



UNITED - Inclusion and Diversity of Learners with Diverse Backgrounds

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Blended Training Program:

“Inclusion and Diversity”

Conflict Resolution and Addressing Exclusionary Behavior

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About UNITED

United – Inclusion and Diversity of Learners with Diverse Backgrounds” is an Erasmus+ co-funded project 2022-2-DE02-KA210-VET-000092335 in collaboration with XU Exponential University of Applied Sciences and Luxembourg Creative Lab aims at enhancing the partnering organisations by educating our staff members and peers on the most important European values of Inclusion and Diversity. More information about our project activities you could find at: <https://unitederasmus.com/>

Unit 1: Recognizing exclusionary behavior in the classroom

Tags: Inclusivity; Diversity; Bullying; Discrimination; Social Isolation; Intervention Strategies; Empathy
Unit 1 - Introduction

In any educational setting, it is imperative to foster an environment that celebrates diversity, promotes inclusivity, and ensures the well-being of all students. However, despite our best efforts, exclusionary behavior can manifest in classrooms, posing challenges to the learning process and hindering the development of a cohesive and supportive community. Exclusionary behavior, which includes actions such as bullying, discrimination and social isolation, can profoundly impact the emotional and academic growth of those targeted. As educators, it is our responsibility to address and prevent such behavior effectively.

In this part of the module, we will delve into the critical aspect of addressing exclusionary behavior in our classrooms. By understanding the nature and consequences of such conduct, we can equip ourselves with the tools to intervene promptly and create an inclusive space where every student feels valued, respected and safe.

1.1. The symptoms you should look for

Exclusionary behavior refers to actions or attitudes that intentionally or unintentionally isolate, marginalize, or discriminate against certain individuals or groups, denying them equal access to opportunities, resources, or social interactions. In educational settings, such behavior can have far-reaching consequences, negatively affecting students' emotional well-being, academic performance and overall sense of belonging.

Recognizing exclusionary behaviors such as bullying, discrimination, social exclusion and microaggressions in the classroom requires teachers and lecturers to be observant and attuned to the interactions among students.

By being aware of the following key indicators and signs, educators can proactively address and tackle these issues to create a more inclusive learning environment:

- **Bullying**

Bullying can manifest through frequent conflicts or aggressive interactions between students. Physical injuries or damage to personal belongings without a clear explanation may also be indicative of bullying.

Sudden changes in a student's behavior, such as becoming withdrawn, anxious, or avoiding specific areas, might signal their involvement in bullying incidents.

Students may also voice complaints about being harassed, teased, or intimidated by others. Furthermore, digital platforms can facilitate cyberbullying, characterized by mean-spirited messages or rumors being spread online.

- **Discrimination**

Discrimination can manifest in unequal treatment based on a student's race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics. Educators should be vigilant for instances where certain students are denied access to opportunities, resources or responsibilities compared to others.

Derogatory comments, slurs or offensive language targeting specific groups may also be evident in the classroom. Educators may notice the formation of cliques or exclusive groups that exclude individuals based on their identity.

- **Social exclusion**

Observing students who consistently sit alone during class or lunch breaks could indicate social exclusion. Students who exhibit limited or no engagement in group activities, discussions, or collaborative projects might be experiencing social isolation.

Additionally, the lack of involvement in extracurricular activities or school events may suggest that a student feels excluded from the school community. Paying attention to instances where students are deliberately left out or ignored during social gatherings is crucial in identifying social exclusion.

- **Microaggressions**

Microaggressions are subtle comments or actions that convey stereotypes or prejudices about certain groups. Educators should be attentive to insensitive remarks about a student's cultural practices, background, or appearance. These can be made by other students and faculty members alike, sometimes unintentionally.

Continually mispronouncing a student's name, despite being corrected, can be a form of microaggression. Moreover, making assumptions about a student's abilities or interests based on their identity can perpetuate exclusionary behavior. This is a particularly challenging and difficult form of exclusionary behavior to recognize.

1.2. Intervening on time

Intervention strategies, tailored to the specific types of exclusionary behavior, aim to foster a more inclusive and empathetic classroom environment, where students feel respected, valued, and supported in their learning journey. There are several strategies that lecturers in the university and teachers at school alike can perform when noticing exclusionary behavior in the classroom.

Here are some strategies that can be used for each of the four types of exclusionary behavior we discussed:

- **Bullying**

Some of the most effective bullying prevention efforts work to improve the overall social and emotional climate of a school and foster positive social or inclusive behavior among all students.

You can achieve this by holding classroom meetings that reinforce positive behavior expectations and provide guidance on how to respond to bullying. Educators should also focus on fostering emotional intelligence among students. Integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) programs into the curriculum can help students develop empathy and emotional regulation skills.

By encouraging open communication, students feel more comfortable expressing their feelings and perspectives, reducing the likelihood of bullying incidents.

- **Social exclusion**

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the classroom is one way to include SEL within the classroom. The program works to create a positive school environment. Teachers, staff, students, and sometimes parents can all participate to achieve maximum effect. We will discuss social emotional learning in greater detail in Unit 2.

Alternatively, universities could introduce positive role models from diverse backgrounds in the curriculum and classroom materials. This can also be achieved by inviting guest speakers to share their success stories can inspire students and promote a sense of belonging for all. As we discussed in Module 7 – diverse backgrounds facilitate diversity of thought, so providing access to such guest speakers will be greatly beneficial for the academic development of the students, apart from tackling issues related to social exclusion.

- **Discrimination**

Discrimination, unlike social exclusion is often done on purpose, due to the unfounded biases certain individuals may hold. The more passive approach with which faculty members can help students understand the importance of diversity and inclusion by creating a safe space for all students to share their experiences and perspectives. They can also use literature that promotes diversity and inclusion in their classrooms.

Having said that – some situations may require a more robust and imminent response from faculty members. Students involved in discriminatory behavior should be reprimanded. Ideally –

a conversation between them a responsible teacher. understand their perspectives and educate them about the impact of their actions.

If the behavior persists - contact the parents or guardians of both the victim and the perpetrator to discuss the incident and collaborate on a solution.

- Microaggressions

The first step here is to teach students what a microaggression is, as this can be a rather complicated matter. Some people may instinctively become defensive and assert that their actions meant no harm. This may well be true, but using non-inclusive language can cause real harm, regardless of the intentions.

We discuss the harm caused by such actions in Module 1: Basics of inclusive language. Refer to that Module for more information which you can then use to explain the matter to students.

The single best thing an educator could do in such situations is to lead by example – pointing out instances of microaggressions, whenever they occur and setting an example of alternative ways to behave in an inclusive and respectful manner.

1.3. Bringing university counselling services on board

Encountering exclusionary behavior can be an overwhelming challenge for faculty members. When navigating between scientific research, administrative work and teaching, educators may find it difficult to devote enough attention to the well-being of individual students, and indeed to even notice all the possible incidents of bullying, microaggressions and other exclusionary behaviors that may take place on campus.

That is why counseling services play a crucial role in supporting students' social-emotional well-being and mental health. Collaborating effectively with them can enhance the overall support provided to students, especially when addressing issues related to exclusionary behavior, microaggressions, and other emotional challenges.

Here is how educators can include counselors effectively:

1. Familiarize yourself with the roles and responsibilities of school counselors, including their expertise in mental health support and counseling techniques. Keep in mind that they can provide valuable insights and strategies for addressing exclusionary behaviour and their impact on students.

2. If you are unsure whether or not a particular case requires intervention, you should communicate with counselors about any incidents of microaggressions or exclusionary behavior observed in the classroom. Share all information, such as students' emotional responses or concerns raised during class discussions.
3. When appropriate, refer students who have experienced or engaged in exclusionary behavior to counseling services for additional support. Educators should inform students about the availability of counseling services and the benefits of seeking help to cope with the emotional impact of bullying, microaggressions and social exclusion.
4. Once school counsellors are familiar with the case, educators should work together to develop intervention strategies that address the underlying issues contributing to microaggressions. Seek input from counselors on implementing restorative practices and conflict resolution techniques in response to incidents. We will discuss specific conflict resolution techniques in the next Unit.

Of course, not all universities will have dedicated counseling services or may have only limited resources in this area. While having dedicated experts on campus is the best scenario, universities can take proactive steps to support students' mental health and well-being even in the absence of formal services.

Collaborating with external resources, promoting peer support, and offering training to educators can contribute to creating a caring and supportive learning environment for all students.

Key Takeaways

- Inclusive language refers to using words, phrases, and expressions that embrace and respect all individuals, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability or other characteristics.
- When addressing exclusionary behavior, the primary focus should be on promoting positive behavior change, fostering empathy, and creating an inclusive learning environment.

Recommendations for Further Reading.

We explore the various aspects of inclusive language throughout the training program. One specific application of inclusive language which includes more theoretical knowledge is HR work. We discuss this in greater detail in Module 7: Diverse Recruitment and Hiring.

References for Unit 1:

Allen, K. P. (2004). Classroom management, bullying, and teacher practices. *The Professional Educator*, 27(1), 1-15.

StopBullying.gov. (n.d.). MTSS Prevention Approaches and Effective Intervention. Retrieved July 28, 2023, from <https://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/research-resources/mtss-prevention-approaches-and-effective-intervention>

Unit 2: Effective conflict resolution

Tags: Conflict, Resolution, Communication, Empathy, Active Listening, Collaboration, Problem-Solving, Mediation

Unit 2 - Introduction

In university settings, conflicts may arise among faculty members, staff, or between instructors and students. Effectively resolving conflicts is vital to maintain a harmonious academic environment that fosters growth and collaboration. This lesson is designed to equip university lecturers and faculty members with essential conflict resolution techniques.

By cultivating strong communication, empathy, and problem-solving skills, educators can lead by example and create a positive atmosphere conducive to learning and scholarly pursuits.

2.1. The essential conflict resolution skillset

To effectively address conflicts related to exclusionary behavior and discrimination in university settings, faculty members need to develop and apply essential conflict resolution skills. These skills are instrumental in fostering open communication, empathy, collaboration, and problem-solving, enabling faculty to navigate conflicts constructively and promote a more inclusive learning environment.

There diverse skillset, required to effectively master the art of resolving conflicts within the university can be outlined as follows:

- **Practice active listening**

Active listening involves fully concentrating, understanding, responding, and remembering what the other person is saying. To master this skill, practice reflective listening, where you summarize or paraphrase what the other person said to ensure understanding. This will immediately reduce the tension in conflicts and demonstrate that the other side is also being heard.

University professors and staff members could explore options to workshops or training sessions on active listening to learn effective techniques and enhance your ability to engage with others in a conflict constructively.

- **Train yourself to understand diverse viewpoints**

To understand diverse viewpoints, engage in empathy-building activities, such as storytelling or role-playing. These activities enable you to step into others' shoes and see situations from their perspectives.

Alternatively, you can practice your cultural competency training to become more sensitive to diverse viewpoints, experiences and cultural backgrounds.

- **Practice empathy**

Show genuine interest in the feelings and experiences of those in conflict to build trust and encourage open sharing. Practice active empathy by asking open-ended questions and validating the emotions of others. Empathy is crucial for developing a deeper understanding of others' experiences, fostering a supportive environment for resolving conflicts.

- **Improve your collaborative problem solving skills**

Develop your collaborative problem-solving skills by facilitating group discussions and brainstorming sessions. Create opportunities for individuals in conflict to work together as a team to find common ground and solutions. Participate in team-building activities or workshops to enhance teamwork and cooperation, as a cohesive team approach can lead to more effective resolutions.

- **Practice emotional self-regulation**

Engage in self-reflection to identify triggers and patterns of emotional reactions in conflict situations. Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or meditation, to maintain emotional composure during conflicts. Cultivating emotional self-regulation helps you respond thoughtfully and constructively during challenging conversations.

1.2. Role-playing scenarios as means of conflict resolution

Role-playing scenarios are an essential part of the tutoring session focused on addressing exclusionary behavior by a lecturer. This interactive approach allows students to engage actively, practice real-life situations, and develop valuable skills to handle difficult conversations related to inclusivity and equity within the university setting.



Image 1: During role-playing exercises student will often form teams, under the supervision of a faculty member. Source: University of Canterbury, New Zealand

During these role-playing exercises, the tutor creates scenarios that depict instances of exclusionary behavior and discriminatory practices involving both the lecturer and students. The scenarios should reflect realistic situations that students might encounter in their academic journey, considering a diverse range of identities and backgrounds.

In this part of the Unit we will take you through how an role-play game, involving students and lecturers can take shape.

Step 1: Choose a topic for the scenario

For example, lecturers and student can explore some of the following topics:

- Scenario 1: In a group project, a student of a particular ethnicity is constantly given menial tasks by their group members and excluded from important discussions and decision-making.
- Scenario 2: During a class discussion, a student with a disability is repeatedly interrupted and ignored by their peers when trying to share their perspectives.

- Scenario 3: Several students make offensive and derogatory remarks about a fellow student's gender identity during a classroom discussion.

Step 2: Rotate roles to allow students to experience different perspectives and develop empathy.

After each role-playing scenario, students should rotate roles so that everyone has the opportunity to experience different perspectives. For example, a student who played the role of the excluded student in one scenario might take on the role of the lecturer or a peer bystander in the next scenario.

This rotation helps students develop empathy and gain insights into the challenges faced by individuals who experience exclusion and discrimination.

Step 3: Provide constructive feedback on communication and conflict resolution skills.

Following each role-playing scenario, the tutor should facilitate a debriefing session where students can reflect on their experiences and the dynamics of the role-play. During this feedback session, the tutor should focus on providing constructive feedback on communication and conflict resolution skills demonstrated during the role-play.

Examples of constructive feedback could include:

- Positive reinforcement for active listening and empathetic responses.
- Suggestions on how to address exclusionary behavior and discriminatory statements assertively yet respectfully.
- Guidance on how to mediate conflicts between students and facilitate a supportive learning environment.
- Recommendations for developing strategies to challenge biases and foster inclusivity among peers.

By including scenarios that involve discriminatory practices and statements among students, the role-playing exercises provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity of exclusionary behavior. This experiential learning approach equips students with the necessary skills to address exclusion and discrimination, fostering a more inclusive and respectful campus community for all.

2.3. Reprimanding exclusionary behavior

When addressing exclusionary behavior, the primary focus should be on promoting positive behavior change, fostering empathy, and creating an inclusive learning environment. While punishment may be necessary in some situations to establish boundaries and uphold the integrity of the educational community, it should be approached cautiously and as a last resort.

There are some considerations regarding punishments for the instigators of exclusionary behavior.

1. If a situation requires disciplinary action, it is crucial to ensure that the punishment is proportionate to the offense. The response should be fair and reasonable, taking into account the severity and intent of the behavior.
2. Whenever possible, adopt an educational approach to address exclusionary behavior. Engage the students involved in open discussions, educate them about the consequences of their actions, and encourage reflection and empathy.
3. Consider using restorative justice practices as an alternative to traditional punitive measures. Focus on repairing the harm caused by the behavior and fostering understanding and reconciliation among the parties involved.
4. Prioritize positive reinforcement and praise for students who demonstrate inclusive and respectful behavior. Recognizing and rewarding positive actions can encourage a more positive classroom culture.
5. When handling disciplinary actions, maintain confidentiality to protect the privacy and dignity of all students involved.
6. Take into account the individual circumstances of each student involved in the incident. Avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to discipline and consider any underlying factors that may have contributed to the behavior.

It is important to remember that the goal of addressing exclusionary behavior is to promote understanding, learning and growth, not to merely punish. Educators should strive to create a restorative and supportive environment that helps students recognize the impact of their actions, make amends, and develop empathy and respect for others. By focusing on educational and restorative approaches, educators can work towards cultivating positive behavior change and fostering an inclusive school community.

When a student is continuously engaged in discriminatory behavior, educational institutions must take such incidents seriously to ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. The appropriate disciplinary actions may vary depending on the severity of the behavior, institutional policies, and local laws. Some possible punishments a student engaged in discriminatory behavior include:

- **Verbal or written warning:** The institution may issue a formal warning to the student, notifying them that their behavior is unacceptable and may lead to further consequences if it continues.

- **Mandatory counseling:** The student might be required to attend counseling sessions or participate in educational programs focused on diversity, inclusion and cultural sensitivity to raise awareness about the impact of their actions.
- **Probation:** The student could be placed on probation, meaning they will be closely monitored for a specific period, during which any repeated discriminatory behavior may result in more severe consequences.
- **Community Service:** The student may be assigned community service hours related to promoting diversity and inclusion, as a way to make amends for their behavior and actively contribute to a more inclusive community.
- **Suspension:** In more serious cases, the student might face a temporary suspension from classes or campus activities as a disciplinary measure.
- **Expulsion:** For severe and repeated instances of discriminatory behavior, the institution may choose to expel the student, resulting in the termination of their enrollment and removal from the campus.

Key Takeaways

- To effectively address conflicts related to exclusionary behavior and discrimination in university settings, faculty members need to develop and apply essential conflict resolution skills.
- By focusing on educational and restorative approaches, educators can work towards cultivating positive behavior change and fostering an inclusive school community.

Recommendations for Further Reading

To improve further your skills at managing inclusivity in an academic setting ,review Module 5: Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment.

References for Unit 2:

Klimmt, C., Hartmann, T., Frey, A. and Krahé, B. (2019). Intercultural perspective on impact of video games on players' cultural sensitivity. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 48(1), pp.1-23.

Scannell, M., (2010). The big book of conflict resolution games: quick, effective activities to improve communication, trust and collaboration. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Unit 3: Building bridges: getting students and parents involved in conflict resolution

Tags: Academic Relationships, Adult Students, Teacher-Student Connections, Parental Engagement, Effective Communication, Conflict Resolution

Unit 3 - Introduction

As educators in an academic setting, fostering strong and positive relationships with adult students is integral to creating a supportive and thriving learning environment. In this unit, we explore the significance of cultivating robust teacher-student relationships in a university setting, where students are of age and seek an enriching and inclusive educational experience.

Additionally, we recognize the importance of involving parents in specific contexts, acknowledging that even adult students may benefit from their support and engagement.

This is crucial particularly in scenarios related to conflict resolution, inclusivity training and exclusionary practices. It is also a delicate balancing act, which we will discuss in greater detail in this unit.

3.1. Resolving conflict before they happen: The healthy student-lecturer relationship

In the context of conflict resolution scenarios related to exclusionary practices, the importance of strong teacher-student relationships becomes even more critical. As educators, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and experiences that adult students bring to the academic setting allows us to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

When addressing conflicts arising from exclusionary behavior, a solid lecturer-student relationship serves as a foundation for constructive dialogue and resolution. Students are more likely to feel comfortable expressing their concerns and experiences when they trust and respect their instructors. Such an open and trusting relationship enables educators to gain deeper insights into the root causes of conflicts and identify any patterns of exclusionary practices.

Fostering an atmosphere of trust between students and their teachers can play a significant role in preempting conflicts related to exclusionary practices. When there is a strong foundation of trust and respect within the academic community, students are more likely to feel safe, supported, and included. This positive environment can act as a preventative measure against exclusionary behaviors and conflicts. A trusting atmosphere can contribute by facilitating:

- **Open communication**

Trust encourages open and honest communication between students and lecturers. When students feel comfortable expressing their concerns, experiences, and ideas, misunderstandings can be addressed early on, preventing conflicts from escalating.

- **Inclusivity and respect**

A trusting atmosphere promotes inclusivity and respect for diversity. Faculty members can emphasize the value of different perspectives and backgrounds, encouraging a culture of acceptance and understanding among students.

- **Conflict awareness**

In a trusting environment, students may be more inclined to inform faculty members about exclusionary behaviors they observe or experience. This awareness allows educators to address issues promptly and effectively.

- **Support systems**

When students trust their lecturers, they are more likely to seek guidance and support when facing challenges or conflicts. Teachers can intervene and provide assistance, facilitating conflict resolution and preventing further issues.

- **Modeling positive behavior**

Lecturers serve as role models for their students. When educators demonstrate inclusive and respectful behavior, students are more likely to emulate those qualities, leading to a reduction in exclusionary practices.

3.2. How and when to involve the parents

Involving parents in conflict resolution while preserving students' independence requires a delicate balance that respects the autonomy and privacy of adult students. Before involving parents in conflict resolution, obtain explicit consent from the adult student. Respect their autonomy by ensuring they are comfortable with their parents' involvement. This step demonstrates consideration for their wishes and boundaries.

Involving parents in conflict resolution should be approached thoughtfully and selectively. While adult students have the right to manage their affairs independently, there are certain situations where parental involvement may be appropriate and beneficial:

- **Mental health concerns**

If the conflict involves emotional or mental health concerns, parents can offer valuable insights and support. In such cases, parental involvement can be beneficial for the well-being of the student.

- **Safety concerns**

If the conflict poses safety or well-being risks, parental involvement may be necessary to provide additional support and assistance to the student.

- **Continuing support systems**

In some cultures or familial structures, parents continue to be involved in adult students' decision-making processes. In such cases, students may prefer or welcome their parents' involvement in conflict resolution.

- **Mediation or family communication**

In cases where conflict resolution necessitates improved communication within the family, parental involvement in mediation sessions can foster understanding and harmony.

- **Specific request from the student**

If the student specifically requests their parents' involvement or support in resolving the conflict, educators should consider their preferences.

Ultimately, the appropriateness of involving parents in conflict resolution depends on the unique circumstances and the wishes of the adult student. Universities should respect their autonomy and preferences while also considering the potential benefits of parental support in specific situations. A student-centered approach, coupled with open communication and sensitivity to individual needs, can help determine when parental involvement is appropriate and constructive.

Key Takeaways

- When addressing conflicts arising from exclusionary behavior, a solid teacher-student relationship serves as a foundation for constructive dialogue and resolution. Students are more likely to feel comfortable expressing their concerns and experiences when they trust and respect their instructors.
- Involving parents in conflict resolution while preserving students' independence requires a delicate balance that respects the autonomy and privacy of adult students.

Recommendations for Further Reading

Working with parents to accommodate the students needs is also relevant when it comes to the transition from school to university. We explore this topic in greater detail in Module 2.

References for Unit 3:

Li, J., Liu, C., Zhang, L. and Li, X. (2022) The impact of perceived personal discrimination on migrant students' social integration: the mediating role of group permeability and the moderating role of parental involvement. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 53(1), pp.1-13.

Pedulla, D. (2020). Diversity and inclusion efforts that really work. *Harvard Business Review*, [online] Available at: <https://hbr.org/2020/05/diversity-and-inclusion-efforts-that-really-work> [Accessed 31 July 2023].

Case Study

Background:

At a diverse university, a conflict arises between two students, Ahmed and Maria, who are both members of a student organization promoting cultural awareness. Ahmed is upset with Maria's leadership style, feeling that she is not inclusive in decision-making and overlooks certain cultural perspectives. This has led to tension within the organization and affected its overall effectiveness in promoting inclusivity.

Step 1: Identification of Conflict and Stakeholders

The university's student affairs office identifies the conflict through student feedback and observations. Stakeholders include Ahmed, Maria, the student organization members, and the university's student affairs staff.

Step 2: Confidentiality and Consent

The mediation coordinator contacts Ahmed and Maria to explain the mediation process and assure confidentiality. Both parties express their willingness to participate in mediation, agreeing to discuss the conflict in a safe and respectful environment.

Step 3: Selection of Mediator

A trained mediator from the university's mediation team is selected to facilitate the resolution process. The mediator is neutral, unbiased and knowledgeable about conflict resolution and inclusivity matters.

Step 4: Pre-Mediation Preparation

The mediator holds separate pre-mediation meetings with Ahmed and Maria to understand their perspectives, concerns, and desired outcomes. The mediator clarifies that they will not impose any decisions but rather facilitate dialogue towards a mutually agreed resolution.

Step 5: Mediation Session

The mediation session takes place in a private and neutral location on campus. The mediator sets ground rules for respectful communication and active listening. Ahmed and Maria are encouraged to share their feelings, experiences, and thoughts while the mediator ensures that each party is given equal time to speak.

Step 6: Identification of Underlying Issues

The mediator helps Ahmed and Maria identify the underlying issues contributing to the conflict, including leadership styles, cultural perspectives, and communication barriers. The mediator reframes each party's statements to foster empathy and understanding.

Step 7: Exploring Solutions

With the mediator's guidance, Ahmed and Maria brainstorm potential solutions to address the conflict and improve inclusivity within the student organization. They discuss methods to enhance decision-making processes, incorporate diverse perspectives, and promote better communication.

Step 8: Agreement and Follow-Up

After reaching a mutual agreement, the mediator summarizes the agreed-upon solutions and action steps. Ahmed and Maria both commit to implementing these changes within the student organization. The mediator follows up with both parties after a specified period to assess progress and address any potential challenges.

Step 9: Inclusive Initiatives

The university's student affairs office collaborates with the student organization to develop inclusive initiatives that promote cultural awareness and respect within the campus community. Ahmed and Maria, now having resolved their conflict, actively contribute to these initiatives as allies.

Step 10: Continuous Support

The student affairs office continues to offer support and resources on conflict resolution, inclusivity, and leadership development for all students involved in the mediation process. The university fosters a culture of inclusivity and encourages open dialogue to prevent future conflicts and promote a harmonious campus community.

Disclaimer: This case study is entirely fictional and created for illustrative purposes only. Any resemblance to real individuals, events, or situations is purely coincidental. The names, characters, organizations, and events mentioned in this case study are products of the author's imagination and not based on any real individuals or entities. The primary intent of this example is to provide a hypothetical scenario for demonstrating conflict resolution through mediation in a university setting.

Tips & Recommendations

- Inclusive language refers to the conscious and thoughtful use of words, phrases, and expressions that embrace and demonstrate respect for the inherent diversity of all individuals, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other distinguishing characteristics. By employing inclusive language, we create an environment that fosters a sense of belonging, acknowledges everyone's worth, and celebrates the rich tapestry of human experiences.
- When addressing exclusionary behavior, the primary focus should be on promoting positive behavior change through education and dialogue, fostering empathy among students, and cultivating an inclusive learning environment where every individual feels valued and respected. By embracing restorative practices and encouraging open communication, we can empower students to grow personally and academically while contributing to a cohesive and harmonious classroom community.
- In conflicts arising from exclusionary behavior, a strong and trusting teacher-student relationship serves as the cornerstone for constructive resolution. Students are more likely to feel at ease expressing their concerns and experiences when they perceive their instructors as empathetic and approachable mentors. Nurturing such relationships encourages open dialogue, facilitating a deeper understanding of the underlying issues and paving the way for meaningful conflict resolution and personal growth.
- Balancing parental involvement in conflict resolution while preserving the independence of adult students demands a sensitive approach that respects the unique circumstances and wishes of each individual. While some students may welcome and benefit from their parents' support, others might prefer to address conflicts autonomously.
- Effectively addressing conflicts related to exclusionary behavior and discrimination in university settings requires faculty members to develop and apply essential conflict resolution skills. Equipping educators with active listening, mediation, and empathy-building techniques empowers them to create a safe and supportive environment where students can engage in constructive discussions and gain valuable conflict resolution tools for their personal and professional lives.
- By prioritizing educational and restorative approaches, educators can cultivate positive behavior change and foster an inclusive school community that values reconciliation, growth, and understanding. Embracing educational methods that focus on empathy-building and conflict resolution skills equips students with the ability to navigate conflicts with empathy and respect, promoting an inclusive culture of mutual support and acceptance.

Glossary

Bullying - Bullying refers to aggressive and repeated behavior aimed at causing harm, distress, or fear in an individual with an imbalance of power, often occurring in social settings such as schools or workplaces.

Collaboration - Collaboration is the process of working together with others, sharing ideas, resources, and responsibilities to achieve common goals or solve problems collectively.

Discrimination - Discrimination involves treating individuals or groups unfavorably or unjustly based on their perceived or actual characteristics, such as race, gender, religion, or disability.

Diversity - Diversity refers to the variety of individual differences among people, encompassing dimensions such as race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, and more.

Empathy - Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and experiences of others, demonstrating compassion and sensitivity towards their emotions and challenges.

Intervention strategies - Intervention strategies are targeted actions or approaches aimed at addressing specific issues or challenges, such as conflict resolution, behavioral problems, or promoting inclusivity.

Mediation - Mediation is a process in which a neutral third party helps facilitate communication and negotiation between conflicting parties to reach a mutually agreeable resolution.

Social Isolation - Social isolation refers to a state in which an individual or group experiences a lack of social connections or interactions, leading to feelings of loneliness and detachment from others.

References

Allen, K. P. (2004). Classroom management, bullying, and teacher practices. *The Professional Educator*, 27(1), 1-15.

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Check Your Knowledge (Multiple Choice with one correct answer)

1. Which of the following can be indicative that a student has been subjected to bullying.

- a) Physical injuries or damage to personal belonging without a clear explanation
- b) Changes in the students behavior - becoming withdrawn or anxious
- c) Frequent conflicts and aggressive interactions with other students
- d) All of the above

2. What are some common types of conflicts and exclusionary behaviors found in the classroom environment?

- a) Cheating on exams, being late for classes, skipping mandatory workshops
- b) Social exclusion, discrimination and bullying
- c) Theft of personal belongings and/or intellectual property
- d) Conflicts are unlikely to arise on campus, so there are no typical examples

3. What is a microaggression?

- a) A physical aggression against an individual, whose perpetrator is a minor.
- b) A type of formal complaint students can address towards the university.
- c) A subtle comment or action that conveys stereotypes or prejudices about certain groups.
- d) A random act of hooliganism on campus.

4. How does active listening help you in conflict mediation?

- a) It deescalates conflicts, by demonstrating the opposing position has also been heard. (correct)
- b) It establishes a system, where arguing people take turns to articulate their positions.
- c) It outlines the common ground which the two sides in any argument share.
- d) It doesn't. Active listening may, in fact, exacerbate conflicts.

5. What is role-playing in the context of conflict resolution

- a) A video game session, where students vent their frustration by playing violent characters.
- b) An experiment, where the lecturer pretends to be a student.
- c) A scenario, designed by the educator, where each students has a specific role to play in order to get a better perspective of a situation.
- d) None of the above.

6. When is it appropriate to expel a student for exclusionary or discriminatory behavior?

- a) After severe and repeated offenses
- b) At the first sign that a student might be prejudiced against a particular group
- c) After a vote of their fellow students, where a simple majority vote against them
- d) At the lecturers discretion

7. Which of the following are necessary for a healthy educator-student relationship?

- a) Inclusivity and respect
- b) Open communication
- c) Conflict awareness
- d) All of the above

8. When is it appropriate to involve the parents in the conflict resolution process of adult students?

- a) It is never appropriate to involve parents, because it deprives students of their own agency.
- b) When the academic counselors are too busy and cannot cope with more complaints.
- c) When the incident in question is only minor.
- d) When there are mental health and/or physical safety concerns

9. What is social isolation?

- a) A state in which an individual or group experiences a lack of social connections or interactions
- b) A process in which a neutral third party helps facilitate communication and negotiation
- c) The inability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and experiences of others
- d) The act of treating individuals or groups unfavorably or unjustly based on their perceived or actual characteristics, such as race, gender, religion, or disability

10. What is the purpose of punishments within the educational system for exclusionary or discriminatory behavior?.

- a) To create an institutionalized sense of retribution.
- b) To promote understanding, learning and growth, not to merely punish
- c) To simplify the process of inclusion of vulnerable groups
- d) These types of behaviors are never subject to disciplinary action.