Creating a Learning Community for Inclusive Innovation
@ WATERHACKWEEK 2020

What is a learning community?

According to a learning community leader[1], "A 'community' is a group of individuals who freely choose to be and do something together in an ongoing way." A member of a learning community typically joins out of their curiosity and commitment to create something that they care about. Learning community members are connected by matters of the heart as well as the mind. Learning communities are brave spaces for truth-seeking and speaking.They are places where curiosity reigns over knowing and where experimentation is welcome. Developing the capacity to live with 'not knowing' when it naturally arises, to learn to be in relationship with oneself and to be reflective rather than defensive in nature is essential for learning in community. Our vision for the Waterhackweek learning community is to catalyze inclusive innovation, a guiding principle for Dr. Vikram Jandhyala, former UW Vice President for Innovation Strategy. The Waterhackweek team wants to build on Dr. Jandhyala's legacy of combining innovation with empathy. To that end, we provide the following guidelines for interacting with each other over the coming week. Not only do we know that interacting with people in these ways will help us be more culturally responsive[2], but it will also help our water data science community thrive and have greater scientific impact[3]. We hope that within this learning community each of you will be able to achieve your individual learning goals this week!

How do we create one?[4]

Take risks
- To grow and understand in a relationship, take the risk of saying the wrong thing. Don't be so afraid that you opt out. Don't miss the opportunity to authentically engage with one another.
- Courageous conversations about sensitive issues like gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and politics issues will eventually offend someone. Be open to hearing how you were offensive. Apologize if your words or behavior have offended someone.

Listen for understanding
- Listen to understand others first—not for how you will respond.
- Don't compare your experiences with another person's experiences. For example, saying gender oppression is the same as racial oppression invalidates the other's experiences.

Expect and accept non-closure
- There will be fortunate situations where you will be able to resolve something between you and another person but more times than not, it will feel unfinished. Sometimes you will have to circle back at another time to reconcile differences and other times you will have to sit with non-closure.

Experience discomfort
- Engage enough to feel a sense of discomfort in the dialogue. Give of yourself fully and take risks!
- Instead of seeking safety, be brave in your teams and lean in to the conversations—this is necessary for innovation.

Speak your truth
- We often avoid speaking our truth for fear of what others might say. It's important that we create an environment where everyone is free to speak openly so that learning can occur.
- Before speaking, think about what it is that you want others to know. How can they best hear you?
- Use I statements. What you are saying represents your perspective only. Don't speak for others.

No fixing
- It is human nature to want to fix other people's pain and discomfort, particularly when they are clearly distressed. However, it's important that we let people experience their emotions and not try to do something with them like rationalize them away. Before you attempt to fix something, pause and reflect on what is going on for you.

Stay engaged
- Discomfort and anxiety are normal parts of courageous conversations. When you start to tune out, return to the topic.
- Resist the urge to change the subject or make a distracting joke when you are uncomfortable. Instead, ask questions from a place of genuine curiosity.

[1] Spears, S. *The Emergence of Learning Communities*. Retrieved from https://thesystemsthinker.com/the-emergence-of-learning-communities/ on March 22, 2019.

[2] Culturally responsive is defined as able to understand and consider the different cultural backgrounds of the people you interact with, are in relationship with, work with, teach, serve. Source: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/culturally-responsive

[3] AlShelbli, B.K., Rahwan, T., Woon, W.L. (2018) The preeminence of ethnic diversity in scientific collaboration. *Nature Communications*. 9, Article number: 5163. Retrieved from https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-018-07634-8

[4] Guidelines adapted from Singleton, G.E., Linton, C. (2006) *Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press

Help us identify and dismantle unethical and unprofessional structures, attitudes and behaviors that impede creativity and respect in our learning community.

Waterhackweek 2020 code of conduct

Waterhackweek organizers are dedicated to providing a harassment-free learning experience for everyone. Regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, age or religion, all participants are expected to respect each other as SCIENCE-MOTIVATED HUMANS first. Waterhackweek volunteers and organizers will step up to address harassment of participants and/or presenters in any form if we are direct witnesses. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any conference venue, including talks.

We expect participants to act in ways that support a learning community at all Waterhackweek event venues and event-related social activities. And we expect you to support collaboration and learning while visiting University of Washington's many communities of practice. **Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.** Waterhackweek organizers will contact hackweek participants violating the stated code of conduct, including being expelled from the conference without refund at the discretion of the organizers

Ways to provide feedback and insights: Participants have multiple ways to address and/or report behaviors they personally experience or those that they witness.

1) **Public feedback:** The Canary Opera pilot is a data collection process that provides group generated feedback on what's working by reflecting and celebrating words and actions that enhance the hackweek experience. You can use flipcharts in your hackroom or #canaryopera on Slack to give public feedback on what is adding to or detracting from your experience. These feedback loop venues are for ideas and comments and are subject to public disclosure following federal guidelines of a U.S. public institution. For situations that distract you from learning, we will use the feedback loop to quickly generate solutions that address any issues we can.
2) **Private feedback:**
   a. Connect with Dr. Christina Bandaragoda in person or private message on Slack
   b. Write de-identified feedback on the Canary Opera feedback loop flip chart in the break area for other participants to see
   c. Deliver anonymous feedback in the private message box under the breakroom flipchart. Organizers will review all information to identify those structures, attitudes and behaviors that uphold creativity and science collaboration.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal comments that reinforce social structures of domination related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, age, religion.
- Sexual images in public spaces
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
- Harassing photography or recording
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcome sexual attention
- Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behavior

How to address unethical or unprofessional behavior at Waterhackweek.

If you have experienced or observed harassment as described above or other unethical or unprofessional behavior (a violation of this code of conduct) and want to talk to someone about it, choose from these specialists below.

1. **Contact the Office of the Ombud, 206-543-6028. ombuds@uw.edu, www.uw.edu/ombud.** For individuals who are uncertain about whether they want to pursue a formal complaint but would like to speak to someone about unethical or unprofessional behavior or some other challenging situations the Ombud office provides a confidential, informal, and neutral, resource for you. They can assist you with determining what, if any, course of action you would like to pursue and to navigate the different resources on campus.
2. **Attend Friday 3/29/2019 (3:45 pm)** Waterhackweek organizers **appointment with the Ombud**. Time is set aside and is available to any Waterhackweek participant who would like to discuss any concerns.
3. **Speak up about discrimination to the University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO), 206-616-2028, uciro@uw.edu**. Staff are available if you would like to file a formal complaint regarding discrimination.
4. **Speak up about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office, 206-616-5334, tixinv@uw.edu, https://www.washington.edu/compliance/tixio/,** staff are available if you would like to **file a formal complaint regarding sexual misconduct.**
5. **For formal concerns/complaints about something other than discrimination or sexual misconduct**, but are clear violations of the code of conduct, please contact: **Civil & Environmental Engineering Chair Laura N. Lowes, 206-543-2390 lowes@uw.edu**