

Thursday, January 11, 2018 at 7:16 AM Central Time

From: Kimberly A. Barrett

Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 7:16 AM

To: STUDENT-L; STAFF-L; FACULTY-L

Subject: A Winter Term Request

January 11, 2018

Dear Lawrentians,

Happy New Year and welcome to Winter Term! I am writing to ask for your active assistance with a very important task. Despite the ongoing work by many in our community to create a more inclusive campus, we have a troubling pattern developing. Over the past year there have been a number of anonymous posters found around campus. Investigations of these incidents suggest that they have been placed on campus, on different occasions, by students, alumni and community members. In some cases the acts constitute a crime, such as vandalism. Some appear to have been part of national campaigns to provoke a response.

However, no matter the intent, they violate university procedures for placing posters on campus and run counter to our values as an institution of higher education. And they can never serve as productive ways to initiate important dialogue for two primary reasons. First, in academic circles, attribution is an important strategy to help judge the veracity of an opinion or idea. It is one way to judge the knowledge and experience upon which an opinion is based. As they say, "you must consider the source." Second, there is a growing body of research that indicates that anonymity breeds incivility. Take for example a study conducted by Arthur Santana. He compared thousands of online comments and found that more than half of anonymous comments contained language that was uncivil or hateful while less than thirty percent of non-anonymous comments did so.

Since ultimately the only person's behavior we control is our own, it is up to each of us as individuals to decide how we will engage with one another. Consequently, I need assistance from each of you to help create a campus climate in which all members of our community, regardless of political perspective, are treated with respect, are emotionally safe and feel that they can speak their truth without intimidation. Lawrence's mission states that we are committed to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding as well as the respect for the perspectives of others. Our Academic Freedom Statement further explains that even though it may at times be uncomfortable we must be able to engage in an intellectually honest exchange of ideas that includes challenging each other's beliefs as well as listening to others without interruption. Developing these skills, which are the roots of critical thinking, are the age old aims of a liberal arts education.

Last term, President Burstein identified three values central to achieving these goals in his matriculation convocation. They were empathy, equity and freedom of speech with limits. One

way that our institution is living these values on a national scale is signing on to two amicus briefs for lawsuits filed in support of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). On a more personal scale, the most fundamental of these values is empathy, cultivation of the ability to understand with feeling the experiences of others. It is not sympathy or agreement. Rather, it is forming a deep understanding of the perspective of others. And this can only happen when we commit to engage each other as a caring community, committed to what I call “Loving Large at Lawrence.” So in addition to reporting bias incidents such as the aforementioned posters, I am asking that you actively work to cultivate empathy.

The daily encounters you have with others serve as a living learning laboratory in ways to cultivate empathy. The following are a few upcoming events that can also help in this process. As always, for more information about these and other events you can visit our website <http://www.lawrence.edu/info/offices/diversity-and-inclusion> or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/odi.lawrence>.

Dignity & Respect Campaign Kick-Off

January 16, 2018

Cinema (WCC), 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Celebrating inclusion, the Dignity & Respect Campaign, is a year-long engagement for the entire Appleton community! The evening event is the public launch of the initiative.

Promoting Inclusion in Academia Through Dialogue

January 20, 2018

Somerset Room (WCC), 1-3:30pm

The workshop will examine hate speech, academic freedom, microaggressions and related material that surfaces in academic spaces among students, staff, and faculty. Information on how to help cultivate new avenues for dialogue, active listening, and empathy-based sessions will be presented.

Dangerous Speech: A global perspective

Monday, January 29

Warch Campus Center Cinema, 7-8:30pm

What are the limits of free speech? What are the social consequences when these limits are breached? Dr. Cathy Buerger will discuss the benefits, costs and limits of free speech in the United States and abroad. Cathy Buerger holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Connecticut (UConn). She is a Research Affiliate of UConn’s Economic and Social Rights Research Group, Managing Editor of the Journal of Human Rights, and an Editor for the Teaching Human Rights Database. She joined the Dangerous Speech Project in September of 2017.

Peace Circles

February 8, 2018

4:30-6pm

The Center for Spiritual and Religious Life

Peace Circles are a structured process used to bring people together to better understand one another, build and strengthen bonds, and solve community problems. They consciously engage

all aspects of human experience spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental. This opportunity is open to all members of the Lawrence Community.

Upstander Training

February 17, 2018

Esch Hurvis Studio (WCC), 10 am - 2 pm

Please RSVP by February 11 by emailing us at div-inclusion@lawrence.edu! (limited seats)

Lawrence Students, Staff, Faculty and the Appleton community are invited to attend. The Upstander training will help you build the skills to interrupt bullying or other harmful behaviors. Learn how to become an agent for change and co-creator of positive narratives about race and other identities. Participants will unpack real-life scenarios to enable them to effectively challenge prejudice in our community. Those who plan to attend are asked to commit to be present for the entire training session.

Best wishes for a happy and successful term!

Kimberly Barrett, Ph.D.

Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion
and Associate Dean of the Faculty