

108 Sensitivity training

Aim of the course

The training is designed to make students more sensitive to prejudices functioning on individual, group and societal level, and to draw attention to the consequent societal stereotypes and inequalities. By focusing attention to the determining - yet often hidden - role of culture the course aims to foster respect for human rights and human dignity, unbiased thinking and tolerance towards other cultures. The course will give the opportunity to get to know more about our own identities; reflect on social norms and rules in our society. The participants of the course will increase their knowledge about theories (culture, positive identity formation, stereotyping, discrimination and prejudice). The course also discusses possibilities, strategies and means of action against prejudices.

Learning outcome, competences

knowledge:

- Knowledge and understanding of the main characteristics of the values of different cultures
- Knowledge of the relationship between social-cultural-economic background and social success
- Knowledge of the historical and cultural aspects of the relationship between majority & minority groups
- Knowledge and understanding of stereotypes and prejudices as well as methods that help to reduce prejudices

attitude:

- Openness to accepting the values and identities of other cultures
- Recognition of cultural differences, the importance of individual cultural identities and the complexity of everybody's identity
- Acceptance of the fact that the co-existence of cultures may lead to conflicts in every field of social life, which can be solved peacefully in pluralistic societies
- Sensitivity to every form of social discrimination

skills:

- Ability to reflect on the hidden assumptions of one's own culture
- Ability to identify and critically relate to someone's own prejudices and ethnocentric view
- Creation of a work milieu in which partners feel valued and accepted, and ability to cooperate constructively
- Ability to understand the characteristics of intercultural communication, to apply them in organizing partners' work and to deal with possible conflicts efficiently.

Content of the course

Topics of the course

Introduction. Core concepts and the meanings of culture. Categorization, stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice. Ethnocentrism and intergroup relations, culture and stereotypes. Social identities, (majority and minority), system justification and the mechanism of social oppression. The course also covers the issues of what can be done against prejudices by familiarizing students with possible strategies and tools to reduce prejudices in practice.

Learning activities, learning methods

Interactive presentation, training methods, experiential learning, workshop by guest expert who work on the field

Evaluation of outcomes

Learning requirements, mode of evaluation, criteria of evaluation:

requirements

- Active participation during the training - maximum half day absence (4 hours)
- Reading the assigned readings
- Writing a paper about a chosen topic related to course syllabus with the title "Encounters". The writing should be based on a real encounter with a person who belongs to a cultural/social group which is unfamiliar/aversive to the student in order to gain knowledge, insight and create contact with that particular group (and its member).

mode of evaluation:

Practice mark. The writing assignment will be evaluated by grades and text feedback.

criteria of evaluation:

- Constructive participation in the course
- Relevance of the topic in writing assignment, and meeting the criteria
- Self-reflexivity of the writing assignment
- Coherence and complexity of the writing assignment

Reading list

Compulsory reading list

- Cushner, K., Brislin, R. (1996). *Intercultural interactions: A practical guide*. Sage Publications.
- Dovidio, J. F., Hewstone, M., Glick, P., & Esses, V. M. (Eds.). (2010). *The SAGE Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination*. SAGE.
- McIntosh, P. (1990). White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. *Independent School*, 49(2), 31-35.

Tatum, B. D. (1997). „*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*” and Other *Conversations About Race*. Basic Books.