



## SCOPE Tip of the Week Member Newsletter

July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013

### A Call to Action: Men's Groups

In 2003 at a prior institution of mine, a group of staff, faculty and students started a weekly group to discuss issues related to men. Specifically, we wanted to explore what it meant to be a gentleman in modern times. Was the term hopelessly outdated? Could it be seen as openly sexist given how far feminism had evolved? What did it mean to be a “good” guy on campus?

We talked about how men were supposed to be seen as strong and independent, but also good listeners, caring friends and partners. We were supposed to take charge, but also be aware of how our jokes could cross a line and become offensive.

We had some solid discussions, though I'm not sure we came to any clear conclusions. We enjoyed spending time with each other talking about issues of masculinity as part of our campus community. Conversations became about understanding perspectives, explaining motivations and righting misunderstandings. The shared searching might have been the best part of our men's group.

Perhaps, in the end, this was the real goal.

Are there enough opportunities for men to gather and talk about how they are viewed on campus? Maybe it would help if we began to just sit down with each other and try to understand what it means to be a man on campus. How do you balance strength with vulnerability? How can men express their views and be understood in a way that respects other groups on campus? At SCOPE, we'd love to hear about how your efforts in this area are received.

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