



# BEYOND BIAS

Being Conscious about Unconscious Bias

Presented by: Molly Senecal, Dean Research & Planning, Title IX

# Outline

- Workshop Goals
- Guiding Principles
- Your Goals and Experiences
- Why is this important?
- Some data (not too much)
- Defining Key Terms
- Strategies for recognizing and interrupting to biases in yourself and others



# Workshop Goals

- Understand the importance and value of inclusivity in the workplace
- Understand what unconscious biases are
- Become aware of what factors might be leading to unconscious bias
- Develop strategies to interrupt biases



# Guiding Principles

- All of us have biases shaped by our view of the world.
- Our view of the world is shaped by values, perceptions, assumptions and expectations. These can be a result of our upbringing, culture religious beliefs, our experiences, education, and many other factors.
- Being different and recognizing differences is okay.

# Your Goals and Experiences

- What interested you in the this training regarding unconscious bias in the workplace?
- What personal experiences have you had with unconscious bias?

# Why is this important?

All students are better educated and better prepared for leadership, citizenship, and professional competitiveness in multicultural America and the global community when they are exposed to diverse perspectives in their classrooms

Additionally a diverse workforce:

- Improves understanding of those you work with
- Creates a work environment that allows everyone to reach their full potential
- Provides multiple perspectives on problem solving
- Increases employee retention

# Los Rios Community College District Strategic Plan

## **Mission:**

The Los Rios Colleges provide a vibrant learning environment that empowers all students to achieve their educational and career goals.

## **Vision:**

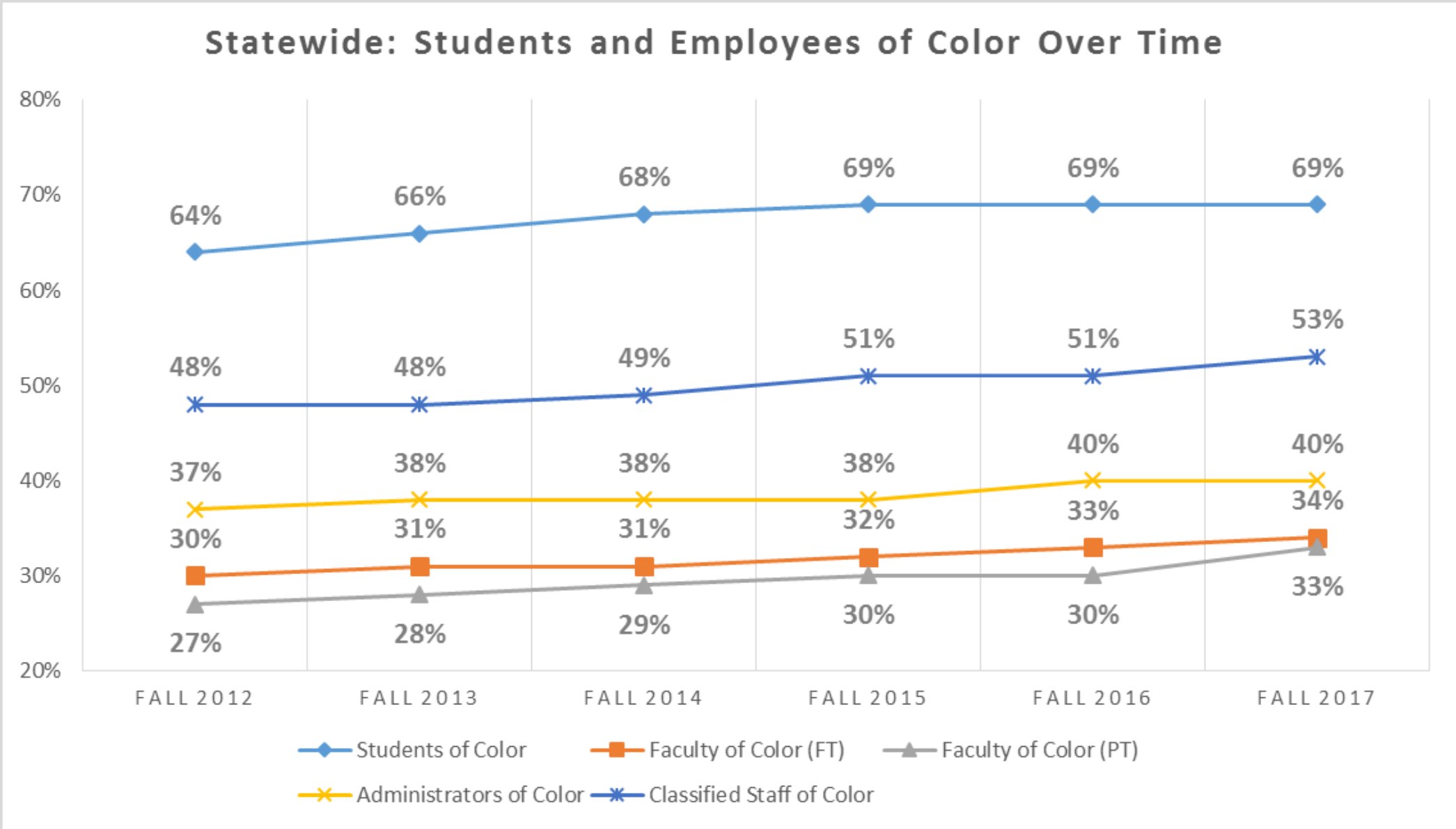
To transform the lives of students and enhance the vitality of our region.

## **Goals:**

1. Establish effective pathways that optimize student access and success.
2. Ensure equitable academic achievement across all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and gender groups.
3. Provide exemplary teaching and learning opportunities.
4. Lead the region in workforce development.
5. Foster an outstanding working and learning environment.

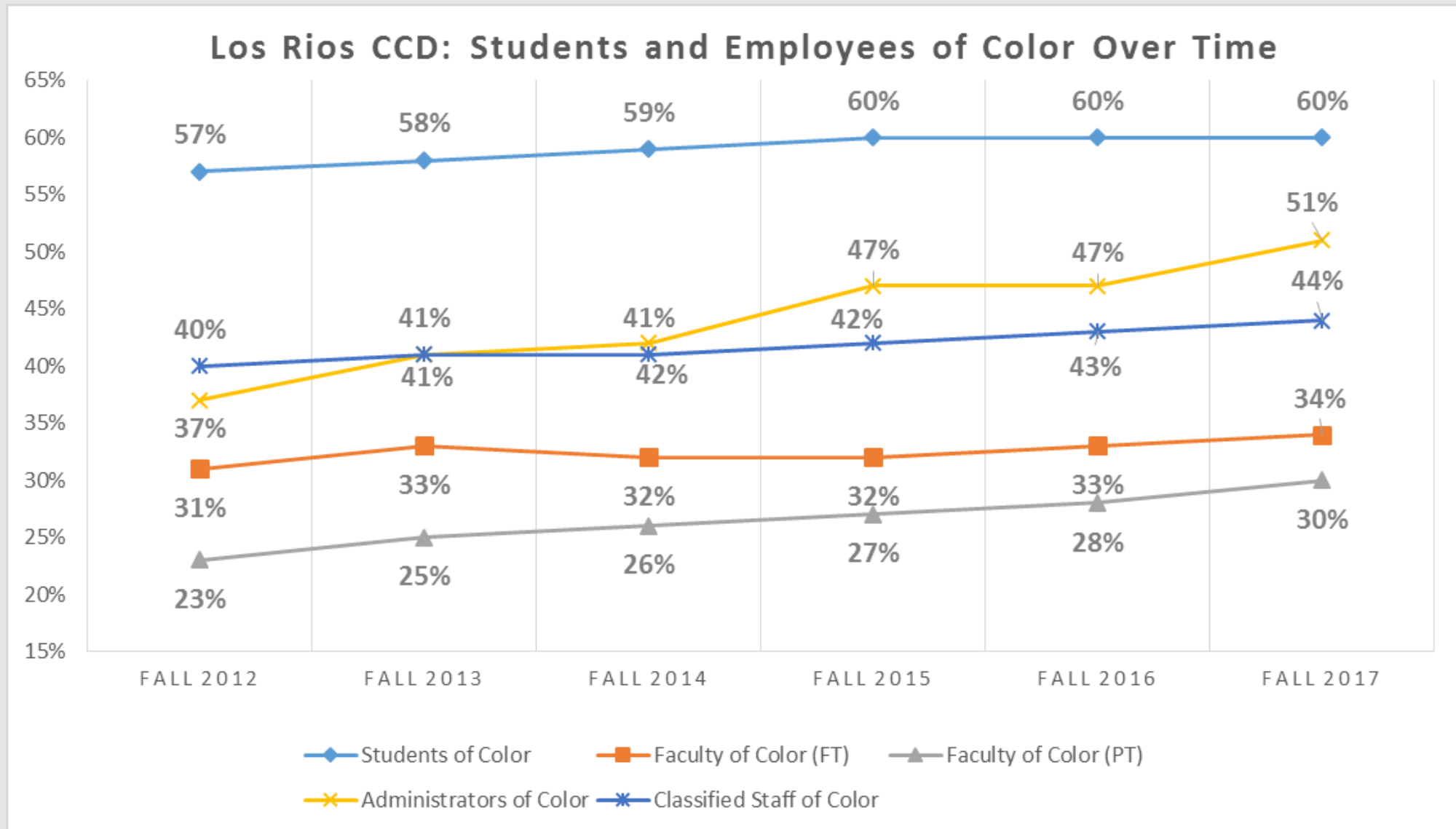


# Statewide Data (2012-2017)





# Los Rios CCD Data (2012-2017)



# Defining Key Terms: Inclusion

How We Interact:

*Differences and diversity are appreciated--not tolerated*

*Inclusive work environments encourage:*

*Curiosity*

*Empathy*

*Enjoyment*

*Creativity*

*Problem Solving*



# Defining Key Terms: Culture

Culture refers to a group or community of people who share common experiences that shape the way they understand the world. It includes the groups that we are born into, such as race, national origin, gender, class, or religion.

Culture is a strong part of people's lives. It influences their views, their values, their humor, their hopes, their loyalties, and their worries and fears.



# Defining Key Terms: Stereotypes

- Cultural Incompetence leads to stereotypes
- A Stereotype is used to categorize a group of people. When people lack exposure or understanding of other groups of people who are different from them, they classify them based on a widely held belief about certain ways of behaving which is intended to represent the entire group of those individuals.
- Stereotypes can result in microaggressions, which are subtle comments or actions based on negative stereotypes that single out an individual as being different from others in the group.

# Microaggressions

| Microaggressions   | Example   | Messages   |
|--|---|--|
| Ascription of intelligence. Evaluates someone's intelligence or aptitudes based on their race and gender.                | (To a woman of color): "I would never have guessed you were a scientist!" Or "How did you get so good at math?"   | People of color and/or women are not as intelligent and adept at math and science as whites and men. |
| Assumption of criminality/danger. Presumes a person of color to be dangerous, deviant or criminal because of their race. | A white person crosses the street to avoid a person of color, or a professor asks a young person of color in an academic building if they are lost, insinuating they may be trying to break in. | People of color don't belong here, they are dangerous.   |
| Gender/sexuality exclusive language. Excludes women and LGBTQIA community.   | Forms that only offer male/female choice for gender; use of the pronoun "he" to refer to all people.  | There are only two acceptable genders; men are normative and women are derivative.                   |

# Stereotype Threat

- **Stereotype threat** occurs when your group is stereotyped as performing poorly in a domain and your performance may appear to confirm the negative stereotype.
  - *Performance decreases on computational and recall tests.*
  - *Conscious awareness of the threat is not necessary for the effects.*
- Stereotype threat is *situational*: performance decreases only in settings where the stereotype is activated.
- Stereotype *activation* is automatic, but **stereotype application can be controlled.**

# Defining Key Terms: Biases

- *Explicit Biases*: conscious actions directed against members of a group.
- *Unconscious (implicit) Biases*: Non-conscious expectations or stereotypes associated with members of a group that guide perceptions and behaviors.
- Action based on unconscious bias is pervasive and inevitable. This can be distorting and result in poor judgment.

# Defining Key Terms: Unconscious Bias

Unconscious Bias –  
Making the Unconscious Conscious



# Unconscious Biases – You are not alone

- Research shows that we all – regardless of gender or race – perceive and treat people based on schemas associated with their race/gender/social group.
  - Both men and women hold them about gender
  - Both whites and people of color hold them about race
- People are typically not aware of them, but with effort can become aware of them and change them.
- Implicit association test:  
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Unconscious biases play a significant role when there is:

- Ambiguity (including lack of information)
- Stress from competing tasks
- Time pressure
- Under-representation of the group in question (when the group does not reach critical mass)

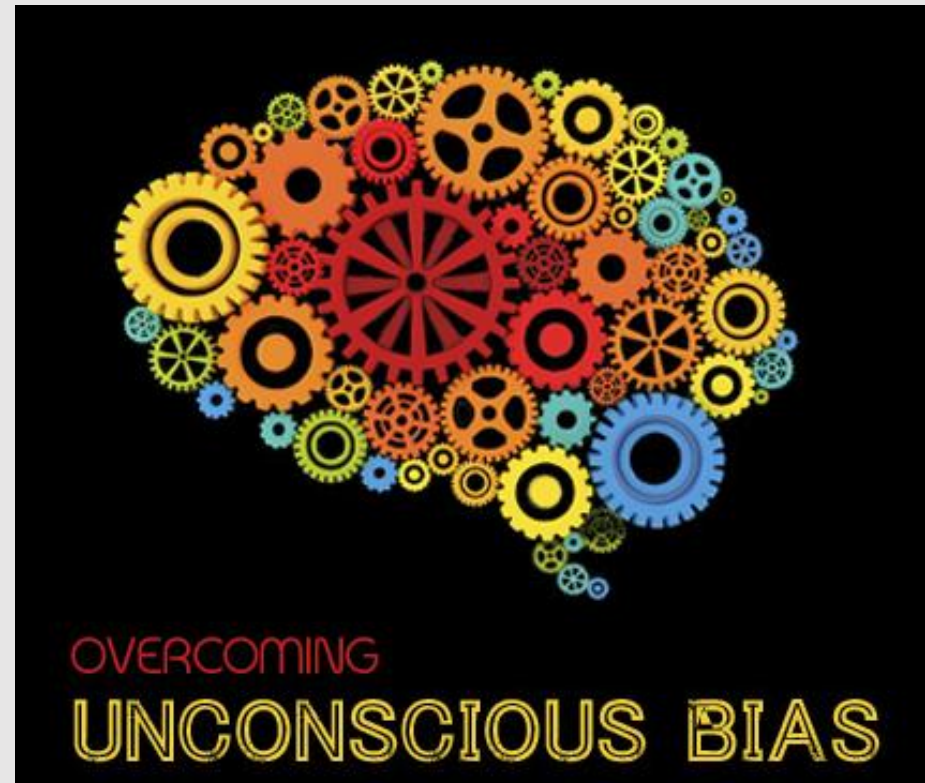
# Unconscious Biases in Education

- Black students are suspended or expelled at a rate three times greater than white students.
- While Black students make up 18% of preschool enrollment, they represent 48% of the preschool students receiving at least one out-of-school suspension.



# Strategies for Interrupting Unconscious Biases

1. Improved decision-making
2. Counter-stereotypic imaging
3. Individuating
4. Perspective Taking
5. Intergroup Contact



# Improved Decision-Making

- Slowing down; being more deliberative; removing discretion and ambiguity from decision-making:
- *Example: Courts Catalyzing Change “bench card” or checklist for judges. See excerpt below:*
  - *“What assumptions have I made about the cultural identity, genders, and background of this family?”*
  - *What evidence has supported every conclusion I have drawn, and how have I challenged unsupported assumptions?”*

# Counter-Stereotypic Imaging



The subconscious power of pictures, images and symbols to create “identity safety” and reduce/counter negative biases.

**Examples:** Images of women and people of color as engineers, CEOs, leaders, etc.

**Question:** If you could redesign your office, program, or common space, what is one specific picture of imagine you would display to counter negative stereotypes about women, people of color and/or others who may feel negatively stereotyped or marginalized within the larger society?

# Individuating

Using the power of regular, one-on-one conversations to see people for their individual qualities and attributes versus seeing them as part of a stereotypic group.



# Perspective Taking

Walking in the shoes – taking on the first hand perspective -- of others (or the perceived other)

*Examples:*

- *Federal Judge Mark Bennet spending time in a solitary confinement cell;*
- *Former Newark Mayor Cory Booker living on food stamps for a week*



# Inter-Group Contact

Using the power of positive, sustained dialogue across different identity groups to support individuation, perspective taking and group re-categorization.

*Example:*

- *National Park Service (NPS) Allies for Inclusion Program; training NPS staff to be dialogue facilitators; using 60-90 minute monthly "brown bags" as the strategy.*



# Reflection Exercise

Interrupting/reducing bias requires that we learn how to pause, slow down or be more mindful in how we make decisions and relate to others (or those that we perceive to be "the other").

*Question: What's one thing you're willing to take off of your plate — or do differently — in your personal and/or work life in order to slow down and be more mindful of how you make decisions and interact with others?*

# Pair Share Activity

- What role can biases play when members of a dominant culture seek to be a mentor or ally?
- How can members of a dominant culture not only be aware of bias but also their own privilege?
- How might you respond if someone suggests that you are exhibiting biases?

## Bias Interrupters – Let's Try It

You are sitting in a meeting and you see that women/people of color are being interrupted far more than the men. How do you intervene?

# Bias Interrupters – Let's Try It

How can you make sure that the women and people of color in your department are getting the same level of support from support personnel?

# Next Steps



- Challenge the myth of non-bias
  - *Even individuals who believe in inclusion, diversity, and equity may still rely on problematic unconscious biases.*
  - *Confidence in your own fairness may prevent you from being as fair as you aim to be. For example, if you are always fair, then others' weaknesses must be their own fault.*

# Next Steps (Continued)

- Examine and challenge your “gut feelings” – these are usually a product of your unconscious biases and can lead to affinity bias (our natural tendency to warm up to people who we think are like us.)
- Engage in an individual self-assessment of implicit biases and preferences.
- Allow yourself to be “checked” by others and have the courage to “check” others.
- Realize that race and other identity neutral preferences many not be neutral in practice.

# Additional Resources

Project Implicit:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>

Inclusion, Exclusion, Illusion and Collusion - Dr Helen Turnbull

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdV80pXhl2g>

Higher Education Recruitment Consortium:

[https://www.hercjobs.org/career\\_advice/diversity\\_resources/index.html](https://www.hercjobs.org/career_advice/diversity_resources/index.html)

HigherEd Jobs – Diversity Resources:

<https://www.higheredjobs.com/articles/DiversityResources.cfm>

Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California

<https://cue.usc.edu/>





# Fostering an Outstanding Working and Learning Environment

Recognizing and interrupting biases helps us all, and results in, increased job satisfaction, lower turnover, higher productivity, improved creativity and innovation, improved problem solving, and increased flexibility. Thank you for attending this training!

