

Addressing Meaningful Engagement ARML2 Session 1 Lesson Plan

Slides: [ARML2 Addressing Meaningful Engagement](#)

Learning Objectives

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Improve and expand understanding of equity and inclusion and how diversity influences mentor-mentee interactions
2. Recognize the potential impact of conscious and unconscious assumptions, preconceptions, biases, and prejudices on the mentor-mentee relationship and reflect on how to manage them
3. Identify concrete strategies for learning about, recognizing, and addressing issues of equity and inclusion in order to engage in conversations about diversity with mentees and foster a sense of belonging

Outline with Timing

Introduction (5 min) Stacey

- Intros, facilitators and attendees
- Ground rules- note about DEI sessions and discussions running long
- Reminder about Advanced Research mentoring and where we are in the CIMER curriculum
- Objectives

Objective 1: Expand understanding of equity and inclusion and how diversity influences mentor-mentee interactions

Definitions of Equality vs. Equity and Inclusion (1 min) Gretchen

- Equity is about giving everyone what they individually need to be able to participate/see what is happening/do research (ex. Having a lab bench at the height someone would need if they used a wheelchair)
- Inclusion- making sure everyone feels welcome to be in the space and valued for their contribution to it

Introductory Activity (15 min) Gretchen

- We are going to continue with an activity. I invite you to begin to think about how you see the world. Remember, everyone sees the world through their own cultural lens. Our diversity stems from our biography- from our lived experiences.

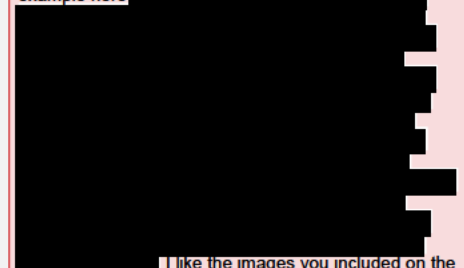
Commented [1]: @gnmccandless@vcu.edu

Can you go through the lesson plan and put your name next to the parts/activities you would like to lead? I will be out of town the first week of July, and at a conference immediately upon my return, so I'm trying to plan ahead.

Assigned to gnmccandless@vcu.edu

Commented [2]: @swahl@vcu.edu

I would like your feedback on giving a personal example here



I like the images you included on the slide and use similar ones in talks that I've given, but wondered what you thought about a personal and relatable science example?

Assigned to swahl@vcu.edu

Commented [3]: I really like your example- I think it will invite others to share their personal stories and foster a trusting environment

- **Individually:** List three things about yourself that are not directly related to your work or career. When you've done that just put your pens down and when the group is ready we'll move to the next step (1-2 min).
- **In pairs:** Share your three things with your partner. You can share as much or as little as you like. We'll take five minutes here (5 min)

Commented [4]: I think we should highlight that ultimately these may be shared with the larger group so no one lists things that they prefer to keep confidential.

Commented [5]: good point

Some potential aspects could include educational background/discipline, the educational background of their parents, whether they were raised in urban or rural settings, experiences with people with disabilities, time abroad, languages spoken, preferences in music, etc.

- **SHARE:** Thank you for chatting with each other and being vulnerable. We would now love to hear about what y'all discussed. Can someone please share something about their partner. (5 min)
- List the things that people named on a whiteboard or flipchart (save for later)
- Acknowledge that, in this society, it is ingrained in our subconscious to first think of diversity in terms of race and ethnicity, but remember that it is broader than that. For example, consider the impact of learning and physical disabilities, gender, age/generation, sexual orientation, class, religion, and differences in communication, learning, and work styles. Think about the list we generated just now. Do participants have any characteristics they would like to add to the list?
- Thank you- we will be returning to this list later today so I will leave this up over there.

Commented [6]: Later in the session: might want to explore work styles and communication as it pertains to different age/generation, though try to keep it positive. What are some differences you see in your mentees with regard to work and communication style that you have learned from?

NOTE: Leave this list displayed throughout the session and tell mentors that they can add to it as you move through the other activities. As you add items, you may discuss how these differences can be viewed as an asset to their mentoring relationships and how varying perspectives and experiences can be capitalized upon to create high quality innovative research.

- Excellent. Now that we have brainstormed how the differences we all have affect our mentoring relationships and can be leveraged for success, let's delve deeper into how these differences affect our mentoring experiences.

ACTIVITY #1: Reflecting on Diversity: (15 min) Stacey

- **DISCUSS:** What do they know about their mentee? How do these differences impact their mentoring relationships and how can they be capitalized on to create high quality innovative research? They may consider the concept of cognitive diversity, or diversity of thought, and how knowledge they've gained from other life experiences has influenced and enriched their thinking as a researcher. List the ideas generated in this discussion on a white board or flip chart.
- **DISCUSS:** How do these differences pose challenges to effective mentoring? They may consider how differences in their mentee's beliefs, work ethic and cognitive ability may present challenges. Also, how does one effectively mentor an entire research team

composed of individuals who are different from one another? How does one develop in their research team members an appreciation for (or at least tolerance of and respect for) differences among individuals on the team?

Objective 2: Recognize the potential impact of conscious and unconscious assumptions, preconceptions, biases and prejudices on the mentor-mentee relationship and reflect on how to manage them (25 min)

ACTIVITY #2: Reflect on Unconscious Assumptions (10 min) both

- **TELL:** Think about some of your assumptions when you entered the room on the first day of this training—that there would be electricity, a table, a bathroom etc. Let's think about some of the assumptions we make about the people we work with.
- **TELL:** Read each word on the list below and ask mentors to focus on the first image that comes to their mind and quickly jot down three words that describe the person they pictured. Pacing is important; only leave about five seconds between each item on the list so that they are focused on the first image that comes to mind.
 - Cook
 - Pilot
 - Mountain Climber
 - Caretaker
 - Politician
 - Researcher
 - Graduate Student
 - Postdoc
 - PI
- **DISCUSS (7 min) with entire group:** Have mentors share some of the words they noted about each prompt, with special attention given to the graduate student and postdoc. For example, did their images include mention of gender, race, body shape and size, or age? Was there some uniformity in their images?
- **TELL:** Remind mentors that we all carry these unconscious assumptions and they need not be a source of guilt or embarrassment. We discuss them as a means of raising awareness so that we can be conscious of them and minimize their effect on our behavior. The Following studies highlight how enculturation affects us all and how it may impact the mentoring relationship.

ACTIVITY #3: Implications of Diversity Research (25 min)

Distribute the Diversity Study Results handout. NOTE: Many of these studies are summarized in "The Benefits and Challenges of Diversity," which is included in the materials handed out.

- Let's take the next 8 minutes to read about some results of studies about diversity in research. Look at each and make notes on how they could impact your mentoring practice. Choose one in particular that you would like to discuss with a partner.
- **In pairs:** discuss your reaction to **one** of the studies and the implications for your mentoring practice. We'll take 8-10 minutes here
- **DISCUSS (8 min) with entire group:** You may want to record the ideas generated in this discussion on a white board or flip chart. Guide the discussion using the following questions:
 - 1. What were your initial reactions to the studies?
 - 2. Which study captured your attention? Why?
 - 3. What implications do these study results have for your mentoring practice?
 - 4. What are two to three practical things you could do to minimize the impact of bias, prejudice, and stereotype in your mentoring relationship?

ACTIVITY #4: Case Studies (20 minutes)

Distribute the three Equity and Inclusion case studies (Is It OK to Ask?, Language Barriers, and Ethnicity, Disease and Ethics) and give participants a couple of minutes to review them and choose which one they would like to discuss in a small group so that there are two or three groups.

TELL(8 min): Discuss in small groups one of the case studies

DISCUSS (10 min) with entire group. You may want to record the ideas generated in this discussion on a white board or flip chart.

NOTE: In some groups, mentors can be fairly quiet and reluctant to speak at first in this discussion, but just give them a few minutes. Once mentors get going with the discussion, it is often rich and engaging. Allowing mentors to choose which case they would like to discuss should help. Be sensitive to the fact that some minority mentors get tapped as the token "spokesperson" on issues of diversity. Possible responses to the cases are included below. There are a few guiding questions at the end of each case, Is It OK to Ask?, Language Barriers, and Ethnicity, Disease and Ethics. Some additional questions include:

1. As a mentor, would you feel comfortable asking a mentee about how their identity impacts their experiences? How do you decide when asking questions about these issues is appropriate?
2. Specifically, how would you go about engaging someone in a discussion about their race, ethnicity, class, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, background and personal values? How do you engage in such conversations based on interest without feeling or expressing a sense of judgment about differences? How do you ask without raising issues of tokenism?
3. How can you view diversity as an asset to a mentor-mentee relationship? Reframe conversations with a mentee in terms of how you can benefit and learn from his/her experiences that differ from your own.
4. Do you think everyone should be treated the same? Does treating everyone the same mean they are being treated equally?

Views of the impact of race, class, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, background on the research experience vary widely. Remember that as a facilitator you are not expected to be an expert on the topic. Given that some facilitators have expressed less comfort mediating this session, we have included some possible responses to the cases below. Given the complexity of human relationships and the importance of situational contexts, these responses are of course by no means exhaustive or comprehensive