POWER Flower
Exploring Notions of Diversity, Power, and Privilege

Paula Barry
Manager, International Education Office

Michelle Greencorn
Learning Strategist, Disability Services
Defining the Concepts

**Diversity:** the condition of having or being composed of differing elements: variety; the state of having people who are different races or who have different cultures in a group or organization.

**Power:** possession of control, authority, or influence over others.

**Privilege:** a right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor.
Defining the “isms”

**Racism:** a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities, and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.

*Example:* color symbolism (e.g. white = good, black = bad), slurs such as savages, uncivilized.

**Sexism:** prejudice or discrimination based on sex; especially discrimination against women; behavior, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex.

*Example:* Using terms such as fireman or businessman when discussing typically male-dominated occupations.
Defining the “isms”

**Ableism:** discrimination or prejudice against individuals with disabilities.

*Example:* Any language that is not person-centered, e.g. saying “autistic” rather than “person with autism”, crippled, retarded, normal.

**Heterosexism/Homophobia:** discrimination or prejudice by heterosexuals against homosexuals; irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals.

*Example:* assuming by default that a person is heterosexual, that families are comprised of heterosexual parents of opposite sexes, using “that’s so gay” to condemn or put down.
The Power Flower
Let’s Talk!

1. Were you surprised by the results of your power flower? Why?

2. Do the results of your power flower coincide with your experiences in life? How has your social power affected your interactions with others?

3. Which can be changed? Which cannot?

4. Would you say we are, as a group, privileged? How does this affect how we are able to fight oppression and discrimination?

5. How can this be applied to the workplace?