To understand and prevent discrimination and harassment

Tomas Brage
Professor of Physics
Lund University

Lund University and tolerance

• Non-tolerance for harassment and discrimination

• Prevention!

• Strong support system.
  – Studentombud with total secrecy
  – The Prefekt/Dean/VC responsible for action – report!
  – Student health.
  – Pedagogical support.
  – LGBTQI-network for students.
  – … ask study advisors, teachers, administrators …
  – Together against "culture of silence".
Today’s program

• Why are we here?

• Discrimination 1: What is it? How to prevent?

• Discrimination 2: Against whom?

• What to do when it has happened.

Why are we here?

Let us give some examples…. 
Study environments at Lund University

A survey by the Evaluation Unit of undergraduate students focusing on their social and study environment.

- 20% of students have experienced bad treatment – 83% of these are women!
- 6% of students feel offended
- Only 22% of the victims of bad treatment took steps within the University (contacted the perpetrator, Student Health Services, management, etc.).

Study environments ... Case study - Economics

One lecturer aged between 50 and 60 addresses girls in general as “little miss” and constantly disregards questions and answers on the grounds that we are going to take maternity leave and not have careers anyway. At the same time I had 30-40 year-olds on my course who behaved extremely inappropriately to the 5 girls that were in the group.

Woman and economics student
Study environments ... Case study - Engineering

*During a laboratory session, I and two other female students happened to be unsuccessful in carrying out the experiment. The comment we got was a sigh and approximately these words: ‘Well, I’m not surprised you messed that up, typical girls.’ At first I thought nothing of it but for the rest of the lab session the gibes continued, with other jeering comments referring to gender.*

Woman and engineering student

Not only gender

In Sweden it is hard to do research on anything but gender and age

– we are simply not allowed to ask about e.g. ethnicity or religion.

But there are surveys done by our ”statistical authority” for e.g. PhD-students:
Proportion of doctoral students who report that at some time during their studies they have experienced discrimination on different grounds:

- Sex
- Identity
- Ethnicity
- Relig.
- sexual orient.
- disability
- age
- other

To international students 2019

It is as though one assumes that we cheat just because we write at home. The other students have exams in university halls, I had to write two essays. The essays do not correspond to 5 credits each; my first essay is 60 pages long...

Alternative forms of examination that may be relevant to the course, but not in relation to what the others are expected to produce.

Students with Disabilities and their experiences of education at LU

Investigation carried out by the Evaluation Unit at LU

Student with Disability
Total silence

Evaluation Unit’s report on LGBT-students

It is strange because it is as though I weren’t here. I feel terribly lonely as a dyke. There must be more of us here [at LTH]. There is such a strange absence of anything to do with these issues [homo- and bisexuality]. This makes it strange for me both in my social contacts and in the lectures. If it were more visible I would feel more comfortable.

Woman at LTH

Discrimination – How does it work?

• Structural and individual discrimination

• Tool for understanding and counteracting

  – the theory of suppression techniques
Suppression techniques …

• Exercise of power that strengthens power differences.

• How privileged groups can maintain and expand their power … at the expense of other groups.

• Historically, practiced by men against women… … to maintain patriarchal structures.

• But found in other social power relations (class, ethnicity).

• Unreflected? Unconscious?

Understanding Suppression techniques

• Step 1: Understand what happens: 
  Suppression techniques.

• Step 2: Empower the victim: 
  Counter-measures.

• Step 3: Important – action of Bystanders: 
  Confirmation Strategies
Suppression techniques

(Berit Ås)

Suppression – Counter measures - Confirmation:

1. Making invisible –Demand attention – Acknowledge
2. Ridiculing – Questioning – Respect
3. Withhold info – Be honest – Inform
4. Double bind – break the pattern – double reward
5. Blaming and shaming – intellectualize – Affirm norms
6. Dividing
7. Objectifying
8. Sexual harassment, violence and threats

1. Making invisible

- **Suppression:**
  - Being given the silent treatment, excluded, passed over, ignored, made invisible, or not supported.
  - Not listen, interrupt, not respond or acknowledge, not take notes of someones ideas, not present someone by name
  - make disturbing noices, turn your back to, play with your notebook or phone
  - ….often body language

- **Counter measure**
  - demand attention

- **Confirmation**
  - Acknowledge – put the spotlight back!
2. Ridiculing

- **Suppression**
  - Make fun at someone’s expense
  - Claim that someone lacks “humour”,
  - Claim someone is laughable, incompetent
  - Use of cultural stereotypes (women are like hens …)
- **Counter measure:**
  - Questioning, ask **what did you mean?**, keep record of what was said, point out that what was said is not OK
  - Never laugh with the bad joke!
- **Confirmation:**
  - Show respect, find allies
  - **Act immediately**

3. Withholding information

- **Suppression**
  - Not give a person information that others get
  - Decisions are made in an informal way
- **Counter measures**
  - Be honest, demand post-ponement of a decision, inform responsible leaders
- **Confirmation**
  - **Inform!** demand transparency and openness, report on discussions outside the meeting, ask for notes
4. Double bind

• **Suppression**
  – "Damned if you do, damned if you don’t"
  – Ex: careful – fussy; determined – bitchy; listening – weak; laughing – not serious; not laughing – boring.
  – Creates a feeling of never being good enough

• **Counter measures**
  – break the pattern and trust your own judgement

• **Confirmation**
  – Double reward
  – Give support and be clear on where you stand

5. Blaming and shaming

• **Suppression**
  – Give people bad conscious for something you are not responsible for
  – Could be delivered in what seems to be innocent words

• **Counter measure**
  – Intellectualize!
  – Put words on your feelings, analyze the situation, find out responsibilities, confront those who blamed you

• **Confirmation**
  – Affirm norms
  – Back people up, give encouragement, define new and positive norms
... and then last, but not least:

6. Dividing (and concour)

7. Objectifying
   - Irrelevant comments on someone's looks

8. Sexual harassment, violence and threats
   - # metoo

Subtle discrimination – ”non-events”

"Cultural-role spill-over" - situations in which people in professional contexts are treated primarily as members of a group and not as professionals:
- **condescending chivalry** (giving praise to a person for something that for the dominant group is considered regular procedure),
- **benevolent exploitation** (letting a person do the job and then take credit for it yourself),
- **considerate dominance** (as a teacher draw conclusions about what a student can cope with without asking)
- **sexual harassments** (#Metoo)
Against whom?

Can anyone claim discrimination?

The law identifies certain "risk groups". So let us turn to the

**Discrimination Act**

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The grounds of discrimination

5 § In this Act the following terms have the meaning ....

1. **Sex**: that someone is a woman or a man. A person who intends to change or has changed the sex they belong to is also covered by sex as a grounds of discrimination.

2. **Transgender identity or expression**: that someone does not identify herself or himself as a woman or a man or expresses by their manner of dressing or in some other way that they belong to another sex.

3. **Ethnicity**: national or ethnic origin, skin colour or other similar circumstances.

4. **Religion or other belief**

5. **Disability**: permanent physical, mental or intellectual limitation of a person’s functional capacity that as a consequence of injury or illness existed at birth, has arisen since then or can be expected to arise.

6. **Sexual orientation**: homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual orientation.

7. **Age**: length of life to date.
How are the "grounds" defined?

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By-standers are key persons!

Together against "culture of silence"!

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