candidates for teams, etc..)
4. Do you think allies are important? If so, why?
5. Do you feel that you have coworkers or colleagues that share the same ideas about allyship?
 - a. Do you have a positive working relationship with these co-workers despite their views?
6. Do you feel your work environment fosters positive, supportive, and inclusion toward racial minorities?
7. What do you think creates a positive work environment for racial minorities?
 - a. Does your work environment reflect this? Is there something, in particular, your workplace does well?
8. What do you think creates a hostile work environment for racial minorities?
 - a. Does your work environment reflect this? Is there something, in particular, your workplace could do better?
 - b. What kind of actions do you think should be taken to create a positive environment for racial minorities?

Discrimination:

9. Are you concerned about the impact of racism at Miami University? Please explain your stance.
10. What challenges do you face when it relates to racism at Miami University?
11. Have you had conversations about race at work? If yes, how did you feel after these conversations?
12. Have you felt that race or ethnicity has played a role in missing a raise, promotion, lead a project, or chance to get ahead at the university?

Institutional behaviors:

13. Is the practice of promoting social justice, inclusion, and human rights for members of a racial minority a priority to you?
14. Do you feel that your department, division, or college within Miami University is dedicated to social justice, inclusion, and human rights for members of a racial minority? Please explain your stance.
15. Do you think the university as a whole is dedicated to social justice, inclusion, and human rights for members of a racial minority? Please explain your stance.
16. What can our organization do to help become more inclusive toward racial minorities?
17. Does the University offer diversity training programs?

- a. Have you completed any of them?
18. Would you be interested in completing a diversity training or program? Why or why not?

Appendix III: Co-design Questions






Journaling

INSTRUCTIONS

For one week, complete the worksheet below for each workday.

1. Mark down each interaction you have or see with between other people. Use the key below and determine which shape to use, based on the type of interaction.
2. After each day, use the highlighters provided and categorize each interaction with a communication level.
3. At the end of the week, submit images of the worksheet to jessica.staubach@MiamiOH.edu.

TYPE OF INTERACTIONS

-  **Microaggressions** – verbal or behavioral indignities, intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward marginalized groups.
-  **Unconscious bias** – stereotypes that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.
-  **Discrimination/bias** – the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things.
-  **Compliance toward racism** – acknowledgment of unfair treatment, but no action is taken.
-  **Allyship** – the practice of emphasizing social justice, inclusion, and human rights by members of a minority, to advance the interests of an oppressed or marginalized group.

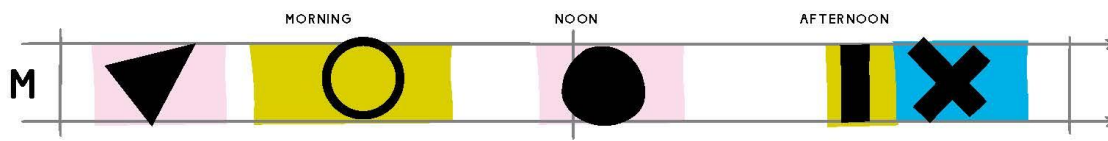
COMMUNICATION LEVEL

-  **Individual** – **within** an individual.
-  **Interpersonal** – **between** individuals.
-  **Institutional/systemic** – embedded as a **normal practice** within an organization.

SAMPLE

M

MORNING **NOON** **AFTERNOON**








NOTES Microaggression: a white coworker said "You're so articulate" to another coworker that is a person of color.

DATE 11/9/2020

Experience map

INSTRUCTIONS

Complete experience map based on one interaction that involves **allyship** from the workweek.

	AWARENESS	CONSIDERATION	DECISION	INTERACTION	POST EXPERIENCE
STEPS					
EMOTION	 _____  _____  _____  _____  _____				
THINKING					
OPPORTUNITIES					

 EXCITED
  HAPPY
  UNSURE
  SAD
  FRUSTRATION

Appendix IV: Prototype test group agenda/questions

What is "Cultural Conversations"?

Miami University is reinventing itself to become a global brand and institution for faculty, staff, and students to thrive, no matter their race, culture, or background. "Cultural Conversations" is a 12-month, employee required initiative to encourage conversations about race, culture, and inequality. All employees are brand ambassadors. This initiative will prepare them to be culturally conscious leaders

How does the initiative work?

Employees will be divided into a Culture Crew consisting of 8-10 people from across campus. A trained leader "Culture Captain", will help facilitate the monthly Cultural Conversations. Each Culture Crew is a stratified sample of employees (classified, unclassified staff, and faculty). The stratified sampling will ensure diversity of race, ethnicity, and background among Culture Crew members. Employees hired after the launch of Cultural Conversations, will be assigned a Culture Crew quarterly.

How does the program work?

Culture Captains (Captains) are certified employees recruited across campus to guide Culture Crews in their culturally conscious journey. Captains will participate in a five-day training on the university's Cultural Conversations initiative. In return for their leadership and time commitment, they will receive compensation for training and subsequent sessions.

What makes this training different?

Monthly Conversations are guided by Captains using intergroup dialogue and an ongoing course schedule. Conversations use perspective-taking and goal setting techniques prompting participants to imagine themselves in someone else's shoes to make a more impactful and lasting learning experience.

Conversation 1: Introduction

- Building relationships with each other
- Why is diversity and inclusion important at Miami?
- Getting comfortable with discomfort
- Setting ground rules for positive group discussion

+ Set monthly goal

Conversation 2: Cultural consciousness

- Monthly goal discussion
- Cultural differences and commonalities
- Unpacking privilege and oppression

+ Set monthly goal

Conversation 3: Bias training

- Monthly goal discussion
- Talk about conscious bias (explicit bias), unconscious bias (implicit bias) and microaggression.

- Dialogue about real world examples in the classroom or workplace.
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 4: Importance/history of allies

- Monthly goal discussion
 - What is an ally?
 - Allyship is active anti-racism
 - How allies support social movements
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 5: Racial injustice and social movements

- Monthly goal discussion
 - Segregation and Jim Crow laws
 - Civil Rights movement and Freedom Summer
 - Current social movements and #BlackLivesMatters
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 6: Current world events

- Monthly goal discussion
 - Review and discuss current events
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 7: Institutional racism

- Monthly goal discussion
 - Institutional racism and pay inequality, discriminatory hiring and promotion practices
 - How to become an inclusive workplace
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 8: Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

- Monthly goal discussion
 - History of the Miami Tribe
 - Relationship between the Miami Tribe and Miami University
 - Efforts of the Myaamia Center
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 9: Current Miami Events

- Monthly goal discussion
 - Review and discuss current events
 - Creating content for crew led conversation
- + Brainstorm conversation topics for conversation 11

Conversation 10: Cultural celebrations

- Select conversation topic
- Why are cultural celebrations important?
- Respecting cultural celebrations
- Miami sponsored celebrations

- Celebration calendar and resources
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 11: Crew Content

- Monthly goal discussion
 - Set by crew
- + Set monthly goal

Conversation 12: Continued progression

- Monthly goal discussion
- Tangible accountability
- How and when to report an incident to Miami
- Looking back

“It’s important that training does not assume that everyone in the audience is a potential perpetrator of prejudice, but acknowledge that some people are targets.”

— Ivouma N. Onyeador (Carter, Lewis, & Ngozi Onyeador, 2021)

Conversation 2: Cultural consciousness

What is being cultural conscious?

Cultural consciousness is a lifelong journey to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures. Cultural consciousness requires:

- A basic understanding of your own culture.
- A willingness to learn about the cultural practices and worldview of others.
- A positive outlook toward cultural differences and a readiness to accept and respect those differences (Preemptive Love, 2020)

Why is it important at Miami?

- Miami is a global brand and is preparing students to be contributing global citizens.
- Miami strives to be a model of inclusivity.
- Working with people from different cultures and backgrounds expands effectiveness, creativity, and innovation within the workplace.
- Miami seeks to create a safe workplace regardless of culture or background (Enhancing Cultural Competence).

Cultural consciousness begins with perspective-taking – mentally walking in someone else’s shoes.

Use perspective-taking to better your work environment.

Q: Do you ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings, projects, or programs?

P: How would you feel if you were excluded?

Q: Do you use inclusive language?

P: How would you feel if some used language that excluded your identity?

Q: Do you actively avoid stereotypes?

P: How would you feel if someone believed stereotypes about your culture?

Q: Do you try to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds?

P: How would you feel if no one tried to learn about your culture or background?

Q: Do you try relating to the values and concerns as other cultures?

P: How would you feel if your values were overlooked?

Q: Do you avoid using slang?

P: How would you feel if you didn't understand your co-workers?

Consider the possibilities of other cultural Norms.

Communication styles

- Language (formal, slang)
- Non-verbal communication (eye contact, gestures)
- Tone expressed (assertive, authoritative, analytical, direct, passive)

Decision-making styles

- Team
- Delegating
- Consultative
- Autocratic

Dealing with conflict

- Positive or negative
- Face-to-face or less direct methods of resolution

Expressing emotions and personal matters

- Variations in comfort level in disclosure (willingness to talk about self or relationships)
- Need for privacy or preference for openness
- Inclusion of emotion or personal issues in decisions

Working styles

- Positive or negative
- Face-to-face or less direct methods of resolution

Processing information

- Analytical (head, thinking) or intuitive (heart, feeling)
- Statistics, facts, and science; or symbols, stories, and spirit

How could the university improve its cultural consciousness?

Q: How could the university better acknowledge experiences, beliefs, values, and norms of Miami community's cultural groups?

Q: How could they adopt policies and practices to assure safety, equal rights, and respect for all regardless of culture or background?

Q: How could university leadership (executive leaders, department heads, managers, and supervisors) prioritize cultural consciousness and inclusion?

Q: How can the university encourage curiosity and a commitment to learning about other cultures?

Goal setting – Aim to improve diversity in the workplace

Set a monthly goal with your crew.

- Advocate for expectations for cultural consciousness in job descriptions
- Review and eliminate prejudice and discrimination in department policies and practices
- Join the Miami mentorship program
- Complete Miami's Green Zone and/or Safe Zone training
- Research other cultures, customs and histories
- Watch documentaries on racism to better understand systemic racism
- Attend Miami's DEI events and/or rally/march in your community or on campus

Resources consulted to develop this training content.

Carter, E., Lewis, N., & Ngozi Onyeador, I. (2021, January). “5 Ways to Improve Diversity Training, According to a New Study.” Kellogg Insight, insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/improve-diversity-training.

Board of County Commissioners. (2016). “Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Road Map.” “Enhancing Cultural Competence.” Enhancing Cultural Competence | Community Tool Box, ctb.ku.edu/en/enhancing-cultural-competence.

Lindsey, Alex, et al. (2017, July). “Two Types of Diversity Training That Really Work.” Harvard Business Review, hbr.org/2017/07/two-types-of-diversity-training-that-really-work.

Preemptive Love (2020, June). “What Is Cultural Competence? And Why Is It Important?” Preemptive Love, Preemptive Love, preemptivelove.org/blog/cultural-competence/

Appendix V: Prototype test group survey

Pre Training – Cultural Consciousness Audit

1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3 Neutral, 4 Disagree, 5 Strongly disagree

- ☐ I am willing to learn about cultural practices and worldview of others
- ☐ I have a positive outlook toward cultural differences, accept and respect those differences
- ☐ I try to relate to the values and concerns of other cultures
- ☐ I ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings, projects, or programs
- ☐ I actively avoid using and believing stereotypes
- ☐ I work to prevent imposing my beliefs and value systems on people from different cultures and backgrounds
- ☐ I am likely to address insensitive comments or behaviors made in the workplace
- ☐ I try to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence communication styles
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence how someone deals with conflict
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence working styles
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence decision-making styles
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence attitudes about expressing emotion and personal matters
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence approaches

Post Training – Cultural Consciousness Audit

1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3 Neutral, 4 Disagree, 5 Strongly disagree

- ☐ I am willing to learn about cultural practices and worldview of others
- ☐ I have a positive outlook toward cultural differences, accept and respect those differences
- ☐ I try to relate to the values and concerns of other cultures
- ☐ I ensure everyone has a seat at the table in meetings, projects, or programs
- ☐ I actively avoid using and believing stereotypes
- ☐ I work to prevent imposing my beliefs and value systems on people from different cultures and backgrounds
- ☐ I am likely to address insensitive comments or behaviors made in the workplace
- ☐ I try to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence communication styles
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence how someone deals with conflict
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence working styles
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence decision-making styles
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence attitudes about expressing emotion and personal matters
- ☐ I respect differing cultural norms that may influence approaches

Appendix VI: Consent Forms

Survey Participant Consent

This study examines allyship in the workplace at Miami University and how to better understand what is needed to build an allyship culture. Completing the survey should take about 10 minutes. You are not required to participate in this study; it is entirely voluntary. If you decline to participate in the survey, you will not incur penalties or loss of benefits of any kind.

If you choose to participate, here are some essential things to know about your involvement in the study:

- You must be at least 18 years of age to participate and a classified or unclassified facility or staff member at Miami University.
- The researcher will request basic demographic information about you, but your confidentiality is protected. The researcher will not use your name or identifiable information about you in their reports about the study.
- You may discontinue participation at any time or decline to answer specific questions without penalty or loss of benefits of any kind.

By completing the survey, you indicate that you are at least 18 years of age, are a classified or unclassified facility or staff member at Miami University, and agree to participate in this study.

If you have any questions about the research now or in the future you may contact me at (513) 706-2825 or jessica.staubach@MiamiOH.edu or my faculty advisor at (513) 529-0530 or zack.tucker@miamioh.edu. If you have any questions or concerns about the rights of research subjects or the voluntariness of participation, you may contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at Miami University at either (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@miamioh.edu

Thank you for your participation,

Jessica Staubach

Interview Participant Consent

This study examines allyship in the workplace at Miami University. You are not required to participate in this study; it is entirely voluntary. If you decline to participate in the study, you will not incur penalties or loss of benefits of any kind.

If you choose to participate, here are some important things to know about your involvement in the study:

- You must be at least 18 years of age to participate and a classified or unclassified faculty or staff member at Miami University.
- The researcher will request to meet with you for a virtual interview lasting approximately 60-80 minutes and include ten questions. The discussion will be audio-recorded.
- The researcher will request basic demographic information about you, but your confidentiality is protected. The researcher will not use your name or identifiable information about you in their reports about the study.
- Video recordings will be de-identified within a month of recording and will be transcribed and converted to audio-only.
- You may discontinue participation at any time or decline to answer specific questions without penalty or loss of benefits of any kind.
- If you participate in a focus group, all participants' identities and responses remain confidential, and you agree to not share them outside the focus group.

You have rights as a participant in this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Jessica Staubach, at (513) 706-2825 or jessica.staubach@MiamiOH.edu.

Miami University's Research Ethics & Integrity Program has reviewed and approved this study. For questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Research Compliance Office at Miami University: (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@MiamiOH.edu.

I _____ agree to participate in this study for purposes outlined above. I give my permission to be interviewed and for that interview to be audio-recorded.

Signature _____ Date _____

Co-design Participant Consent

This study examines allyship in the workplace at Miami University. You are not required to participate in this study; it is entirely voluntary. If you decline to participate in the study, you will not incur penalties or loss of benefits of any kind.

If you choose to participate, here are some important things to know about your involvement in the study:

- You must be at least 18 years of age to participate and a classified or unclassified faculty or staff member at Miami University.
- The researcher will request to meet with you and lasting approximately 15-30 minutes and include instructions to the co-design process. The discussion will be audio-recorded.
- The researcher will request basic demographic information about you, but your confidentiality is protected. The researcher will not use your name or identifiable information about you in their reports about the study.
- Video recordings will be de-identified within a month of recording and will be transcribed and converted to audio-only.
- You may discontinue participation at any time or decline to answer specific questions without penalty or loss of benefits of any kind.
- If you participate in a focus group, all participants' identities and responses remain confidential, and you agree to not share them outside the focus group.

You have rights as a participant in this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Jessica Staubach, at (513) 706-2825 or jessica.staubach@MiamiOH.edu.

Miami University's Research Ethics & Integrity Program has reviewed and approved this study. For questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Research Compliance Office at Miami University: (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@MiamiOH.edu.

I _____ agree to participate in this study for purposes outlined above. I give my permission to be interviewed and for that interview to be audio-recorded.

Signature _____ Date _____

Focus Group Participant Consent

This focus group examines allyship in the workplace at Miami University and how a training program using perspective-taking and goal-setting can increase knowledge and engagement. Completing the focus group should take about 45-60 minutes. You are not required to participate in this study; it is entirely voluntary. If you decline to participate in the survey, you will not incur penalties or loss of benefits of any kind.

If you choose to participate, here are some essential things to know about your involvement in the study:

- You must be at least 18 years of age to participate and a classified or unclassified faculty or staff member at Miami University.
- The researcher will request basic demographic information about you, but your confidentiality is protected. The researcher will not use your name or identifiable information about you in their reports about the study.
- You may discontinue participation at any time or decline to answer specific questions without penalty or loss of benefits of any kind.

By completing the survey, you indicate that you are at least 18 years of age, are a classified or unclassified faculty or staff member at Miami University, and agree to participate in this study.

You have rights as a participant in this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Jessica Staubach, at (513) 706-2825 or jessica.staubach@MiamiOH.edu or my faculty advisor at zack.tucker@MiamiOH.edu.

Miami University's Research Ethics & Integrity Program has reviewed and approved this study. For questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Research Compliance Office at Miami University: (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@MiamiOH.edu.

I _____ agree to participate in this study for purposes outlined above. I give my permission to be interviewed and for that interview to be audio-recorded.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix VII: Recruitment

Survey Email Recruitment

Subject: Quick question about allyship at Miami University.

My name is Jessica Staubach. I am a graduate student at Miami University, conducting research to fulfill the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Experience Design.

I am looking for participants to complete a survey about their experiences as a Miami University employee and current workplace culture toward racial minorities. The survey consists of 25 questions and will take about 15 minutes. This research is significant because it serves as a building block to better understand what is needed to build a culture of allyship for minority employees at Miami University.

My research project asks the question: In what ways can a culture of allyship be introduced to make a more inclusive work environment?

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you are interested in this opportunity, please continue to the link provided in this email.

Interviews Email Recruitment

Subject: Let's talk about allyship at Miami University.

My name is Jessica Staubach. I am a graduate student at Miami University, conducting research to fulfill the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Experience Design.

I am soliciting interviewees to discuss their experiences as a Miami University employee and workplace culture toward racial minorities. The interview will take about 60 minutes to complete and consists of approximately 30 questions. This research is significant because it serves as a building block to understanding better what is needed to build a culture of allyship toward minority employees at Miami University.

My research project asks the question: In what ways can a culture of allyship be introduced to make a more inclusive work environment?

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you are interested in this opportunity, please respond to this email.

Interviews Email Recruitment follow-up

Subject: Follow-up: Let's talk about allyship at Miami University.

Good afternoon,

I recently sent an email inquiry to learn about workplace culture toward racial minorities at Miami University.

Your participation will help build a better understanding of what is needed to build a culture of allyship toward minority employees.

The interview will take between 30-60 minutes.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please respond to this email.

Focus Group Recruitment

Subject: Want to see the prototype based on your feedback?

Good morning,

I'm contacting you because you've recently completed a survey, interview, and/or co-design regarding allyship within the workplace at Miami University. Thank you for your help! I'm now ready to test my proposed program, "Cultural Conversations."

This program uses perspective-taking discussion and education, as well as goal setting. The focus group will take about one hour and will include 3-5 people next week.

If you're interested in participating in the focus group that reviews and providing feedback to the program, please respond to this email.

Thanks for your continued help. I'm excited to share what I have developed and hope to make it even better with your feedback.

This study has been approved by the Miami University Institutional Review Board, approval #03705e.

Appendix VIII: IRB Approval

Preliminary research application

March 12, 2020

To: Jessica Staubach and Zack Tucker (staubajl@miamioh.edu; tuckerzw@miamioh.edu)

Re: Allyship at Miami University



OFFICE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP (OARS)
Institutional Review Board for
Human Subjects Research
102 Roudebush Hall
Oxford, OH 45056
(513) 529-3600

Project reference number is: 03705e

(please refer to this ID number in all correspondence to compliance administration)

Application:

03705e - Preliminary Research—Allyship at Miami University

has been given its initial review. Please respond to each comment directly (copy and paste and address and please revisit your original research description and forms and highlight your changes as is appropriate. This will speed up the review process.

The reviewers have recommended that the following concerns be addressed:

1. Please title the consent information: “Research Consent Form.” The word research needs to be used prominently.
2. In addition, you agreed to include contact information on consent forms per Miami policy:

If you have any questions about the research now or in the future you may contact me at [enter your email address; phone number] or my faculty advisor at [email address]. If you have any questions or concerns about the rights of research subjects or the voluntariness of participation, you may contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at Miami University at either (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@miamioh.edu.

Please revise the consent forms submitted with this modification as well as all the consent forms associated with Protocol 03703e and submit them to humansubjects@miamioh.edu.

Modification application

March 29, 2021

To: Jessica Staubach and Zack Tucker (staubajl@miamioh.edu; tuckerzw@miamioh.edu)

Re: Allyship at Miami University



OFFICE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP (OARS)
Institutional Review Board for
Human Subjects Research
102 Roudebush Hall
Oxford, OH 45056
(513) 529-3600

Your application to modify the methods or personnel for protocol:

#03705e – Preliminary Research—Allyship at Miami University has been approved.

Nature of modification: Adding an activity and related consent process

Modification Approval Date: 29-Mar-2021

Please feel free to contact this office with any questions or concerns you might have.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neal H. Sullivan'.

Neal H. Sullivan