Unpacking and Interrupting Unconscious Bias
A series of workshops designed to develop an understanding of unconscious/implicit bias and strategies for interrupting bias on interpersonal and systemic levels.

Unpacking Unconscious Bias 1.0
(Choose the date that fits your schedule)
Wednesday, September 23
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Wednesday, October 14
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Thursday, November 12
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
How can someone’s race/ethnicity, gender or gender expression, age, ability status, religion, appearance, or other identity factors influence how we view and interact with them—even when we are trying to be open, unbiased, and inclusive? This is an introduction to implicit or unconscious bias and how it influences daily interactions and decision-making. In this interactive session, we also summarize how the brain makes automatic, unconscious associations and takes mental shortcuts that shape attitudes and reinforce stereotypes. Fortunately, it is possible to interrupt (not eliminate) implicit bias to become more inclusive and equitable in our interactions. This virtual workshop presents some of these strategies as a step toward anti-racism and other bias interventions.
Facilitator: Edward Pittman, Senior Associate Dean of the College

Unconscious Bias 2.0 and Dismantling Structural Bias
Prerequisite: Unconscious Bias 1.0
(Choose the date that fits your schedule)
Thursday, October 1
9:30 am – 12:00 pm
Thursday, October 22
9:30 am – 12:00 pm
Thursday, November 19
9:30 am – 12:00 pm
This workshop builds upon introductory unconscious bias concepts and explores the relationship between interpersonal bias and systemic/structural bias. Participants will develop an understanding of how unconscious and explicit bias creates institutional and structural inequities. Participants will also discuss institutional practices and consider how bias may be embedded in such practices/policies and consequently impact outcomes for students, employees, and visitors. A key takeaway from this workshop will be how to think about creating paths for institutional change while shifting from interpersonal to structural responses in our efforts to create more inclusive and equitable campus environments.
Facilitator: Edward Pittman, Senior Associate Dean of the College

Strategies for Challenging anti-Black Racism
Friday, October 2
10:00 am – 11:30 am
As the Black Lives Matter and racial justice movements gain global momentum and students and college employees demand accountability from leadership, many departments are reevaluating their anti-racist culture and strategy. How do you ensure that your actions and leadership are actively anti-racist, sustainable, and accountable to Black members of your campus community? This workshop supports participants in reflecting on how anti-Black racism may “show up” in their roles, learning strategies to challenge anti-Black racism, and brainstorming and committing to pathways forward.
Facilitator: Zahida Sherman, Director of the Multicultural Resource Center, Oberlin College; Founder, Z Crown Consulting

Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)
Thursday, October 8
12 pm - 1:00 pm
According to results from the American College Health Assessment, in 2020, 38.2% of Vassar student respondents (149 students) seriously considered suicide at least once in the prior year. Join us in the collective effort to keep our community members safe. In this workshop faculty, staff and administrators will be trained in QPR, an empirical approach to reducing the risk of suicides. Participants learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide and how to intervene by applying three simple steps that may save a life. Co-sponsored by Counseling Services and the Dean of the Faculty Office.
Facilitators: Wendy Freedman, Director of Counseling Services; Andrea Pesavento, Director, Health Promotion and Education

Leadership, Followership, and Hierarchy
Wednesday, December 2
10:00 am - 12:00 noon
(Contact edpittman@vassar.edu for more information)
This workshop will explore some of the relational and structural elements of organizational leadership. The first part will focus on the relationship between leadership and followership, including an examination of the critical elements involved in playing each of these roles well. The second part will look at the nature of hierarchy in organizations like Vassar, organizations in which the role of hierarchy and its value to the organization is often debated. We will look at the impact of hierarchy on communication in both up and down reporting relationships in organizations. Finally, the workshop will provide participants with a framework for thinking about effective leadership—the individual skills and awareness as well as the institutional structures and roles that enable an organization to accomplish its mission. For Administrators.
Facilitator: David Berg, Organizational Psychologist; Professor, Yale University

Unconscious Bias 3.0 and Systemic Change: What Next?
Prerequisite: Unconscious Bias 2.0
(Choose the date that fits your schedule)
Thursday, December 3
2:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Wednesday, December 9
9:30 am - 12 noon
This workshop encourages participants to think about practices, policies and structures and they might institutionalize inequities that stem from bias (sexism, ableism, anti-Semitism, racism, heterosexism, xenophobia, etc.). Learning about without conscious bias is incomplete without the next steps and conversations about what we can to promote and sustain change. Participant will talk across offices and construct plan for addressing structural bias.
Facilitator: Edward Pittman, Senior Associate Dean of the College

Register at: http://pages.vassar.edu/professional-development/