

# Identity & Unconscious Bias

CALTECH CENTER FOR DIVERSITY  
ERIN-KATE ESCOBAR

CALTECH Y  
LIZ JACKMAN



CALTECH CENTER  
FOR DIVERSITY

# Objectives:

- Help you develop the **practice**\* of creating welcoming and safe environments
- Create an **awareness** around issues of identity, bias, and microaggressions
- Offer a **skill set** to manage environments and diffuse conflict and difficult situations around identity

\*ongoing, life long commitment to self evaluation



**What have you seen/heard in your work as a tutor?**

What has been working well for you?

What are some of the challenges?

# Ground Rules:

- Conversation
- Step forward, step back
- Be open and honest
- Speak from personal experience using “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings
- Practice empathy
- Please speak one at a time
- Challenge by choice
- Anything else...

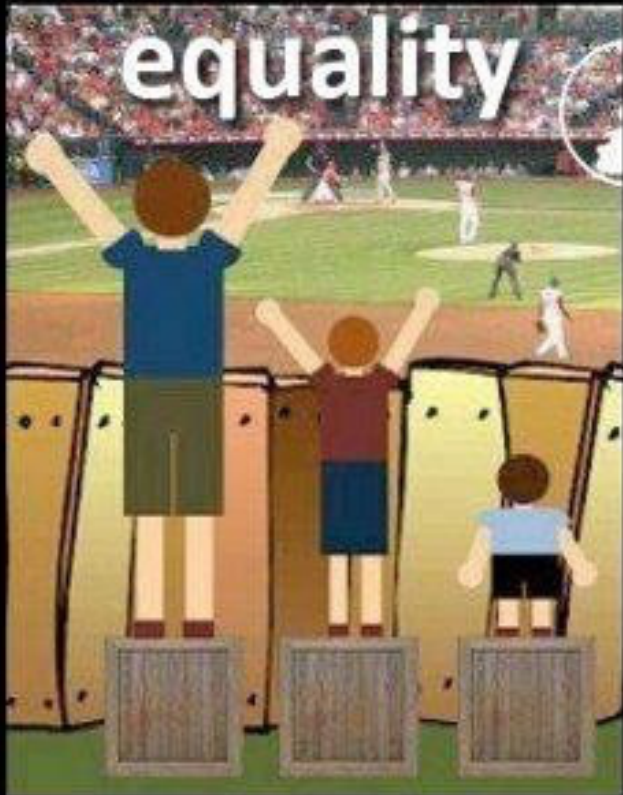
# Working Definitions

- Unconscious Bias/Implicit Bias
- Privilege
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- LGBTQIA
- Gender identity

# Your Role as A Tutor

Why does a conversation about diversity matter?

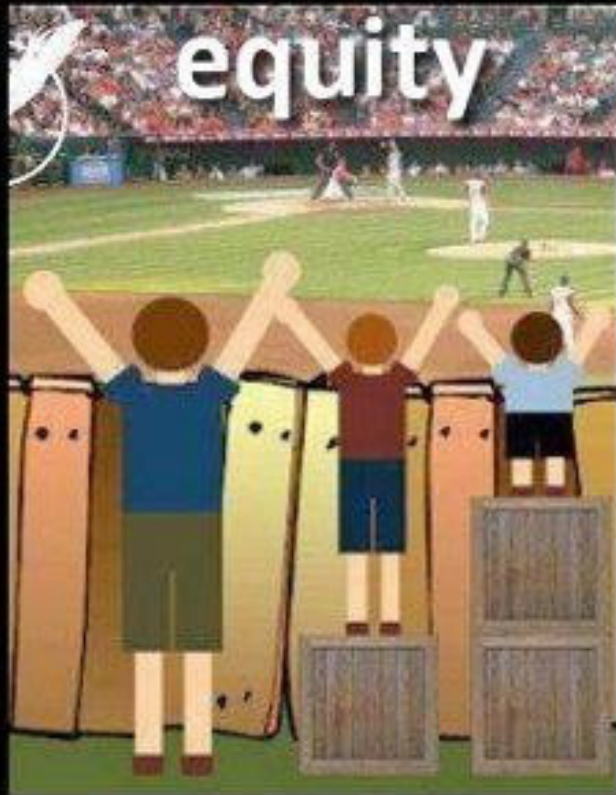
What does it mean for you in your position as a tutor?



### Equality = SAMENESS

Equality is about **SAMENESS**, it promotes fairness and justice by giving everyone the same thing.

**BUT** it can **only work IF everyone starts from the SAME place**, in this example equality only works if everyone is the same height.



### Equity = FAIRNESS

**EQUITY** is about **FAIRNESS**, it's about making sure people get access to the same opportunities.

Sometimes our differences and/or history, can create barriers to participation, so we must **FIRST ensure EQUITY** before we can enjoy equality.

- Recognize that **equity** does not mean sameness;
- **Fairness** does not mean treating everyone in the same manner, but recognizing and striving to meet their distinctive needs

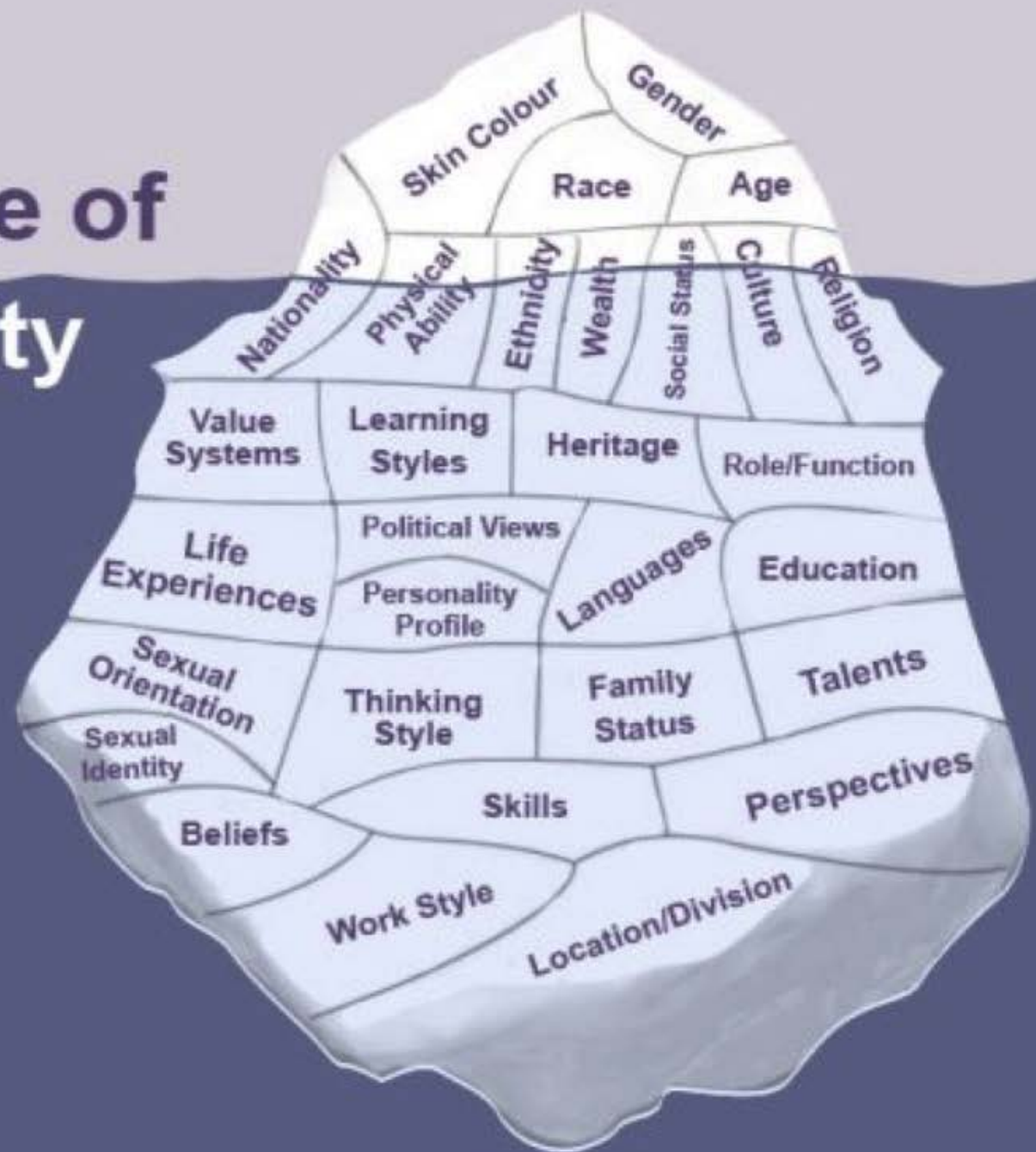


# Identity Iceberg





# Waterline of Visibility



# Factors That Make Up Your Identity:

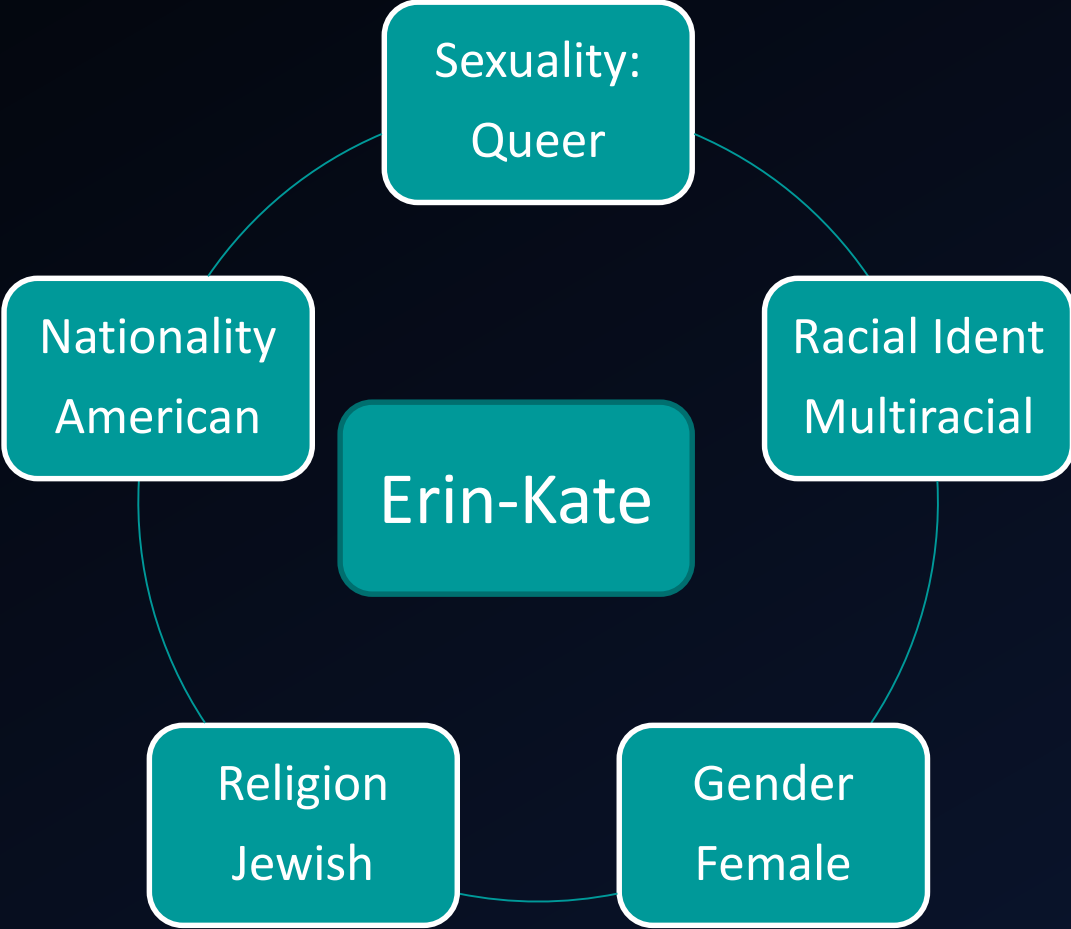
- Race/Ethnicity
- Class
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Nationality/ Country of Origin
- Ability
- Non Traditional/Traditional Family status
- Socioeconomic Status
- Education
- Religion/Spirituality
- Age

...and  
many  
more.

# Racial and Cultural Identity Development

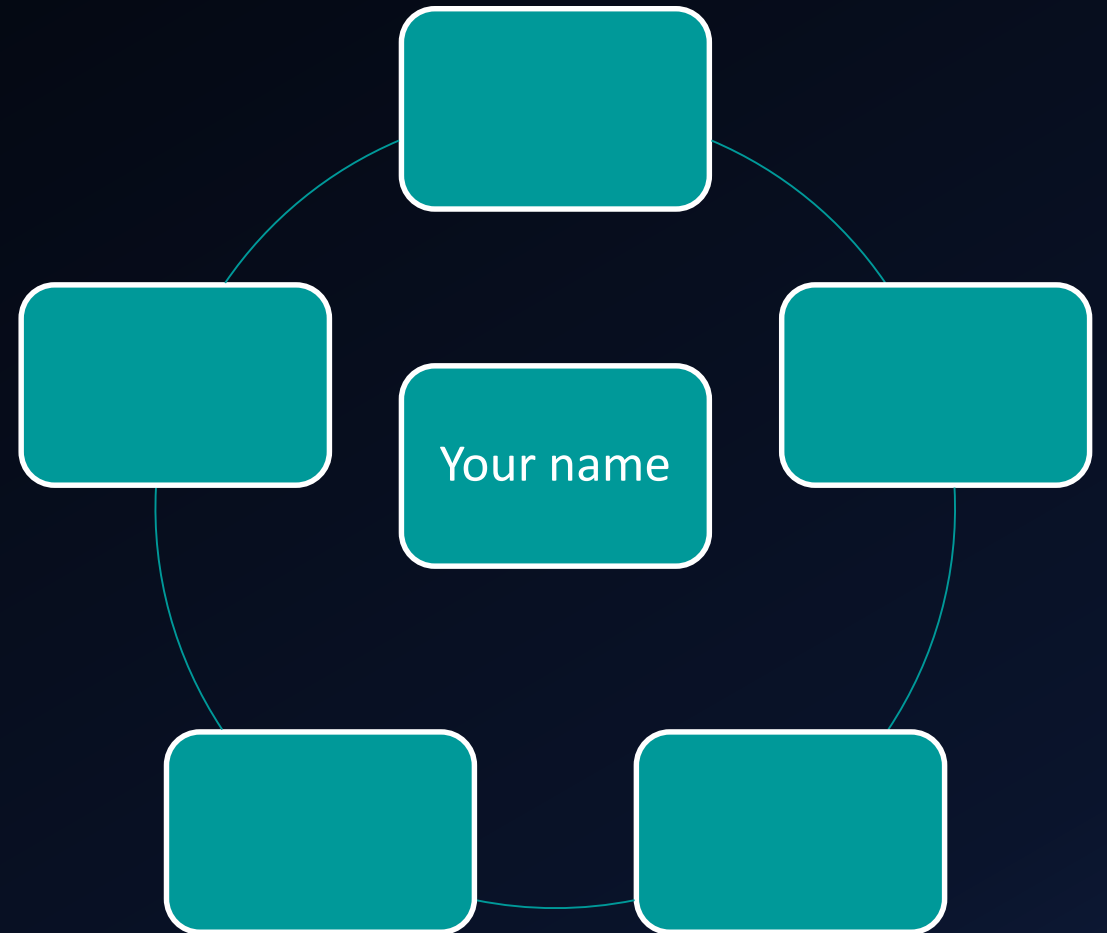
5 STAGES MODEL

# Social Identity



# Social Identity Profile...

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Nationality/ Country of Origin
- Ability
- Non Tradition/Traditional Family status
- Socioeconomic Status
- Education
- Religion/Spirituality



# Common Challenge- Stereotypes:

Over simplified ideas about an entire group of people without regards for individual differences

- Example....
  - All \_\_\_\_\_ are good at \_\_\_\_\_.

# This leads to UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

## HOW WE MAKE SENSE OF THE WORLD

- Categories
- Safety
- Bias

Individuals are fundamentally biased to favor people similar to them and biased against those who are different...

## UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Unconscious biases are created and reinforced by our environments and experiences. Our mind is constantly processing information, oftentimes without our conscious awareness. When we are moving fast or lack all the data, our unconscious biases fill in the gaps, influencing our every day choices and actions

# What are Microaggressions?

Statements or actions that can be intentional or unintentional. They communicate slights and insults and can be harmful, hostile, and send negative messages based on a person's marginalized identity



# What Microaggressions Look Like:

## **Verbally**

"You don't look like a scientist."

## **Nonverbally**

Only men are speaking at a meeting

## **Environmentally**

Access to restrooms for all

Usually outside the level of conscious awareness

# Challenges We Face:

- Bias, Prejudice, Discrimination and the -isms, i.e.
  - Racism
  - Classism
  - Gender discrimination/Sexism
  - Homophobia/Heterosexism
  - Ableism
  - Ageism
  - Weightism/Fatphobia
  - Religious bigotry

...and  
many  
more.



## Person Experiencing the Bias:

- You're Not Crazy
- Decide to Educate or Not
- Seek out Allies and Resources
- Turn to your support systems

## ROLE PLAY

Examples you can use:

- “I don’t think of you as....”
- “So, what are you? Where are you REALLY from?”
- “All \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_”
- “Can I tell you a funny joke?”
- Color-blind statements
- You’re really \_\_\_\_\_ for a \_\_\_\_\_”
- “I didn’t expect \_\_\_\_\_ from someone who’s \_\_\_\_\_”

# Managing Dissonance:

I get it! What about helping others to get it?

## People need to feel validated and respected

- Guilt and blame are not effective tools in moving people forward in social justice work

## People learn through their own processes of discovery

- Meet them where they are at developmentally

## Helping Communities Battle Apathy

- Connecting scientists experiences outside their own & relationship building

# Resources:

- Center for Diversity
  - Taso Dimitriadis (Confidential Resource) [taso@Caltech.edu](mailto:taso@Caltech.edu) 509-496-3492
  - Erin-Kate Escobar (Confidential Resource) [ekescoba@Caltech.edu](mailto:ekescoba@Caltech.edu) 831-818-3973
  - Eva Graham [egramham@Caltech.edu](mailto:egramham@Caltech.edu) 626-395-8103
- Counseling Center
  - General In emergencies cPhone line 626-395-8331
  - all security ext 5000 to request on call counselor
- Office of Health Education
  - Jenny Mahlum (Confidential Resource) [jmahlum@Caltech.edu](mailto:jmahlum@Caltech.edu), 626-395-2961
- Asst Vice President for Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion/Title IX Coordinator
  - Felicia Hunt [fhunt@Caltech.edu](mailto:fhunt@Caltech.edu) 626-395-3132

Final Thoughts and Questions?



CALTECH CENTER  
FOR DIVERSITY