

Subject: RE: final project draft
Date: Sun, 18 May 2003 19:37:03 -0400
From: "Melissa Moynihan" <Melissa.Moynihan@umb.edu>

Hey ---,

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your draft....your passion for this important topic rings through from start to finish!

I appreciate that this paper is intended to provide the impetus for action research on this topic of prejudice. You've really researched the topic well and your references provide a solid foundation for getting a better understanding of why prejudice exists, even including the biology/cognitive psychology aspects of it. The way you have presented this and walked the "non-experts" (like me) through the topic is very compelling and does a good job of winning support, as your facts truly highlight the need for action!

I found myself coming back to questions pertaining to the "hows" and logistics of implementing the action research. The paper's mission statement, that you have included at the start spells out the intention of the paper, yet I wondered how you would present this material to the key constituents (high level administrators) to win their support. Will you hand them your paper and hope they read it or will you schedule a one on one meeting with them and personally walk them thru it?

On page 3, beginning of the second paragraph, your opening sentence sums up a major point in all of this..."facilitate creative and critical thinking...." This statement should be directly tied to the ACTION that you propose...perhaps by including some specific examples of how to facilitate this type of thinking....One idea that occurred to me is that in the elementary schools, so many classes now have "open circle" to discuss social issues regarding how kids treat each other. Perhaps this open circle time can be partly dedicated to incorporating critical and creative thinking skills, as it pertains to assumptions made of other kids, and soon, this will begin to become automatic for the younger kids....almost as a form of prevention...sorry, for oversimplifying....i recognize the magnitude of the dilemma, but maybe this can be developed further to incorporate the complexities of it all.....

Your 3 step process for change is off to a good start...again, tie this into how the school system may incorporate these steps, with specific examples.

On page 5 the 3rd paragraph is full of great points....You mention the process to change group norms....will this communal and individual reflection and development be offered after school? Who will lead these groups? Are you the facilitator or is there a key administrator in charge?

Perhaps as part of your action plan, at the completion of your first or second successful programs, this program can have its own website, highlighting the successes and pitfalls that the schools faced, in order to help guide other school systems through a similar process.

Your solution section, (with more specifics on the strategies and logistics) will be very appealing to administrators who share your concerns. Or, if they didn't share your concern at the onset of reading your paper, they have probably been persuaded by by your fine definition of a very serious problem!!!

Good luck with pulling it all together, --- ! Hope all is well.

Melissa