

DIVERSITY • EQUITY • INCLUSION

NICHOLAS SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT • DUKE UNIVERSITY



Dr. Nicki Cagle
NSOE Associate Dean of DEI

From the Associate Dean of DEI

Welcome to the Nicholas School of the Environment's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion newsletter!

If you would like to add announcements or information to future NSOE DEI newsletters, please email me at nicolette.cagle@duke.edu.

If you have any feedback about DEI initiatives or issues in the Nicholas School that you'd prefer to leave anonymously, please use this [DEI at NSOE feedback form](#).

[Learn More](#)

COMMUNICATE

Nominate a Colleague for the DEI Spotlight

Each month, students, faculty, and staff may nominate a fellow colleague(s) who has helped to foster a kind and inclusive environment at the Nicholas School. By recognizing these efforts in our community, we can continue to cultivate a culture of celebration and inspiration for the next group of brave actors.

Click [here](#) to nominate your colleague(s)!

CELEBRATE



Resource Sovereignty as Environmental Justice in First Nations Salmon Fisheries

On Nov. 10th, Dr. Julia Bingham presented her research on the processes and structures of fishery governance and coastal management, and their implications for coastal communities. Dr. Bingham is an interdisciplinary social scientist interested in coastal ecosystems and communities and human-nature relationships.

Energy Week

During Energy Week, several speakers spoke about their work in energy justice including Danielle Decatur, the Director of Environmental Justice at Microsoft, and Yesenia Rivera from [Solstice Initiative](#).



EDUCATE

Perspectives on Decolonizing International Research Panel

On Nov. 10th, a panel was held on how tensions born from colonization show up in research contexts, along with tools that can be used to disrupt the legacies of colonization and practices to explicitly engage in the process of decolonizing our research. Panelists included PhD. candidate, Mishka Malinowski, Dr. Elizabeth Shapiro Garza, Sr. Lecturer Sandra Valnes Quammen, and Dr. Edgar Virgüez.

Find a recording of the panel [here](#).



Tips for Faculty on Neurodiversity in the Classroom

On Oct. 8th, more than 80 instructors attended Duke Learning Innovation's neurodiversity workshop with Elise Mueller and Darla Swann.

For those who would like to learn more and could not attend, Mueller and Swann have shared their slides and a recording of the session, a blog post, and additional tips and resources [here](#).

How to Open Your Mind and the Minds of Others

American culture idolizes leaders that exhibit certainty and stubbornness. The reality is more complicated. Data suggests that the most effective leaders fall in the middle of the spectrum of agreeableness and stubbornness, curiosity and certitude. In fact, both extremes of the spectrum are rife with bias.

There are two types of psychological conflict that are important to understand: relationship and task conflict. Relationship conflict is personal and emotional. Task conflict is about debating ideas in an intellectual rather than personal way. When we're overly agreeable, it's often because we're focused on avoiding relationship conflict. When we're overly certain, it's often because we're focused on avoiding task conflict. Successful teams tend to have little relationship conflict and lots of task conflict, people "disagree without being disagreeable."

Biases associated with agreeableness:

- Agreement Bias - accepting a bad deal because saying "yes" is more comfortable than saying no.

Biases associated with certitude:

- First Instinct Fallacy - a tendency to get better scores on tests if you reject your "gut instinct" and go with your second guess.
- Totalitarian Ego - when sticking to wrong beliefs makes us feel stronger because we are engaging our self-defense mechanism.
- Group Identity - identifying with a group with strong, set beliefs, causing us to become "preachers" or "prosecutors" who proselytize or argue against other perspectives without intent to get closer to the truth.

What are some strategies for keeping an open mind, without succumbing to the biases associated with agreeableness or certitude?

- Create conditions for emotional safety and intellectual challenge (i.e. create **task conflict** not relationship conflict).
- Like your support network, create a **challenge network** of people that will challenge your beliefs and perspectives.
- Activate curiosity by **posing interesting questions** rather than making statements.
- Ask "how" questions to deepen your understanding of a system and to assess the depth of your own knowledge. This counters the **illusion of explanatory depth**, where we overestimate our own understanding of a system.
- Practice intellectual humility.

Changing someone's mind is difficult and oftentimes logic doesn't work. Psychologist, Adam Grant, suggests not to be a "logic bully." Instead **show curiosity** about the other's perspective and motivation. Become a master negotiator by **asking a lot of questions** and **seeking common ground**. Also, be open to making concessions and changing your viewpoint.

But be aware of **solution biases**. This occurs when people dislike a proposed solution and dismiss the problem. Adam Grant applies this to climate change:

"If you say that companies need to reduce their emissions to someone who's a staunch free market conservative, they may not like your proposal and may be motivated to deny climate change. Instead of jumping to solutions, say 'hey, I'm aware that there are some problems when it comes to climate change, and I would love to hear your ideas about the different possible ways that we can solve them.'"

Finally, keeping an open mind and remaining mentally flexible doesn't always mean changing your mind. Sometimes we choose to "stay the course" because it seems like the right thing to do, even after reviewing new data and different perspectives.

Summarized from You 2.0: How to Open Your Mind on the Hidden Brain Podcast (Click [here](#) for more information).

EVENTS

Ongoing

Walk & Talk



Dear NSOE faculty and staff,

Is there a colleague that you would like to get to know better, but haven't had the chance?

Invite them out to coffee today!

Click [here](#) for more info.

Register

Let's Do Lunch



Is there an NSOE member that you would like to get to know better, but haven't had the chance?

Invite them out to lunch today!

Click [here](#) for more info.

Register

Weekly Meditation

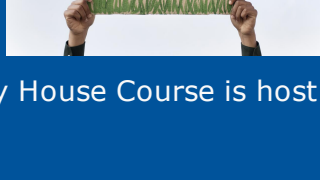


Mindfulness supports DEI work by fostering an inclusive mindset and disengaging our automatic responses which are often fueled by unconscious bias.

Click [here](#) for times & locations.

Register

Interested in Climate Justice?



The Climate Justice & Global Intersectionality House Course is hosting a speaker series open to the Duke & Durham community.

Questions? Contact [Leah Roffman](#).

Register

"Be fearless in the pursuit in what sets your soul on fire."

- Unknown

DEI Resources

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