Project Overview

- As scientists, we study how changes in climate and our physical environment alter biodiversity and species interactions in an ecological community. However, we lack a venue where we can discuss how the academic climate affects the diversity of ecologists and evolutionary biologists in academia. Therefore, we created a discussion group on how stereotype threat, unconscious bias, and privilege influence interactions that faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates have in the classrooms and research labs of the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology.
- We led a reading and discussion group during Winter 2016 on the topic of diversity, equity, and inclusion in biology classrooms.
- We discussed stereotype threat as it came up in our biology classrooms and labs.
- We discussed stereotype threat as it came up in our readings of *Whistling Vivaldi* and a few corresponding academic papers. *Whistling Vivaldi* is a great introductory text on stereotype threat, its consequences, and impact on undergraduate students’ experiences in the field/discipline.
- 6 meetings of 90 minutes each

Key Insights

**Participant Interests:**
- The scientific nature of *Whistling Vivaldi*
- A safe teaching circle, support group, or space to talk about broad teaching and mentoring concerns
- Learning about experiences of other participants in their classrooms

**Participant Quotes:**
- "This reading group has become a valuable outlet to discuss and learn about important issues that we do not get a chance to talk about in the department."
- "It has been so interesting and challenging to have these conversations as we all bring our own social identities and comfort (or lack thereof) to discussion and reflect on how things work in our classrooms and beyond."
- "The group has been very important in reaching collective understandings of how issues related to inclusiveness affect everyone and how it affects classroom learning."

**Going Forward:**
- Continue meeting and read *The Difference* and/or other literature related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion issues and participants’ interests
- Summarize a 45-minute presentation to share findings with the department
- Q & A with a social scientist? Co-sponsor a seminar speaker whose research is DEI related?

Participants

**Discussion Organizers and Co-Leaders**
- Jo Kurdziel
- Cindee Giffen
- Marian Schmidt
- Susan Cheng

Members of the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
- 6 faculty
- 3 post-docs
- 24 graduate students
- 1 staff member
- 1 undergraduate

Artifacts

- 2-3 page summaries:
  - Stereotype threat
  - Classroom Climate
  - Values Affirmation
  - Course Structure and Materials
  - Providing constructive feedback

For a Diverse Faculty, Start With Retention

**Next Steps**

- A new book for the reading group: *The Difference*
- Working group or other support for folks to share syllabi, course policies, assignments, and strategies for inclusive teaching