

Original Article:

**THE EFFECTS OF WOMEN’S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY
STUDIES COURSES ON THE DEVELOPMENT
OF PRIVILEGE AWARENESS AND
INTERSECTIONAL AWARENESS**

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Abstract

Studies of privilege and intersectionality awareness have focused on the effect that a single intervention has on one area of privilege awareness, with fewer studies examining the effects of attending college on the development of intersectional privilege awareness. Building on work showing that college experiences and diversity courses contribute to privilege awareness, the present study focuses on whether taking a lower-division course compared with taking an upper-division Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGST) course, impacts privilege and/or intersectional awareness. Participants (N=118) attended a state university in South Texas. Seventy-five were enrolled in a General Psychology (GP) course and 43 in a WGST course. Demographic information and responses to 2 surveys measuring privilege and intersectionality awareness were collected using a pre-post-test design. Students’ scores on both scales indicated no change in privilege or intersectionality awareness from pre- to post-test, with WGST students demonstrating a greater understanding of these than GP students. Discussion centers on how our results contribute to research on the impact of the college experience on identity development and improving the measurement of privilege and intersectionality awareness.

Keywords: privilege awareness, intersectionality, identity development

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INTRODUCTION

Privilege is the “invisible knapsack of advantages and benefits” that an individual experiences based on their gender, race, sexuality, social status, ability, or ethnicity (McIntosh, 1989). Individuals who experience privilege are often unaware of the rewards in their own lives, as they credit their personal and professional successes to work ethic and personal characteristics, rather than acknowledging the role of privilege as unearned. Much of the research on privilege has focused on White privilege, the special assurances and resources granted to those who are White or White passing in society (McIntosh, 1989). Those who are unaware of their White privilege may act from a sense of entitlement because they feel as if they deserve such rewards (McIntosh, 1989; Rains, 1998), with the unspoken implication that people of color do not deserve the rewards that White people receive.

Studies of White privilege have laid the framework for studies of other forms of privilege. Male privilege, for example, is another type of privilege whereby men experience advantages and benefits over women in society (McIntosh, 1989). Heterosexual privilege pertains to the social structure that favors heteronormativity while oppressing those that are LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, etc.) (Case et al., 2014). Class privilege refers to the unearned resources and status systemically attributed to upper-middle-class and rich individuals, at the expense of those in the working or lower class (McIntosh, 1989). Ability privilege gives resources and advantages to able-bodied individuals while neglecting the physical, emotional, and social barriers that individuals with disability experience (Bialka & Morro, 2017). Rather than treat these identity markers as independent of one another, intersectionality theory postulates the interconnectedness of an individual’s gender, race, sexuality, and class among other social identities, all of which operate together to affect how an individual functions within social systems of status and power (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Davis, 2008). Overlooking issues of intersectionality perpetuates not only White privilege, but male, cis-gender, heterosexual, social class, and ability privileges (Rodriguez, 1998). The importance of understanding intersectionality, then, centers around the comprehensive understanding of one’s own privilege (Curtin et al., 2015). As explained by the members of the Combahee River Collective (1983, p. 264), “the synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives.” Individuals with more privileged identities experience a different reality than those with marginalized identities due to different forms of discrimination and oppression (Bramesfeld & Good, 2016) linked with intersecting identity markers.

Identity Development and the College Experience

Identity development was commonly thought to end as adolescents entered young adulthood, but more recent research on emerging adulthood has shown that identity

development continues after adolescence ends (Arnett, 2000, 2015; Syed & Azmitia, 2009). Much of this research (Arnett, 2000; Chickering, 1993; Perry, 1970) has framed identity development as part of a broader cognitive developmental progression with emphasis on the changes that take place as part of the college experience. Among the cognitive changes that take place when in college are changes from more simplistic, dualistic (Perry, 1970), black and white (Chickering, 1993) approaches to knowledge and problem-solving toward more complex and nuanced forms of thought about the world, one's discipline/area of study, and one's self. This developmental progression takes the college student towards an acceptance of ambiguity and complexity (Perry, 1970) as well as a greater appreciation for multiple points of view (Chickering, 1993) rather than the more simplistic belief that knowledge is either right or wrong, a strategy more characteristic of adolescents (Perry, 1970). In this way, college students come to integrate things they learn (knowledge) with their personal experiences in a system that allows for different points of view that can exist as relative to distinct frames of reference (Chickering, 1993; Labouvie-Vief, 2006; Perry, 1970). Relinquishing the earlier, more rigid, dualistic forms of thoughts can be encouraged by the kinds of challenges and support that students encounter in most of their college courses. Additionally, encountering other points of view through peer interactions is important as it exposes them to the kind of multiplicity that encourages this form of cognitive growth (Syed & Azmitia, 2009).

This kind of post-formal thought allows for more flexible thinking in areas of moral development (Kohlberg, 1969) and in self-understanding (Kohlberg, 1969; Labouvie-Vief, 2006). As they continue to navigate the college experience, students become better able to integrate multiple aspects of their own identity including what some have come to call the "Big 8" socially constructed identities (Johnson, 2006; Tatum, 2000): race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, ability, religion/spirituality, nationality, and socioeconomic status and achieve "new and complex forms of thinking" during a period that "appears to present a kind of critical stage in which these thought structures get launched but are not necessarily brought to fruition" (Labouvie-Vief, 2006, p. 59).

Development of Privilege Awareness in College

Another area of research related to identity development focuses more closely on how emerging adults in college develop an awareness of privilege. Since this developmental time-period has also been said to involve important developments in one's social and personal identity i.e., in the ways individuals categorize themselves in relation to various group memberships, the study of privilege awareness among college students of diverse social groups has been a topic of interest (Pratto & Stewart, 2012). One important finding is that the development of privilege awareness may differ between different social groups (Pratto & Stewart, 2012). When an individual is a member of a dominant group, they may be less likely to develop an awareness of their privileged identity, for example, as they have been raised with the idea that they are the social norm (Iyer et al.,

2003; Pratto & Stewart, 2012). Contrary to this, individuals with non-privileged identities tend to have more awareness of their identity. Having internalized being outside of the dominant, normative group, they tend to have greater awareness of the dynamics of privilege between dominant and subordinate groups (Pratto & Stewart, 2012).

Studies of privilege awareness in college classrooms often make use of short-term interventions, such as video clips or surveys (Boatright-Horowitz et al., 2012; Uluğ & Tropp, 2020) and generally focus on the effect that a single intervention has on one area of privilege, for example, gender privilege. Fewer studies have analyzed the effects of semester-long courses on one's privilege awareness (but see, Case 2007; Case & Stewart, 2009; Case & Rios, 2017) and most often focus on one aspect of privilege. The most common identity privileges that have been studied are race (Case & Rios, 2017), gender (Case, 2007), and sexual orientation (Case & Stewart, 2009). For example, Case (2007) conducted a semester-long study analyzing the effectiveness of a Psychology of Race and Gender course in raising male privilege awareness, sexism awareness, and feminist identification and demonstrated an increased level of male privilege awareness and heterosexual privilege awareness (Case & Stewart, 2009).

Results such as those mentioned above suggest that specific diversity courses can increase students' awareness of more than one type of privilege. What they have not addressed is whether such courses increase students' understanding of these forms of privilege as *intersectional*. Privilege theorists Collins (2000), Ferber (2012), and McIntosh (2012) stress the imperative nature of studying and understanding privilege as an interconnected "matrix of domination" (McIntosh, 2012, p. 198) that shapes individuals' lived experiences. Exploring privilege awareness through an intersectional framework deepens and clarifies one's understanding of the various forces and systems of power within the person and societal systems (Ferber, 2012; McIntosh, 2012). Even though researchers generally acknowledge that privilege awareness is best understood as an intersectional phenomenon (Case et al., 2012; McIntosh, 2012), studying students' development of privilege awareness in this way has been less common than studying identity markers independently of one another. One notable exception is work by Case (2012) who conducted a qualitative analysis of how a group of White women in an extracurricular club (White Women Against Racism) increased their understanding of race privilege by building on their awareness of their gender privilege and "explored the influence of multiple identities and intersections with whiteness as sources of influence on their own anti-racism" (p. 78). These results demonstrated how continued exploration of identity in college through extracurriculars can facilitate the exploration of a more complex understanding of intersections of privilege (Syed & Azmitia, 2009) and suggest that an awareness of privilege in connection with individual identity markers may precede a more complex intersectional awareness.

Overview and Hypotheses

The present study seeks to contribute to the literature on the effects of attending college and of taking semester-long diversity courses on the development of privilege and intersectional awareness. Given that identity development continues throughout one's college experience (Arnett, 2000, 2006; Chickering, 1993; Perry, 1968, 1981; Syed & Azmitia, 2009) and that this continuing development of identity has been linked with exposure to new material in college courses, niche coursework, and extracurricular activities (Arnett, 2000; Syed & Azmitia, 2009), we examine two groups of students. The first group consists of first-year students recruited from General Psychology (GP) courses and the second group is made up of third and fourth-year students taking one of 10 upper-division diversity courses in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGST) minor. In order to measure potential changes in their understanding of privilege awareness and of intersectional privilege awareness as a function of a) being in college and of b) taking a WGST course, we asked them to complete one scale measuring privilege awareness, another on intersectional privilege awareness at the beginning and the end of the semester.

Hypotheses:

1. Privilege awareness will increase from pre-test to post-test for the WGST students, while a smaller increase or no increase will be seen for GP students.
2. Intersectional awareness will increase from pre-test to post-test for WGST students, while a smaller increase or no increase will be seen for GP students.
3. Overall privilege awareness and intersectional awareness will be lower for GP students than WGST students.

METHOD

Design

The present study makes use of a mixed design to assess privilege awareness and intersectional awareness among a group of lower-division college students taking a GP course and a group of upper-division college students taking a WGST course. As first-year students, those taking GP have had relatively little exposure to college courses, and likely no exposure to coursework that specifically focuses on issues of privilege, while the WGST students have been in college for two to three years and have taken at least one WGST course. This allows for the comparison of both the possible effects of the college experience in general (between subjects) and the possible effects of GP and WGST courses in particular (within subjects), on privilege and intersectional awareness.

Two scales ("Awareness of Intersecting Sources of Privilege" and "Intersectional Awareness Scale") were used to assess levels of privilege awareness and intersectional awareness at the start and then again at the end of the semester (within subjects). This pre-

test post-test design allows for an analysis of potential changes over the course of one semester in privilege and intersectional awareness as a function of taking either a General Psychology course during the first year of college or a WGST course as upper-division students. The between-subjects design allows for an analysis of potential changes in privilege and intersectional awareness as a function of completing at least two years of college (all WGST students were juniors or seniors), including at least one WGST course, thus measuring more long-term changes in privilege and intersectional awareness.

Participants

Participants (N=118) in this study, enrolled at a regional Hispanic-serving state university in South Texas, were either taking one of 17 General Psychology sections (n=75) or one of 10 interdisciplinary WGST courses (n=43): Introduction to Women's Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Communication and Sexuality, Intercultural Communication, Language in Society, Psychology Capstone Seminar: Feminist Transformation of Moral Development Theory, Sociology of Sexuality, Human Sexuality, Drama Queens: Gendered Bodies in Performance, Sociology of Gender, and Gender, Sexuality, & Literature: "Queer Before Queer."

Demographic information, including name, email address, student ID number, age, gender, race and/or ethnicity, sexuality, major and/or minor, year in college, and number of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality courses taken-was collected from each participant. The students' names, email addresses, and student ID numbers were collected to facilitate matching the pre-test and post-test data. The majority of the sample identified as White (46%), heterosexual/straight (66%), and women (cisgender) (78%) (see Table 1).

Measures

Awareness of Intersecting Sources of Privilege. In order to assess privilege awareness, the Awareness of Intersecting Sources of Privilege Scale (Bramesfeld & Good, 2016) was administered. The scale consists of 12 items to be rated on a 7-point Likert scale with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 7 indicating strong agreement. The value for Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha = .88$, indicating a good level of internal consistency. Sample items include: "Men have more opportunities and greater access to resources than women" and "Individuals with a White identity actually have fewer advantages over others than one might think" (See Appendix A). Although the name of the scale is *Awareness of Intersecting Sources of Privilege*, the content of the questions asks participants to respond regarding discrete aspects of identity.

Intersectional Awareness Scale. The Intersectional Awareness Scale (Curtin et al., 2015) was originally administered to assess Black and White female activists' intersectional awareness (Greenwood, 2008). It was later adapted to be appropriate for all individuals and used to assess awareness of intersectional identities (Curtin et al., 2015). The scale consists of 8 questions to be rated on a 7-point Likert scale with 1 indicating

strong disagreement and 7 indicating strong agreement. The value for Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha = .75$, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency. Sample items include: "We must understand racism as well as sexism" and "People can belong to multiple social groups" (See Appendix A).

Table 1. Demographic Data

	WGST Group		GP Group	
	n	%	n	%
<i>Gender</i>				
Woman (cisgender)	32	74.4	60	80
Man (cisgender)	9	20.9	12	16
Non-binary	1	2.3	2	2.7
Prefer to self-describe:	1	2.3	1	1.3
<i>Sexuality</i>				
Straight or heterosexual	28	65.1	50	66.7
Gay	2	4.7	4	6.3
Bisexual	6	14	15	20
Pansexual	2	4.7	1	1.3
Asexual	1	2.3	1	1.3
Queer	3	7	3	4.0
Prefer to self-describe:	1	2.3	1	1.3
<i>Race or Ethnicity</i>				
Asian	0	0	5	6.7
Black or African American	1	2.3	1	1.3
Hispanic or Latino/a	18	41.9	26	34.7
White	18	41.9	36	48
Multiracial	4	9.3	4	5.3
Prefer to self-describe:	2	4.7	3	4.0
<i>WGST Courses</i>				
1-2	34	79.1	0	0
3-4	5	11.6	0	0
5+	3	7	0	0
<i>Year in College</i>				
First-year	0	0	75	100
Junior	8	18.6	0	0
Senior	35	81.4	0	0

Note: N= 118

Procedure

Particularly because the WGST courses tend to have smaller enrollments, data for this study were collected during 2 consecutive semesters (Spring and Fall of 2022) to increase the overall number of participants. Once IRB approval for the study was obtained, and prior to the beginning of the semester, faculty teaching the General Psychology and WGST courses were contacted to request their permission to recruit the students in their courses. At the start of the semester, students in those courses whose faculty of record agreed to allow their students to participate were invited to participate via email. Those who agreed were given a link to the consent form. Those who signed the consent form were given a link to the survey.

All participants were administered identical surveys at the start of the semester (pre-test) and then toward the end of the semester (post-test) via Qualtrics. The Qualtrics survey, a web-based survey platform, allows participants to confidentially submit their responses from their own computer. Participants were given a window of approximately 3 weeks to access the survey. Once they began the survey, they had to complete it in one sitting. Upon accessing the survey, participants were presented with the survey questions followed by the demographic questions. Upon completion of the survey, the participants were thanked for their participation and received extra credit if their professor offered it. Once the data were collected and matched (pre-test to post-test), the identifying information (name, ID number, and email address) was removed from the dataset.

RESULTS

To examine the effectiveness of WGST courses on raising privilege and intersectional awareness from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. Composite scores were calculated for each participant on each scale for pre-test and post-test. The independent variable (course type) was used to examine the effects on the dependent variables (privilege awareness and intersectional awareness). We predicted that there would be an increase in privilege awareness (H1) and intersectional awareness (H2) from pre-test to post-test for the WGST and little to no increase for the GP students. The analysis revealed no statistically significant difference in privilege awareness or intersectional awareness for the WGST or GP students; therefore, hypotheses one and two were not supported. We predicted that the GP students would have an overall lower understanding (lower scores on the pre-test and post-test) of privilege and intersectional awareness than the WGST students. There was a main effect for course type for Privilege Awareness $F(1, 116) = 6.57, p = .011, \eta^2 = .042$, and for Intersectional Awareness $F(1, 116) = 5.70, p = .018, \eta^2 = .037$; therefore, hypothesis 3 is supported.

DISCUSSION

Current findings did not demonstrate an increase in privilege awareness or intersectional awareness from the start to the end of the semester for either GP or WGST students. This suggests that these courses in and of themselves do not lead to significant changes in students' awareness of privilege or of intersectional privilege. One possible explanation for the lack of change from the pre-test to post-test may be that privilege awareness and intersectional awareness undergo a more protracted (longer than one semester) developmental process. Additionally, the GP and WGST students' scores were relatively high, indicating that they may already have a good deal of privilege and intersectional privilege awareness.

While the students' scores suggest that they might already have somewhat high awareness of privilege and of intersectional privilege at the start of taking college courses, results also suggest that there is growth over the course of the first couple of years in college with respect to awareness of both privilege and intersectional privilege insofar as WGST students demonstrate an overall greater understanding of privilege awareness and intersectional awareness than GP students. This is consistent with a conceptualization of development in these areas as a more protracted process that may not be fully captured in a brief intervention (Case 2007; Case & Stewart, 2009; Case & Rios, 2017) or perhaps even in a single semester of niche coursework likely to expose students to these ideas. It is also consistent with the idea that these more protracted developmental changes occur in connection with extracurricular activities outside of the classroom.

The generally higher scores among the WGST students do, however, suggest that WGST courses may contribute to college students' developing understanding of these identity issues insofar as such courses systematically present students with opportunities to examine and explore a variety of social justice topics that highlight systemic power dynamics. Another possibility is that, since the WGST students (third and fourth-year students) have more college experience than the first-year GP students, this could in itself be a contributing factor to their greater understanding of privilege awareness and intersectional awareness. Further research is needed to tease apart the possible contributions of cognitive maturation, college in general, niche courses in particular, specific extracurricular college experiences, and the possible developmental unfolding of understanding privilege as related to single identity statuses and as intersectional.

Lastly, since WGST courses are electives, those students who self-select into them are likely to have an interest in issues of diversity, identity, privilege, and intersectionality. This could also account for the higher awareness of these issues reflected in their scores. It is also likely that those students who have self-selected into WGST courses are simultaneously involved in extracurricular activities (e.g., Islander Feminists) that further support a fuller understanding of privilege and of privilege as systemic and intersectional.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current study had several limitations. First, the inclusion of information about students' participation in extracurricular activities might have contributed to a clearer understanding of whether such experiences are related to students' increasing privilege and intersectional privilege awareness as distinct from their participation in particular kinds of coursework. This is an important consideration insofar as it carries implications about how best to support such development, specifically about the kinds of experiences (e.g., applied vs. didactic, student vs. faculty-driven, individual vs. group work, perhaps with involvement in the community, etc.), and pedagogical implications that could inform college and university faculty and staff who teach courses and/or supervise extracurricular activities.

Second, the sample size of the WGST group was small, and the sample sizes of the WGST and GP groups were not equal. A larger, more balanced, and more diverse sample may have allowed for more adequate comparisons between demographic groups on both scales. For example, insights into the possible relationship of one's own identity status as a contributing factor in the development of privilege awareness and/or intersectional awareness could be explored. While a majority of the participants identified as White (46%) or Hispanic (37%), heterosexual/straight (66%), or cis-gender women (78%), a larger sample might have revealed differences in how one's own identity shapes their developing understanding of privilege and intersectional privilege as a function of their own identifications as members of more or less privileged groups. Future studies should aim to collect a large enough sample of participants who identify as different genders, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, ability levels, and socioeconomic statuses in order to facilitate such analyses comparing participants' understanding of privilege awareness and intersectional privilege awareness as a function of one's own intersectional identity or identities.

Third, future research could strengthen our understanding of the relationship between students' general cognitive development and their understanding of privilege and intersectionality. While we found that the WGST students had higher overall scores on both scales, disentangling the possible effects of years in college from experience in diversity courses might require a more complete understanding of the relationship between cognitive development that occurs as one moves through college experiencing a wide variety of courses, diverse perspectives from peers, and extracurricular activities, and development that takes place in diversity courses in particular.

A fourth limitation was the attrition rate from pre-test to post-test. Due to the pre-post test design, if a participant completed the pre-test but not the post-test, we were unable to include their responses. The study had an attrition rate of 69%, with a loss of 108 participants (21 from WGST and 87 from GP) from the pre-test to the post-test. This attrition is a threat to internal validity as it could have skewed the results for both the GP and WGST groups.

A fifth limitation was that this study utilized one scale that has not been used extensively and has not been validated (Curtin et al., 2015). It should also be noted that the Intersectional Awareness Scale (Curtin et al., 2015) does not address all aspects of identity (e.g., ability) and the different ways in which someone can be privileged or without privilege. In addition, there could have been a social desirability bias on both scales, due to the wording of some questions, which may have biased participants' answers to respond affirmatively regarding the topic material. This could explain what we thought were relatively high scores, even among the GP students, on this scale. The Intersectional Awareness Scale (Curtin et al., 2015) did not have any reverse coding to check for consistency with the participants' responses.

Finally, a more nuanced measure of the students' understanding that goes beyond whether they do or do not endorse statements about privilege or intersectional privilege may better capture their initial understandings as well as potential changes in their understanding over the course of the semester. Our use of these scales may have oversimplified these constructs, also contributing to generally high scores. To help address these issues, qualitative methods making use of responses to open-ended questions are underway to help better understand the developmental pathways that characterize emerging adults' understandings of these issues as a function of their broader identity development.

Conclusion and Practical Implications

As identity development in college continues to be a topic of research and discussion, it is important to understand the ways in which individuals come to understand privilege awareness and intersectional awareness as part of their own and others' identities, as well as the systems of power that create and maintain them. The present study suggests that engaging college students in diversity courses may be a way to increase their understanding of these concepts, but that college students may also develop an understanding of these concepts outside of diversity classes, perhaps through extracurricular activities, interactions with diverse peers, and other typical college experiences. While the present study suggests that our students begin college with some existing understanding of privilege and of intersectional privilege, the specifics of this understanding are as yet unclear, partly due to limitations of the instruments used to measure their understanding. Further research is needed to clarify how they construct their existing knowledge upon entering college, as well as their developing ways of understanding privilege and intersectional privilege, in order to best support emerging adults' ongoing development both in and out of the classroom. As Carreiro and Kapitulik (2010) discuss, teaching students about privilege and intersectional awareness does not entail using a specific formula or module, but rather, should build on college students' general cognitive and identity development. Even though research has indicated that members of a dominant group may be less likely to recognize their own privilege, while individuals with subordinated identities are more likely to understand privilege dynamics

(Pratto & Stewart, 2012), teaching privilege awareness has often been geared toward traditional middle-class students, leaving out students whose identities do not fit that mold (Carreiro & Kapitulik, 2010), positioning minoritized students at a disadvantage. A better understanding of the potentially different ways that students understand privilege depending on the diverse backgrounds they bring with them to the college experience may help educators better support the potentially diverse pathways to a more complex awareness of privilege and intersectionality. The importance of teaching diversity course material and continuing to educate students on privilege awareness and intersectional awareness is to allow students to partake in experiences where they can discuss and learn more about the vast majority of social issues that exist in society and how they can become active participants and agents of change for social justice (Cole et al., 2011). More attention not only to student identity, but to the specific kinds of experiences that support students' developing awareness of privilege and of intersectional privilege, are needed to help faculty, staff, and students across disciplines create environments in which students can fully explore the meaning of privilege and the systemic ways that social identity can intersect in the lives of individuals with different privileged statuses. On a broader scale, an exploration into how WGST material contributes to students' broader experiences, inside and outside of the classroom, would support the preliminary evidence that an intersectional understanding of privilege goes beyond student learning objectives in the classroom and how social sciences as a field could go about assessing and fostering those changes.

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APPENDIX A

Awareness of Intersecting Sources of Privilege Scale

All of the items were rated by participants using the following 7-point scale.

Entirely Disagree 1	Mostly Disagree 2	Somewhat Disagree 3	Neither agree nor Disagree 4	Somewhat Agree 5	Mostly Agree 6	Entirely Agree 7
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1. Individuals with a White identity have more opportunities and greater access to resources than individuals with a racial and ethnic minority identity.
 2. Individuals who identify as heterosexual/cisgendered have more opportunities and greater access to resources than individuals who identify as LGBT.
 3. Men have more opportunities and greater access to resources than women.
 4. Nondisabled individuals have more opportunities and greater access to resources than individuals an impairment (i.e., disabled individuals).
 5. Individuals who are middle class or wealthy have more opportunities and greater access to resources than individuals living in poverty.
 6. Individuals with a White Identity actually have fewer advantages over others than one might think (R).
 7. Individuals who identify as heterosexual/cisgendered actually have fewer advantages over others than one might think (R).
 8. Men actually have fewer advantages over others than one might think (R).
 9. Nondisabled individuals actually have fewer advantages over others than one might think (R).
 10. Individuals who are middle class or wealthy actually have fewer advantages over others than one might think (R).
 11. Men with White identity, who are heterosexual, nondisabled, and middle class/wealthy hold the greatest power within this country.
 12. Race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and poverty are intimately connected and work together to determine the opportunities and resources available to a person.
- Scoring: Items 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 were reverse coded prior to averaging scores.

Intersectional Awareness Scale

1. We must understand racism as well as sexism.
2. Understanding the experiences of women from different ethnic groups is important.
3. Homophobia and heterosexism affect the lives of heterosexual people as well as gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals.
4. While there are important differences in how different kinds of oppression work; there are also important similarities.
5. People don't think enough about connections between social class, race, gender, and sexuality affect individuals.
6. People can belong to multiple social groups.
7. Black and White women experience sexism in different ways.
8. People who belong to more than one oppressed social group (e.g., lesbians who are also ethnic minorities) have experiences that differ from people who belong to only one such group.