



STARBUCKS®
GLOBAL ACADEMY

Resource Toolkit for
To Be Welcoming Curriculum

WELCOMING DIALOGUE ON DISABILITY BIAS



OVERVIEW

Public spaces and third places are more welcoming to all when we celebrate our shared humanity. By understanding each other, we deepen connections. To encourage more meaningful conversations on this topic, leaders at Starbucks partnered with experts at Arizona State University to create To Be Welcoming, a 15-course curriculum designed to address bias through understanding the human experience.

Below are 4 core resources from the “Welcoming Dialogue on Disability Bias” course. This learning experience presents key terms related to disability bias, an exploration of the role that media representations play in creating stereotypes around disability, examples of everyday macroaggressions and microaggressions that people with disabilities face, and a guide to encourage dialogue on disability bias. Learn more about the program and register for courses at [ToBeWelcoming.com](https://www.tobewelcoming.com).



RESOURCE 1

Key Terms and Concepts

RESOURCE 2

Media Representations of People With Disabilities

RESOURCE 3

Ableism: Macroaggressions and Microaggressions

RESOURCE 4

Dialogue Challenge

We will begin by defining key terms and concepts related to disability bias. These terms have been defined specifically to fit the context of this course, and will be used to enhance your understanding of the course topic.



NORMALCY

The concept that there is a typical and average set of human behaviors and physical and psychological characteristics, and that deviation from these makes a person abnormal, deviant, or defective.



DISABILITY JUSTICE

A social framework informed by the experiences of people with disabilities that considers disability within intersectional frames like race, gender, and class. Disability justice defines justice as “representation, recognition, and redistribution of power and resources for and with individuals with disabilities.”



ABLEISM

Refers to a set of practices and beliefs assigning inferior value to individuals who have developmental, emotional, physical, or psychiatric disabilities, thereby devaluing and limiting their potential.



PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

A way of communication which highlights the person and not their physical limitations. This manner of communication is aimed at mitigating the marginalization people with disabilities (e.g. a person with autism) encounter in everyday communication.



MICROAGGRESSIONS

Insults that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, target individuals based on aspects of their marginalized identity. Individuals with disabilities experience environmental, verbal, and nonverbal microaggressions driven by inaccurate beliefs about their competence and ability.



IDENTITY FIRST LANGUAGE

A form of self-identification wherein people with disabilities choose to identify with a particular group of disabled people (e.g. an autistic person). This manner of self-identification is meant to show a cultural affiliation with a specific group.



INTERSECTIONALITY

The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.



SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF DISABILITY

The idea that disability is a social construction idea. It does not deny the existence of individuals' biological and/or psychological differences, but emphasizes that societal norms, human activities, and political actions attribute particular meaning to these differences, often with negative consequences.



DISABILITY RIGHTS

Legal and social considerations for people with disabilities. Beginning in the 1970s, this movement's goal is to secure equity within the disability community, including providing social services that reduce societal barriers to ultimately increase self-determination for individuals with disabilities.



MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

A perception of disability that views difference as something to be clinically 'fixed' through the use of medical treatments, even in situations where the difference does not cause pain or illness. The model devalues human bodies that differ from a perceived norm.

Summary: Bias of any kind generally stems from ignorance about situations different from the norm, which can lead to prejudice against others. These key terms will help you understand and demystify the “unknown,” as well as give a glimpse of the trauma that certain groups of people still endure due to bias.

Portrayals of people with disabilities in popular media largely determine how society understands them. Yet popular media (movies, advertising, TV, and music) most often portrays people with disabilities in inaccurate, incomplete, or even offensive ways, reinforcing dominant conceptions of disability as a deficit and people with disabilities as sufferers in need of a cure. This reinforces the medical model in the popular imagination.



OBJECTS OF PITY

A historically common portrayal of disability in the media is where people with disabilities are paraded in front of non-disabled people, their “sad stories” shared to a background of sappy music, with the hope of raising money to cure, “fix,” or otherwise help these individuals.



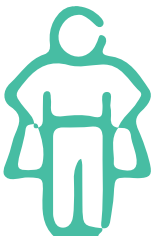
INSPIRATION

The stories of people with disabilities doing everyday activities or achieving accomplishments are celebrated as miraculous stories worthy of inspiration. This is what Stella Young, disabled activist, calls inspiration porn. Inspiration porn describes images of and stories about disabled people that non-disabled people use to exclaim how inspirational people with disabilities are simply for doing ordinary tasks.



EVIL

Depictions of people with disabilities as villains is a particularly common trope dating back to fairy and folktales. Typically, the person is evil as a result of anger or bitterness about their disability and is seeking revenge or otherwise acting out in anger without abandon.



SUPERPOWERED

Sometimes coined the “supercrip” trope by critics, this is the idea that the person with the disability, despite their sad conditions, has something very special or magical about them that redeems them in the face of the non-disabled audience.

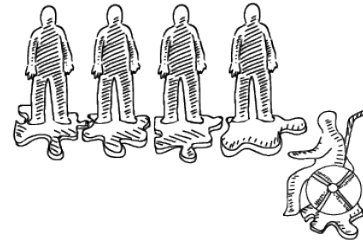
SUMMARY

Overwhelmingly in popular media, people with disabilities are portrayed inauthentically, which contributes to how they are understood and treated across society. Many non-disabled people have limited interactions with people with disabilities. As their only exposure to disabled people, stereotypes contribute to fear, inaccurate understandings, or “missionary” or helper relationships that hurt, rather than help, people with disabilities.

The following resource presents some of the ways that people with disabilities experience ableism in their everyday lives.

MACROAGGRESSIONS

A macroaggression is any structural action (like a policy, law, or common practice) meant to exclude or result in the exclusion of certain people. In the case of people with disabilities, many macroaggressions are connected to a lack of accommodations or the choice not to provide them, as seen in the following examples:



- A law allowing insurance companies to deny healthcare coverage to someone with a pre-existing condition.
- A company policy requiring a driver’s license as the only method of identification in order to carry out a service.
- A college or university policy that prohibits the use of electronic devices even for note-taking or recording lectures.
- A building with multiple floors that does not include an elevator.
- An organization refusing to include braille signage on walls.
- An employer giving convenient parking spaces to senior managers and refusing to provide a nearby parking space for an employee with mobility impairment.

MICROAGGRESSIONS

In addition to macroaggressions, people with disabilities also must contend with microaggressions. Microaggressions are everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, whether intentional or not, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages based solely upon a person’s membership in a marginalized group. They occur at the individual level, unlike systemic-level macroaggressions. The following is a list of microaggressions people with disabilities face on a daily basis, according to Wendy Lu, a writer for the online women’s magazine *Bustle*.



- Reducing the disability to an unfortunate fact
- Deciding for others how “bad” their disability is or isn’t
- Disability discrimination
- Assuming that disability always means inability
- Belittling
- Condescending responses
- Inspiration porn
- Turning disabilities into minor, everyday defects or using them as a punchline
- Assuming the disability is a negative trait
- Projecting an “us” versus “them” mentality
- Tiptoeing around the word “disability”
- Using blanket statements

Source: <https://www.bustle.com/articles/186060-13-microaggressions-people-with-disabilities-face-on-a-daily-basis>

SUMMARY

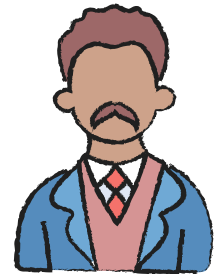
Problematic media portrayals and a lack of inclusive practices contribute to ableism, manifested in macroaggressions and microaggressions. These occasions of discrimination can be counteracted by well-informed people, with and without disabilities, who maintain a sense of humor and charity.

Talking about disability bias requires a complex and creative communication skill set. This series introduced you to the role civility, empathy, and dialogue play in navigating critical conversations around bias. As you practice these skills, your awareness will increase and you will get better at engaging in critical conversations on sensitive topics.

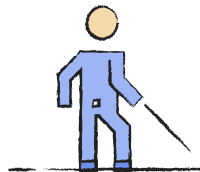
It can be difficult to start a dialogue on these issues. Use the following list of questions to guide your conversation on disability bias.

DIALOGUE CHALLENGE

I'm learning about the role civility, empathy, and dialogue play in critical conversations around disability bias in the To Be Welcoming Series featured on Starbucks Global Academy. One of the activities is a dialogue challenge where I am encouraged to engage in dialogue with a close family member or friend on their perceptions of disability. Do you mind if we discuss your perspective? Thank you.



Who are some famous or influential people with disabilities you know about?

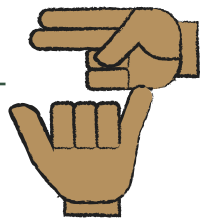


How would you define disability? What does having a disability mean to you?



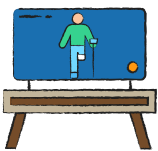
How do you think most non-disabled people perceive people with disabilities?

What perceptions or beliefs do you hold about people with disabilities? What has influenced or shaped your perceptions about this group?



What are your experiences with people who identify as part of this group? Do you know any such people personally? How did you meet them?

Do you think your perceptions about people with disabilities match the views society holds about them? What about the perceptions of people in your family or your community?



How have you seen people with disabilities portrayed in the media?

What do you think about biases people with disabilities face in society?

Do you think people with disabilities have the same opportunities as people from other groups in the U.S.?



What similarities do you believe you share with people who have disabilities?

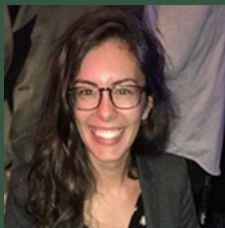
COURSE AUTHORS



Dr. Seena Skelton

Director of Operations
Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center

Dr. Skelton is Director of Operations of the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center, where she plans and manages projects and services offered to public, state, and local education agencies throughout thirteen states. Dr. Skelton has worked as an educational consultant for a regional special education resource center in southwest Ohio, a lead consultant for three state-wide school improvement initiatives funded by the Ohio Department of Education, and a co-director at both the Equity Alliance at ASU and the Great Lakes Equity Center at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). She has garnered more than 20 years of experience in the areas of systems change, school improvement, and educational equity. Dr. Skelton has been an adjunct professor at Northern Kentucky University, the University of Cincinnati, the College of Mount Saint Joseph, and IUPUI. She has co-authored book chapters on implementing systemic change for improved student outcomes, and regularly presents at numerous local, state, and national conferences on various topics related to promoting the success of historically marginalized students. Her latest scholarly work explores her identity as a Black woman with a disability, including her own educational experiences and how her identity shapes the professional learning work she engages in with public educators.



Dr. Carlyn Mueller

Assistant Professor
Rehabilitation Psychology & Special Education
University of Wisconsin Madison

Carlyn earned her PhD in Special Education at the University of Washington in Seattle. Carlyn's research focuses broadly on disability identity development. Based on her experience as a person with physical and learning disabilities, her research privileges student perspectives on special education and works to disrupt deficit notions of disability in school and schooling. Carlyn completed a BA in Special Education at Goucher College in Baltimore, MD and an MEd in Learning, Diversity, and Urban Studies at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. At the University of Washington, she has developed several disability-related undergraduate classes for future educators and taught them online and in person. She has presented at both national and international conferences, such as the American Educational Research Association annual conference and the Second City Disability Studies in Education Conference, and is developing resources and mentorship opportunities for graduate students with disabilities in academia. Her work is published in *Rehabilitation Psychology*, the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, and the *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*.



Dr. Holly Pearson

Assistant Professor
College of Education & Social and Behavioral Sciences
Framingham State University

Dr. Holly Pearson is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Framingham State University. She received her PhD in Education with an emphasis in Disability Studies from Chapman University, an MS in Sociology from Iowa State University, and a BA in Sociology with a minor in Asian Studies from the

COURSE AUTHORS

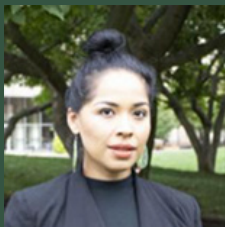
University of Alaska Fairbanks. Stemming from her background and identities as an Alaskan deaf Korean adoptee female who grew up signing American Sign Language and spoken English, her research focuses on the diversity and disability disconnect. She draws upon critical spatial studies, disability studies, intersectionality, and arts and visual methodologies in order to (re)examine social issues around institutional diversity and disability in higher education from a socio-spatial justice lens. Presently, she is exploring the history of higher education, particularly in the dynamic between higher education architecture and diversity. She is also examining disability disclosure, hidden labor, and hidden curriculum among scholars with disabilities. She has presented and published research on the impact of disability studies curriculum, disability and diversity, disability and spaces, intersectionality, and arts-based and visual methodologies in multiple journals and national conferences. She also actively serves on the board and as secretary for the Society of Disability Studies and as secretary// treasurer for the American Educational Research Association's Disability Studies in Education SIG.



Dr. Kathleen King Thorius

Associate Professor
Special Education and Urban Education Studies
Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

Dr. Kathleen King Thorius is Associate Professor of Special Education and Urban Education Studies and Executive Director of the Great Lakes Equity Center and its Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center. Dr. Thorius holds expertise in culturally responsive and sustaining education, special and inclusive education, equity considerations in multi-tiered systems of support, and race and disability equity-oriented professional development. Published extensively in practitioner and research outlets, including Harvard Educational Review, and the International Journal of Inclusive Education, Dr. Thorius was a school psychologist before earning her PhD as a USDOE-funded doctoral fellow in an interdisciplinary program to prepare culturally responsive special education professors. As a non-disabled White woman, Dr. Thorius presents nationally and internationally on equity and justice issues in race and disability, with a focus on demonstrating and interrupting how racism and ableism are embedded in and enacted through education policies and practices.



Dr. Zelideh R. Martinez Hoy

Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Leadership
North Dakota's Department of Educational Leadership

Dr. Zelideh Martinez Hoy is an assistant professor for the Higher Education program at the University of North Dakota's Department of Educational Leadership. Born in Mexico and raised in Fort Wayne, Indiana, she pursued her bachelor's degree in Legal Studies, master's degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs, and a Ph.D. in Health Behavior at Indiana University. She has worked as a student affairs practitioner, higher education administrator, and individual and family resiliency counselor for immigrant families. Her research focuses on the impact of vicarious trauma in helping professionals with a focus on student affairs practitioners and public interest lawyers.