

[Chukwuanugo:] My name is Chukwuanugo Okudo.

[Baden:] My name is Baden Gaeke Franz.

[Interviewer:] In this module, we're looking at social identities and how they impact faculty and students. If someone were to ask you to describe yourself in terms of your social identities, what would you say?

[Chukwuanugo:] I identify as a racialized student.

[Baden:] I am an autistic person. I am a trans person who use they- them pronouns. I am also queer.

[Interviewer:] Thinking about your time as a postsecondary student, how do you feel your social identities, and others' responses to them, influenced your experiences?

[Chukwuanugo:] There are ways I could probably phrase it. It could be in a verbal and non-verbal aspect. Probably being faculty or staff being supportive and motivating towards me. Encouraging me to do well, as well as other students in my courses. That sense brings about a feeling of me being inclusive or being included in what is going on. I feel like I am among, maybe amongst them. Maybe the non- verbal part might be the student union as well. Incorporating the collectives, like a racialized collective. Making room for people like myself to meet, gather and share our experiences when we can.

[Baden:] When I had to fill in assignments and essays and that sort of thing. It would take me a bit longer than it would most people because prioritizing is difficult with autism. Generally my professors were very good about granting extensions when I needed them. There were definitely a few of them that weren't or wouldn't do it unless I had notes from Accessibility Services. I would say one of the things that would have helped quite a bit would be extending these sorts of things to all students, not just the ones who had an official documentation of meeting it.

[Interviewer:] Without identifying anyone, are there any negative experiences or other barriers that you faced in your courses due to the social identities you have?

[Chukwuanugo:] The major aspect that I would say that was maybe a little bit visible to me would be unconscious bias. I believe that would be one of the topics that we would

see in our world today that we sometimes do not know existed. In this unconscious bias, that is where it's not just related to maybe just faculty or staff. That's also my fellow students. Not being maybe aware that would be the word to use of maybe what's going on maybe or what's maybe existed with myself maybe from my own cultural aspect.

[Baden:] I had several professors who didn't always use the correct pronouns and names that students asked them to. Or they would make a big deal out of saying, oh and I'm going to do this. Oh, I'm such a terrible person. Make it about them if they got it wrong. Generally, the better thing to do would have just been to try your best to get pronouns right all the time. When you don't, say sorry, repeat the sentence.

[Interviewer:] Are there ways that you feel your social identities have influenced your experiences in a positive way?

[Chukwuanugo:] My social identity has definitely influenced my experience here in the university as well as in Manitoba in a positive way. I think majorly I would start off culturally because coming from someone or someone coming from a different cultural background and coming here as well to meet a different culture as well, it has actually helped me to try to merge the two cultures together to understand people a little bit more better. It has also helped me understand the communication aspect with people as well as language because language is a barrier sometimes for racialized students or international students as a whole.

[Baden:] There was a lot of community in the university setting that really helped to sort of bring me together with people that I wouldn't have necessarily come into contact with to do with social identities. There's queer or disabled student groups. There were times that I had perspectives in classes that other people didn't have that I was able to bring up: Well, there's an issue that you might not have thought of from a different angle, and often that was treated with a lot of enthusiasm. People were very happy to hear about these other perspectives.

[Interviewer:] What do you believe faculty members could do differently that would have helped you or other students like you?

[Chukwuanugo:] I think this pertains to students more than it does to faculty. I think students appreciate it when sometimes, and I think, I definitely think students appreciate this when maybe the instructor or the professors know them by name. Now, it's not something that all pros would be capable of doing, but definitely to learning curve or learn opportunity for you to at least make the effort or at least show that maybe you're making that effort to maybe know your student names or at least communicate more with your students, promoting group work. By group work, it doesn't necessarily mean assignment-wise. It can be, maybe, they are teaching and then randomly bring up a topic and say: Okay, you guys get in group work like maybe five, for five to 10 minutes, and just briefly talk about this and just participate. And besides that, maybe the first day of class, because that one definitely, I think, it resonates more with me because when I came to the university, the first day of class, it was more of, okay, let's get to work, talk, and that's it. Trying to engage with the student, trying to at least love the course and appreciate what your instructor or the professor is teaching. So, in general, it's more of like the instructor being the one that brings this initiative to the students because I know as much as it's not the instructor's duties, I think it would be much more appreciated by the student if the instructor brings this initiative to them.

[Baden:] I suppose there is a bit of an issue of ensuring that if there are trans students in the classrooms, knowing where the nearest gender accessible washroom is would help or at least knowing where to send somebody to find out.