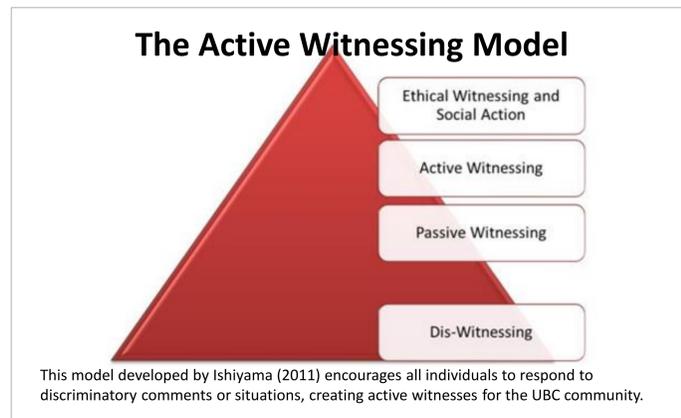


Intercultural Understanding: A Transformative Student Training Model

The Project

The University of British Columbia is committed to building an inclusive living and learning environment. The aim of this project, started in 2012, is to develop stronger intercultural understanding within the UBC student population to support the university's goals.

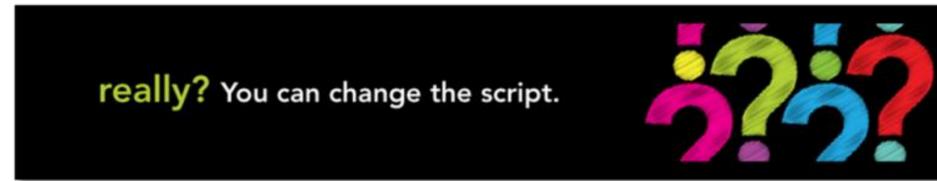
Intercultural understanding is fostered through building students' skills and knowledge needed to respond to discrimination and become active citizens for a sustainable society.



Goals

- Increase student awareness and comprehension of issues surrounding intercultural understanding
- Empower students to respond to discriminatory and hurtful language and behaviour as they witness it
- Continue to strengthen a community of practice on campus which gives student facilitators the opportunity to build meaningful relationships, grow their capacity for engaging in difficult conversations and foster respectful campus environments
- Build sustainability through embedding the Active Witnessing Model for social change in student leadership training curriculums on campus

Project Partners: Access & Diversity, International Student Development, First Nations House of Learning, Equity & Inclusion Office, Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology, AMS, and Dr. Ishu Ishiyama (Faculty of Education).



Project Highlights

The Really? Campaign

Really? empowers students to move from passive to active witnesses in their everyday life and to take on a leadership role in promoting social change at UBC and in the community. The campaign has three main parts:

- 1) **Passive Campaign** – posters, handbills, and digital signs raising awareness about intercultural understanding and discrimination
- 2) **Really? Workshops** – interactive workshops building student capacity to intervene as active witnesses against discrimination
- 3) **Peer-Facilitator Training** – 2-day program teaching students innovative ways to respond to discrimination and growing their capacity to facilitate difficult conversations on campus



Community of Practice

Creating a space for student facilitators to connect and continue their learning together with campus partners to improve intercultural understanding

Embedding Active Witnessing

Incorporating the model in student leadership trainings campus-wide to ensure a collective and sustainable leadership for social change

Impact

“It really opened up my eyes more and made me continue to reflect more on how the little things that you do really can amplify so much and be such a societal issue” (Really? participant, 2014)



*Tentative data from project evaluation. Finalized results will be available in April 2015.

Now in its third year, the project has:

- Encouraged and supported the development of Intercultural Understanding, Social Sustainability, and Student Learning on campus
- Engaged more than 1000 students in Really? workshops and trained an additional 75 students as peer-facilitators, building student capacity to respond to discrimination and engage in difficult conversations
- Embedded the Active Witnessing model in student leadership training, introducing 1500 student leaders to the approach during BRIC training in summer 2014

“Another thing that I took from the workshop was being able to listen effectively. It doesn't matter whether it's about you or not, it's about being able to empathize with other people, and if somebody is saying something that they don't realize is wrong then maybe you can show them why it is” (Really? participant, 2014)