



Ableism 101

By Disability Support Programs & Services

Erika Higginbotham, Isaac Arguelles, Sandy Ricketts

SAN DIEGO
MESA COLLEGE

Agenda

Learning Outcomes

Activity

Define Ableism

Different Types of Ableism

How Does Ableism Interfere with Academic Success?

Steps to Eliminate Ableism

Closing Questions

Learning Outcomes

1

Have a general understanding of Ableism including the different types and contributing factors.

2

Understand how Ableism affects the well-being and academic success of students.

3

Have the ability to recognize and then eliminate Ableism.

Activity

Do you view disability as a 'bad' thing?

Does your vocabulary include the words "retard or idiot?"

Have you seen an individual with a service animal and questioned whether or not they need it?

Has someone disclosed an invisible disability to you and you responded with "you look fine to me."

Have you ever asked someone if you can ask them a dumb question?

Have you made the assumption that individuals with disabilities aren't capable?

Ableism

Ableism: defined as the discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities and/or people who are perceived to be disabled. Ableism characterizes people who are defined by their disabilities as inferior to the non-disabled.

“It is a system of thinking and doing that harms disabled people. It is a belief system. It is a value system. In other words, ableism is a form of systemic, structural, and institutional oppression. What that means is that ableism is a system of power differentials and power relations, where people whose body minds are considered healthy, whole, functional, sane, stable, strong, and intelligent are granted enormous political, social, cultural, and economic power at the direct expense of people whose body minds are instead deemed sick, broken, defective, diseased, disordered, deficient, weak, unstable, and stupid.” - Lydia X. Z. Brown

Common Ableist Terms & Microaggressions

“She is a hard worker. For a DSPS student, I am impressed.”

“I have one of your students.”

“We all have some kind of disability.”

“Extended test time isn’t fair to the other students.”

“ADHD isn’t real. You just need to work harder.”

“What happened to you? But you look so normal.”

“You’re in a wheelchair? Do you have a license to drive?”

“You must be so patient. I don't know how you work with disabled students.”

“Maybe this isn’t the right class for this student”

“You can do anything if you just put your mind to it.”

Internalized Ableism

By Maria Palacios

Internalized ableism is

focusing on walking again,

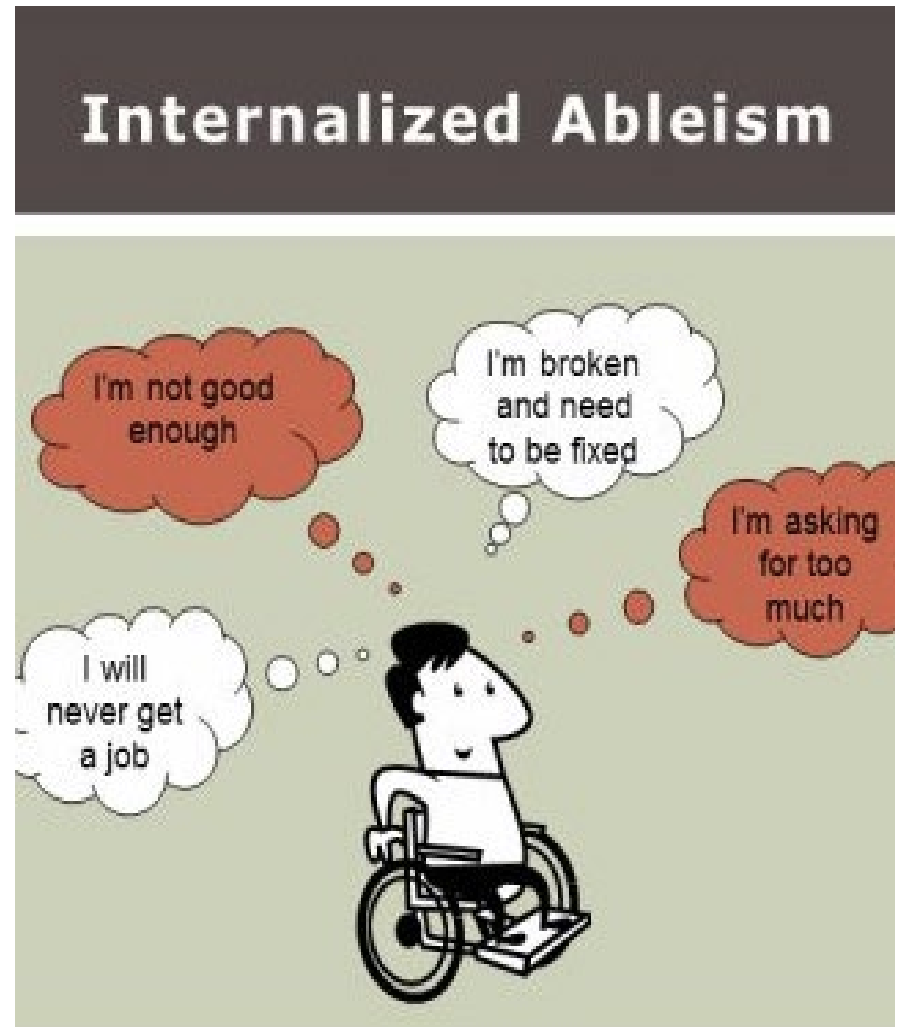
or seeing again,

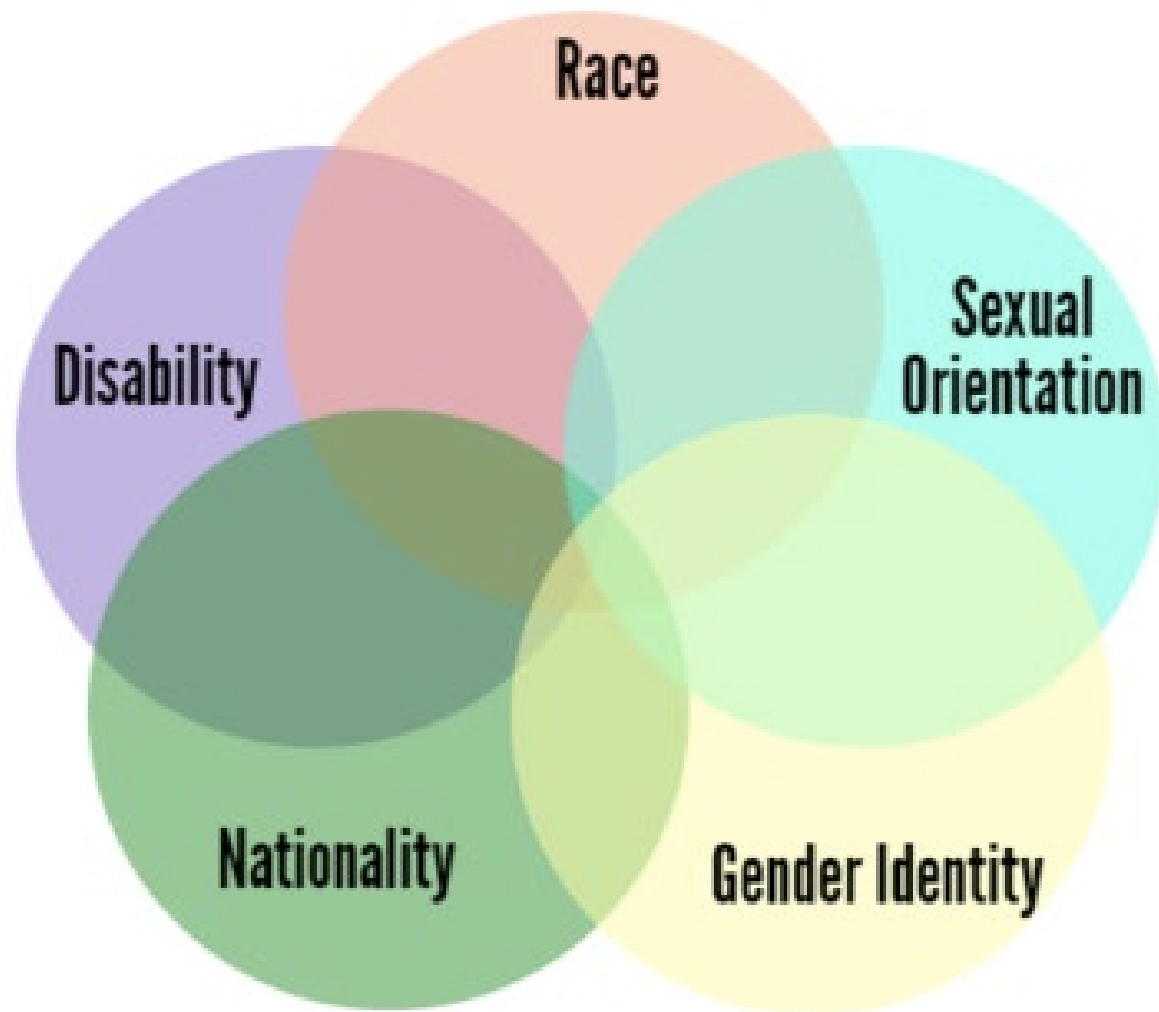
or being able-bodied again while throwing
away

a perfectly livable life because we've been led
to believe

our lives as disabled people have no worth
unless they're attached

to an able-bodied goal, or an able-bodied
dream.






How Does Ableism Affect Our Students?

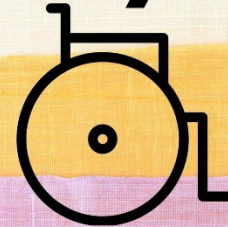


Recognize & Eliminate Ableism

- Do you question students that disclose they have a disability?
- Are you only accommodating to students that have visible disabilities?
- Do you use ableist terms?
- Do you assume that individuals with disabilities are not capable?
- Do you tell students with disabilities that they are an inspiration or are brave?



Not disabled, just differently-abled



Eliminate Ableism

Awareness

Strength-based language vs deficit language

Review class content

Don't assume. Not all disabilities are visible

Don't question students or put them on the spot

Become an ally for students with disabilities

Hire individuals with disabilities

Person-first or Identity-first?

Practice cultural humility! Ask what the students' preference is.

- Person-first: Student with a disability
- Identity-first: Disabled student

Tips	Use	Do not use
Emphasize abilities, not limitations	Person who uses a wheelchair	Confined or restricted to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound
	Person who uses a device to speak	Can't talk, mute
Do not use language that suggests the lack of something	Person with a disability	Disabled, handicapped
	Person of short stature	Midget
	Person with cerebral palsy	Cerebral palsy victim
	Person with epilepsy or seizure disorder	Epileptic
	Person with multiple sclerosis	Afflicted by multiple sclerosis
Emphasize the need for accessibility, not the disability	Accessible parking or bathroom	Handicapped parking or bathroom
Do not use offensive language	Person with a physical disability	Crippled, lame, deformed, invalid, spastic
	Person with an intellectual, cognitive, developmental disability	Slow, simple, moronic, defective, afflicted, special person
	Person with an emotional or behavioral disability, a mental health impairment, or a psychiatric disability	Insane, crazy, psycho, maniac, nuts
Avoid language that implies negative stereotypes	Person without a disability	Normal person, healthy person
Do not portray people with disabilities as inspirational only because of their disability	Person who is successful, productive	Has overcome his/her disability, is courageous

Social Media Accessibility



Plain
Language



CamelCase
Hashtags



Image
Descriptions



Captioning
& Audio



Link
Shorteners

Closing Questions

- How do you actively challenge ableism in your institution?
- How have you changed historical practice that excludes individuals with disabilities and racialized individuals with disabilities?
- Would your students and colleagues with disabilities describe you as an anti-ableism activist?