



ACS final report form

- Complete this form in no more than five pages.
- Attach your final financial report in a separate document.
- Note that portions or the entirety of your final report may be reprinted on the ACS grants webpage.

Name of project lead: Michael Miyawaki
Campus: Hendrix College
Project title: The Hendrix College Microaggressions and Microaffirmations Project (M&M Project)
Today's date: 1/11/19

I. Project summary

Briefly describe the purpose, intended goals, and major activities of your project.

The purpose of the Hendrix College Microaggressions and Microaffirmations Project (M&M Project) was to create a photography project on microaggressions and microaffirmations. Microaggressions are “everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults [that] communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages” to targeted social groups (Sue 2010). The effects of microaggressions are cumulative and can result in negative psychological and physiological outcomes for the recipient (ibid). In the context of higher education, these events can negatively impact students’ academic performance, college retention, and sense of belonging (Harwood et al. 2015). Microaffirmations, on the other hand, are “small gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening” (Rowe 2008) and have the potential to yield positive outcomes in outlook and performance for students (Pittinsky and Montoya 2016).

The goal of the M&M Project was to raise awareness about microaggressions and to promote the adoption of microaffirmations. The project involved taking photos of students holding up written signs of their experiences with micro-behaviors, developing a website to feature these photos, and launching an awareness campaign to utilize the website in multiple ways, including as part of classroom instructions, faculty/staff development, student leadership training, etc. The project theme was on microaggressions and microaffirmations pertaining to race, ethnicity, and culture. By raising awareness about racial microaggressions and promoting the adoption of microaffirmations, the photography project contributed to ongoing institutional efforts to further foster a more inclusive, welcoming, and understanding Hendrix community.

The M&M Project was carried out in a 3-step process: 1) Data collection during the spring, 2) Website design over the summer, and 3) Awareness campaign in the fall. During the spring, information sessions were held in February to introduce the project to the Hendrix campus, followed by official photo shoots in March and again in April. Over the summer, the photos were edited in June and the website was designed in July and August. Also during this time,

student participants were asked to include a written testimony adding context to their photos. Lastly, an awareness campaign was launched in the fall with a campus forum in October to reveal the website (<https://hendrixcollege.wixsite.com/mmproject>). As part of the campaign, the website was featured as assignment in a course and at several faculty/staff meetings, with plans for further campus dialogue on microaggressions and microaffirmations in spring 2019. To help with the photography and website design, I hired two student photographers (Jazmin Calixto, Rachel Elmakiss) and one student web designer (Kelsey Dietrich).

II. Attainment of goals

Explain the steps you took to achieve and evaluate the success of *each* project goal.

Provide details regarding the tools and methods used to measure each goal and the extent to which, based on those measurements, each goal was met.

Goal: Raise Awareness about Microaggressions and Microaffirmations

The goal of the M&M Project was to raise awareness about microaggressions and promote the adoption of microaffirmations. For assessment, an evaluation form of the event (e.g., forum, workshop, assignment) was used (see attached form). The form asked several questions, including attendees' understanding of microaggressions and microaffirmations prior to and after the event, as well as whether they plan to incorporate knowledge gained from the event in their future interactions with others. Project success was based on attendees' increased understanding of microaggressions and microaffirmations.

The M&M Project website was revealed in a campus forum in October. The campus forum featured a keynote address by Dr. Hephzibah Strmic-Pawl (Assistant Professor of Sociology at Manhattanville College) and a panel discussion on microaggressions and microaffirmations utilizing photos from the website. Over 30 people attended the event, which was well received. Feedback from the campus forum revealed a marked increase in attendees' understanding of both microaggressions and microaffirmations. After the event, attendees indicated that their understanding of microaggressions increased from 3.53 to 4.73 (on 1-5 scale with 1 = None, 5 = High). Similarly, attendees' understanding of microaffirmations increased from 2.83 to 4.67. Comments from the evaluation form were also positive, ranging from being more attentive to what they say to others and being more proactive in calling out racial microaggressions.

Event Evaluation: Website Reveal (October 2018)

Overall Assessment of Event (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent)	4.72	
Microaggression: Level of Understanding (1 = None, 5 = High)	Before	3.53
	After	4.73
Microaffirmation: Level of Understanding (1 = None, 5 = High)	Before	2.83
	After	4.67
Share Topic with Friends, Family, Colleagues (1 = Very unlikely, 5 = Very Likely)	4.77	

NOTE: N = 30 (includes 11 who participated in the photo shoot)

In addition to the campus forum, the M&M Project was introduced in my *SOCI-270: Race and Ethnicity* class, where an assignment was even created utilizing the website. The assignment involved analyzing photos of microaggressions and microaffirmations from the website and discussing how these examples can contribute to and help explain some of the campus climate results found in the 2016-2017 Hendrix College Diverse Learning Environments Survey (see attached assignment). After completing the assignment, students provided feedback on the

assignment itself. Findings from the assignment evaluation showed a significant improvement in students' understanding of both microaggressions (from 2.61 to 4.89 on 1-5 scale with 1 = None, 5 = High) and microaffirmations (from 2.50 to 4.94). Comments were generally positive, with many indicating greater awareness about the micro-behaviors and expressing a need to be more attentive to their interactions with others.

Assignment Evaluation: SOCI-270 Course (October 2018)

Overall Assessment of Assignment (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent)	4.28	
Microaggression: Level of Understanding (1 = None, 5 = High)	Before	2.61
	After	4.89
Microaffirmation: Level of Understanding (1 = None, 5 = High)	Before	2.50
	After	4.94
Share Topic with Friends, Family, Colleagues (1 = Very unlikely, 5 = Very Likely)	4.17	

NOTE: N = 18 (includes 3 who participated in the photo shoot)

Based on findings from these evaluation forms, the M&M Project has demonstrated success when it comes to raising awareness about racial microaggressions and microaffirmations for attendees and students. The comments given by attendees and students also reveal promise about adopting more microaffirming behaviors in their interactions with others going forward.

III. Impact of project

Explain the impact your project had on relevant constituencies (e.g., students), structures, (e.g., a major program), processes (e.g., community engagement), and/or relationships (e.g., consortial partnerships).

Campus reception of the M&M Project has been very positive. 90 students participated in the photo shoot, sharing their experiences with microaggressions and microaffirmations pertaining to race, ethnicity, and culture. During the photo shoot, many students expressed excitement about the photography project and even others asked about future project themes (e.g., gender and sexuality). The project also generated curiosity and support from faculty and staff. Many particularly liked the microaffirmations aspect of the project and its potential to foster a more inclusive and welcoming campus environment. Lastly, the M&M Project was even featured in the Hendrix Profile, the college's student-run newspaper.

Since the website reveal, there has been continued interest from students, faculty, and staff about the M&M Project. I have received invitations to talk about the photography project at a Student Staff Affairs meeting and at an Interfaith Community Meal event. Next month, I will be presenting the M&M Project to students and staff in the Murphy Scholars Program and in March, I will be leading a faculty development workshop on ways to creating an inclusive classroom environment utilizing the M&M Project website. Going forward, I will continue to look for additional ways to introduce the project to the Hendrix community. For maximum institutional impact, one long-term goal is to feature the M&M Project website as part of Extended New Student Orientation for incoming students to learn about the harmful effects of microaggressions and the potential power of microaffirmations.

IV. Consortial (ACS-wide) value of the project

Describe how your project results can or will strengthen ACS, e.g., via the dissemination of a final report, the future training of campus leaders, or the building of an inclusive community of practice.

The value of the M&M Project to the ACS is that the framework for the photography project can be shared with other member institutions through the dissemination of this final report. Member institution interested in starting their own photography project on microaggressions and microaffirmations can use findings from the M&M Project as a template and then modify the approach to meet the specific needs of their respective campuses. I can also be available to consult with any interested member institutions to further discuss matters related to the M&M Project and its execution. Overall, this photography project contributes to the ACS mission of supporting member institutions and their efforts towards achieving diversity and inclusion.

V. Lessons Learned

Describe the surprises, challenges, and lessons learned during the project, e.g., is there something you are very glad you did or would do differently? Did you face obstacles that called for creative problem-solving? What would have made the project even more successful?

While campus reception to the M&M Project was positive and feedback from the evaluation forms demonstrated project success, there were challenges along the way. Given the enormous task of introducing and executing a campus wide photography project, the first challenge was to garner support from the larger Hendrix community. To address this challenge, I worked closely with Dominique Kelleybrew (Coordinator of Multicultural Student Services) and the Multicultural Development Committee, an umbrella organization for multicultural student clubs on campus (e.g., Asian Cultures Club, Organization for Latino Expressions, Students of Black Culture, Multiracial Students Coalition). In particular, Dominique was instrumental in getting the project off the ground and providing insight into student life at Hendrix.

The second challenge had to do with communication. Initially, email was the primary method to advertise the photo shoot (e.g., campus wide Hendrix Today emails) and communicate with the students. Given that many students today rely on social media to communicate and learn about events, an Instagram page (https://www.instagram.com/hdx_mm_project/) was created as another method to making announcements and communicating with students. The third challenge concerned the timing of scheduling events (e.g., photo shoots). By the second round of photo shoots in April, students were extremely busy with class assignments and other end of the semester matters. As a result, not as many students were able to participate in the photo shoot. Even during the awareness campaign, it was more challenging to schedule any events in November, leading to the need to schedule future events earlier in the semester.

In addition to the challenges, there was a campus incident that took place involving vandalism. As part of advertising the photo shoot in March, posters were created of students holding up written signs of their experiences with microaggressions and microaffirmations, and placed all over campus. On one of the posters, a swastika sign was found written over the forehead of a featured student. The vandalized poster was found in one of the campus dorms. Upon learning about the incident, I spoke with the student who found the poster and later submitted an official campus incident report to the student dean in April. I also informed and apologized to the student featured in the poster over what happened. The student understood and was unsurprised about the incident. Since that incident, no additional posters were placed in campus dorms.

One decision monumental to the M&M Project was to ask student participants to provide a written testimony to their photos of microaggressions and microaffirmations. Over the summer, I contacted the students asking them to add context to their experience and offer their thoughts on that experience, including how they felt at the time and why the experience was particularly meaningful or problematic. A total of 48 students added testimonies to their photos. While not

originally part of the project plan, these testimonies provide to be powerful. In the assignment evaluation form, many students in my *SOCI-270: Race and Ethnicity* class found the written testimonies to be one of the most interesting and impacting aspect of the M&M Project. These written testimonies also served as a nice substitute to the initially planned video-recorded interviews with select students about their experience with and thoughts on micro-behaviors, allowing for more students to provide a “voice” to the written signs in their photos.

VI. Next Steps

Explain what you intend to do with/how to you intend to use or build on the results of your project.

The next steps to the M&M Project include utilizing the website to facilitate ongoing campus dialogue on microaggressions and microaffirmations, and to expand the current project into a photography series on the topic, this time focusing on micro-behaviors associated with gender and sexuality. To facilitate ongoing campus dialogue, I will be presenting the M&M Project to students and staff in the Murphy Scholars Program in February, leading a faculty development workshop in March featuring the website, and looking for additional ways to showcase the photography project to the Hendrix campus. A long-term goal is to find a way to feature the M&M Project as part of Extended New Student Orientation so that every incoming student can learn about microaggressions and microaffirmations so as to contribute to the college’s effort and commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.

In addition to facilitating ongoing campus dialogue, I will be launching the next M&M Project focusing on gender and sexuality as part of the ACS continuation grant.

In addition to facilitating ongoing campus dialogue, I will be launching the next M&M Project focusing on gender and sexuality as part of the continuation grant from the Associated Colleges of the South. I will once again work closely with Dominique Kelleybrew as well as look to hire two new student photographers and one student web designer. For further campus support, I will be collaborating with the Committee on Gender and Sexuality, an umbrella organization that includes SAGE (Students Advocating Gender Equality) and two LGBTQ+ student clubs, Unity and TRANS@HDX, and consulting with Tonya Hale (Director of Student Activities and the newly created Coordinator of LGBTQ Student Services). In order to address some of the challenges from this past year’s run with the M&M Project, this time I will be working more closely with student organizations, utilizing multiple methods of communication (e.g., use of social media), and scheduling events earlier in the semester, especially the photo shoot.

VII. Feedback/suggestions for the ACS grant program (optional)

Thank you for funding this project. I hope the outcomes met the vision of the grant program.

APPENDIX A

REFERENCES

Harwood, Stacy A., Shinwoo Choi, Moises Orozco, Margaret Browne Huntt, Rudy Mendenhall. 2015. *Racial Microaggressions at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: Voices of Students of Color in the Classroom*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Pittinsky, Todd L., and R. Matthew Montoya. 2016. “Empathic Joy in Positive Intergroup

Relations.” *Social Issues* 72(3):511-523.

Rowe, Mary. 2008. “Micro-Affirmations and Micro-Inequities.” *Journal of International Ombudsman*, 1(1):45-48.

Sue, Derald Wing. 2010. *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

APPENDIX B



EVENT EVALUATION FORM

Thank you for attending the event. Your feedback is very much appreciated. The responses will be used to assess the effectiveness of the event and to identify ways of improving it in the future. Please answer BOTH front and back.

1. Did you participate in the photo shoot for the M&M Project? Yes No

2. What is your overall assessment of the event?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Good		Excellent

3. Prior to this event, what was your level of understanding of microaggressions?

1	2	3	4	5
None		Medium		High

4. After this event, what is your level of understanding of microaggressions?

1	2	3	4	5
None		Medium		High

5. Prior to this event, what was your level of understanding of microaffirmations?

1	2	3	4	5
None		Medium		High

6. After this event, what was your level of understanding of microaffirmations?

1	2	3	4	5
None		Medium		High

7. How likely are you to share this topic with your friends, family, and/or colleagues?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely		Neutral		Very Likely

8. Which aspect of the event did you find most interesting or useful and why?

9. Do you plan to incorporate the knowledge gained in this event in your interactions with others going forward? If so, in what way?

10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you again. I appreciate your feedback. For those interested in learning more about the M&M Project, please contact:

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APPENDIX C

SOCI-270: Race and Ethnicity

Instructor: Michael Miyawaki

Fall 2018

Due Date: 10/15/18

M&M Project Assignment

In this assignment your task is to discuss how microaggressions and microaffirmations can shape the college experiences of students at Hendrix. To do this, you will analyze examples of racial microaggressions from the M&M Project website to help explain some of the campus climate results found in the 2016-2017 Hendrix College Diverse Learning Environments Survey. In addition, you will draw on examples of microaffirmations from the website to address how these behaviors can improve campus climate outcomes. In doing so, you will address the following:

1. **Definitions (5 Points):** Provide a working definition of racial microaggressions as well as a description of microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations. Moreover, discuss the impact that racial microaggressions can have in terms of outcomes for people of color and particularly in the context of higher education. Lastly, define microaffirmations and briefly explain the potential benefits of such behaviors for students of color.
2. **Microaggressions (12 Points):** Analyze **THREE** examples of racial microaggressions from the M&M Project website. For each example, indicate a) what type of microaggression it is, b) why the microaggression is problematic, and c) how it can contribute to one or more of the outcomes observed in the Hendrix College Diverse Learning Environments Survey. Be sure to explain your analysis in all three examples of microaggressions. **NOTE:** Your examples must come from at least two different types of racial microaggressions.
3. **Microaffirmations (8 Points):** Evaluate **TWO** examples of microaffirmations, also from the M&M Project website. For each example, discuss a) what type of microaggression it can address, b) why the microaffirmation is meaningful, and c) how it can help to improve one or more of the results from the campus climate survey. Be sure to elaborate on your analysis for both examples of microaffirmations.

For examples of racial microaggressions and microaffirmations, visit the link to the M&M Project website : <https://hendrixcollege.wixsite.com/mmproject>

NOTE: Results from the 2016-2017 Hendrix College Diverse Learning Environments Survey can be found on our course Moodle page.

Be sure to address all **THREE** sections. Your paper should reflect good writing skills, knowledge of the material, and careful thought on the topic. Paper Format: About 3 pages in length, double-spaced, in Time New Roman 12-point font, with 1-inch margins on all sides. Please follow the guidelines. **Late papers will be penalized 3% per day.**