



Introduction:

"This activity is going to be centered on implicit biases and microaggressions. What exactly are implicit biases? Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. Implicit biases do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs as they are gradually learnt (for instance- through inaccurate media portrayals), and difficult to identify, since they are often denied. These biases surface in the form of micro aggressions, which can have adverse effects. A microaggression is a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group. In order to better understand what microaggressions are, and why they should be eliminated, we will be conducting an activity that highlights the impacts internal biases can have on new international students" (Virginia Cabrera).

Participant Instructions:

1. You will be paired up and one partner will be given strips of paper. If you are the partner who received strips of paper, follow the instructions on the strips of paper and then switch roles when the facilitator tells you to. Do not share the instructions you receive with your partner.

2. Debrief with the following questions:

- What were some microaggressions you have heard or experienced, and what were some that surprised you?
- Why do you think these statements are harmful or hurtful to others?
- How could you change what you heard to convey the original message without the harmful content?
- Were there any statements that you never realized were actually microaggressions?
- How can your awareness of microaggressions help foster a more inclusive campus?

3. Conclusion:

"As you have just experienced, microaggressions can be extremely uncomfortable and hurtful. The first step towards curbing these microaggressions is to accept our internal biases and understand where they come from. Only then can we work towards mitigating them. It is vital that every international student and domestic student feels welcome and at home here at our beloved university. Being mindful of your verbal and nonverbal communication can help foster a more inclusive and respectful environment for new students. A lot of us are afraid of offending others but it is important we acknowledge we have said something hurtful and offer apologies. We hope that this activity helped open your eyes to microaggressions that you might not have known about and enable you to more effectively communicate with those around you" (Virginia Cabrera).