UD COE Inclusive Teaching Workshop Series:
Inclusivity 101

The Takeaways
- Under-represented students, which in engineering is women and students of color, face obstacles to their success in the classroom, some of which are intrinsic (psychological) and others which are extrinsic (environmental & social).

- By being aware of these obstacles, instructors can mitigate their effects and promote an equitable learning environment for all students.

Fast Facts
- **Stereotype Threat[1]:** A psychosocial phenomenon in which individuals' behaviors tend to conform to societal stereotypes about the group to which they identify. In classroom settings, students from underrepresented groups with perceived lesser academic abilities tend to underperform when reminded of their membership in said group.

- **Imposter Syndrome[2,4]:** A psychological phenomenon in which a person feels inadequate (like "an imposter") despite having ample qualifications and/or achievements in their chose field.

- **Implicit Bias[3]:** Unconscious attitudes, stereotypes, or beliefs that can positively or negatively affect one's behavior towards different groups of people, e.g., a particular racial or ethnic group, gender identity, or age strata.

Teaching Tips
- To undermine stereotype threat, **provide racially and gender diverse models** of student success. Models may include undergraduate teaching assistants, example final reports or projects, or testimonials and guest appearances from upper-level students.

- In an engineering course, it is rarely necessary and **not advised to call attention to students' gender or race**, particularly in public settings. However, if you do need to collect this information (perhaps for purposes of an educational research project), make sure to solicit demographic information post-exam or post-survey. Doing so at the beginning of an assessment may trigger stereotype threat and undermine student performance[1].

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- The following strategies can be used to **combat imposter syndrome**:
  - Remind students that, though **you may have high standards**, you have confidence that they all can achieve them through hard work and practice[5,7].
  - There may be students in your class who have prior experience with your course material and/or technical skills. Sometimes these students will dominate classroom conversations in an attempt to show off and/or earn your favor. This behavior can be very detrimental to otherwise well qualified students with no prior exposure and can exacerbate stereotype threat. **Politely but firmly ask the show-offs to refrain from dominating class conversations** and support their fellow classmates in their learning[6].
  - If you feel comfortable, **share your own experiences** overcoming Stereotype Threat or, with permission, those of a near-peer recent graduate of your course[6].

References:
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3. Greenwald, Anthony G., and Linda Hamilton Krieger. "Implicit bias: Scientific foundations." California Law Review 94.4 (2006): 945-967.
4. Hill, Catherine, Christianne Corbett, and Andresse St Rose. Why so few? Women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. American Association of University Women. 1111 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington, DC 20036, 2010.
5. Gibbs, Graham. "Teaching Students to Learn: A Student-Centered Approach." (1981).
6. Margolis, Jane, and Allan Fisher. Unlocking the clubhouse: Women in computing. MIT press, 2003.
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