## Q&A: Educator Pedagogical Approach
The NAME Steps: Addressing Anti-LGBTQIA2S+ Microaggressions Patricia Saleeby, PhD
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January, 2020



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*What do the NAME steps offer the social work educator?*

Classroom discussions in social work education can be charged and complex, with a substantial focus on topics such as power, oppression, stigma, and social identity. Even so, educators typically receive little guidance on recognizing and responding to microaggressions in their classrooms. Social work educators serve a central role in helping students and colleagues reflect on and learn from microaggressions that inevitably arise in the classroom. Improving the ability of educators to recognize and respond thoughtfully to microaggressions is vitally important as we train the next generation of social work leaders.

On behalf of the CSWE Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (CSOGIE), we developed the NAME steps (Byers et al., 2019) to help our colleagues recognize and intervene in microaggressions toward LGBTQIA2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, two-spirit, and other sexual and gender minority) populations.

*What prompted the development of the NAME steps, and how was it developed?*

Homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic microaggressions are a serious problem in all educational settings, and research undertaken by former and current CSOGIE members has found that this includes social work

classrooms (Craig et al., 2015). Such microaggressions—everyday slights that communicate aggression or undermine a person's value based on their marginalized social identities (Sue, 2010)—are harmful for many LGBTQIA2S+ students and are detrimental to the educational development of all social work students.

Educators might find it difficult to respond to microaggressions in their classrooms because they are concerned about staying on topic; worry about a lack of time; think it is not their place to intervene between students; or feel defensive, embarrassed, or ashamed—perhaps especially if the educator is the one who committed the microaggression. However, naming and addressing microaggressions, especially when it is hard to do, is a central component of the implicit curriculum in social work education.

The NAME steps are an extension of the findings of CSOGIE's *Social Work Speaks Out!* study (Craig et al., 2015), which highlighted the microaggressions and other negative experiences of many LGBTQIA2S+ students in social work programs across North America. The steps were developed by the authors with substantial input from other current and former members of CSOGIE.

### *How can I use the NAME steps in my courses?*

We developed the NAME steps to provide flexible guidance for educators across the social work curriculum. These steps are not meant to be rigidly followed, and it may be necessary to adapt the steps with your students to suit the needs of your classroom or other learning context (e.g., field placements). As the educator, you may choose to proactively introduce the NAME steps at the start of the term, or you may use them as a guiding framework to help orient yourself in a challenging moment.

1.  Proactive Introduction: At the start of term, you may decide to purposefully introduce the problem of microaggressions and acknowledge your responsibility for helping the group to name and address microaggressions when they come up. The NAME steps can be presented to students as a framework to collectively address incidents of microaggressions as they arise.

2.  A Guiding Orientation for Instructors: When you notice an incident, you can use the NAME steps to structure your response to the microaggression and its impact in your class without scapegoating and develop a concrete collaborative plan for moving forward.

### *References*

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Dr. Lauren B. McInroy is an assistant professor in the College of Social Work at The Ohio State University. Her research investigates the impacts of information and communication technology on the well-being of marginalized adolescents and emerging adults—particularly LGBTQ+ young people who experience heightened risks.



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