

# Identifying and Challenging Microaggressions 2020

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Hello, everyone. This is our first online workshop, so just please bear with us. But this is Identifying and Challenging Microaggressions. We're going to start with a quick introduction. So my name is Yubi. You can't see me, because I'm sharing my screen. But I'm a social justice peer educator.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: And I'm Nicklaus. And I'm also a social justice peer educator. We are part of the Office of Outreach and Education here at Wazzu. We, as a group of undergraduate students, employed to host and create workshops like this for community members, staff, and faculty, and students of course.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Even though we're not all in the same area, we still wanted to have a land acknowledgment. We acknowledge that we are gathered today on the traditional homelands of the Palouse Band of Indians and the ceded lands of the Nez Perce Tribe. We further acknowledge their presence here since time immemorial and recognize their continuing connection to the land, to the water, and to their ancestors. Yes.

Sweet. So for this workshop, we have a few learning targets that we have for you today. The first thing, of course, is that we want to give you all the proper tools to define and identify microaggressions. So that you'll be able to actually utilize this in your day to day life, because you have to know what you're dealing with first. And second, is to acknowledge that microaggressions are often unconscious, internalized, and work within larger systems of oppression, which is more or less to acknowledge that this is something that we are all going to be dealing with, whether we necessarily think so or not.

And third, to understand the impact and scope of harm that microaggressions have on marginalized groups. So why does this matter, really? And for our fourth point, our goal is to analyze the difference between individuals and marginalized groups to which they belong, to make a distinction there.

So these are our normal workshop guidelines, that are kind of oriented towards more of a group discussion setting. We won't be in the chat as you may have heard, but we do encourage you to participate, talk to one another, you can DM one another during this workshop. But these are kind of guidelines for how to talk about these kinds of things without accidentally hurting one another's feelings, or getting stuck in the weeds, and not being able to make progress.

So the idea behind all of these, I guess, I'm just going to summarize is that you want to be talking from your own experience and your own grounded experience, not sharing the experiences of others, or assuming the experiences of others. And also, to be sure that you understand that this is a space where you can make mistakes and you can ask questions and maybe feel kind of vulnerable, or that you might get in trouble if you say the wrong thing.

Understanding that this is a space for that, and it's like a good thing, where we want to be able to do that and make progress, rather than hold back. And we don't know how that's going to work for a Zoom one, but we of course, want to make sure that there is time to have questions and discussion as well. So that'll be at the end, if nothing else.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: So hopping right into the content. We first ask the question, so what is a microaggression? You may have heard this word used in a lot of other spaces before, and we just want to make sure everyone's on the same base with the definition of what a microaggression is. So it says, "Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, non-verbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership." Klaus, do you want to deconstruct that long definition?

Yeah, so basically what this is saying is, that my progressions are-- they're not like-- we don't call them like microaggressions because they're not a big deal or they're just kind of insignificant. We call them microaggressions because they're these very small manifestations of larger systems of oppression. They're the minute ways in which that gets expressed through our language, through how we talk to one another, how we engage with one another, or how we even think of one another in very general terms.

So that can be something as simple as like, whether or not you choose to assume that someone that you're coming into a conversation with has his own in the same background or skill level as you, when you're in like a reasonable equal setting. Or if you are assuming certain standards of skill or potential when you are advising someone or working with a student. And additionally, when we talk about snubs or insults or slights, that can be things that we don't even necessarily understand as being an offense when we do it, because it's not something that is targeting us necessarily. So they can be kind of hard to recognize. And why we want to break this down so much when we're going through this, is specifically because of that.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Just to reiterate those points we have a video. The sound shouldn't be an issue, but there are subtitles.

SPEAKER 1: For people who still don't think that microaggressions are a problem.

SPEAKER 2: "Oh, you're so well-spoken." Oh.

SPEAKER 3: Just imagine, instead of being a stupid comment a microaggression, is a mosquito bite. It's a compliment.

SPEAKER 1: Mosquito bites and their itch are one of nature's most annoying features. But if you're only bitten every once in a while.

MOSQUITO: No, where are you really from?

SPEAKER 4: Uh, Cleveland.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Sure, it's annoying, but it's not that big a deal. The problem is that some people get bitten by mosquitoes a lot more than other people. I mean a lot more. Whether it's on a date--

MOSQUITO: Oh, you're English is so good.

SPEAKER 5: Excuse me?

SPEAKER 1: Going grocery shopping.

MOSQUITO: You know, everything happens for a reason.

SPEAKER 6: I'm just buying apples.

SPEAKER 1: Commuting to work.

MOSQUITO: So when are you going to have a baby?

SPEAKER 1: Watching TV.

MOSQUITO: We have to keep the Redskins name. It's part of our culture and history.

SPEAKER 1: Or just walking down the street with your partner.

MOSQUITO: I couldn't even tell you were gay.

SPEAKER 1: Mosquitoes seem to pop up every where.

MOSQUITO: Do you know John? Can you give me shopping advice? I love Cher too.

SPEAKER 1: And getting bit by mosquitoes every goddamn day--

MOSQUITO: Can I touch your hair?

SPEAKER 1: Multiple times a day.

MOSQUITO: You're so pretty. Can I touch it? Please? Please? Can I please?

SPEAKER 1: Is [BLEEP] annoying, and makes you want to go ballistic on those mosquitoes, which seems like a huge overreaction to people who get bit every once in a while.

SPEAKER 7: It's a mosquito bite, who cares?

SPEAKER 8: Just another angry black woman.

SPEAKER 1: Of course, beyond just being annoying, some mosquitoes carry truly threatening diseases that can mess up your life for years.

MOSQUITO: Astrophysics? Hmm. Maybe you should a less challenging major.

SPEAKER 9: Ow, my dreams.

SPEAKER 1: And other mosquitoes carry strains that can even kill you.

MOSQUITO: It looked like he was up to trouble. OK. I felt threatened.

SPEAKER 1: So next time you think someone's overreacting, just remember, some people experience mosquito bites all the time.

MOSQUITO: You're all so exotic. Wow.

SPEAKER 1: And by mosquito bites, we mean microaggressions.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: So with that video, we just wanted to show you a little bit more of what the definition means more in real life. We also will be going over more examples as the presentation goes on. So the next thing we're going to talk about is the types of microaggressions. Often times, people just think of microaggressions as a larger issue, when there are actually very specific types. And we're going to get into that.

So the first type is a microassault. And so these are often conscious and deliberate, and it can be verbal or nonverbal, and these are things that we consider to be more explicit forms of verbal or non-verbal violence. Examples include, refusing service based on identity, and using phrases like, "That's so gay." It's a conscious choice of phrasing, and it can unconsciously perpetuate ideas of homophobia.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: To make distinction there, we say it's a conscious choice of phrasing, so it's just like a conscious and deliberate thing that is done, but it also isn't just that. It's like, you consciously choose to use the phrase like, that's OK, but maybe you don't intend necessarily to be saying in that moment, "Gay people are bad." It's just that is the way in which that is being used. So regardless necessarily the intent, the choice itself is like one that is deliberate.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: And that's another point, is that a lot of these things are so-- a lot of people say them without knowing their implications. And a lot of their implications are based in systematic oppression, which we will talk about later on as well.

The next one is microinvalidations. So this one is-- I'll just explain it. This one is often unconscious and unintentional. And this really invalidates the core of a person's identity. So I'm

sure many of you may have heard of the term, "I'm colorblind. I don't see color." And although that may be used in a well intended way, it erases and dismisses the lived experience of people of color. So by saying you don't see color, you are invalidating that person's lived experience, but also history. Another example is telling women they're too sensitive when they react to something misogynistic, instead of actually listening to what they are saying. It's easier to invalidate their character.

Next one is micro insults. This one is once again, often unconscious and unintentional. Subtle rudeness or insensitivity that demeans a person's identity. So a lot of the times, once again, these can be used as well intended. So if someone says, "You speak English so well," they may mean it as a compliment, but it implies that the person doesn't fit what we associate with speaking English well. That was also part of the video.

Another one, is comparing people of color to animals, even one not meant to be insulting. So an example of this, was when Serena Williams, well, I think she was on a magazine cover or something. And a lot of people said that she looked like some type of animal, because she's a--

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: Gorilla.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Gorilla. Because she's muscular. And so they may not have been saying that to insult her as a Black woman, but that's the implication that it has. And a lot of these things are also rooted in history. So there is a history of judging people, judging the way people speak English. That's a very systematic thing. Also, there's a history with people of color being compared to animals as a way of dehumanizing them. So a lot of these things have bigger historical systematic roots than we may believe.

Next thing we're going to talk about is microaggressions in the context "isms." And so this is kind of connecting to the historical systematic frame of things. And so when we say words like racism or sexism, it's specifically talking about a system of oppression.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: We're talking about a system of oppression, rather than like individual or interpersonal things. So like racism refers to all aspects of racial discrimination, but as a term, specifically the institutional and sociocultural manifestations that are across the board, rather than like, whether or not a person individually has prejudice or demeaning beliefs about a certain racial group.

We'll be saying the same things about classism, like when we talk about classism, we're not talking necessarily about only poor people being the most heavily impacted by unequal wealth distribution. We're talking about the entire system by which money equates with power.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: And then we also wanted to note that we are going to talk about a few isms, but we wanted to acknowledge that there are plenty of identities and systems of oppression. But for the sake of time, we will not obviously be able to go over all of them. So the first one is racism.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: Yes. So the first thing we are going to talk about for racism is assumptions of criminality. So people of color are often assumed to be, or people prejudice them to be criminal, or otherwise, a criminal risk. So like, they're going to steal your belongings. They're going to-- like, if there's a black person in a white neighborhood, they're here to do crime. That's that kind of concept. And that's racist.

But it can also be something as simple as like, we say clutching your purse or wallet when a man of color walks by, and that's nonverbal. That's something that's just body language. And maybe not something that someone is thinking about when they do it. And of course, they may also not be thinking of like, oh man, melanin equals crime, but they are nevertheless doing so, because of this long running system of racism, that says like, OK, people of color are criminals. We have more heavily criminalized people of color. We incarcerate people of color at a higher rate. People of color are more likely to be shown on the news as people who have committed crimes. So there's a lot of things that go into that.

Next one is notions of being exotic, or fetishization. So like the idea of like, can I touch your hair. Like, oh your hair so exotic. Like, that is something that happens a lot, especially to black women. And the examples we give, [INAUDIBLE] the idea of Latinas as being "spicy" or like, "hot." Specifically hot, rather than like another term. Hot gets used the most to describe Latina women. And it's an idea that reduces this entire category of people into a stereotype, based on cultural perceptions of Latina women as being sexualized.

And another one is and assumptions of intellectual inferiority. So the assumption that people of color are going to perform less well in classes, or that they're going to struggle more in college, or things like that. Or even that like with the same [? educational ?] background, that people of color have a lower skill level or are less competent. These notions are heavily racialized.

The next one we're going to talk about is hetero sexism. Heterocissexism is a combination of heterosexism and cissexism, which are considered separate words a lot of the time, but together, it is meant to describe the system of oppression that targets queer or LGBTQ+ people, based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

The first example we have here is, use of hetero sexist or cissexist terminology. So it's going to be derogatory words or slurs, "That's so gay," we talked about. "Don't be a faggot," we've talked about. And these are very casual usage of words as insults. I don't know about y'all, but when I was in middle school and high school, this is very common. These were things that people say around you. It's the social world that you're swimming in. And that has an impact on people, especially queer people who are parts of that community.

And the next one we're going to hear you talk about is discomfort, disapproval of queer experiences. So generally, just discrimination based on that person's identity and that assumption of abnormality, right below that is tied into that like, that being queer is bad. Being queer is abnormal or an illness. And so like, that discomfort or disapproval is very oftentimes

very casual., like, I just don't see it. Or like, I just don't think it's right, but like you can do whatever you want behind closed doors.

Those notions don't actually say that queer people aren't bad they just say like I don't want to deal with it reinforces that idea that there is something undesirable about queer people. And that assumption of sexual pathology or abnormality is something that impacts transgender women in particular, a lot. The idea that transgender women are all sexual predators who will assault cisgender women in bathrooms, is a very popular myth that is perpetuated, and that has been frequently debunked.

And historically, there's a lot of instances where gay men are assumed to be pedophiles or very promiscuous, and/or [? very ?] promiscuous, and that's also tied in to that notion of abnormality. And these notions are reinforced also when you see people talk about like, whether or not it's reasonable to say that someone could be asked to go to conversion therapy, or excluded from a certain job, like a school counselor for being queer.

And the next when we talk about is ableism. So ableism the system of oppression that marginalizes people with disabilities. And that is very broad as a term. We have more specific terms that we use to refer to more specific types like, lookism, mentalism, et cetera. And part of it has to do with psychiatric impairments are considered oftentimes to be slightly different than physical impairments. But as a whole, this system is applying to people who are in one way or another, not considered to be fully able, and are then discriminated against in terms of inferiority.

So disbelief or denial is a kind of microaggression that people with disabilities get a lot. I myself, have a disability, and it's really wild to have people try to tell you that you don't look like you have a disability. I wouldn't have guessed you had a disability, because you can't always tell when someone has a disability. People have invisible conditions. People have intermittent conditions. And there are also these kinds of statements assume there is a certain way that people with disabilities look or act, which isn't accurate.

Another example of microaggressions targeting people with disabilities is minimization, so minimizing the struggles that people are facing by saying like, we all have a disability of some kind. I get that one a lot. And oftentimes, that's people trying to say like, I understand, because I also had experienced impairment. But when it comes off as is, well, like, what you're trying to tell me is like-- you don't need to tell me this.

You're trying to tell me that you're experiencing an impairment and that you need assistance, but I don't believe you. And it's not that big of a deal, and you're exaggerating. Or like that because a person has experience, like one kind of disability, that they 100% understand what it's like to have another condition. So like if you have broken a leg in the past and used crutches, saying like, oh, I totally understand what it's like to be in a wheelchair isn't accurate either. And it can be really demeaning.

The last thing we're going to talk about here is exclusion from society or spaces. This is sometimes called alien in one's own land as well, which is a little bit confusing. So take that if you will. But this idea applies to folks who are unable to fully access spaces in the way that able people are, because there is not a means by which these individuals have been thought to being included fully, or that they don't need to be included fully.

So like when a public school has a special education system that is completely separate from the rest of the school, and there isn't integration, and there are only a few teachers that can teach in the special education program, that is an example of people not having full access to that space, not having full access to the experience of education as well. So that can be a serious problem.

So the last one we're going to talk about it is classism. So classism, like I mentioned earlier, is a system of oppression that marginalizes people based on class status, or income, or economic background, depending on your context, because as college students, a lot of the times our incomes are considered to be an aggregate of our parents, plus ours, plus financial aid. Whereas, like people in my same age group with my same annual income could be considered to be far more into the working poor category than I am.

Anyway, the notions that I hear frequently in this area are first, people in poverty can attain social mobility if they just work harder, that kind of notion of like picking yourself up by your bootstraps, which ignores the fact that there are a lot of reasons why people struggle to attain social mobility, especially economic mobility. And part of that has to do with the fact that it takes money to go to college. It takes money to buy a nice suit to go to your job interview. It takes money to be able to get to a certain location to even have a job.

There's also lots of assumptions that come along with like, if a person doesn't have reliable transportation, which is to say they use public transit, that this person is going to be an unreliable employee in general. This idea that it is the fault of an individual that they are economically disadvantaged, rather than the end result of a lot of intersecting factors, most of which a person is going to be born into, is extremely dismissive.

The next notion and talk about is the idea that working class or poor people are bad parents or criminals. This is something you gets interlaced with racism, a lot, especially because racism as a system of oppression, also economically disadvantages people of color. There is a lot of talk sometimes when you hear if there's like a high profile case of like teenagers of color being accused of a crime, people say things like, their parents need to take responsibility. They need to take control of these kids, and things like that.

Which is really weird when it's compared with when we are looking at college students who are white, upper class men, who sexually assault someone, and then face virtually no consequences. And then it's like, oh, he's just a kid. And we don't want to ruin anyone's future, and he's a good kid, and all of these things. So the opportunity to be given the benefit of the

doubt, for lack of a better term, isn't given to people who are assumed to be criminals, or to be bad in general.

The last thing we're going to talk about here is assuming working class or poor people are uneducated or bigoted. The idea that rednecks are all racist, which isn't true either. That seems like a weird thing to claim right now, but I promise not all rednecks are racist. There is plenty of folks, especially extremely economically disadvantaged white folks who have built longstanding systems of solidarity with marginalized people of color across economic lines and across racial lines.

There's also a great deal of assumption that folks who are working class or poor are going to be racist or sexist or homophobic, because they are uneducated, because being educated equals being less prejudiced, which isn't quite accurate. There's lots of ways to get through like a really good college education and still be extremely racist, or extremely homophobic, or extremely sexist. And these notions are based in prejudice that isn't directly tied to one's class.

So to kind of bring this all together, we want to talk a bit about the impacts and effects of microaggressions, because it is important to know that there are more concrete effects to the widespread existence of microaggressions than just people's feelings getting hurt. And oftentimes, we think of things like people using slurs or derogatory language, or committing microaggressions is not being a big deal, and it's just about someone's feelings. And on the one hand, it's not just about people's feelings. But on the other hand, it's not really good to hurt people's feelings either, especially when it's tied to larger systems of social and cultural oppression.

So to kind of just go down the list here, psychological impacts that come with things like getting your feelings hurt, are things like internalized oppression, so believing the things that are said to or about you that are hurtful, because you hear it all the time. Or like, we see this a lot with sexism, like people applying the same kind of sexist ideas that marginalize them onto other people.

So people who sometimes identify as tomboys. I did identify as a tomboy in the past, will sometimes say like, I'm not like other girls, like, I'm different. I'm not like those folks, when really, that's just saying that there's like a right way to be a woman, and that there are parts of being women that are bad that we shouldn't do. Yeah, trauma and fatigue as part of this, is like just really getting tired of hearing it, not like getting exhausted, not being able to really handle this kind of emotional toll anymore. And that is like when in the video, when we saw like the person like whipping out the flamethrower and going ballistic on the mosquitoes, like, that's kind of where that is. That idea that I just can't take this anymore.

And with that, depression, like feeling like you can't do anything. You lose a sense of agency, and it is really difficult to work against a lot of those really harmful aspects of depression, when you are in a position where you are constantly having your inferiority reinforced onto you by other people, especially when they don't think it's a big deal.

And last part would be compromised from my sense of identity, so not having a clear idea of who you are or what it means to be who you are, like, especially for individuals who are immigrants, having a compromised sense of identity. If you are a second generation immigrant like, you are constantly being equate with being not American, like, you're not really American because your parents are immigrants. That's going to really complicate your sense of who you are and your national identity, and as well as your self-esteem and self concept.

So something [INAUDIBLE] that are behavioral effects, so skepticism, not believing when other people tell you-- even like compliments, because we've mentioned like several different kinds of backhanded compliment so far. Like, you speak English so well, your implication being like people of color don't speak English well. That can really hurt, and so getting a real compliment can become kind of a, "Are you [BLEEP] with me kind of thing.

Force compliance or complicity, so like, just not challenging microaggressions when they happen, or even macroaggressions, because there's a feeling that you can't do anything. And also, that there will be consequences if you do. So like, if when you speak out about microaggressions and you get dismissed or reprimanded, like you're causing problems or causing like fights for no reason, you're just going to give up.

And that ties in also with like rage and anger. We talked about trauma and fatigue tying into rage and anger, like that's something that's going to happen sometimes for some folks. It's like not being able to manage those kinds of strong emotions anymore, or when this particular trigger happens. I know I've gotten mad in the past way inappropriately in the perspective of other people, when I've been told that it wasn't expected of me to do certain things because I'm disabled. It's very frustrating. And when I blow up about it, people are shocked like, it's not a big deal. But it feels like a big deal, and it hurts a lot, and people don't blow up for no reason. And with that, also, when we talk about depression and fatigue, since that sense of hopelessness is really part of that as well.

Physiological impacts are the results of long term stress, or experiencing stress consistently over a long period of time, just in general. It results in things like high blood pressure, high heart rate, and a weakened immune system. That's something that just physically happens to your body because of the hormones that are present in your body as a result of stress. Like cortisol, we think of as a stress hormone. It does these things to your body. And there have been multiple studies that indicate that people of color in particular, experience more adverse health problems as a result of long term interactions with racism.

And so our last part here is social impact. So alienation, feeling you're not part of a community or part of a space, or that you can't be. Mistrust, again, like tying into skepticism, like, you can't trust people to not microaggress you unexpectedly, especially when it's like something that's very, very common. And some folks like, you can try to like pick up and carry on, be like, OK, I can deal with this when this happens, but it's not something that everyone has to deal with going into a new social interaction, having to like be like, OK, am I going to have a bad interaction right now.

And our last part here is threats to physical safety. So when we talk about challenging microaggressions, the physical safety is part of that, people's reactions to challenging these kinds of things can become violent, as well as just generally facing social repercussions for speaking out.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: So we are going to have an activity. We're not really sure how this is going to work on Zoom. Maybe talk about it in the chat, or think about it in your head, it's kind of up to you. We just want you to critically think about the situations that we present. So we're basically going to give you a scenario, and then you're just going to answer the following questions. You don't have to memorize it. It's already on the next slide.

So the first scenario is, the presenter at a ceremony you your attending has just announced the recipient of an award. However, the recipient is unable to go onto the stage to accept their award, as the recipient is a wheelchair user, and the stage can only be accessed via a set of stairs. So with that scenario, y'all can think about in your head, discuss in the chat, identify the microaggression, so what in this situation is the issue? What is the underlying message of the microaggression?

So that kind of goes back to these systems of oppression, the isms, that Klaus was speaking of. What does that really mean? And then identify the actual system of the microaggression. And then think about or discuss how you would respond to the situation, that's kind of the most important question. Because these are all things that have happened in real life to even some of the people that we work with. So it's always good to just know what to do if that does happen.

So just take a little time. We're probably going to give you one or two minutes for each scenario. Y'all can continue talking or thinking in your head in the chat. I'm just going to go ahead and answer the questions. So the first one, so what is the actual microaggression? The event planners failed to ask if accommodations were needed. So I don't know how many of y'all have planned an event, but anytime you do plan an event, it's always important to ask for accommodations.

It could be things like being wheelchair accessible, having things written in paper, subtitles for videos that you may be showing, special auditory devices, there's a lot of things that people may need in order to fully experience an event. So it's always great to ask. What is the underlying message? So by the event planners not asking if accommodations were needed, they assumed that everyone was able-bodied. They assumed everyone would just attend the ceremony the same way, and nothing would be different.

This is also a microinvalidation. Kind of going to like what I said before, it assumes that all the attendees can use the stairs without proper accommodations. And the system of oppression is ableism. So it's forcing-- well actually, in this case, it's alienating those who need proper accommodations in the situation. And four, discuss how you would respond to the situation. That's kind of up to you. But what we have written is always asking if accommodations are

needed before hosting any type of event, even when we do workshops, we ask if there's any accommodations needed.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: One other aspect of this one I'd like to touch on is that it's partially also that there's an implication that someone who uses a wheelchair could not be a recipient of this award. Because when a space is designed only for one kind of body, there is an implication that that is the only kind of body that's going to be there. And if you are not able to use that space, you may as well not enter. That's kind of the message that's sent, is that you're not welcome here, or that you weren't expected to be here, and there isn't room for you.

A good way of thinking of what proper accommodations are as well, is that if the stairs leading up to that stage were like three feet tall each, that would be really difficult to get onto that stage for just about everybody. And that would be ridiculous for us to ask folks to be like, well, if you can't make it up the stairs, you can come around at the front of the stage. Because like we wouldn't ask people to do that. So in that same way, like, it's not so much that people need special treatment, it's that people need to have that access, regardless of how it's going to be provided.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: And just, I don't want to keep adding on to this one scenario, not necessarily for this specific situation, but it's always good to have those things, even if no one asked for those accommodations, so there should always be a seat in the room that's wheelchair accessible. If you're having a presentation, you should have a couple paper copies. Anytime you're showing a video, you should just show subtitles, and that way it normalizes the behavior. And a lot of times some people feel uncomfortable asking for accommodations, so that's just another way of handling the situation. OK. The next scenario.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: So the scenario is, one of your organization sisters is planning a Latinx Night for the Greek community to promote and celebrate Latinx culture. One night when you were studying, someone says, "There is no racism here on campus, so why do we need this type of event?"

YUBI LOJEWSKI: So once again, it's just the same questions.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: All right, well, we'll jump in. So the microaggression itself here is a statement of like, there is no racism here on campus. Why do we need this type of event? That is the microaggression itself. And the underlying message of the microaggression is saying like, well, there's no racism here, because I haven't experienced it, which isn't necessarily accurate and probably isn't accurate at all.

The type microaggression is a microinvalidation, because it's saying, "I know better." And this is reality, and that's not accurate. The system of oppression, this is reinforcing it as racism. And for how to respond in this situation, this can be kind of a complicated one, depending on what the context is. So when we've done this in the past with folks from the Greek community,

sometimes there is like a bit of question of well, should we go to our officers, or should we be handling this ourselves.

We, as SJPs, don't have the context to really be able to step folks through necessarily how exactly to address things with your specific org, unless we have a real opportunity to sit down and do that outside of a workshop. But general guidelines for this kind of thing are to, if you can, be challenging this kind of statement when it happens, if you're present. Because if it just kind of is let go, that says this isn't a problem. This kind of statement is totally valid, and like, you know, yeah, maybe there isn't any kind of racism on campus. Maybe we don't need this type of event. Who knows? Anyone could be right in this situation. And that's not a message you really want to be sending.

Really, a response to this would probably be something along the lines of like, explaining how racism works, and also emphasizing multicultural education and multicultural events are not centering, not necessarily like, people who aren't part of that culture. It's not like we're not doing this event because like white people need to be able to participate, or whatever, it's like because people of different cultures have a right to be able to celebrate and practice that culture, and find pride in it, regardless of the space that they're in. Racism isn't a predetermining requirement for whether or not you can be proud of the culture that you're a part of.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: The next scenario. I'm just going to show it on this screen, just to save a little bit time. A student you know and in of your classes who identifies as a woman is named Emily. The professor calls attendance, and he stops on one name. After a moment of silence, he looks directly at Emily and says, "Everett Morrison." Emily tells the professor that her preferred name is Emily. And he responds with, "I'm just going to stick with what's on the roster."

So we're going to go ahead and answer these questions. So the problem with this scenario is the fact that the professor was so dismissive, especially in front of the entire class. So not only was the professor wrong by refusing to call the student by their name, but the professor was also wrong because he did it in front of the entire class. And so that dynamic really shows the class that Emily is not valued in her class, and it opens the door for other people to treat Emily that same way.

This is a microassault/microinvalidation. It could be argued either way. The underlying message is that Emily is not considered a quote unquote real woman, because her name is different on the roster, and this reinforces the system of cissexism. As Klaus mentioned before, the way that you would respond to this situation is it could differ in a lot of different ways. Sometimes when it is some type of figure of authority, or someone who has some type of leverage over you, it can be harder to speak out against that person.

Like in this case, the professor controls your grade. So you may be a little intimidated to say something. Also, we understand that not everyone is going to say something in front of a room full of people, so going to the professor during office hours, reporting the situation, if you

yourself feel like you're not capable of telling the professor what he did wrong, getting other third parties is a way to handle that situation. Do you have anything to add, Klaus?

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: So for scenario number four. So you're at a networking event where you're required to wear a professional clothing. This event is open to students of all class standings and majors. At the event, you overhear different people making comments about the way someone is dressed. And hear things like, "I definitely saw that at Walmart." and "That looks like it belonged to her grandmother."

We're a little tiny bit low on time and I want to be able to have time for questions. So we're going to go through this, The microaggression itself is these comments that are being overheard, and the underlying message is like, even if the clothing is professional wear, or is otherwise acceptable for the setting, because it is from Walmart or second hand, that this person's worth is their [? image. ?] This isn't actually the same thing, and that that's grounds to devalue that person.

So the system of oppression is classism. And it's also important to note that this kind of drawing a line in the sand is-- this kind of rational where because it's cheap or second hand, isn't actually professional wear, and you have to have nice clothes, and they have to be first hand, and they have to be clean, and all they have to be well ironed, and all of these things, it creates a two tiered system. It others people who don't have access to the kinds of resources that are needed to perform professionalism to a certain standard. And that's not necessarily a factor of someone's skill, or their background, or their value as a potential employee or student.

For how to respond to this situation, sometimes you don't end up in a position where you can. Like confronting strangers in the public space is not really accessible, and can be very, very scary. But there are other ways to address some of the larger problems that this brings up. Like, the idea that there are two tiers of professional wear, and that one of them is associated with being working class or poor, and therefore, is worse, is not something it's just going to be coming out when people are having these kinds of conversations in a group in a professional event.

It's going to be also a sentiment that is going to be shared by other members, or by companies, or administrators, who are going to be making decisions about how well people perform in interviews, or in networking settings, and how desirable they are as an employee. So that's something that if you are part of the organization doing a networking event, or you are part of a institution, like a company, or a school, or a hospital, or something, where you are having to make judgments about someone's professionalism based on things like clothing, you can influence the perception of people by others by having these kinds of conversations about like hey, there are reasons why people might wear second hand professional clothing, or wear cheap clothing that aren't directly tied to their value.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Just have enough time for questions, I'm going to go through this real quick. Listen to an ally with people who report discrimination. So as we said before, sometimes it's not

the best idea to actually do something in the moment, just for your own physical safety. So being an ally and listening to people is really important. Challenge your own biases. We all have them. And a lot of times, are unconscious. So just constantly checking it, checking yourself, and thinking, what is the purpose of what I'm saying, and what's the underlying message.

Be humble. We all make mistakes. Take responsibility and apologize. That's a big thing that we talk about. We all make mistakes, even in our positions. We all are learning, so it's a continuous journey. And then finally, intervene and provide support. So if you are privileged in a situation where you feel comfortable actually intervening, then please do so. But also provide support. Don't intervene just to make it seem bigger, but actually try to provide support to the person who was harmed in the situation.

NICKLAUS MCHENDRY: All right. Well, thank you all so much for coming to this webinar. And we hope to be able to continue doing these kinds of things throughout the end of the semester. We know it's kind of a wild time right now. And we also hope to continue doing the work that we do regularly during the school year and the fall. So [INAUDIBLE] going to be at Wazzu in the fall, and if we're going to be at Wazzu in the fall, we'll see you then.

YUBI LOJEWSKI: Thank you, everyone. Have a good night.