



High Impact Practices for Staff-Student Interactions



The *LIFT* SU Goal 1 working group and the Office of Diversity & Inclusion offer this resource as a set of modest suggestions for staff-student interactions. Even slight changes in how we approach our interactions can significantly impact our students. This handout is designed to facilitate staff members' ability to create a place where our students can belong and thrive.

Inclusive Interactions *Building Relationships, Reinforcing Belonging*

Names	Microaggressions	Warm Hand-Off
<p>Address students correctly; focus on accurate pronunciation. Pay attention to accents and intonations. If you're not sure, ask the student - don't guess. It's perfectly fine to say, "Please teach me how to say your name."</p> <p>Avoid dead-naming students.</p> <p>Be aware of, and use, correct pronouns. It's a great practice to model sharing pronouns (during introductions or at the beginning of an event), but make it optional for students to share theirs. We do not refer to pronouns as "preferred."</p> <p>Double check your emails. Seattle University aliases are listed by first name, last name. Pay attention to how students (and colleagues) sign their names in emails and address them accordingly.</p>	<p>Be aware of common microaggressions.</p> <p>Be open to hearing feedback if you've unknowingly engaged in actions that made a student feel unwelcome, marginalized, or singled out for an identity they hold, and apologize thoughtfully.</p> <p>Check your assumptions. One way to prevent harm is to actively check your assumptions about others. Consider what assumptions you may be making in terms of immigration status, language, or origin, and whether an individual "looks like" a student.</p> <p>Change your language. Small shifts in language can create a more inclusive campus environment. For instance, ask, "What's your affiliation with the University?" instead of, "Are you a student/staff/faculty?"</p>	<p>Welcome students with a friendly "hello," smile, and give them your attention.</p> <p>Students will come to you with questions and needs that you cannot answer or provide. Whenever possible, actively assist students in navigating the university.</p> <p>Referrals are great. And spending the extra time to take a student to the resource or pulling up a campus map to help locate the resource can be helpful. Give your colleagues a heads up so they know to expect a student at their office.</p> <p>Know your campus resources (or know where to look). Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender inclusive restroom map • Food resources/ campus microwave map • Lactation rooms • Sacred spaces, including multifaith prayer room • Commuter resources, such as showers and lockers



Mindfully Inclusive Environments

Building a Space Where Everyone Feels Welcome

Assess Your Physical and Digital Space

Consider how your spaces are adding to or detracting from an inclusive campus environment. Some specific considerations include:

- Are there physical obstacles and items that students need to navigate?
- Are there images that may signify exclusion vs. images that indicate your space and you are a safe place?

Additional inclusive actions:

- Add identity markers and resources in your email signature (e.g., “I’m First Gen,” your pronouns).
- Consider using a booking application for students to schedule time with you (e.g., MS Bookings).
- Turn on automated captioning on Zoom.

Other Considerations

When seeking information on forms and surveys, think about what data you need to perform your task. Don’t default to asking for all demographic information if you don’t need it.

Take time to create genuine and meaningful connections with students (and colleagues). Get to know each student and avoid the temptation to lump students together based on demographics and assumptions. Treat each student as a unique individual, in keeping with *LIFT* SU principles.

Be open to feedback and maintain a posture of humility and learning. We will all make mistakes in our effort to create an inclusive and welcoming campus environment. How you respond to feedback can be just as important as not making the mistake in the first place.

