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## Implicit Bias Training for Woke Faculty

Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt  
Linfield University, rdutt-b@linfield.edu

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# Implicit Bias Training for Woke Faculty

| Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt pens a satirical memo.

By [Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt](#) // July 10, 2020



**Memo:** Implicit Bias Training for Our Woke Faculty

**From:** Provost JollyMolly Daft

Dear white faculty,

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, this summer's racial upheaval, the impressive faculty statements you have written calling out our racist superstructures and your pledge to demolish white supremacy in our institutional practices, we will be conducting an *early* summer implicit bias training for faculty via Zoom. We hope you will enthusiastically participate in this year's training in honor of Black Lives Matter to improve your skills in demonstrating performative allyship.

The training is being sponsored by the Department of Liberal Studies and will be run by your very own. The faculty members from Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities (whom you have previously gaslighted for bringing to your attention various implicit biases) will be your trainers. It will be their privilege (which they do not take lightly) to make you aware (once again) that your implicit biases are actually quite explicit.

## Letters to the Editor

Readers have submitted responses to this essay. You can view them [here](#) and [here](#), and find all of our [Letters to the Editor here](#).

Your faculty trainers have set some ground rules:

- You will *all* be muted and can only be unmuted if you have anything meaningful to contribute. "Meaningful" does not mean that you start giving a long testimony about all the antiracist books you have read (based on *The New York Times'* antiracist book list) or start quoting James Baldwin (from [brainyquote.com](#)).
- You are also strictly prohibited from retelling *that* story about how you *cried* when the POC student shared with you her experiences with racism during a horse-riding trip in Napa.

- When you are unmuted and you start speaking by saying, “I am very aware of my many privileges as a white, upper class, cisgender male/womyn ...” you will be immediately muted and ejected to one of the breakout rooms. In the breakout room, you will be joined by other “privileged” faculty like you to have deeper conversations and reflect on your privileges. In the breakout room you will be given 45 minutes to list your privileges and be asked about your awareness of how you think your privileges oppressed those who are *not* as privileged as you are (like how you screwed them over for your opportunistic gains).
- Each of you will be asked to reflect thoughtfully about ways in which you have taken credit for the work that has been done by BIPOC faculty and how you have shamelessly promoted their labor as your own ideas. (Feel free to use the word “loot” here multiple times.)
- You will be asked to reflect thoughtfully about how you have actively volunteered other white colleagues on significant universitywide committees because of your discomfort or fear that a competent BIPOC faculty member may challenge the status quo (and indeed decenter your white privileges).
- Each of you will be asked to bring your own cups to hold your white tears and a small digital food scale to weigh those tears. If your tears weigh less than two ounces, you will have *successfully* completed your implicit bias training. The president’s office has agreed to send you a “Non-Fragile Ally” certificate to display in your office. If your tears, however, weigh more than two ounces, then you will have to take the *mandatory* explicit bias training. Your retirement benefits will be reduced until this training is completed. You will not be receiving any certificates for completing the explicit bias training.
- Finally, if you are Becky, Karen, Susan, Chad or Kyle, you will be placed in a separate breakout room to just observe, fume and explode. The provost is organizing a boot camp with **Jane Elliott** for you all!

Thank you for turning up in record numbers (with your masks on) on Juneteenth last month to discuss how you are willing to add only three articles to create your antiracist syllabus. We also appreciate your ideas for converting our entire university to a giant Black studies program starting fall 2020.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you on Zoom. If you don't show or make any excuses to be absent, we will finally know who last fall blocked the ethnic studies major and that stellar Afro-Cuban candidate to be hired as our chief diversity officer.

Sincerely,

Your provost, JollyMolly Daft, and the BIPOC training crew

## **Bio**

*Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt is the Edith Green Distinguished Professor and teaches in the English department at Linfield University in Oregon. She is the author of The Postcolonial Citizen: The Intellectual Migrant and is the lead editor of the forthcoming book Civility, Free Speech and Academic Freedom in Higher Education: Faculty on the Margins. She frequently writes and critiques about conditions that impact underrepresented faculty in higher education and issues of free speech and academic freedom.*

