



The City of Worcester

Executive Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Training & Development

DEI Community Policing Curriculum 2025

Worcester Police Department Academy

Facilitator: Chief Equity Officer, City of Worcester

Schedule: January – June | 12 Sessions | Twice Monthly | 18 hours

Audience: Worcester Police Academy Recruits

Location: Worcester Police Training Academy

Session 1: History and Evolution of Policing

Key Focus:

Understanding the historical development & evolution of law enforcement in the U.S., with an emphasis on its impact on marginalized communities.

Learning Objectives:

- Trace the evolution of policing, particularly in relation to various perspective of systemic racism and power structures.
- Identify historical patterns of injustice and their relevance to current marginalized community dynamics.

Discussion:

- How has the history of policing shaped community distrust?
- What narratives have been excluded or misrepresented?
- How has policing evolved over time, and what lessons can be learned from historical injustices and community interactions?

Practical Application:

- Use historical awareness to inform culturally sensitive policing practices in relation to marginalized communities.

Activity:

- **Collaborative timeline/ events exercise:** Officers examine pivotal moments in U.S. policing history and reflect on how these events influence modern community interactions.



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Homework Assignment

- Reading Assignment: Your choice of a selected reading. Read on the history of policing, focusing on the impact of perceptions of policing in marginalized communities.
 - Reflection Journal: Write a brief reflection on how an understanding of history can shape an officer's approach to community policing.
 - Complete survey
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Session 2: The Cycle of Socialization

Key Focus:

Introduction to Bobbie Harro's Cycle of Socialization, explaining how individuals are socialized into systems of privilege and oppression. In addition, an examination of how this manifest in law enforcement.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the stages of Bobbie Harro's Cycle of Socialization.
 - **First Socialization:** Family, community, and early life experiences shaping our views of identity.
 - **Institutional Socialization:** How education, media, and institutions reinforce biases.
 - **Enforcers:** How peers, media, and societal structures maintain the status quo.
 - **Internalization:** The unconscious way we internalize these socialized norms and biases.
 - **Breaking the Cycle:** Raising awareness and challenging biases in policing.
- Recognize how socialization shapes perceptions and behaviors in policing.

Discussion:

- How have personal and institutional experiences shaped our understanding of identity?
- How does law enforcement reinforce or interrupt socialized norms?

Practical Application:

- Identify areas in daily practice where cycles of bias can be interrupted.

Activity:



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- **Personal Identity Mapping:** Officers map early social influences and identify moments where dominant norms shaped their worldview.

Homework Assignment:

- **Reflection:** Reflect on how breaking the Cycle of Socialization can improve policing practices and community relations. Continue to examine your biases and strive for self-improvement.
 - **Reflection Journal:** Write a brief reflection on what they learned about their own socialization and how it might influence their future work in community policing.
 - **Complete survey**
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Session 3: Introduction to Intersectionality

Key Focus:

Exploring how different identities (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) intersect to create unique lived experiences of privilege and oppression. In addition, analyzing how overlapping identities influence individuals' experiences with policing and systems of power.

Learning Objectives:

- Define and apply the concept of intersectionality.
- Identify vulnerable groups within communities that experience layered marginalization.

Discussion:

- How do identities (e.g., race, gender, disability) intersect in a police interaction?
- Where do we see disparities based on intersecting identities?
- How can understanding intersectionality improve interactions with diverse community members?

Practical Application:

- Adapt engagement strategies to consider multiple identity factors and overlapping lived experiences.

Activity:

- **Case Study Analysis:** Officers evaluate real-world scenarios through an intersectional lens and discuss responsive approaches.



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Homework Assignments

- Reflection: Reflect on how your intersectionality shapes your lived experiences.
- Reflection journal: How does your intersectionality impact or shape your lived experiences.
- Complete survey

Session 4: Understanding Implicit and Explicit Bias

Key Focus:

Distinguishing between implicit (unconscious) and explicit (conscious) bias and examining how each impacts decisions in policing.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify personal biases through reflection and assessment tools.
- Learn how bias affects behavior, decision-making, and public perception.
 - Implicit Bias: Unconscious, automatic stereotypes or attitudes influencing actions.
 - Explicit Bias: Conscious and deliberate attitudes or actions based on prejudice.

Discussion:

- Where does bias manifest in policing procedures, practices and decision making?
- How can officers minimize the influence of bias?

Practical Application:

- Build bias-check routines and accountability structures into professional conduct.
- Identifying how bias affects decisions like arrests, use of force, and community interactions.

Activity:

- **Implicit Association Test (IAT) + Scenario Roleplay:** Officers complete the IAT, reflect on results, and engage in bias-interrupted decision-making exercises.

Homework assignment:

- Officers will take the Implicit Association Test (IAT) to explore their own implicit biases.



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- Complete Survey
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Session 5: Understanding Microaggressions in Policing

Key Focus:

What are microaggressions, and how do they manifest in policing interactions? Understanding subtle but harmful behaviors (microaggressions) and their cumulative impact on marginalized groups.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the historical roots and connection to what makes committing microaggression harmful.
- Learn the various levels and types of microaggression
- Define microaggressions and their impact in community-police encounters/interactions.
- Build the skill to identify and correct harmful language or actions.

Discussion:

- What are examples of microaggressions encountered in law enforcement?
- How can officers be more aware of their interactions?

Practical Application:

- How can officers respond to microaggressions, both in themselves and others, to build more positive community relationships?
- Utilize de-escalation tools that incorporate empathy and respect.

Activity:

- Identifying and discussing microaggressions in law enforcement or general situations, with a focus on responding constructively to them.

Homework assignment:

- Reflection: Have you ever experienced or witnessed a microaggression? How did it make you feel?
- Reflection Journal: Have you ever experienced or witnessed microaggression? How did it make you feel?
- Complete survey



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Session 6: Mid-Program Integration: Bias Mitigation & Action Plan Foundations

Key Focus:

Review foundational concepts and begin forming a personal action plan to improve equity and accountability in law enforcement practice.

Mid-Program Recap of Core Concepts:

- History of Policing and systemic injustice
- Cycle of socialization and institutional norms
- Intersectionality and layered identity
- Implicit and explicit bias
- Microaggressions and trust erosion

Learning Objectives:

- Synthesize knowledge from previous sessions.
- Connect personal experiences with systemic patterns in law enforcement.
- Begin mapping a personal DEI Action Plan.

Discussion:

- Which concepts have had the biggest impact on your understanding?
- Where do you see opportunities for growth in yourself and your department?
- What can you utilize in your plan to help execute your plan?
- What challenges might arise in implementing these personal action plans?
- How can officers hold themselves and their peers accountable for bias reduction?
- How can these commitments strengthen community relationships?

Practical Application:

- Use this session to reflect and lay the foundation for meaningful, achievable change.

Activity:

- **Personal Action Plan Brainstorm** — Officers will create an individual action plan to commit to bias mitigation in their policing practices.



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- Identify 3 key biases you have recognized in themselves or the system.
- List 5 actionable steps you will take to mitigate these biases in daily policing.
- Define one long-term goal for maintaining equitable policing.
- Share their action plans in small groups and provide feedback.

Homework Assignment

- Reflection Journal: Continue to work on your personal action plan
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Session 7: Anti-Discrimination & Bias

Key Focus:

Exploring workplace discrimination, harassment, and related police oversight in Massachusetts.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the definitions of discrimination and unconscious bias
- Understand the recent history of police oversight initiatives
- Discrimination and unconscious bias:
 - How to recognize both
 - How to prevent both

Discussion:

- What systems exist in the department to prevent misconduct?
- How can officers participate in a culture of accountability?

Practical Application:

- Apply city policies and procedures in everyday work environments.

Activity:

- Review relevant data
- Review of the Racial Equity Audit
- Review cases involving marginalized members and police

Homework Assignment:

- **Reflection:** Reflect on your personal experiences and how they pertain to today's lesson



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- **Reflection Journal**
 - Discuss a time when you yourself have been the victim of discrimination or Sexual Harassment/ Protected Class Harassment (SH/PCH). How did this make you feel? What did you do?
 - Discuss a time when you observed someone else being subjected to discrimination or SH/PCH. How did this make you feel? What did you do?
 - Reflect on your own personal internal biases. What internal biases are you aware of in yourself? What do you do to counteract these biases?
 - Complete Survey
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Sessions 8 & 9: Community Involvement & Trust-Building (Panel Series)

Key Focus:

Fostering empathy, partnership, and trust through direct engagement with local community leaders, cultural advocates, and youth organizations.

Learning Objectives:

- Listen to diverse community voices with an open and empathetic lens.
- Apply cultural insights to real-life policing to improve community policing
- Understand the challenges with each community and what to be aware with to inform your engagement with that community.

Discussion:

- Who are you and the work of your organization?
- The specific community you represent, including the challenges and strengths of this population?
- Key insights for law enforcement officers on how to engage respectfully and effectively with your community.
- How can law enforcement better align with community values?

Day 1 – Community Voices: Culture, Advocacy & Accessibility

Panelists:

- Mayor of Worcester



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- Assistant Principal, University Park Campus School
- City Manager's Office – Latine Representative
- Vice Chair, Accessibility Advisory Commission
- Homeless Project Manager
- LGBT Asylum Task Force Representative
- Chair, Human Rights Commission
- President, Worcester NAACP

Activity:

- Live Q&A with panelists + group discussion: "How can I improve engagement with these communities in my daily role?"

Day 2 – Community Voices: Youth, Health, Identity-Based Leadership

Panelists:

- City Councilor - Jewish Community Representative
- Worcester Public Schools (Principal & Dean)
- CEO, YWCA Central Massachusetts
- Executive Director, Southeast Asian Coalition
- President & CEO, MA Women of Color Coalition
- AIDS Project Worcester Representative
- CEO, Boys & Girls Club
- YMCA Central MA Community Relations Director

Activity:

- Live Q&A with panelists + group discussion: "How can I improve engagement with these communities in my daily role?"

Homework assignment

- Reflection: Reflect on how you plan to best support Worcester communities
- Reflection Journal: Based on the presentations, pick a community you will add to your action plan to support as officer. This should be a community you are not familiar with.

Session 10: Action Plan Workshop



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Key Focus:

Continue to develop a strategic, measurable, and personally meaningful action plan for equitable policing and bias mitigation.

Learning Objectives:

- Translate all classroom learning into practical steps.
- Set short- and long-term goals for growth and accountability.

Discussion:

- What are the barriers to implementing this plan?
- How will I sustain this work beyond the academy?

Practical Application:

- Create actionable steps with SMART goals and accountability support.

Activity:

- **Plan Building Workshop** — Officers use templates to finalize their DEI Action Plan draft and participate in peer feedback groups.
 - Identify 3 key biases you have recognized in yourself or the system.
 - List 5 actionable steps you will take to mitigate these biases in daily policing.
 - Define one long-term goal for maintaining equitable policing.
 - Share their action plans in small groups and provide feedback.
 - Community section – identify and how will you make a commitment to support a community that you are unfamiliar with?

Homework assignment:

- Reflections: reflect on how you plan to best support your selected community
- Assignment: Finalize your presentation to present your Personal Action Plans

Sessions 11 & 12: Final Reflections & Action Plan Presentations

Key Focus:

Concluding the program with structured presentations that showcase individual learning, strategy, and commitment.



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Learning Objectives:

- Articulate key takeaways from the DEI curriculum.
- Provide a brief reflection on your overall experience in the DEI academy.
- Present a clearly defined and community-conscious action plan.
- Engage in collaborative dialogue and accountability with peers.

Presentation Requirements:

Each officer must present:

- 3 personal key biases or behaviors they will actively address
 - For each bias identified, outline 5 specific actions you will take to reduce or eliminate that bias in your daily policing work.
- 1 short-term strategy to implement in their daily practice
- 1 long-term commitment to equity-informed policing
- How they plan to maintain accountability in the field
- One community partner or resource they intend to build trust with and commit to supporting

Activity:

- **Officer Presentations:** 10 -15-minute presentations followed by peer Q&A, cohort discussion, and closing circle ceremony.

Sessions 13: Departmental DEI Ceremony!!

Officers are awarded a DEI certificate, recognizing their completion of the course and their commitment, by the Chief Equity Officer, the Mayor, the Chief of Police, City Councilors, and the WPD leadership team.