As a supplement to our Bobcat JEDI Program workshops, we are offering a monthly review of book that touches on topics connected to Diversity and Inclusion. We hope to offer excellent suggestions to keep thinking about these topics if it’s been a while since you've had time to attend a workshop, or if a topic has piqued your interest and you want to learn more about it. We'd love to have perspectives from all over the campus, so if you would like to recommend a book or a film (a tv series, a zine, etc.), please be in touch. We are hoping to have reviews of about 500 words that can tell colleagues what to expect from the book, how it helped you thinking about the topics connected to Diversity and Inclusion, and whether you’d recommend it to a friend (and why!). If you're interested to contribute, please send us an email at divcert@txstate.edu. We'd love to include your thoughts. Submissions will be reviewed and edited prior to publication.

Howdy JEDIs,

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY  ISSUE.1  MARCH 2020

THE J.E.D.I

BOBCAT J.E.D.I PROGRAM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING TRAININGS

March 2020

Allies for Individuals with Disabilities Date: Tuesday, March 10 | Time: 1 – 4 p.m. | Location: JCK 460 | Avery (streaming at Round Rock Avery 355)

In Limbo: Dilemmas Faced by Undocumented Students Date: Thursday, March 11 | Time: 1 – 4 p.m. | Location: JCK 460 | Avery (streaming at Round Rock Avery 355)

Supporting Transgender/Non-Binary People in Higher Education Settings Date: Thursday, March 12 | Time: 2 – 5 p.m. | Location: JCK 460 | Avery (streaming at Round Rock Avery 355)

Survival Sign Language (6 part course) Date: Mar. 24, Mar. 26, Mar. 31, Apr. 2, Apr. 7, Apr. 9 | Time: 3 – 4 p.m. | Location: JCK 460

Teaching First-Generation Students: Practical Tips for the Classroom Date: Tuesday, March 10 | Time: 11:00AM - 12:30PM | Location: Zoom

Examining Social Justice and White Fragility: Lessons Learned by a Tenured Faculty Member Date: Tuesday, March 24 | Time: 10:00AM - 11:30PM | Location: Round Rock

LinkedIn LEARNING

The link below highlights one course from LinkedIn Learning that is applicable for the Bobcat J.E.D.I Program.

Cultivating Cultural Competence and Inclusion
I was introduced to Dr. Robin DiAngelo's work on white fragility when I saw her speak at the 2018 Equality University Conference right here at Texas State. During DiAngelo's talk, she mentioned that folks in the audience who weren't white (or did not benefit from white privilege) would probably just politely smile and nod at her points (as they've lived them their entire lives), but that her words might cause some discomfort for white folks who consider themselves to be aware of racism and want to work against it. She asked us to sit in that discomfort and consider why we experienced those feelings, and then broke down the differences between how we are often socialized to perceive racism as opposed to how systemic racism works. Her book (which I had ordered online with express delivery by the time her Q&A had concluded) delves deeper into this idea and invites the reader, especially the white reader who thinks they're doing a good job by not being outwardly racist, to sit with those feelings, reflect on them, and use that knowledge to do better anti-racist work.

DiAngelo posits that though white people in the United States are raised in a culture that places emphasis on race, that culture also teaches us not to talk about race or behave as though race affects us. As a result, when race does affect us, we often respond in ways that can be harmful to others: shutting down the conversation, attempting to distance ourselves from “bad white people” (you know, the guys in hoods), centering ourselves by becoming emotional and crying, etc. In DiAngelo's writing, these are all symptomatic of a fragility that has been cultivated by culture and socialization and that we need to work to dismantle in order to work towards a goal of anti-racism (or of just being better neighbors, friends, and colleagues to people who aren't white).

To accomplish this goal, DiAngelo incorporates historical context, personal anecdotes, and academic perspectives into her book. One aspect of her book that I found particularly useful as a reader involved her recounting of times when, despite her best efforts, DiAngelo’s own white fragility had a negative effect on others. As a white person, I often worry that I will say or do the wrong thing, so it was helpful for me to see an example of what to do when you know you've caused hurt. DiAngelo takes the reader through her efforts to make amends for wronging a colleague, and gives guidelines for how to do the work, rather than pushing the work of making amends back onto the person who was wronged as a result of her own words and actions.

For these reasons, I recommend White Fragility, especially to colleagues who are looking for ways to use their privilege to support fellow community members.