

Four Corners Exercise

Each corner represents "Agree", "Strongly Agree", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree". Once students hear the value statement, they are supposed to physically move to the corner of their choice. Facilitator then asks people why they chose that particular corner. People tend to be quiet at first, but when you get to a statement that people feel passionately about, watch out!

1. Sex without love is okay.
2. Segregated housing in terms of race, gender, or special interest should be allowed on campus.
(This one gets tricky for people. They tend to base their answer on race alone, so you also ask whether or not there should be single-sex residence halls, honors residence halls, Greek housing, etc.)
3. Role models are more effective if they are of the same race, gender, and sexual orientation.
4. Racial minorities can be racist.
5. A homophobic joke can be funny. (After the students have made their decision for this one, I usually then ask whether or not a racist joke can be funny. Answers tend to change then, which leads to great conversation about why they are different in the minds of students.)
6. A faculty mentor is more effective if he or she is of the same race or gender as the student.
7. It is okay to have different admission standards to allow for diversity in race, gender, and sexual orientation.
8. English should be the official language of the United States.
9. President Clinton should have been impeached for his infidelity.

The current student group went through this exercise and it was a great opportunity to discuss how individual feelings on a topic can drive behavior. The group felt that it was a good exercise and that more people need to experience identifying their own bias in situations.

This is most likely a diversity exercise I will repeat in other courses.

~Rick Lippert