Spring 2020
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS
Office of the Dean of the College, Vassar College
Register at: https://pages.vassar.edu/professional-development/
If you have questions or need more information, contact Ed Pittman, Senior Associate Dean of the College, at epittman@vassar.edu, or 845-457-5426.

Disrupting Unconscious Bias 1.0
February 7, 10:00 am–12:00 pm
College Center, MPR
How can gender or gender expression, age, race, ability status, religion, appearance or other identity factors influence how we interact with and judge others—even when we are trying to be open, unbiased and fair? This is an introduction to unconscious or implicit bias and how it impacts everyday situations and decision-making in personal and professional environments. Participants will gain an understanding of how the brain processes information quickly and shapes attitudes and stereotypes, followed by basic steps on how to minimize the effects of unconscious bias.
Facilitator: Edward Pittman, Senior Associate Dean of the College

Welcome to America?
February 14, 10:00 am–12:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
What it’s like for students to come from another country, and her culture—perhaps even another language—and study in the United States? How do student-facing professionals learn how to see through “international eyes”? Join us for an educational, interactive and fun-exploration of what it means to be an international student at Vassar. A lively discussion about social, cultural, political and academic differences, and the opportunity to get your questions answered.
Facilitator: Andrew Meade, Assistant Dean for Student Growth and Engagement, Director of International Programs

It Happens Here:
Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence at Vassar
February 19, 10:00 am–12:00 pm
College Center, MPR
Sexual violence happens at astounding and unacceptable rates to college students of all genders. This workshop, facilitated by the Director of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention (SAVP) Office, will offer definitions of sexual assault and consent, describe the scope of sexual violence and its impact, and examine how to recognize signs of trauma and begin to talk about trauma. Participants will learn about trauma-informed practices for their day-to-day work life and leave with increased confidence in their ability to respond to students who disclose experiences of sexual violence.

Facilitators: Nicole Wang, Director, Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention (SAVP); Erin Ross, Coordinator, Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention (SAVP)

Self-Care: What is That?
February 24, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
Self-care has been a world thrown out as a goal. However, what does that mean or look like? This workshop is intended to explore what self-care practices in our stressful lives might be the beauty and barriers to achieving this goal. Come join us for this interactive session as we engage in thoughtful and meaningful topics and share our sustainability and resiliency.
Facilitators: Andreea Pesevanu, Director of Health Promotion and Education; Constanza Vescio, Staff Therapist, Counseling Services

Disrupting Unconscious Bias 2.0
February 27, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
A next-step level workshop, this session is open to administrators and staff who attended an introductory implicit/unconscious working group earlier in the year.
Participants will examine deeper intervention strategies and explore the connections between personal/interpersonal biases and systemic/structural bias and discrimination. Attention will also be devoted to understanding the impact of unconscious and other forms of bias on students and work/office colleagues.
Repeat session from Fall 2019
Facilitator: Edward Pittman, Senior Associate Dean of the College

The Transitions Truth: Supporting First Generation and Low-Income Students at Vassar
March 2, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
This workshop will help participants understand more about first generation and low-income students, how to adopt more equitable practices in their offices, and address our own perceptions and biases regarding this student community. The session will be informational, experiential, and conversational, and include activities to stimulate your interest and action.
Repeat session from Fall 2019
Facilitator: Coprio Berry, Director of the Transitions Program

How Did That Get Approved?
Supporting Resident Leaders at Vassar
March 5, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
This workshop will help you understand the student leadership model at Vassar and afford the students the opportunity to take on important and influential leadership roles on campus. But, how do student organizations plan their events and work to reach their goals? How does the shared governance structure impact the role of administration when working with student leaders? This workshop will review the student organization landscape, and explore the different roles, responsibilities, processes, and challenges facing student leaders. We will do a deep dive into real student organization case studies from the past several years. Participants will discuss various strategies to support student leaders in these important tasks, as administrators and support staff, and explore ways to empower their leadership on campus.
Facilitators: Will Rush, Assistant Director of Campus Activities; Michelle Ransome, Director of Student Activities and the Center for Community Service

Mental Health First Aid
March 9 and 10, 9:00 am–2:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
Do you want to help students and peers with emotional or mental health struggles, but not sure how? This course will prepare staff, faculty, and administrators to become effective in our community. Participants will receive a certificate of completion from the National Council for Behavioral Health. The training is facilitated over 2 1/2-day sessions. Sensitive topics such as depression, anxiety, stress, self-harm, suicidality, and substance use will be discussed in the course.
A nationally published manual and lunch will be provided.
Facilitator: Michael Drucker, Director of Residential Education, Office of Residential Life

A Day in the Life of a Vassar Student-Athlete
March 22, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
College Center, MPR
Come and learn more about a day in the life of student-athletes at Vassar. The facilitators will share an overview of the Brewers Athletic Program, summarize expectations of student-athletes, and outline resources for supporting their Vassar education.
Facilitators: Michelle Walsh, Director of Athletics and Physical Education; Kaitlin Leach, Associate Director of Athletics for Compliance and Student-Athlete Welfare

Cultivating Your Emotional Intelligence
April 10, 9:30 am–12:00 pm
Location: TBD
Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is a term used to describe an individual’s degree of self-awareness, the ability to understand others’ emotions, and their ability to use that understanding to motivate and handle complex social situations. EQ helps you to engage with others in a more effective and meaningful way, which is beneficial in your professional and personal life.
Facilitators: Ginger Jurecka Blake, Director of Organizational Development and Training at SUNY New Paltz

You Don’t Seem Disabled:
Assumptions About Access, Ability, and Effort
April 15, 10:00 am–12:00 pm
Location: TBD
Students and employees with disabilities often feel misunderstood and unheard. This session will bring awareness to unconscious assumptions that affect how we interact with people with disabilities. Participants will develop a vocabulary to discuss and understand disability and disability needs, increase awareness around ableist thinking that limits access, apply universal design (UD) to promote more inclusive physical spaces, and create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for people with disabilities.
Facilitators: Mary Jane Cavanaugh, Morgan Halling Specialist and Director, Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity; Matthew Mueller, Morgan Halling Academic Coach, Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity

Dealing with Challenging Conversations with Co-Workers: Applying a Cross-Cultural Lens
April 22, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
College Center, MPR
This interactive workshop will offer communication techniques for having challenging conversations with co-workers while applying a cross-cultural lens. Tools provided and practiced during the session include: feelings as messages—skill for emotional literacy, and the cooperative process—a technique to practice win-win outcomes while offering both positive and negative feedback. These tools will be presented in the context of how cross-cultural dynamics affect conversations between co-workers and facilitate learning about the culture of our work environment.
Facilitators: Joe Steele, MRA, and Consultant from VISIONS, INC.

Restorative Justice Principles and Practices
April 30, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
M. Ordan Meeting Room
The topic of Restorative Justice has been a common topic in recent years. Many of us have inherited this strategy that encourages us to consider situations to either be right or wrong and value people as either good or bad. Restorative Justice (RJ) and Restorative Practices (RP) offer an alternative ideological frameworks asserting that individual people are not summarily good or bad, but rather their actions have the ability to harm others. We can identify the harm done, we can collectively choose ways to repair it. In this workshop, we will learn about the history and principles of restorative justice. We will also consider strategies for administrators and staff to adapt RJ and RP for our own work here on campus.
Facilitator: Michael Drucker, Director of Residential Education, Office of Residential Life