University of San Diego

Division of Student Affairs
Student Staff On-Boarding Curriculum: Culture of Care

Title:	Culture of Care
Time Required:	60 or 90 min.

Background:

This training is offered as part of a three-part series of student staff on-boarding workshops for new student employees working in Student Affairs. Each supervisor is responsible for delivering the curriculum to their student staff and integrating into their existing training opportunities. Supervisors are invited to attend a train-the-trainer session to learn about the curriculum so they have the comfort and confidence to deliver the training to their team. If requested, supervisors can partner with another another trainer to support their team training. Specifically, Sean Horrigan, Marie Minnick, and Adan Sanchez are available to co-facilitate with any supervisor that would like assistance.

Credit: The Social Empathy training curriculum was originally designed as part of a Student Affairs Strategic Planning goal to support the development of student employees in 2015-2016. The curriculum was primarily developed by Dr. Cynthia Avery (AVP) and Amanda Puetz (Community Director) and we are grateful for their work on this project.

	Explore	Practice	Live
Social Empathy Development Rubric	Recognizes the experience of others as different from one's own to understand structural inequalities. Recognizes the difference between sympathy and empathy.	Values empathy and begins to take up a practice that builds capacity to understand complex social conditions. Engages in opportunities to expand one's capacity for empathy by practicing presence, openness, and vulnerability toward social empathy.	Enacts a consistent practice of empathy on a trajectory towards solidarity. Encourages others to pursue opportunities to move from empathy to social empathy. Owns a sense of responsibility for positive social action to reduce disparities among communities.

Literature Review:

Prior to developing the program, a literature review was conducted. The study of empathy spans a variety of disciplines including psychology, anthropology, literary studies, politics and brain studies among others. Specific areas noted were the following:

- Empathy has the power to transform our own lives and bring about societal change (Krznaric, 2014)
- Non-cognitive skills and attributes such as team work, emotional maturity empathy and other interpersonal skills are as important as proficiency in English and math (Colvin 2014)
- Empathy is a skill that can be improved (Schumann, Zaki and Dweck, 2014)
- Student Affairs offers environments in which undergraduates can apply the knowledge and skills they have gained as well as acquire new skills and competencies (Athas, Oaks, Kennedy-Phillips, 2013)

- College students' capacity for empathy has decreased by 40% over the past four decades (O'Brien and Hsing, 2011)
- 58% more college students scored higher on a narcissism scale in 2009 than 1982 (National Institutes of Health)
- Social media via various forms of technology created false social relationships that replaced real societal relationships within community (Twenge, 2013)
- Increased use of social media isolates people more than connect them and improves perceived social capital but not actual social capital (Twenge, 2013)

Training Details:
- Supervisors will be trained to deliver the curriculum to their own student teams. Training must occur within the Fall semester and can be creatively integrated into existing office training opportunities. Student employees must be compensated for participation in the training.
- Information about the training requirement was sent to all supervisors in September
- A train-the-trainer session was scheduled for Oct. 16 and video recorded for any supervisor unable to attend. A shared google folder with training documents is available to all supervisors.

Training Supplies:
- A/V Equipment (computer, projector, screen or white wall)
- PPT (accessed through shared google drive)
- Small paper lunch bags (1/participant)
- Ten questions on "cards" in each bag
- Reflection / journal questions (1 paper/student)
- A marker and pencil for each participant

Learning Outcomes of Training:
As a result of training students will:
- Understand how a Culture of Care is being defined across the USD community (with staff, administrators and faculty).
- Correctly identify the differences between sympathy and empathy
- Define what a Culture of Care and Empathy means to Student Affairs (student employees.)
- Identify the ways in which a Culture of Care and empathy would look like in interactions with other employees, peers (other students), staff, faculty, and constituents.
- Describe individual actions and plans to demonstrate a Culture of Care and Empathy in work settings, academic environments, residence halls, etc.

Step by Step Instructions:

- Welcome and Introduction:
  Presenters introduce themselves and their roles on campus, if a smaller group, each participant may introduce themselves and where they work on campus.

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Cultivating a Culture of Care and Empathy
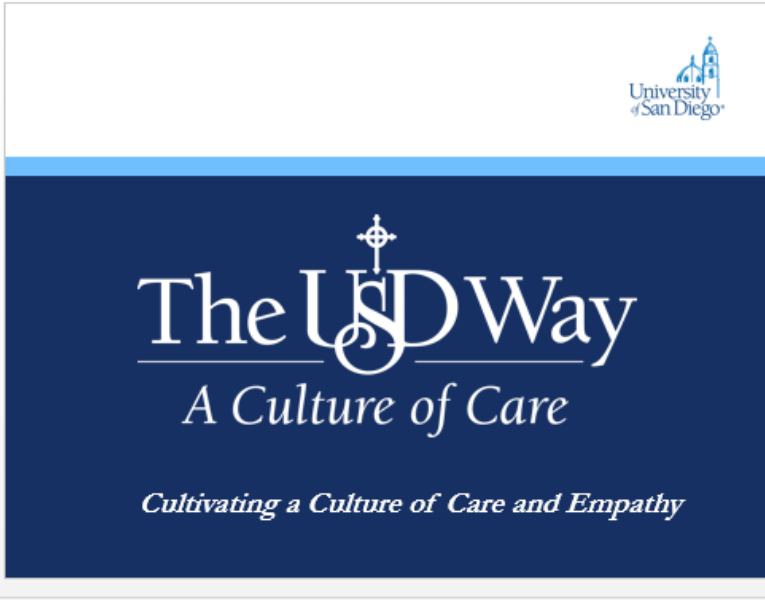
- Review Community Guidelines:
  - Ask all participants if they agree to the statements, and if there are any they would like to add.

Community Guidelines

- Turn off all cell phones or place on silent
- Be open to the perspectives of others
- What is shared in this room should stay in this room
- Be willing to take risks and open up
- Each person's story is unique and has value
- Our time together is precious
- Use "I" statements (speak only for yourself) each of us has a unique experience
- Keep an open mind

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- If the department has a service philosophy, review this and how it may be tied to empathy.

The USD Way

- As a community, we pledge to respect the value and human dignity of each and every person.
- We are committed to treating everyone with courtesy and compassion so that they feel valued, cared for and respected.
- Our actions are grounded in our Catholic tradition of social justice and love for our community.

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- Review university's Mission Statement/Values:
  - Describe how empathy is tied to the university mission statement, values, student experience, etc.

USD Mission Statement

The University of San Diego is a Roman Catholic institution committed to advancing Academic Excellence, expanding liberal and professional Knowledge, creating a diverse and inclusive Community, and preparing leaders dedicated to Ethical Conduct and Compassionate Service.

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- Share with students that the first of the interactive activities will begin, and they should stand up and be ready to move around the room (as abilities allow).

- **(NOT DONE IN 60 MINUTE WORKSHOP)** Students should now break up into groups for the group discussion aka "Mingle Mingle":

- Have students break into groups of three, as denoted by the number on the screen. They should introduce themselves to their partners and discuss the prompt for 2-3 minutes. Ask the large group to share out 2-3 examples.

- Have students break into new groups of 2 as denoted on the screen. They must interact with someone they didn't meet previously. Encourage them to discuss the prompt, focusing

on the community members they serve in their roles for 2-3 minutes. Solicit 2-3 responses from the large group.

Mingle Mingle 2

What does our Culture of Care look like with those we serve in our roles on campus?

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Share two examples

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- Again, have students break into new groups of 3. These should be students they haven't previously worked with. Ask them to reflect on poor service experiences they have encountered previously (hopefully not on your campus) They should discuss the prompt for 2-3 minutes. Ask the large group to share 2-3 examples.

Mingle Mingle 3

What does the Culture of Care <u>not</u> look like at USD?

Share two examples

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- At the end of the group discussion—students may return to seats.

- Ask if anyone in the group of students wants to share the difference between sympathy and empathy:

Empathy v. Sympathy

What is the difference between the two?

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- Share with the group the following definitions:

Empathy v. Sympathy

Sympathy
To express sympathy is to make it known that you are aware
of another's distress and that you have compassion for
them; you feel sorry for them, but don't know exactly
what they feel.

Empathy
With empathy, *you feel with* a person and display
compassion at a deeper level of understanding by
stepping into the other person's experience.

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- Engage in conversation regarding the difference between these two concepts. Are they equally important? Why or why not?

- Play Brene Brown's empathy video for the group:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw

Video Clip

- Review Phrases to avoid:
    - "I know exactly what you are going through"
    - "Well at least…"
    - "I know how you feel"

Review the slide below, emphasizing the points with examples relevant to your department, or the student population you are working with.

Some "What and Whys" of Empathy

1. It is a choice!
2. It can be developed with practice.
3. It is an essential skill for navigating personal relationships (de Waal, 2009)
4. Foundation for moral development (Eisenberg & Eggum, 2009)
5. Empathy allows us to contribute to something greater than ourselves.
6. Employers are seeking graduates who can demonstrate empathy (Colvin 2014)

- Describe each of the following two scenarios. How would they address someone who came into their workspace in these ways? How might they assist them?
    - Scenario 1: Perhaps ask "Is there anything I can do to make your day better?" This acknowledges that they see the sadness or pain of the other person without prying.

○ Scenario 2: Offer suggestions on how to help calm others who might be taking out frustration or anger on them i.e. Remembering it is not about "them," lower their voice to encourage the other person to do the same, asking the other individual to take a break to reduce their level of stress, etc.

What would you say/do?

If someone walked into your area and had obviously been crying?

If someone was extremely angry or frustrated?

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- The purpose of this exercise is to raise awareness of how perceptions are developed. Also, to explore how perceptions of others may develop barriers to extending empathy. Share an example if you have a story from your experience.

How is empathy related to perceptions?

1.) On the outside, on one side of your bag, write how you believe others perceive you. (silent exercise)
2.) On the other side, write down how you perceive yourself.
3.) Discuss the differences in perceptions (how we think others perceive us, and how we perceive ourselves)
4.) Where do you think these differences in perception come from? Is there something in our history, our stories that shapes these perceptions?

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- Once the exercise is complete, have students write down their answers to questions *inside* the paper bag. Have them identify someone they have not yet worked with and then move to another part of the room with their partner.

- The goal of this exercise is to practice being present to your partner. To listen, empathize, and relate to their experience as you are able. Finally, we want to reflect upon how various life experiences may result in a different USD experience than you hold.
- It may be helpful to review the Community Guidelines again, and to remind students they do not need to reveal something they do not feel comfortable sharing, yet should be encouraged to open up. They may ask open ended follow up questions of their partner.

Learning to walk in another's shoes

1.) Write down your answers to the questions on the cards inside the bag. (6 minutes)
2.) Move somewhere in the room with your partner.
3.) Share your answers with your partner. (20 minutes)

Learn to be present.

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- After the exercise is completed, students may return to their seats. Students should then complete the personal free write reflection. Allow 6 minutes to complete this (2 minutes/question). **(60 MINUTE WORKSHOP WILL LIMIT TO 2nd QUESTION)**

Free Write Reflection

Based on the information shared with you, how might the experiences of your partner result in a different USD/life experience from you?

What personal experience have you had that allows you to empathize with your partner? If you do not have a personal experience that directly relates, how can you still show empathy to your partner?

How can you show compassion to them, and ensure they feel welcomed and valued at USD?

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- Final Large Group Discussion (3-5 minutes)

Empathy in Practice

How has learning about the stories of others helped you understand the diverse experiences of others on this campus?

How will you remind yourself to place yourself in others' shoes on a daily basis (especially when you don't know their story)?

How will you model openness and compassion in your daily life on campus.

How does this affect how you go about your work?

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Closing quote:

Closing

"Empathy is the most mysterious transaction that the human soul can have, and it's accessible to all of us, but we have to give ourselves the opportunity to identify, to plunge ourselves in a story where we see the world from the bottom up or through another's eyes or heart."

~Sue Monk Kidd

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- Students were provided with two challenges for the month ahead.
  1). Ask to sit with someone they do not know in the dining hall and engage them in authentic conversation.
  2.) The next time they are out to dinner with friends, "stack" their phones in the middle of the table to allow for all members to be present and not distracted.
- Email out training assessment asking students to complete.

Suggested recommendations for post training follow up:

Follow up actions for employee supervisors:

1. Revisit these concepts when you interacting with staff members informally.
If student employees report an encounter at work with someone who was not very pleasant, encourage them to consider what might be going on in that person's world. Explore what they could have done to make that person's day a little better.

2. When the staff members are working together, encourage them to learn about one another during "down time" by engaging in authentic conversations.

3. Ask students about how they might apply what they have learned about empathy in an interview, and to target personal areas of growth in preparation for future jobs.

If you have questions regarding this training exercise, please contact:
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