

Welcome to the third module, Exploring Power Dynamics in Post-Secondary Institutions for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Learning Series. I am Eric Sagenes, currently I'm a doctoral candidate at the University of Manitoba in the Faculty of Education and a Sessional Instructor. I've taught courses in leadership in adult learning, leadership in anti-racist education, and second language education. My area of research and scholarly interest is around social activism, decolonization, and diversity. This module looks at the concepts of power and oppression.

When I was teaching an anti-racism course, a student made a comment that when we talk about equity, diversity, and inclusion, the underlying thread is understanding how power functions and its impacts. That's the interesting thing about power is it's always present and sometimes not all of us are even aware of it. However, I can tell you that you may not notice it, but there are some people who are conscious of it. We tend to become more aware of it when it impacts us and prevents us from achieving our intended goals, or we have an understanding that we have to act and behave different because of the people who are around us. For example, some of us have had to walk into meetings or gatherings or even inside classrooms and we learn quickly what is expected of us and who has power in those situations based on the interactions. Inside university classrooms, we know that the instructor has the power in that situation and they lay out the expectations of the students. When attending a faculty meeting, it is not hard to know who commands authority and we adjust our actions accordingly. Throughout this module, you will learn what power is and what it can look like, the impacts it has on the person who has power and those who are oppressed by power. Lastly, you'll be introduced to the work of Dr. Kevin Kumashiro who talks about social justice education and offers ideas on how to address the power dynamics in post-secondary settings.

The goal of this module is to raise your consciousness about how power plays out in different situations, and hopefully you'll start to see how it plays out in your own context. Once we become aware of it, then we can be more likely to address it and ensure that we are working towards equitable and inclusive environments. Enjoy the module.