Purpose:
This workbook includes the necessary exercises, quizzes and reflections for you to complete the anti-oppression workshop. The purpose of the workbook is to ensure active participation with the workshop material. Your responses in the workbook will not be evaluated, shared or distributed without your consent. Not all responses need to be detailed or lengthy, so long as you demonstrate your engagement with the workshop content.

Definitions for various terms are woven throughout the material. A glossary of definitions is appended to the end of this workbook. Feel free to flip to it and add to it as needed.

Session 1: Understanding Oppression
Foundation, Concepts, and Introductory Themes

**Exercise 1.1:** Briefly write down what you hope to take away from this workshop. Do you feel that you already have a strong understanding of anti-oppression, or is this your first time coming across the concept? Are there any specific topics that you would like to learn more about? Hold on to these reflections and compare it to your reflections on what you have learned at the end.

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**Exercise 1.2:** What images or thoughts come to mind you think of oppression? Have you encountered the concept before?

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Exercise 1.3: How have you navigated overt and covert types of oppression in the past? What forms of overt and covert types of oppression have you witnessed, participated in, or were on the receiving end of? What do you think are some overt and covert types of oppression that show up in your club/society functions?

Exercise 1.4: We pose, as a very broad question – why is there oppression? In thinking about why oppression exists, can you identify some historical events or ideas that are at the root of oppression? What are some current impacts, legacies, and manifestations of oppression?

Exercise 1.5: Who do you think holds power – and who do you think doesn’t? When you think of something as being powerful, what kinds of images come to mind? What embodies power? Conversely, what embodies powerlessness?
**Exercise 1.6:** Intersectionality word association exercise: Using an intersectional framework, match each term with their appropriate definition by drawing a line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ableism</td>
<td>Oppression whose primary attribute is domination over women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classism</td>
<td>Oppression of people who do not identify with their assigned sex at birth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Oppression of those who do not conform to heterosexual norms, who are same-sex loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarchy</td>
<td>Oppression of those who identify as Black, Indigenous or racialized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisgenderism</td>
<td>Oppression of those without economic means, privileging those with wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homophobia</td>
<td>Privilege of those who are able-bodied</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 1.7:** The following is a series of questions which asks you to identify the various social locations that you occupy. This list is not exhaustive, and offers a starting point for reflection.

1. I attend a post-secondary institution.
2. My parents have an university education.
3. English is my first language.
4. I can find band-aids at most stores that match my skin tone.
5. Public transportation is not my only form of transportation.
6. I have no problem finding foundation/beauty products that work with my skin tone.
7. I can access healthy and culturally-appropriate food at most grocery stores.
8. I feel as though my identity (race, skin colour, language, religion) is well-represented in the institution.
9. I can fit into most clothing stores' generic size range.
10. I consider myself to be able-bodied.
11. I consider myself to be neurotypical.
12. I have never been asked if I am “from here”.
13. I have access to a community that I feel represented in. (Cultural, religious, etc.)
14. I feel comfortable showing romantic affection towards my partner in public without fear of ridicule, repercussion or violence.
15. I feel comfortable wearing my hair naturally.
16. I do not have an invisible illness or disability.
17. I feel comfortable calling the police if I am in trouble.
18. I have accepted something (i.e. scholarship, job, school) based on my association with a friend or family member. (Access to opportunity based on connection).
19. I feel comfortable making mistakes without folks attributing them to my identity (i.e. race, gender, religion, etc.)
20. I always feel comfortable walking home alone at night.
21. I have studied the culture of my ancestors in elementary school and feel as though it was an accurate representation of our history.
22. I have never been made fun of or bullied for something that was beyond my control/ could not change.
23. I have never missed a bill payment due to insufficient funds.
24. I have never been cat-called.
25. I see people who look like me in TV and movies.
26. I have never been stopped by the police for being ‘suspicious’
27. I have never been denied a promotion or a job for no apparent reason.
28. My ancestors willingly settled in Canada.
29. I feel safe when going downtown to bars and club.
30. I have never experienced family rejection because of my gender/sexual identity.
31. I do not have to work part time to make ends meet.
32. I have never not been able to attend an event because it was inaccessible.

**Exercise 1.8:** What are questions that made you reflect in ways you may not have before? What questions resonated with you? What questions should be added to this list?

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SESSION 1 QUIZ

1. The three (intersecting) forms of oppression are:
   a. Systemic, interpersonal, intersectional
   b. Social, physical, cognitive
   c. Systemic, interpersonal, epistemological
   d. Environmental, physical, social

2. Provide a definition of intersectionality, and briefly describe its importance:
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

3. Name two systemic phenomena at the root of present-day oppression:
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   
   *Answers: white supremacy, settler colonialism, patriarchy, cis-genderism, heterosexism or heteronormativity, ableism, classism, fatphobia*

4. Positionality is the idea that various people occupy different 'social locations' according to their race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic background, citizenship status, religion, and ability.
   a. TRUE
   b. FALSE

5. Anti-oppression is the practice of:
   a. Learning about oppression
   b. Challenging oppression when you see it
   c. Identifying and challenging all forms of oppression
   d. Not believing that oppression exists
   e. Answers a, b, and c.
Session 2: Current and Local Contexts
Oppression in Canada, Nova Scotia, and Dalhousie University

Exercise 2.1: Have you learnt about the history of oppression in so-called Canada and Nova Scotia? What did you learn? How was it taught? Do you think that this teaching was adequate?

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Exercise 2.2: Shade or check each circle to identify whether you previously have encountered a historical fact or concept related to Canada, Nova Scotia’s and Dalhousie’s history of oppression. Don’t worry if you haven’t heard of something before – this exercise is for you to learn and self-reflect, not to be evaluated on.

Anti-Black Racism

- Did you know that many of early-eighteenth century Halifax’s leading families and social and political leaders were pro-slavery, Confederacy supporters?
- Did you know that the man who founded Dalhousie University, of George Ramsay the 9th Earl of Dalhousie, was racist toward Africans and their descendants?
- Did you know that Dalhousie College and other Nova Scotia’s provincial institutions and infrastructure were created, in part, with revenue from slavery-based economies?
- Did you know that some enslaved Black people actually escaped pre-Confederation Canada to seek freedom in the Northern American states in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in a migration that has been called the “reverse underground railroad”?
- Did you know that the Ku Klux Klan and other white nationalists were active forces in Canada? By 1922, there were Klan members in Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Québec, with as many as 25,000 KKK members in the country.
- Did you know that the last segregated school in Canada closed in 1983?
- Did you know that in the city of Halifax, Black people were six times more likely to be stopped and questioned, or “carded” by police than white people? (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Street Check Report, March 2019)
Anti-Indigeneity

- Did you know that the French, who were the first European nation to colonize parts of Canada (called New France), enslaved Indigenous people?
- Did you know that after his re-election in 1878, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald orchestrated a state-sanctioned famine for Indigenous communities in the Canadian Prairies, in order to force relocation onto reserves and to facilitate colonization by white settlers?
- Did you know that there were enforced segregation policies that restricted Indigenous peoples’ movements from 1885 to the mid 1950’s under a “pass system”, in which they had to have special permission to leave reserves?
- Did you know that the last residential school didn’t close until 1996?
- Did you know that at any given time, some 100 First Nations communities are under boil water advisories?
- Did you know that Indigenous children (aged 0-14) account for approximately 7.7% of Canada’s population, but represent 52.2% of children in foster care?
- Did you know that Indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to be to be missing or murdered than any other women in Canada?

Anti-2SLGBTQ+

- Did you know that in 1841, the Canadian Criminal Code began to impose the death penalty for all persons engaging in same-sex sexual relationships?
- Did you know that in the 1950’s and 1960’s, the RCMP began to keep a list of all known homosexual people in some Canadian cities? They did this with the purpose of forcing them out of government jobs, denying them promotions, and to track people who crossed the US border.
- Did you know that the criminalization of homosexuality in Canada did not end until 1969?
- Did you know that while it is prohibited in some provinces and municipalities, conversion therapy is not yet fully prohibited across Canadian law?

Exercise 2.3: Have you heard the term ‘state violence’ before? Why is state violence important to identify in the context of anti-oppression? What is the state?

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Exercise 2.4: How have you navigated overt and covert types of oppression in the past? What forms of overt and covert types of oppression have you witnessed, participated in, or were on the receiving end of? What do you think are some overt and covert types of oppression that show up in your club/society functions?

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Exercise 2.5: Have you heard of, witnessed, participated in, or experienced oppression at Dalhousie? How did it impact you and others in the situation? How did you address the situation? What supports did you utilize? How can you proactively address similar issues when in your position of leadership?

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SESSION 2 QUIZ:

1. A commonly-held belief is that forms of oppression in Canada (both in the past and in the present) are not “as bad” as they are in the United States. Given what you have learned, do you think that this is true?
   A. True
   B. False

2. State violence and overt oppression are the same thing.
   A. True
   B. False

3. Provide one brief example of oppression that occurs at Dalhousie University. If you have personally experienced oppression at the school and feel comfortable sharing your experiences, you may do so.
4. Does your chosen example fall into covert or overt oppression? Why?

5. Can you identify the individual, systemic, and epistemological aspects of this example?

Session 3: Decolonization and Liberation
Applying an Anti-Oppressive Lens to Club & Society Affairs

Exercise 3.1: Can you identify the ways in which you club or society might exhibit features of settler-colonialism? How might you contribute to decolonization at Dalhousie (and in Canadian society broadly) through your role as a club and society leader?

Exercise 3.2: Write down words that you associate with the term ‘liberation’. Can you reflect on what liberation means, and why it’s important in the context of anti-oppression?

Exercise 3.3: What do you think of when they hear the word safe space? What are safer spaces, and why are they important in the context of a club and society? What kinds of attitudes and behaviors contribute to the existence of safer spaces? How might you make your club and society a safer space?
Exercise 3.4: Can you identify specific examples of what oppression might look like in the context of your club & society? In the context of your club & society, how might you go about addressing and challenging this oppression?

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Exercise 3.5: Return to your responses to the question “What do you hope to take away from this workshop?” Having completed this workshop, is there anything that you have learned that you didn’t know before? Do you feel like this training was valuable? Do you feel that, with this knowledge, you will be able to execute the duties of your club and society using an anti-oppression framework?

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SESSION 3 QUIZ:

1. Briefly describe decolonization, and speak to its importance:

___________________________

2. Liberation involves envisioning a society that is not governed by hierarchy, inequality, and by unequal power relationship:

___________________________
a. TRUE
b. FALSE

3. Safer spaces are:
   a. A place where people feel like they can be authentically themselves
   b. A space where people are compassionate, non-judgmental and supportive
   c. When someone listens to another person’s perspective without interrupting or talking over them
   d. All of the above

4. Which of the following is NOT a way to practice anti-oppression in your daily life?
   A. Learn skills for self-reflection and interpersonal accountability
   B. Learn to see outside your own experiences and perspectives
   C. Always put yourself first
   D. Educate yourself on the history of oppression

5. Provide one example of something that your club & society currently does to make events inclusive, and another example of something that you could do differently.

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Feedback:
The following section is for you to provide feedback on this anti-oppression training. At Human Rights and Equity Services, we are constantly working to ensure that our educational work is the most effective and up-to-date as possible. Therefore, we appreciate any feedback on how to improve this anti-oppression programming.

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Definitions

Oppression:
Oppression is the act of one social group using power or privilege for its own benefit while disempowering, marginalizing, and subordinating another group. There are often said to be three kinds of oppression: systemic/institutional, individual/interpersonal, and internalized/epistemological. Oppression may also be overt or covert.

Systemic/Institutional Oppression:
Systemic oppression describes a network of institutions, policies, and practices that create advantages and benefits for some while perpetuating discrimination, oppression, and disadvantages for others. Systemic oppression is rooted in ‘systems’ exclusion that have persisted across space and time.

Interpersonal/Individual Oppression:
Interpersonal oppression occurs when individuals engage in oppressive behavior against another person or a group of people. This form of oppression includes acts such as direct violence and attacks, insults, harassment, discrimination, or more subtle micro-aggressions and microinsults.

Epistemological/Internalized Oppression:
Epistemology is the theory and study of knowledge production. As a form of oppression, it describes how dominant forms of knowledge functions to erase and devalue the knowledge
produced by marginalized people. We may also describe oppression as ‘internalized’ to describe the fact that many people may hold oppressive beliefs or values in which they do not necessarily recognize as being harmful or oppressive.

**Anti-Oppression**

Anti-oppression means actively identifying and challenging all forms of oppression. Anti-oppression is both an idea and a practice. Being anti-oppressive requires understanding the various manifestations of oppression, and challenging them in your life, relationships and actions.

**Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is a theory that originates in radical Black Feminist scholarship, which posits that we need to fundamentally account for the intersecting and interconnected features of oppression. Intersectionality argues that social categorizations such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability create interdependent systems of social discrimination and disadvantage. A person’s identity in relation to these intersecting factors will subsequently shape their lived experiences with oppression.

**Positionality**

Positionality is the multiple social identities that a person holds. Any given person may hold multiple privileged and marginalized identities according to their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and other social categories. Positionality is the social space that we occupy in relation to other people, which is why it is also commonly referred to as your social location.

**Safer Spaces**

Safer spaces are environments, whether in a classroom, a club & society, or in a group of friends, where people feel comfortable, supported, and respected. A safer space is where people feel that they can be authentically themselves, and don’t fear judgement, criticism, or rejection. A safer space is something that is made and maintained by people in a social setting.

**Liberation**

Liberation is freedom from oppression. At its core, liberation is about envisioning a society that is not governed by hierarchy, inequality, and by unequal power relationships.

**Decolonization**
Decolonization requires recognizing the historical legacy of settler-colonialism, and actively working to challenge its present-day manifestations of violence against Indigenous people. Decolonization also requires centering Indigenous voices, perspectives and experiences.

More definitions can be found in the Social Justice Terms Glossary.