



National Association of Colleges and Employers - 2019 Inclusion Committee

Transcript: Social Justice Initiative

Hi, my name is Jane Waite. I am the senior associate for social justice learning and engagement at Oregon State University. I direct the social justice education initiative out of faculty affairs. The program is only in its third year. I am the director and I'm really the only staff person. This program launched, and the intention was that it would be for all faculty, staff and graduate students at Oregon State University. That's about 10,000 people. There was some movement and interest in having this program be required for everybody. And given the way it was staffed in the way, it's just me and some of the other institutional pieces, I didn't feel that was a good idea. I didn't want to spend all of my time defending why people had to take this program. So we've made it volunteer. In essence, what it looks like now is that sometimes a unit or a supervisor may step in and want everybody in their unit to take it.

So it becomes something that that unit asks for, maybe become required in a unit. But institutionally it's still volunteer. That said, we've still had a few thousand people come through the program. When a unit or a work group is immersed, where you have the vast majority of people who've been through the foundational program, it's an eight hour curriculum. Then it really makes a difference in the way those people are able to do their work. And the way those, those units can do their work. So they can reach strategic, they can do strategic planning more clearly or they can reach the goals are already articulated through their strategic planning more efficiently.

The Social Justice Education Initiative at Oregon state has an overarching goal of supporting institutional growth. Right? We want to see shifts in the organization. We're not really focused on individual growth. So individual growth happens, but SJEI is interested in individual growth to the extent that it contributes to increased efficacy amongst colleagues, in terms of alignment in language, conceptual frameworks and background knowledge that that increase the efficacy of the way that they are enabled to enact inclusion within their work. So SJEI never tells folks how to do their work, but we hope to provide a lot of tools for which they can do their work differently.