

## **Professional Development Topics and Questions to Explore to Reduce Social Class Barriers to Career Development Success**

Project: Reducing Social Class Barriers to Career Development Success  
2017-18 IUPUI Welcoming Campus Innovation Fund - [welcoming.iupui.edu](http://welcoming.iupui.edu)

Our plan to continue professional development, raise awareness, and create solutions to social class barriers will address these questions:

1. How might we reduce career-related barriers through educating ourselves and employers?
2. How might we better prepare students for the reality of the workplace?
3. How might we develop in our students and graduates a sense of belonging in the workplace?

### **Suggested Topics, Questions, and Areas to Explore in Professional Development:**

#### Biases, Values, and Power Topics and Questions

- How might we examine and challenge our own biases? How might we challenge the biases of those around us?
- How might we support students in examining and challenging the biases they may face in the job search process and in the workplace? In what ways is the university culture reinforcing or challenging these biases?
- How might we examine the power dynamics in the workplace and in job search processes?
- How might we examine the power dynamics at our own institution (between employee levels, students, families, community, etc.)? How is this perpetuating the issues we're trying to reduce?
- How might we examine our own values around work and careers and how those values affect our advising methods? In what ways are we enforcing or challenging the career and work-related values of different social classes?
- How might we ask better questions to understand context for student behavior that we may be interpreting as unprofessional?

#### Processes and Policies Topics and Questions

- How might we make space to regularly reflect on recurring issues we see and report to the appropriate people to effect change? What can be changed?
- What creative strategies do we have for policies and procedures that can't be changed? How are we sharing those strategies with others?
- How might we advocate for standardization and centralization of policies? How might we advocate for policy change?
- How might we break down silos and work across units to share information and best serve students?

#### Mentoring and Guidance Topics and Questions

- How might we make our own invisible identities visible to students?
- How might we be and provide access to role models for navigating office culture and professional communication?

- How might we provide guidance on and opportunities to practice talking about transferable skills, experiences, and accomplishments?
- How might we connect students to mentoring within major and/or profession?
- How might we provide guidance on becoming a self-advocate in the workplace?
- How might we provide guidance on balancing multiple identities at work? How might we support others in becoming these guides? How might we effectively disclose our own multiple identities in the process of having these conversations?
- How might we model how to navigate office culture? How might we begin and continue these conversations and support others in doing this?
- How might we provide advice on the transition from college to career? How might we provide advice and guidance on continued career development and career management after college?
- How might we support and empower students in advocating for themselves in work and other professional situations?

#### Career Development and Career Management Topics and Questions

- How might we improve resources for job-search basics such as professionalism, etiquette, resume and cover letter writing, and dressing appropriately? How might we make these more culturally-inclusive and easy to understand?
- How might we make expectations and professional etiquette rules more transparent? What hidden rules can we make visible?
- How might we provide opportunities to expand the networks of our students and increase their professional connections at all levels? What support can we provide around networking?
- How might we support the creation of paid internships and academically-relevant experiential learning?
- How might we help students connect to these opportunities and understand how to select and make the most of these opportunities? How might we help students select opportunities that meet their own needs, interests, and strengths?
- How might we create more job shadowing and informational interview opportunities? How might we help students connect to these opportunities and be prepared to make the most of them?
- How might we make career services more welcoming? How might we be creative in outreach to students?
- How might we recognize and reduce the barriers students may face as they navigate career development and management? In what ways are we individually (intentionally or unintentionally) reinforcing these barriers?
- How might we reinforce belonging in the workplace and how might we reduce lack of belongingness? (for students and among ourselves)

#### Articles and Resources:

- Box: <https://iu.box.com/s/ur2xbpze3ftpbfofn42oixk9y1915vn6>
- Short url: <http://go.iu.edu/21or>