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Jamk's principles for a safer space

1 Introduction

Jamk's principles for a safer space have a goal to make it possible for the members of the community to participate and work together regardless of one's background in all Jamk's actions. In a safer space you are not judged, and everyone gets respect and support as they are including diversity. For example, in teaching and guiding situations you can sometimes be out of your comfort zone which might evoke uncomfortable feelings. However, you should remember that you can't always avoid uncomfortable feelings because they are a natural part of the learning process. A respectful and appreciative atmosphere makes it possible to face difficult emotions and to talk about them if necessary. Principles for a safer space are made to give tools for individuals to intervene with situations and discuss issues together.

Principles for a safer space are learned together so making mistakes and learning about them is possible. Principles presented here are not flawless, but they are meant to be adapted in different situations. To make a safer space possible, their meaning needs to be worded in a way that is suitable for practice. A teacher can for example go through the principles in the first course meeting, so everyone knows what kind of rules apply in actions together. It would be important to present Jamk's principles for a safer space also for example in staff trainings and other Jamk's events.

Jamk's principles for a safer space are one of the actions in Jamk's equality plan. In addition to Jamk's equality and accessibility plans these principles are also affected by Finnish constitutional and equality laws.

2 Actual principles

- **Don't bully**, discriminate, act disruptively or treat others with disrespect. Pay attention also to unintended situations where you might have acted wrong without your knowledge. Be open to the feedback you receive and if necessary be ready to act differently in the future. Treat others equally regardless of their:
 - age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political or trade union activity, family affairs, health condition, disability, sexual orientation, or any other reason related to a person.
- **Intervene and speak up**. Creating a safer space is everyone's responsibility. If you see or experience a space unsafe, talk about it with the party concerned. It is important to bring up your own point of view constructively without insulting or blaming others.
- **Respect** others' right to personal space, self-determination, and bodily integrity. Everyone has their own personal boundaries that need to be respected. You need to identify your boundaries yourself first and say them out loud so you can tell others about them.

Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulu	Postiosoite/Address	Puhelin/Tel.	Faksi/Fax	Internet	Y-tunnus
JAMK University of Applied Sciences	PL 207 FI-40101 Jyväskylä FINLAND	0207438100 +358 20 743 8100	(014) 4499694 +358 14 4499694	www.jamk.fi	1006550-2

- In an online learning environment, you need to show up with your own name and picture and make sure that outsiders aren't present and/or within hearing distance.
- **Acknowledge your own presumptions.** Everyone makes assumptions but actions based on them can be harmful. With your own actions you can build a safer learning environment where everyone can be themselves while respecting others.
- **Use understandable language.** Understandable language means for example explaining hard terms and using English instead of Finnish when there are others than Finnish-speaking people present. Understandability also means that communication is clear and appropriate.
- **Listen and be heard.** In addition to listening, it is important to aim to understand others. Understanding others is a part of interaction and dialogue skills. In communication and discussions with others you need to act with respect and appreciate different points of view. Remember that communication also includes non-verbal communication: body positions, facial expressions, and gestures. You can always ask if you have understood the thing correctly and ask more about others' way of thinking.