

Building Future Leaders:

Transformative Professional Development Opportunities for Student Workers

Presenters

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We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

Access and Inclusion

and

Civility and Respect

...this week and in all aspects of our organization.

Introduction





Jewls Griesmeyer-Krentz, *Associate Director*, Learning Support Services, Linfield University

- Current Student Staff: Tutors, Testing Proctors, Office Assistant
- Previous Student Staff: Classroom Assistants, Lead Classroom Assistant, Social Work Interns, Honors Student Intern

RT Tougas (they/them), *Senior Access Counselor & Consultant*, Disability Resource Center (DRC), Portland State University

- Supervision of Student Staff: Classroom Assistants, CA Lead
- Other DRC Student Staff: Alternative Format Tech and AT Leads, Front Desk staff, Access Interns and Engagement Interns

Agenda

-  Background
-  Foundational Training
-  Periodic Retreats
-  Ongoing Training
-  Practice & Vision in Small Groups or Individually
-  Realistic Application



Icebreaker and Setting Intention

Please take three minutes to reflect before sharing:

1. What do student workers do in your office?
2. What are you hoping to learn about professional development for student worker?

Learning Goal One



Attendees will learn about providing professional development opportunities for their student workers through examples and resources

Learning Goal Two



Attendees will translate the suggestions for their specific contexts. Small group discussion will generate ideas. Each attendee will leave with at least one concrete plan to offer professional development for their student staff with a focus on disability justice

Background

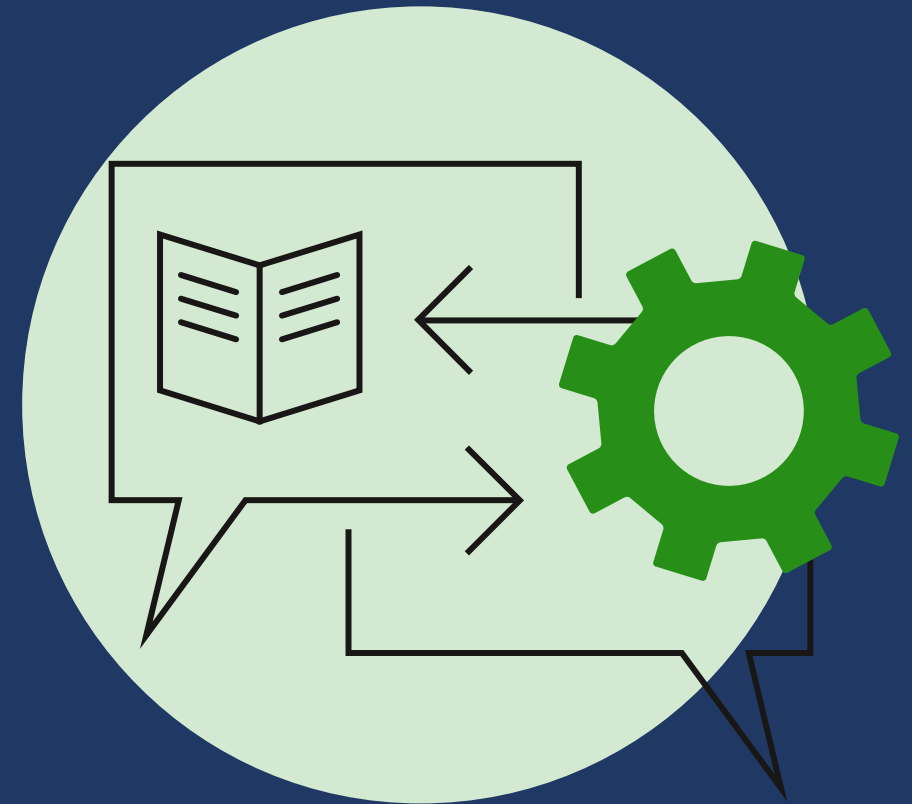
Institutional Context
Theoretical Framework

Institutional Context

- Portland State Disability Resource Center office-wide antiracism work
- Professional staff *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad
 - Reading, Discussion, and Action Groups
 - Planning and implementation of ongoing student staff training and professional development

Theoretical Framework

- Critical Social Theory (Friere)
- Transformation Theory (Mezirow)
- Transformative Leadership (Weiner)
- Social Justice Lens



Critical Social Theory

“...reflection—true reflection—leads to action. On the other hand, when the situation calls for it, that action will constitute an authentic praxis only if its consequences become the object of critical reflection.”

(Friere, 2001)

Transformation Theory

“A transformative process of meaning becomes clarified through expanded awareness, critical reflection, validating discourse, and reflective action as one moves toward a fuller realization of agency”

(Mezirow, 2000, p. 25)

Transformative Leadership

“Transformative leadership is an exercise of power and authority that begins with questions of justice, democracy, and the dialectic between individual accountability and social responsibility.”

(Weiner, 2013, p. 89)

Foundational Training

Format

Training Goals

Foundational Training Format

Annual, full-day training

- Part I: All student workers ([Sample Agenda Part I: All Student Workers](#))
- Part II: Intensive role-specific training ([Sample Agenda Part II: Classroom Assistants](#))

Foundational Training Goals

- Establish a social justice framework
- Learn about how their work relates to the overall DRC mission and vision for social justice
- Acquire knowledge about specific job-related tasks

Foundational Training Worksheets

Ableism
Worksheet

Communication
Exercise

Conflict
Resolution

Calling
in/Calling out

Self-care
Breathing
Exercise

Periodic Retreats

Investigation—Action—Reflection Format
Examples of for Each Part

Periodic Retreat Format

- Progressive, professional development retreats based on critical social theory, transformation theory, and transformative leadership.
- Format follows an arc based on initial, critical investigation of values, values-based action, and critical reflection.

Overarching Framework

Investigation-Action-Reflection

Critical Investigation

- Build self-awareness and understanding
- Identify shared values



Values-Based Action

- Choose values-based actions and goals
- Application to everyday work



Critical Reflection

- Understanding of self as a leader
- Articulate change



Investigation

- Student workers establish a combined values
- Student workers decide on a set learning goals for the year



Mission—Vision—Values

Mission

- What do we do today?
- Who do we serve?
- What are we trying to accomplish
- What impact do we want to achieve?

Vision

- Where are we going moving forward?
- What do we want to achieve in the future?
- What kind of future society do we envision?

Values

- What do we stand for?
- What behaviors do we value over all else?
- How will we conduct our activities to achieve our mission and vision?
- How do we treat members of our own organization and community?

Combined Value Statement

DRC Staff Combined Values

- Proactivity
- Communication
- Respect
- Accompliceship/Allyship
- Anti-Ableism/Accountability
- Safety
- Collaboration
- Community

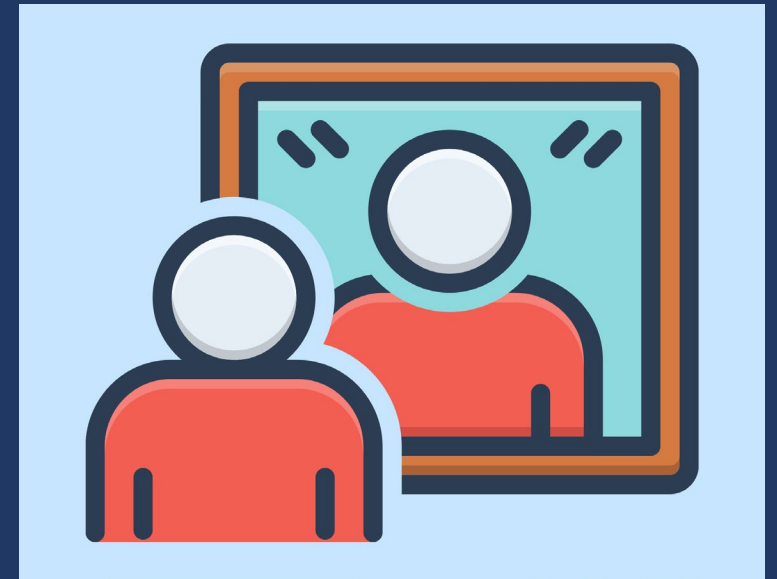
Action

- Value-added, social justice-driven work experiences
- Opportunities to suggest changes to procedures
- Reinforced by ongoing training



Reflection

- Deepen understanding of self within leadership contexts
- Student leaders develop ways to articulate change
- Feedback from student workers about training



Ongoing Training

- Enriched Training at Regular Staff Meetings
- Self-Directed Opportunities as Part of Paid Work
- Passion Projects



Ongoing Training Goals

- Continued training about ableism and intersectionality
- Social justice approach to individual interactions
- Clarify responsibilities and boundaries for student worker role
- Student workers apply combined values to their everyday work
- Student workers to use their interests and strengths to apply their values to mentored “passion projects”

Regular Staff Meetings

- Infuse critical problem-solving from a social justice lens into meetings and the practicalities of the work
- Provide enriched training with connections to everyday job functions

Enriched Regular Trainings: Classroom Assistants

Example: Classroom Assistants monthly check-in

- Viewed 5-min Ford Foundation video about social justice and disability.
- Discussed Classroom Assistant experiences, observations about student access and boundary-setting with faculty.

Enriched Regular Trainings: Tutors

Example: Quarterly Tutor Training

- Resources about learning styles, learning differences, and learning experience including self-assessment
- Discussion about how to fit tutoring to different types of experiences
- Coordinated study tables

Self-Directed Training

Provide self-directed training opportunities to fit student workers' interests, goals, and learning styles

- Student workers get paid their hourly wage and document what key take-aways
 - Examples:
 - Resource library (Example: [Anti-racism resources](#))
 - Conferences and webinars upon approval

Mentored Passion Projects

- Students may propose a “passion project” to fits shared values and interests
- Staff mentors provide:
 - Practical guidance
 - Encouragement
 - Reinforcement of shared values and social justice lens

Passion Project Example: It's Your Center

- Accessible, community art project developed by Jewls with her Honor's College Intern, Mia Cremer
 - Variety of tactile materials, paint, markers, etc.
 - Art piece created in conjunction with opening the new DRC Safe(r) Space
 - Opportunity for disabled student group tabling



It's Your Center

Passion Project Example: DRC Virtual Study Collective

- Developed by Darcy Kramer (Senior Access Counselor) with DRC Engagement Social Work Interns, Em Raines and Rachel Doran
- Established Community Values
- Open zoom room with three breakout room options
 - Social Space,
 - Quiet Space,
 - Private Conversation Space

Group Practice

Developing a Vision for Student Worker Training
Realistic Application

Practice and Vision

In small groups, develop a sample workshop, training plan, or personal goal using the investigation—action—reflection framework

- **Investigation:** What are your guiding values or ethics (as a supervisor, for student staff, or for your work more generally)?
- **Action:** outline training goals and/or events that align with your values
- **Reflection:** what do you notice about yourself (as a staff member) in this process? What actions interest you/ what feels urgent?

Share your group's ideas

Realistic Application (discussion)

How do you navigate supervision, logistics, and mentorship for student workers when your DS office is managing reduced capacity?

- Take a few minutes to reflect on your own or with someone sitting near you
- Large group discussion

Conclusion

Please use any of the materials found in the links throughout this presentation and adapt them to your specific context.

Questions?

Thank You!!



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Session Evaluation

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programming.

Thank you for attending!

