

**TOOL: INTERRUPTING INTERSECTIONAL MICROAGGRESSIONS (GIMAs and RIMAs)**

<b>RIMA THEME AND EXAMPLE</b>	<b>FIRST or THIRD-PARTY INTERVENTION EXAMPLE</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION APPROACHES</b>
<b>Alien in One’s Own Land</b>		
To Latinos or Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) folks from U.S.: “Where are you <i>really</i> from?”	“I’m just curious. What makes you ask that? I already told you that I am from Colorado.”	<b>INQUIRY:</b> Ask the speaker to elaborate. This may also help the speaker to become aware of what they are saying.
<b>Ascription of Innate Ability versus Hard Work:</b>		
To an AAPI person, “Of course you got an ‘A’, you are Asian!”	“It sounds like you think I get A’s because I am AAPI, and not because I studied. What makes you believe that?”	<b>KEY PHRASES:</b> “Say more about that.” “Can you elaborate on your point?” “It sounds like you have a strong opinion about this. Tell me why.” “What is it about this that concerns you the most?”
<b>Color-Evasive Racism:</b>		
“I don’t see race.” “Racism is not relevant. You need to toughen up if you are going to succeed!”	“When you say that, it does not acknowledge me, my experiences, culture, [if applicable:] and language.”	<b>PARAPHRASE &amp; REFLECT:</b> Reflecting on the essence of what the speaker has said by briefly restating in your own words demonstrates your desire to understand them and reduces defensiveness. Reflect with the speaker on both content and feelings as appropriate.
<b>Myth of Meritocracy:</b>		
“Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.”	“So, you feel that everyone can succeed if they work hard enough. It sounds like you are assuming we all start at the same place which discounts variant historical disadvantages and privileges.”	<b>KEY PHRASES:</b> “So, it sounds like you think...” “You’re saying...” “You believe...”
<b>Pathologizing Expression &amp; Communication Styles:</b>		
To female or trans Black staff member, “Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down.”	“It appears you were uncomfortable when ___ said that. There are many ways to express ourselves. Let’s talk about how we should honor all styles of expression.”	<b>REFRAME:</b> Create a different way to look at a situation. <b>KEY PHRASES:</b> “What would happen if ....?” “Could there be another way to look at this....?”
<b>Second-Class Citizen</b>		
You notice that your female colleague is frequently interrupted during a meeting	“Responder addressing the group: ___brings up a good point. I didn’t get a chance to hear all of it. Can we ask ___ repeat it?”	“Let’s reframe this...” “How would you feel if this happened to your _____?”
<b>Assumptions about intelligence and academic success</b>		
To a BIPOC woman: “I would’ve never guessed that you are a scientist.” Or: “You read well!”	“I’m wondering what message this is sending her. Do you think you would have said this to a White male?”	<b>INQUIRY &amp; ACCURATE INFO:</b> <b>KEY PHRASES:</b> “What does a scientist look like?” “She has a Ph.D.; she should be able to read well!”

Sources: Harwood et al (2010); Zerai et al (2021); Adapted from: Kenney (2014); Kraybill (2008); LeBron (2008); Peavey (2003); Sue (2010); Annamma et al (2017).

**TOOL: INTERRUPTING RACIAL AND INTERSECTIONAL MICROAGGRESSIONS (Pg. 2)**

<b>RIMA THEME AND EXAMPLE</b>	<b>THIRD-PARTY INTERVENTION EXAMPLE</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION APPROACHES</b>
<b>Myths about Meritocracy</b>		<b>STRATEGIC QUESTIONS:</b>
In a hiring/admissions committee meeting: “We are not discounting people on basis of race or gender! There are no qualified BIPOC/women applicants.”	“How might we consider and mitigate the impact of implicit bias to ensure that we have a fair hiring process in regards to gender and race?”	Ask the speaker to consider inaccuracies in their views and how their statements affect others. This may also help the speaker to become aware of the impact what they are saying.
Unsolicited comments to Black staff from a White staff member: “I think Affirmative Action (AA) in university hiring is unfair”	“How does what you just said honor your colleague?” “Is it possible that AA helps to address historical racial inequities?” “Did you know that white women have been the greatest beneficiaries of AA in the U.S.?”	<b>KEY PHRASES:</b> “Say more about that.” “Can you elaborate on your point?” “It sounds like you have a strong opinion about this. Tell me why.” “What is it about this that concerns you the most?”
Attending physician to Black woman medical student in response to her presentation in which she proposed a new treatment: “I didn’t know you were smart!” (despite fact that she spoke up as much as males during that week)	“What impact do you think your statement has on this student and on dynamics among medical students? Have you considered taking the gender and science implicit associations test? How might you rephrase your feedback next time?”	
<b>Representative for the Entire Race (or SOGIE or PWD)</b>		<b>REDIRECT:</b>
U.S.-born Japanese American staff member who is asked to comment on Chinese culture; or Zulu person who is asked to comment on Xhosa culture—or to translate for white staff members.	“June/Amahle, we would love your opinion, as much as we would appreciate opinions from the rest of our colleagues; in fact, let us open up this question to anyone here, and then take a look at informed perspectives from the literature.”	Shift focus to a different person <b>KEY PHRASES:</b> “Let’s shift the conversation…” Let’s open up this question to others…” “Let’s consult the academic literature on this one instead of relying on opinions.”
<b>Second Class Citizen</b>		<b>STRATEGIC QUESTIONS:</b>
Calling things “ghetto”; other examples include calling things “white trash”. Q: Examples from South Africa?	Asking questions to find language that does not marginalize on basis of race and class.	Asking questions to challenge speaker’s use of language that is damaging in force or effect.
“I have been called a [SOGIE expletive] by fellow students on several occasions. This typically happens in residence halls after hours”.	To affected student: “I am sorry to hear that, [name]. Would you like us to host a SOGIE awareness workshop in your residence hall?” To individual committing IMA: “That language is offensive and unacceptable”.	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EXPERIENCE:</b> Being an upstander means acknowledging experiences of those experiencing IMAs and offering to serve as an ally and advocate. We must confront hate speech head on.

<b>TOOL: INTERRUPTING RACIAL AND INTERSECTIONAL MICROAGGRESSIONS (Pg. 3)</b>		
<b>RIMA THEME AND EXAMPLE</b>	<b>FIRST or THIRD-PARTY INTERVENTION EXAMPLE</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION APPROACHES</b>
<b>Lack of Bystander Intervention</b>		
Black staff member who feels uncomfortable being put in the situation of confronting use of “n word” [or – example from South Africa?] when they did not witness this.	“Thank you for bringing this to my attention. It is a bit taxing for you to expect me to intercede when I wasn’t even there when it happened. You can file a university grievance.”	<b>INQUIRY &amp; ACCURATE INFO:</b> It is not the job of Black staff to intercede when someone uses a racial epithet. There are university and legal processes to handle this and even federal procedures to investigate hate speech. <b>KEY PHASES:</b> “Let us help you find more appropriate parties to whom to report your concerns.”
<i>On part of faculty:</i> When Black men, Black women, Trans staff report academic bullying & harassment from others in their department or school	“It is vital that we create an inclusive process in our unit. Research shows that diverse groups can create the best outcomes. We will create community norms in our department.”	<b>INQUIRY &amp; ACCURATE INFO:</b> Share studies providing evidence of strength of diverse work groups. Model an effective group work process by discussing GIMA survey results and asking unit to devise norms for inclusive work.
<i>On part of university administration:</i> Senior faculty, HOD, or HOS delays or dismissals of requests for academic accommodations from PWD staff colleagues	Send out regular reminders of policy regarding accommodation requests. Set up a procedure to check a sample of departments annually to assess success with providing accommodations.	<b>ACCURATE INFO:</b> Notification of policy and acting on policy violations. Enhancing compliance by assessing units. Remind colleagues that all staff deserve equitable access to university resources.
<b>SOGIE-Evasive Trans/homophobia</b>		
“Transphobic undertones are just so rampant in my academic program. People are really well intentioned, but they just act like trans people don't exist & show notable discomfort (uncomfortable laughing, grimacing) when I bring up trans bodies and experiences...”	“According to Beyond Zero data for SA, in 2021 almost 200k identified along the trans or gender nonconforming spectrum. In order to enhance inclusiveness, we need to do all that we can to make sure everyone feels they belong.”	<b>ACCURATE INFO:</b> A 2016 survey indicates that .6% of U.S. adults are transgender (and almost 200k in S.A. are). However, it is severely underreported. The suicide rates for LGBTQIA+ folks are higher than national averages. For trans folks in the U.S., 41% attempt suicide at least once. Acting to interrupt transphobia is a matter of life and death.
“Being misgendered regularly despite having my pronouns worn or in my zoom name”	“Hey _____, I don't know if you're aware, but they actually use they/them pronouns. I wanted to let you know before you make a mistake. We would hate for [name] to have a negative experience.”	<b>INQUIRY &amp; ACCURATE INFO:</b> Ask whether individual committing IMA is aware of target’s preferred pronouns. Organize an LGBTQIA+ inclusiveness workshop; share Dr. Ben Barres’ story <a href="https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/autobiography-transgender-scientist">https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/autobiography-transgender-scientist</a>
Sources: Harwood et al (2010); Zerai et al (2021); Adapted from: Kenney (2014); Kraybill (2008); LeBron (2008); Peavey (2003); Sue (2010); Annamma et al (2017; Williams Institute 2016).		

### **Considerations** (from Harwood et al 2010):

- The communication approaches are most effective when used in combination with one another, e.g., using impact and preference statements, using inquiry and paraphrasing together, etc.
- Separate the person from the action or behavior. Instead of saying “you're racist”, try saying “that could be perceived as a racist remark”. Being called a racist puts someone on the defensive and can be considered “fighting words”.  
Avoid starting questions with “why”; it puts people on the defensive. Instead try “how” or “what made you ....”.
- When addressing a microaggression, try to avoid using the pronoun “you” too often; it can leave people feeling defensive and blamed. Use “I” statements describing the impact on you instead or refer to the action indirectly, e.g., “when \_\_\_ was said ...” or “when \_\_\_ happened ...”.
- How you say it is as critical as what you say, e.g., tone of voice, body language, etc. The message has to be conveyed with respect for the other person, even if one is having a strong negative reaction to what's been said. So it is helpful to think about your intention when interrupting a microaggression, e.g., do you want that person to understand the impact of his/her action, or stop his/her behavior, or make the person feel guilty, etc. Your intention and the manner in which you execute your intention make a difference.
- Sometimes humor can defuse a tense situation.

### **Acronyms**

- Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)
- Black (S.A.), “The term Black is used to refer collectively to Africans, Coloured, and Indians. It is a term that emerged during the Black Consciousness era of 1970s to refer to the oppressed peoples of South Africa” (Mabokela and Mawila 2004, p. 396).
- Black & Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), in U.S., includes Asian/AAPI, Latinx/Hispanic, Multiracial individuals & others
- Community of Practice (CoP)
- Gender-related Intersectional Microaggressions (GIMAs)
- Intersectional Microaggressions (IMAs)
- Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI); Hispanic Serving Research University (HSRU)
- Justice, Equity, Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion (JEADI)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual/Pansexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA+)
- Liaisons for Equity, Advocacy & Diversity (LEAD) Council of Associate Deans for Diversity
- Minority Serving Institution (MSI)
- Person(s) with Disabilities/Disabled Persons (PWD)
- Racial and Intersectional Microaggression(s) [RIMA(s)], to include racial, class, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and ableism (discrimination and bias against Persons with Disabilities)
- Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE)
- South Africa (S.A.)
- Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Minority (URM), to include Native American/American Indian, Black/African American, & Latinx/Chicanx/Hispano
- United States of America (USA or U.S.)
- Vice President for Equity and Inclusion (VPEI)
- YRRS-Youth Risk and Resilience Survey

HANDOUT LINK: <https://campusclimate.unm.edu/rima-survey/presentations.html>

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You are invited to add examples of IMAs, interventions, & communication approaches below:

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<b>Alien in One's Own Land</b>		<b>INQUIRY:</b>
To ... (note target of IMA) "Where are you <i>really</i> from?"		
<b>Ascription of Innate Ability versus Hard Work:</b>		<b>KEY PHRASES:</b>
To ... (note target of IMA)		
<b>Color-Evasive Racism: [or Gender-Evasive Sexism] +</b>		<b>PARAPHRASE &amp; REFLECT:</b>
"I don't see gender." "Gender is not relevant."	"When you say that, it does not acknowledge me, my experiences, culture, [if applicable:] and language."	
<b>Myth of Meritocracy:</b>		<b>KEY PHRASES:</b>
<b>Pathologizing Expression &amp; Communication Styles:</b>		<b>REFRAME:</b>
<b>Second-Class Citizen</b>		
		<b>KEY PHRASES:</b>
<b>Assumptions about intelligence and academic success</b>		
		<b>INQUIRY &amp; ACCURATE INFO:</b> <b>KEY PHRASES:</b>

### **SMALL GROUP SESSION**

**We will assign you to a small group. See *Toolkit: Interrupting Intersectional Microaggressions*.**

- Your group will be assigned **one case**. **Discuss the ways in which you would interrupt** racial/ethnic, SOGIE (sexual orientation and gender identity and expression), gender/sex, religious, PWD (Persons with Disabilities)-targeted **GIMAs** and **RIMAs**.
- Plan to **share** your interventions with the larger group.
- You will have approximately **8 minutes** in each small group session (**assign facilitator, notetaker, narrator and actors**).
- Then we will **report back** to the group by sharing your observations and interventions by acting them out (5 minutes).
- Alternatively, you may be assigned to edit the interrupting microaggressions toolkit.

### **Skits:**

- Group 1: Doctoral student takes matters into her own hands.

“I was working on my doctoral studies proposal. I got pregnant that year. My supervisor would not read any of my submissions. He slowed me down for at least 6 months ... , I asked (him) to please read my work so I can defend my study and apply for ethical clearance. I decided to share my work with peers and received critical reading and comments and told my supervisor that I need him to prepare my proposal committee soon as I was also getting pressure from my scholarship. I went to defend without his reading of my work.” – South African colleague

- Group 2: Examples of sexual and gender-based harassment were offered by several respondents, largely those who work at HEIs in South Africa

“It was in the office of a male colleague, ... commenting about my outfit, not the report I brought to him. ...Nothing I said he ever took seriously. ... It was very frustrating, I felt like a piece of meat ready to be devoured. The worst part, I could not avoid him because he was my ... manager.” – South African colleague

- Group 3: Challenging Black Women as Academic Leaders

“I applied for a dean’s position, and one of my senior colleagues told me that I am ‘too soft’: that I do not have what it takes to be in a senior management position. His view of university management was clearly informed by stereotypical patriarchal forms of leadership as dominance. – South African colleague

- Group 4: Comments about Black women’s hair styles and promotion of white standards of beauty

“In passing while walking to a meeting, a leader at the University said you are always changing your hair up. I think it looks good whenever you straighten it.”—U.S. colleague