Examining and Mitigating Implicit Bias

Examining and Mitigating Implicit Bias with a brief keynote from Teresa Nance followed by a panel of featured faculty Kevin Gannon, Marlo Goldstein Hode, and Darvelle Hutchins. Moderated by Kevin Kelly, Academic Director at ACUE.

Kevin Kelly [00:02:45] Welcome, everyone. Our webinar will begin shortly.

Kevin Kelly [00:03:34] Hello, everybody, and welcome to today's online discussion, examining and mitigating implicit bias. I'm Kevin Kelly, academic director at the Association of College and University Educators, or ACUE, together with our collaborative partners. We're proud to share this series with you. Before we dive into today's topic, I'd like to review our agenda and establish a few participation guidelines. We'll start with a brief keynote from Dr. Teresa Nance before asking our panelists to introduce practices and strategies for preparing an inclusive online course. And we'll reserve most of today's session, about thirty-five minutes for discussion and a Q&A with you. Our goal is to have an interactive conversation focused on this topic with practical ideas and suggestions for your online teaching. Please pose your questions in the Q&A function that we will moderate and discuss with our panelists. Toward the end of the hour, we'll share how we can continue the conversation online and share some additional resources to support your teaching at the bottom of the Zoom window. You'll see a closed caption button if you'd like to use this feature. Select close caption then choose: show subtitle > view full transcript or you can change the subtitle settings. I also want to let you know that we'll be asking for your feedback. As our time comes to a close. So please take a few minutes to share your thoughts so that we can be sure to continue providing you with the most relevant resources and information. We'd like to get a sense of who's who in the room today. So you'll see a poll pop up on your screen. Please select the item that best reflects your current role or the role you primarily play at your institution. Well, looks like we have about

a little over half of you are faculty with another quarter identifying as other another maybe 13 percent as leaders on your campuses. And then another seven percent in an administrative capacity. So thank you all for sharing your roles or your primary roles. And with that, I'd like to start our discussion. And welcome to it. Dr. Teresa Nance, the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion and the Chief Diversity Officer at Villanova University. She'll spend the next few minutes setting the stage for our conversation today before joining us later for our Q and A. The need to improve human interaction by developing communication skills that display sensitivity to cultural, racial and ethnic diversity has never been greater than it is today. With her dual specializations and interpersonal communication and multicultural affairs, Dr. Nance is a great source for information on impression management, developing professional voice and diction,conflict resolution,cultural diversity and interpersonal communication, and listening and conversation skills. Wow. Dr. Nance, with all that again, I'd love to welcome you. And have you kicked this off.

Teresa Nance [00:07:18] Thanks so much. Kevin, in his book Pedagogy of Freedom, Paolo Freire wrote I cannot be a teacher without exposing who I am. Let me begin my remarks today with a question. How do you get ready for class? Gather your books and folders together,check your computer, as I think about it; all of the things on our usual checklist are about the content we will deliver. But what about you? What are you bringing into the class besides the content of your lecture? As teachers, we know our success in the classroom demands an ability to relate to our students. We know that it is important for us to be able to to bring our whole selves to to the classroom, the material or messages we cover and classes are contained in our notes. But the key to great teaching is knowing that we as human beings are the medium through;which our students hone meaning and understanding through the words we choose, the examples we gave or, even the jokes we tell we do as Freire said, tell the students who we are, allowing them to understand us better. And in so doing, establish the kind of classroom rapport that leads to great teaching moments. In addition to our knowledge and understanding of our disciplines, we also bring the things that make us unique human beings, our history, our culture and our individual experiences. Each of these elements creates a framework for which we see and act upon the world, in the classroom and in life. We see an encounter, people, things and events we need to figure out. We see a student slumped over on the desk. We see another student entering the classroom with what appears to be a grin from ear to ear. And we see another student with his arms folded tightly across his chest to the first student. We say, why don't you go to the health center and get some aspirin. To the second we say something great must have happened to you. And a third, we say, why did you get a sweater if you're feeling cold? Each of these cases, we observe students behavior and reached a conclusion. The step we don't think about is the step in between, which is largely unconscious. The step that required us to fill in our gaps of knowledge and reach a conclusion. We drew an inference. We made an unconscious assumption. The first dude was sick. The second happy. And the third was cold. The problem is that our conclusions may be as wrong as they are right. The first student may simply not want to talk to people. The second could be grimacing in pain. And the third just has his arms crossed for comfort. As human beings, we're not fond of ambiguity. We observe behavior and then in an instant, fill in the gaps of knowledge. Unconsciously, we fill in these gaps with our knowledge and our understanding. It is axiomatic to say that our classrooms are growing more diverse daily as they do. The possibilities of the way that we see and understand the world will not be the same as our students. Thus increasing the likelihood that mistakes will be made. The important thing to remember here is that a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing. Today we're going to be talking about bias, implicit bias, biases on the highest level, simple, simply a preference for or against something or someone. We all

have preferences from ice cream to our choice of footwear. Sometimes we know our biases and sometimes we don't. Whether it's going to lunch and selecting the same salad day after day, or are students looking around the classroom and then returning to the same seat? These preferences are a part of life for those of us in front of the classroom, however. The problem with implicit bias is that it represents the attitudes or even stereotypes that could impact our understanding,actions or our decisions in an unconscious matter. This is so important because in the classroom we have the power in our relationships with students. We control the content, the activities, the grade book, our biases matter and as a consequence become important to us to understand and manage. When I think of teacher power in the classroom, I'm reminded of a brief example from my work several years ago. As the story goes, a young black woman was sitting in an English class and the professor was writing on the board with his back turned to the class. Suddenly someone's phone goes off and the ringtone consists of misogynistic rap lyrics without turning around. The professor called out the young black woman's name and said, Turn off your phone. What is so interesting in this case is the conversations afterwards. The professor claimed three things.1) Nothing but respect for the young woman.2) That there was no intention of stereotyping or denigrating the student. And 3) she was just taking the situation too seriously. Perception is reality, according to the professor's logic. It sounded like Mary's music. What he implied was that in this predominantly white class, black sounding music, obviously, would be coming from the lone black student? Mary, on the other hand, felt unseen as an individual and just lumped into an undifferentiated group of black students by this professor. Mary was so impacted by the event. She seriously thought of changing majors. What do we know? Intent does not equal impact. As teachers, we all make judgments based on our experiences, both professional and personal, to avoid the kinds of issues mentioned above. It is imperative that we stop and challenge ourselves to see students differently, to ask questions instead of making definitive statements when we're not sure. And most important, become comfortable with admitting we don't know or that we are wrong. Thank you so much for your attention. And now let's get ready to hear this amazing panel.

Kevin Kelly [00:13:59] Thank you. Dr. Nance was powerful to hear you describe how bias is, the way we make sense of the world and what we do to mitigate its effects. And that really aligns with how I approach learning equity in my own teaching. So I truly appreciate everything that you shared. Now I'd like to introduce our panelists to our participants. Today, we have Kevin Gannon PhD. He's the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and a professor of History at Grand View University in Iowa, he's also also the author of Radical Hope A Teaching Manifesto. Next, we have Marlo Goldstein Hode, she's also a PhD and a senior manager of Strategic Diversity Initiatives in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the University of Missouri, St. Louis. And last but not least, we have Darvelle Hutchins' MBA and MA, lecturer of Department of Communication Studies at Cal Poly and the diversity strategist at TADS Telecommunications. And again, I'm Kevin Kelly and I'm honored to be moderating this conversation. And like all of you, I'm looking forward to learning with and from our experts. So let's get started. Welcome, panelists. And Marlo, thank you for agreeing to kick off our conversation.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:15:29] Hi, everyone. I'm so excited to be here today to see so many of you not see you, but imagine you out there in the audience. We are in academia. So we know it's always important to start by defining our terms. And that's particularly important, I think, with the term unconscious bias or implicit bias, because these terms are often misused or conflated with other terms, such as prejudice or discrimination. And so I want to take a few minutes to kind of clarify what this term is and what it isn't. Starting with

the terms unconscious bias and implicit bias. I've been reading on and researching this topic for several years now, and I haven't actually found in the literature a distinction between the two. They seem to be used fairly interchangeably, maybe depending on what discipline the research is. And so if anybody knows of a distinction, anyone in the audience about, which is more correct in what context, I'd love to learn with you. So just some basics. This is kind of the one of one of implicit bias. Oh, sorry. Could you. Yeah. OK. So the first thing is everybody has implicit biases. Doesn't mean you're a bad person. Just means that you have a brain. Next one. Because our brain are these amazing computers that use cognitive shortcuts to sort and categorize information really quickly. And the way that it does this is by associations. We have a lot of information stored in our brain. And when we encounter something or someone:some piece of information that needs processing, it associates it with something that we have stored in there. I think, as was mentioned, we have both positive biases and negative biases. And both of these are worthy of our attention because even our positive biases can perpetuate and create inequality. For example, when we think about who we prefer, who we're going to recommend for a position or a mentorship program. So it's important to be cognizant of both of these biases next one, as was mentioned already were some of us are very aware of the biases or preferences for things like chocolate ice cream or certain kinds of music. But, you know, and that's fine. But the issue are the biases that are operating under our conscious level of awareness. And this is where it's really a struggle for people because a lot of times are unconscious or implicit biases, conflict with how we feel consciously. One story that I think really illustrates this. I don't know if you all saw this. It was a big story some years ago on Facebook and there was a white father who had adopted an African-American daughter. And in the video, he's talking about, you know, the light of his life and their wonderful relationship and how much it hurt him to have to have the talk with his daughter. And if you are any African-American parents or parents of color out there, you know what this talk is right? Where you have to say to your child, you are the most wonderful thing in the universe. And some people might treat you poorly based on the color of your skin. So he talked about having to have this talk with his daughter and then he says. And then soon after that, he was walking down the street, comes upon a bus stop. There's an elderly white lady sitting at the bus stop and coming down the street was a young black man towards the bus stop. And his first thought there, his initial inclination was like, oh, I should hang back a minute and make sure that everything is OK. And then his second thought was, oh, my God. I cannot believe I just did to someone's son. What I'm terrified and horrified that someone's gonna do to my daughter. And so he posted the story on Facebook to raise awareness, no matter how much you feel consciously, there's some unconscious biases that can impact your behavior and actions. And this is what we need to be conscious up. And the final thing I'll say about this is our biases, as we mentioned, are these cognitive shortcuts. They're actually sort of neural pathways.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:19:26] And they cannot be overridden, but they can be sorry, they can be overridden, but they cannot be over written. This is my famous quote. You can quote me on this. And what I mean by that is when we take action to consciously override, recognize what our biases are like, that Facebook dad, you know, recognize when they happen. And then you can actively choose to act otherwise. And there are several sort of antibody practices that you can engage in. And eventually those bias does do weaken. But they don't go away. So it's really ongoing work of a lifetime. I think I have another minute or two. Right. So next slide. This is just a real quick we're gonna send you this resource. But as I mentioned, our brains are these amazing sorting, categorizing associated and associative mechanisms. And we'll send you this list, this link. But there are almost 200 cognitive bias. Now, I will say that, you know, these biases come into play when we have too much information, not enough information, not enough time. And if you dig down and

read these little biases, they're not all about race and gender, which are the ones that we talk about most. The ones that are the most there's the most research on. But race and gender are sort of these meta-biases. These pieces of information that are stored in the brain.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:20:55] And so when we're making these assumptions, judgments, decisions in some of these contexts, that's where the racial and gender biases may come into play. Next slide.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:21:08] And so the important thing about is to know, one, recognize that you have biases and do some work to figure out what those are. But then also be really cognizant of when you're in situations where these biases might come into play. And these will be situations when like let me know if any of this sounds familiar. It will be situations where there's a shortage of time. We need to make a quick decision, whether it's personal or environmental stress or multitasking. This means that you can't fully focus on the decision that you need to make. Also routines when you're on autopilot. This is a typical situation where a faulty assumption or judgment might come into play or as we just said, when there's too much information or incomplete information. So thinking about all the daily tasks you do grading papers, interviewing students, meeting with students. So a lot of these are situations that should call your attention to the potential for bias. And I think I just have one more slide. And so finally, just to talk about some of the things that that you can that you can do, as Dr. Nance was talking about in the beginning, your being. Take a moment to think about your thinking. The three students in your classroom, you've made some very quick judgments about what they are thinking, feeling or what you know, what they're doing. And just thinking about perhaps you have a student, a young student, maybe a young Latino student, a young Latino student with some tattoos. And you noticed that his assignments are either coming in late or coming in with a lot of mistakes. And so you might make some very quick assumptions or logics about why that is happening.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:22:46] So your first step is just take a step back.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:22:48] We like, OK, I'm making an assumption that, you know, that he can do the work, that he has all the skills and tools and materials that need to complete these assignments on time. So my assumption is that he's making the choice not to do that. Now, we might stop and ask him disconfirming information what other things might be happening in this person's life that might preclude them from completing assignments on time or making these mistakes. And then, of course, it's always important to get an outside perspective, right. Two heads are better than one talk with a colleague, or maybe even some other students respecting all FARPA regulations. But right now, you're certainly missing something in the situation. So talking to someone can help bring in new information.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:23:31] And I think that's all I hope I didn't take up too much.

Kevin Kelly [00:23:36] Thank you, Marlo. I appreciate that you mentioned that not all biases are about race and gender. And then that last slide, the introduction of the concept of assumptions as well. I was just looking at the Yale Center for Teaching and Learning website the other day, and they shared a common assumption for online teachers is to believe that students know that they should ask for help when they need it and that they know how and where to go to do that.

Kevin Kelly [00:23:59] So I know we have a lot of online instructors or instructors who have been pushed online due to our current circumstances. And so these ideas that you've shared have really helped to clarify the definitions, Darvelle. How would you like to build on what Marlo just shared with us?

Darvelle Hutchins [00:24:18] I would say that it is such a wonderful conversation. So thank you so much, Dr. Nance and Dr. Goldstein Hode, for starting us off. I will say that, you know, as both of you mentioned, is that we all have bias. And I think it's important to note that as educators and practitioners of the work that we do, that we are not exempt from that. I think about my own bias and just the fact that I was socialized to write with my bias as well as its. It was developed through my lived experiences. Right. And so I acknowledge that particularly as an instructor, you know, I thought about some early bias that I had going into the field of academia. And this idea that seniors. right, were more prepared for the class or for coursework than some of our freshmen. Right, that came into the class; bias that maybe engineering students were more critical analytical thinkers in, let's say, some of the arts majors, bias that students who showed up to office hours were more prepared and productive and smarter than those who didn't. And probably in today's world that those who come up right are more ready than those who don't come up in this virtual space. And for me, I think the question that I'm constantly asking myself is how do I continue to work to keep myself accountable to making sure that I'm doing my due diligence to be equitable and fair across the board in terms of making sure that the students have a wholesome experience in the class and that everyone has an equal experience even when it comes to grading. And I continue to ask myself is how do I hold myself accountable with putting in check my own biases? And so I think about a popular qualitative and analytical, I would say, method. And I think about in phenomenology, there's two different types of phenomenological research that I'm familiar with. And one of those, is transcendental and what transcendental phenomenology, excuse me. There is this belief that as a researcher that you're able to bracket or you're able to stop or to cease your bias. Right. That you're able to put your bias to the side so that you can focus on the holistic experience of the participant, when you're doing your analysis. And when I think of that particular method, I think about some of the more recent anti bias practices, such as removing the student's name from the from the paper. Right, so that you can just focus on the student work without attaching the student's identity to that paperwork. Right. And so that's one approach. But then there's another type of phenomenological research, and that is the hermeneutic phenomenology. And that's this idea that you bring your you acknowledge your bias right. In the process and you learn to work through the biases that you have. And I will say that as an instructor, I definitely will identify more with the hermeneutic approach to teaching and learning. And the way that I do that is that I don't deny the fact that I have bias. Right. As an instructor, that it shows up with me. But how do I continue to work through to make sure that I am being equitable and fair to my students? And one of the ways that I do that is being very clear in terms of what my expectations are when it comes to grading an assignment. And so that's setting a very clear rubric for the students and making sure that when I find myself veering away from that rubric or if I feel like I'm grading the student based on their experience or my interactions with them, then I'm not doing them justice and I'm not being fair. Right. And so I'm always constantly when I'm grading the student's work, referring back to that rubric to make sure that I'm being just and fair and making sure that the student did deliver, in fact, what it was that I was looking for and that I do not take anything else into account outside of what it is that I communicated that were the expectations for that assignment. And so I think it's important for us as learners and as educators, right. To set very clear goals and expectations for the course and to continue to remind ourselves and to reflect on the biases that we have and how can we best position ourselves to work through that with the understanding that bias

is always going to show up wherever we are. It's gonna it's gonna meet us in the classroom as instructors. And how do we continue to be mindful of that so that we can be more inclusive and that we can be more forward thinking and making sure that we're providing a very fair and a safe, equitable experience for the student.

Kevin Kelly [00:28:37] Thank you,Darvelle, you gave some fantastic concrete strategies along with it, kind of adding to Marlo's underpinning about how we can see bias and understand it a little better. So, Kevin Gannon, I'd like to invite you to share your thoughts as well.

Kevin Gannon [00:28:57] Thanks, Kevin. And it's a real pleasure to be with everybody here this afternoon.

[00:29:01] And an honor to be on this panel with folks whose work I'm a great admirer of. And I'd like to follow up kind of directly with what Darvelle was talking about in terms of how do I, as an individual instructor, not just admit that I have biases, but become aware of, you know, what those are, where they come from, and how to work with them and how to be in the same space with them rather than, you know, take the unproductive route of just simply denying that they exist. And in this type of work, one book that's been really influential on my own practice is Steven Brookfield's book, Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher. And Brookfield's idea of critical reflection, I think is a really useful way to kind of frame the work that we're about, not just in this area of inclusive pedagogy or mitigating bias and inequity, but just as being a critical pedagog in the first place. Because what Brookfield would have us do is not only reflect on what the assumptions and choices that we make are, but why we've made those assumptions and choices in the first place. And so the learning spaces that we create with and among our students are often the product of those choices. And if we don't realize that we've even made some of those choices on a conscious level, then we can run into some problems when it comes to parts of our student groupings, as well as issues of equity and social justice. And so some of you might be familiar with the late David Foster Wallace story: This Is Water. But I think it's a really good metaphor for us to kind of conceive of this work and the way you and I won't tell it nearly as well as he did. But he tells a story. There's two young fish swimming along through the ocean and an older fish come swimming towards them after a little while and they pull up alongside one another. The older fish says to the younger fish, Oh, what a beautiful day it is. The water feels great. Isn't it wonderful to be here in the ocean and get to swim through it all day? And the two younger fisher like, OK. OK, cool, whatever and they go swimming on past each other. And about five minutes later, one of the younger fish turns to the other fish and says, what the hell is water?

Kevin Gannon [00:30:57] So I think the work that we're about here is, you know, we need to do A) realized that we're in the water, but then B) be able to describe that water not just to others, but to ourselves. You know, we're in this all pervasive practice of teaching, which is so closely tied to our own personal identity and experience that we need to recognize we are in the water.

Kevin Gannon [00:31:17] And so for me, what that means is kind of a radical ethic of transparency, really being intentional about being as transparent and as explicit as I can with my students, whether it's about larger outcomes and learning outcomes of the course or even the kind of nitty gritty, everyday details of a particular assignment or assessment.

Kevin Gannon [00:31:37] And I think this is particularly important in our kind of COVID educational environment where so much has moved online. What we do know about

online teaching and learning is that much of it, by default becomes mediated simply through the written word. And so words, intent, inflections, all of the things that we depend on, an in-person teaching are now missing from a fully online environment. We have to be very conscious of how we come across in an overwhelmingly text mediated environment. And we also need to figure out ways like audio and video, for example, that we can supplement just the use of text. One particular practice that's been very helpful for me and Darvelle alluded to the idea of being explicit about criteria and being consistent when we assess our students. Learning is the tilt framework developed by Mary-Ann Winkelmes when she was at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. I believe she's at Brown now, but don't quote me on that. Exactly. So sorry, Mary-Ann if I got that wrong and what Tilt stands for is transparency and learning and teaching. The Web site, tilthighered.com Has a wonderful array of resources and the research that backs it up. But for our purposes here, I think the important thing about this is it offers me a way to present tasks to my students by adopting a framework that talks about, you know, what is the purpose of this task and I put that as a heading. Right. What knowledge are you going to gain and what skills are you going to develop? And then outlining the task itself, you know, concretely every step that is needed to be taken in order to be successful in this particular learning activity. And then finally, the criteria. And a lot of us talk about criteria for assignments like a research paper, you know write a smooth and well polished research paper or what does that look like? Right. Do all of our students have that understanding? Do all of our students had the access to the type of educational experiences that would allow them to implicitly understand what a well written research paper would look like in the same way that I do. As a white, middle class male. My experience in academia and education has been a lot different and has been in institutions that have been fairly well resourced than some of my students. And so am I carrying that experience in to introducing learning activities and criteria to my students. And so what the tilt framework has me do is provide not just detailed criteria, but also. Examples of successful work along the lines of that assignment. Now, one might object and say, you know, all you're going to do is get a bunch of copies of the sample research paper that you give them. But that's actually not been my experience. What it does do is it takes away anxiety for students who have not been asked to do a particular task before. If I asked my students to do something and they've not been asked to do it before and I'm not giving them all the tools that they need to do it successfully, then I'm not doing my job. And they're not learning. Really, what it comes down to for me is the tilt framework. And then this larger ethic of transparency that I try to have inform it is primarily, you know, one of the primary accomplishments that this helps me expose and unpack my own assumptions about what my students can and can't do, what they've been asked to do, what they haven't been asked to do, and more importantly, what I've internalized as someone who's been working in higher education for about 25 years. So in other words, it helps me understand that I'm in the water and it helps me describe that water to others in a way that makes sense to them. What I am after is rewarding and affirming the learning that is taking place. I'm not after rewarding or affirming who has more cultural capital or who came from more well resourced schools. I'm not after rewarding or affirming those things at all. I'm trying to erase those differences in the best way to get about that work is to be able to adopt an ethic of transparency where I examine name and then try to work within and around the biases that I like anybody else bring to the classroom.

Kevin Kelly [00:35:29] Thank you, Kevin. Wow. So the three of you have really set up a great stage for some questions and answers and I think we'll get kick off with one of them. Most recent Joyland Nummy has asked.

Kevin Kelly [00:35:46] How might we work to address implicit biases students have about us in the classroom? And Darvelle I know that in previous conversations you've talked about what happens when we flip the script and so maybe you can start us off and maybe the other two can jump in after you've addressed that question.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:36:05] Now, first off, that is that is an excellent question and it's a very real question for me, being a black faculty member, teaching in a predominantly white space.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:36:14] It's something that I oftentimes think about. It's something that I will be honest and say that it's something that I continue to grapple with working that out. I go into my classroom and I say, well, what are students thinking about me in terms of my race? You know, in many cases I am the first, you know, black male professor. Right. The students have been exposed to. And so I'm always thinking about the impression, right. That I make on the students. I'm always thinking about how will the student evaluate me. Right. Based on my race, because we know that research has shown that black or African-American professors or people of color typically receive less or unfortunate or I would say less pleasant reviews right than white professors. Right. And so I think about that. I think about, you know, what the student think about my teaching style and my approach to teaching and learning. And how might the expectations of me be different than it will be of a white faculty member? Right. And so those are just questions that I that I go into the classroom with. And I will say that, you know, for me, those questions, they they live with me every day. And I will say that in many ways they pressure me to communicate more and often. Right. And so I'm constantly making sure that I'm spending extra time in the classroom. And in today's day and space, in that virtual space, making sure that I'm monitoring the discussions, that everything is going well, that a student; making sure that I did not miss a question that a student asked, giving the students my cell phone number. Right. To make sure that they always can be in contact with me. You know, I think about just the emotional labor, right, of having to process their potential or possible bias that they may have and how I work to implement surveys. You know, in the middle and towards the end of my class, just to do a pulse check to see what students are thinking or how they're feeling in the class.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:38:01] And so I would say that, you know, it's very real, right, that students have their bias. And so one of the things that I will say that I do is that I work to bring to light that bias. And so I tell students, I say, hey, I know that I may be the first black professor that you have, but, hey, work with me. Give me a chance. You know, this is gonna be a great environment. If you have any questions.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:38:21] If there are any issues, you know, let me know, you know, what's going on. And then I also post research and, you know, I talk about bias when I ask students to complete a survey. You know, I put those statistics at the front of it so they know. And so that they can put in check their own bias so that they're evaluating me based on their learning in the class. And based on the outcomes of the class as opposed to how they see and perceive me based on my race or other identity factors that they might not that they may not see as being favorable. And so I guess for me, I try to educate and learn with the students and help them to see this as we're both in this learning, journey together. And let's assume that we have the best intentions of each other.

Kevin Kelly [00:39:04] Great. Marlo, do you have anything you'd like to add to what Darvelle just said in his answer?

[00:39:10] Yeah, just kind of to the second to the last part of that question about what else can this instructor do? And first of all, you're doing a lot. So that's you know, you remarked in your question that you're having them take the Harvard Implicit Association test. You had to do some reflection. You show them some research. And so I'm actually a person who does a lot of anti bias education. And so I dove into the research to find out like, well, is it actually effective? And what the research shows is it can be if and only if one that you are aware that you have biases and have some sense of what they are. So you're doing that for your students by having to do the Harvard Implicit Association test and having some discussion. 2) They have to care that there's a negative impact to these biases. Right. They have to have some kind of intrinsic motivation to want to override or challenge these biases. And then 3) you know, unfortunately, one lecture on unconscious bias or this session today does not resolve the problem. It's developing and a chronic awareness of bias. So an ongoing thoughtfulness and critical engagement. So if those three things can be met, then we have hope to mitigate bias.

Kevin Gannon [00:40:28] Last but not least, Kevin Gannon. Anything you'd like to add on this topic?

Kevin Gannon [00:40:32] Thank you very briefly to touch on maybe the perspective of folks who are sitting in promotion and tenure committees or who are administrators who have that power of hiring and extending contracts and things like that. We know that these biases exist in classroom evaluation data. We know that faculty of color in particular women get lower scores on student evaluations. We know this. This is not in dispute. There is a wide body of peer reviewed statistically sound research on that. And so then the question becomes, for those of us who work in those areas where a faculty career is impacted, what are we going to do with that knowledge? Right. So if you're on a promotion and tenure committee, what are you doing with student evaluation data? How every piece of data has a story. And so are you paying attention to the story that surrounds it? Are you ensuring the your process doesn't just rely on student evaluation data to judge teaching effectiveness? Right. We really need to unpack the things that we're working with that impact the careers, especially of early, early career faculty of color and ensure that, you know, this phenomenon that, again, we know exists is not targeting in a very inequitable way.

Kevin Gannon [00:41:41] Some of our colleagues, especially in STEM fields. So with that knowledge, we have to put that knowledge to work in our institutions.

Kevin Kelly [00:41:51] Thank you, sir. And then, Darvelle,, in your response, you mentioned that we need to consider virtual course environments. And another participant asks, What do you believe are unconscious biases in online and or technology enhance education?

Kevin Kelly [00:42:05] So I'm wondering if any of the three of you have an answer to that question.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:42:17] Well, I will say that I would try to answer this with this question directly.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:42:22] But one thing I will say is that we have to be considerate, that this digital space is very different from face to face right now when students cam up or they come online. Right now, you are being exposed to their home right there, their personal space. And so we have to be considerate that, you know, perhaps brothers and

sisters are home from school as well. And so they may be sharing, you know, a house or a bedroom with three or four people. Right. And so, you know, students may choose to not cam up. And there may be reasons behind that. There may be students who have just living conditions that they don't want their classmates exposed to. And so I think that we have to be very flexible during this time and that we have to provide different options. We also have to be understanding of students have different technology capabilities in and different speeds and things of that sort. And so it's a time where we have to be very accommodating and not assume that how we are set up as faculty members, that the students have the same access. And so it's important to be mindful that.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:43:26] And I guess I'll just add to that that the implicit biases that you may have towards your students are triggered like even before you meet them. And when you're looking at your roster, when you see certain names and sometimes rosters have pictures or sometimes there's additional information such as their major, all of those things are bits of information that you have stored in your brain from either past experiences, from exposure to media, from sort of repeated ideas that you know, that you encounter. And so, again, whether you're consciously doing it or not, you are making some assumptions, judgments. Now, not saying that you're going to act on those. And I'm not saying they're going to impact how, you know, you will treat those students, but they are there and it can be worth it to sort of acknowledge those. I had an experiment, I was going to offer to you to do that and in beginning of the semester to take a look at your roster and then think about the general grade distribution that you have in that class. And if you had to do it, like was just looking at that limited information, which of those students you think you're gonna get an A. which would get a B, which would get a C, which would be D. Now that can be dangerous because it might have an anchoring effect. Right. That you don't want, but it can also be used for you to go back. Then after the first two assignments and see how much of that is coming true. And if it's coming true, might it not be worth a deeper dive into your evaluation of some of their work? Are there some things that you may have been missing because of these implicit assumptions that you already identified as you're bringing in?

Kevin Gannon [00:45:06] One other point that I would add as well is in their opening remarks, both Terry and Marlo mentioned, you know, implicit biases or these cognitive shortcuts that we take. Right. We fill in the blanks with assumptions that we already have. And in either a hybrid or a fully online course, there are a lot more blanks to be filled in. Right. You know, I'm teaching a Hyflex course where most of my students are just Black Zoom screens with their name on it. Right. And so one of the things that I think is really important for us to be doing in this environment is A) recognizing that implicit bias is going to have a more magnified effect because we are not connected in the ways that we would be in a face to face traditional, quote unquote, classroom. And so there's a lot of good research out there on social presence and online learning. And I think the more we're able to build in a social presence for both us and our students in an online course, the better off we are in terms of mitigating some of those cognitive shortcuts that we might take otherwise. So that's an area of inquiry I think is going to be really important. And again, back to that idea of the literacy load and mediated solely through written text. Let's think about ways that we can provide more fully fleshed out, three dimensional portraits of both ourselves by giving our students the chance to do that as well. And again, fill in some of those blanks accurately as opposed to leaving it up to other people's biases and assumptions.

Kevin Kelly [00:46:24] Thanks. The three of you and I'd like to pull Dr. Nance back into the conversation with one of the questions that's been upvoted pretty highly in the Q&A area.

Kevin Kelly [00:46:35] Dr. Nance, Sondra McGuire brings up that implicit and explicit bias from peers can significantly impact the classroom experience for black, indigenous and people of color. And it's especially true in group work, she says. And so I'm wondering, how are you helping faculty at Villanova prepare to introduce implicit bias to students and help them become aware of their own biases toward their peers?

[00:47:09] So if I had the question correct, then you're asking, how are we helping the students be aware of their biases? And I really want to begin with the teachers, because that's where my work has begun, is helping the teachers recognize the responsibilities that they have when they put students in group work. Too often we think, oh, here's a day. They go into groups and, you know, they'll get their get their work done without knowing that what we have to do is prepare the students to go into those groups. And I can tell you so many stories of of issues that I had to take care of because literally students of color were left out of groups or as students tell me, they were put in the loser groups and that directly impacted their grades. And so through our teaching and learning center and also through workshops given through my office, we work with faculty to talk about how it is you prepare your class for, you know, for those for group work. And we talk explicitly about the question of bias because students won't say, oh, I'm biased in the way that I that I you know, I put my group together. I just put my friends together and you say, wait a minute, let's think about that. Let's talk about what biases. And then let's talk about why we didn't put other people in. The second thing I would say is that in putting groups together, being more purposeful would also be instead of just having students freely check in, freely select people, think about what the different personalities in the group would would be adding. And one of the things I try to do also in my own coursework is to think of ways in which the students of color have some to have some specific knowledge or skills that the rest of the group will not have in order to address the issue in class so that those students actually become some of become not only highly wanted in groups, but more important, are able to shine in those groups as well.

Kevin Kelly [00:49:16] Thank you, Dr. Nance. Any of the panelists, do you have something you'd like to add about helping students become more aware of their biases toward their peers, especially in group work?

Kevin Gannon [00:49:31] The one thing I would say here very briefly is that to do so carefully and skillfully like this can't just be a throw away class exercise or like we're in a computer lab. Everybody log on and take the implicit association test online or something like that. There needs to be a lot of care that goes into creating the space where this happens because people are going to get, you know, from an implicit association test, for example, results that are going to make them really uncomfortable and maybe defensive and that sort of thing can end up cratering a class rather than moving students into a space that's more constructive. And so this is where collaboration if your campus as a teaching and learning center or a chief diversity officer or a workforce that's working on these sorts of issues. This is where we tap the expertise of our colleagues to help us figure out how to start those conversations in a classroom with students if we're not feeling necessarily experienced or comfortable or skillful enough to do that by ourselves. This needs to be a collaborative activity, I think.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:50:23] And I'll just sort of add on to that. It's a great point. I mean, sometimes we can get an unconscious biases in a more indirect way by simply adding more information into the brain. So, for example, to group work, one of the ways that I did that and my class was at the beginning of the semester, I had people fill in a survey about what skills, what particular skills they might bring to a group. And what are some of their hobbies and different things. And so when they came when it came time to signing up for groups and I did have people choose specific roles to play, but I had to look at that information so that, you know, you want to make a group that is harnessing the diverse skills and experiences of this, you know, of their student body here. The other information on that spreadsheet was like their work experience and, you know, in different things. So then they're focusing in on those skills and experiences without necessarily making that association between race, gender or ethnicity, whatever it is.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:51:24] So giving them additional information to make choices was what I was getting at.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:51:30] And I will say for for my class, because I teach a lot on diversity and inclusion. I would say that much of the content really does introduce the students to the concept of implicit bias or unconscious bias. And so they do. I guess through learning, they become more mindful of not enacting that with their peers. But I will also say that prior to teaching this course, I have taught other courses, such as public speaking and some other communication classes.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:51:58] And what I would typically would do is I would have students to do a silent interview activity at the start of the class. And so basically what this looks like is I will pair the students. And again, this was like an a face to face environment that I imagine that you can probably do this in a virtual space. But I would pair students with one of their peers and there'd be like a list of questions where they don't talk to the peer, but they answer the questions, how many pets do they have? Where are they from? Like, just a set of questions, what they least like about public speaking, what do they most enjoy. Right. And then after they complete the silent interview, give them about five to seven minutes. And then I asks for them to speak with their peer and to get the real answers to those questions. Right. And so not only does it build community and engagement, but students realize that they have biases that they come into the classroom with and that they have about people that might not necessarily be true. But then in turn, they also learn that they have more in common with their peers than they thought. Right. Despite the fact that they may have some differences in terms of gender or race and other other aspects of their identity create.

Kevin Kelly [00:52:59] And it looks like there's a follow up for instructors who may not be able to see easy pathways to introduce the concept of bias. With respect to the content that they teach. And so the question is, how can someone who doesn't teach in social sciences address these issues with students, quote, We're locked into our content and bringing up anything unrelated may present a problem. So beyond the things that you've all already shared, are there some strategies for introducing these topics that show its connection to students ability to learn together?

Teresa Nance [00:53:40] May I please,.

Kevin Kelly [00:53:42] Dr. Nance? Go ahead.

Teresa Nance [00:53:43] One of the things and I would speak to those of you who are in faith based institutions, one of the things that we often call upon as members, even as the diversity office work, diversity officers working with classes, is that we really talk about community. And it doesn't matter what you're teaching, everybody at Villanova knows about community. So what we've really done is to really attach the very Villanova Augustinian concepts we are run by the Augustinian friars notions to community. And then when we begin to talk about classroom practice, talk about that, we all have a responsibility to one another. And that part of that responsibility is making sure that we are including and and doing that equitably. So I would. So one of the things I would say is that one of those hidden tools that you can use is actually if you have a mission or at your university to use that as a way of connecting students to one another. Second point I'll say is and it is I will talk about my bias. My bias is that diversity can never be relegated simply to the social sciences or to humanities as faculty members. We all have a responsibility to maintain justice in the classroom. And if we're not doing it, then we're not doing our job.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [00:55:13] And I'll add a different frame, so I think, you know, part of being effective communicators is choosing the right frame or argument for your audience, right. So in a different place, you might also frame unconscious bias, because, again, as I mentioned at the beginning, people have a lot of baggage with the word bias or implicit biases. And just even saying that can raise their defensiveness. But what we're really talking about is making effective decisions. Right. So if you want to make the best decision possible, no matter what your discipline is. If you're looking in the sciences and you are looking at research questions or if you are creating groups for a business class, I guess that's social. You know what I'm saying? Right. So you can frame it as how are we going to make decisions based on the full breadth of information that we can take in as opposed to the quick shortcuts available to us. That's one way to do it.

Kevin Kelly [00:56:15] Thanks. Thank you both. And so.

Kevin Kelly [00:56:20] Now, we have only a couple minutes left, so I wanted to kind of end with something kind of stepping back out a little bit from that specific question. And I know we've answered this in bits and pieces throughout, but I wanted to give you all another opportunity to share an idea so maybe we can go through all four of you to answer this last question. How do we move past acknowledging that we have these biases and move toward action or remedying their effects? What steps are the panelists and the keynote taking at their institutions or have they heard of at other institutions? And so maybe we'll start with you, Dr. Nance, and we'll move down the line.

Teresa Nance [00:57:03] Thank you. First of all, let me say that this has been a pleasure and so wonderful to talk about this, because this truly is my passion. One of the things that we have at our institution is that we have started at intergroup dialog program and the real power that we end. For those of you who know about intergroup dialog, the function of the program is to put competing identities, if you will, together and then teach students how to have the difficult conversations. And I think one. And while that may seem like that's extra. And outside of the classroom, it has a spillover effect. And one of the things, in fact, we're working on now that I think we all got demands from our black students. We actually got a demand from our black students this summer to create a diversity course that included intergroup dialog because they want to be able to take it into the classroom. Students know the importance of doing it. The last thing I'm going to say, and I take this from , we're never finished that if we're really committed to doing the kind of work that we're doing, then we have to keep reading, we need to keep talking, and we need to keep learning about how to do things better.

Kevin Kelly [00:58:11] Since we're almost out of time for the Q&A session, maybe Marlo, Kevin and Darvelle, you can do tweet sized replies. One quick idea that people could adopt. And we'll start alphabetically with Darvelle.

Teresa Nance [00:58:41] Darvelle, you are muted.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:58:45] My apology. I was just in agreement with Dr. Nance.

Darvelle Hutchins [00:58:48] I think that, you know, as institutions that we need to have more courses on diversity, more courses that address topics of inclusion, equity, social justice. Right. I think that we need to be looking within our institutions and our departments to figure out how can we work to go away with processes and systems and structures that that are upheld through these biases. Right. That are that may work to marginalize certain groups or to further to further create oppressive experiences for faculty of color. So I think that that is a starting place is more courses and then doing a survey of our structures to make sure that we are not contributing to that oppression.

Kevin Kelly [00:59:35] Thank you, Darvelle, Kevin.

Kevin Gannon [00:59:38] So this is my challenge, especially to those out there like me who identify are identified as white. And if you're at a faculty or administrative position, you can't take the off ramp in these conversations. And it's easy for those of us who are white to do so. And it's easy for us to say we're being objective and rational and bias free. We cannot leave conversations that make us uncomfortable. And I know we subscribe to that theory in theory, but it has to inform our practice as well. We want our students to become, you know, to challenge their prior assumptions. We want our students to be critical thinkers. We want our students to be lifelong learners. We tell our students they're going to be transformed by their time at our institutions. If we are not modeling that ourselves, then those are just empty words. And so I leave you with a challenge acknowledging, confronting and then working to overcome the effects of implicit biases, especially in principally white institutions among white faculty and staff members, is an urgent task that's before us that we need to be about that work.

Kevin Kelly [01:00:38] All right. And Marlo, a tweet sized reply. Just a small little tidbit to take away.

Marlo Goldstein Hode [01:00:43] I don't tweet, I don't have a Twitter account and I don't like it. So I don't know if I can do it, but I'll just say is that it is ongoing work. I started this journey myself probably eight years ago, and now it requires a lot of attention and developing that chronic awareness of ourselves and that willingness to look at yourselves and accept things as, you know, just be very honest. And that's more than a tweet. And that's why I don't tweet. So thank you so much. It's great meeting here today.

Kevin Kelly [01:01:09] Well, I'd like to thank you and all the panelists and Dr. Nance the keynote for this incredible discussion. And we hope that this is just the start of a conversation. As we come to a close, we invite you to enter one word into the chat to describe today's session. Please click the link in the chat to share or go straight to menti dot com and enter the code on the screen seven five two seven two five zero.

Kevin Kelly [01:01:35] And that will create a word cloud that will show in just a second. We want to thank our partners for their support. We think are. We thank our panelists for

their time today. And we invite you to continue the conversation online, as I mentioned on our Web site. You'll find additional resources from today's conversation, including a video recording and a transcript of today's discussion, a full chat transcript and additional resources. And you'll see a survey link in the chat that's probably flown by by now because of all the great things you're all adding. We rely on feedback to continue to offer the most relevant and engaging content. We would love your responses, to recognize the effort will select a few respondents who share their name to receive a 50 dollar card in gratitude. So let's take a look at how you've all described today's session. I see. Actionable, informative, fantastic, useful. And here they are. Those of you who have put your words in to the word cloud generator, at menti.com ; outcome informative, inspiring, enlightening, helpful, thoughtful. So I know we will be ending in just a minute. So I want to thank again all of our panelists, our partners and all of you the participants. If you have not done so already, please check out the recordings from the first two webinars and this inclusive online teaching series. Please stay safe and have a great online class.