**Common Ground Activity Introduction**

• Purpose is to help create awareness about the differences and commonalities

present within this group, and within the Reed community.

• Intended to raise awareness about the danger of making assumptions and the complexity of intersections of our social identities

• Works best if everyone is quiet and listens to what others say

• Will be reading specific statements/characteristics. Raise your hand (or step forward) if you identify with the statement (if the statement is true for you).

• DISCLAIMER: Everyone has the right to PASS. There will be time at the end to discuss the experience, but during the activity, it’s important for everyone to remain quiet and observant.

**SET UP:**

* Have group form a large circle
* The activity can be adapted for varying settings and physical abilities. You can use chairs and have participants stand up/sit down. Also can have participants seated and raise hands for the statements (if doing this, it’s important that participants all can see one another or the activity loses some of it’s impact).

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You were born outside of North America

You were born east of the Mississippi

You were born west of the Mississippi

You were born north of the Mason-Dixon line

You were born south of the Mason-Dixon line

You grew up in a rural area

You grew up in a suburban area

You grew up in an urban or metropolitan area

You grew up in a country different than your parent(s)’ birth country

You were homeschooled

You went to a public high school

You went to a prep high school

You went to a private high school

You went to a religious high school

You went to a boarding boarding school

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You grew up a two parent household

You grew up in a one-parent household

You grew up with a guardian who was not a biological parent

You are an only child

You have a family member who is or was in the military

You have a friend who is or was in the military

You have served in the military

You are (or have been) responsible for full-time care for another human being

You know someone who is in jail

You have ever done something for which you could have been arrested

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You or someone in your family has experienced homelessness

You grew up in a household where you have skipped a meal out of necessity

Your parent or guardian is or has been unemployed

You identify as having a middle class background

You identify as having an upper middle class background

You identify as having an owner class background

You identify as having a working class background

You grew up in a family that has experienced significant shifts in socio-economic class status

You have felt embarrassed about your household’s socio-economic class

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You were the first person in your family to graduate from high school

You will be the first person in your family to graduate from college

One or more of your parents or guardians has a four-year degree

One or more of your parents or guardians has a graduate degree

One or more of your parents or guardians has multiple graduate degrees

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You identify as being an introvert

You identify as being an extrovert

You worry that your introversion or extroversion won’t fit in at Reed

You identify as being politically conservative

You identify as being politically liberal

You identify as being politically libertarian

You identify as being politically radical

You have engaged in political action based on your political ideology

**SWITCH QUESTIONERS HERE**

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You identify as having a learning disability

You identify as having an emotional or physical disability that may not be visible to others

You have experienced a temporary or long-term change in your physical ability that impacted your daily activities

You have a family member who experiences a mental or emotional condition that impacts their daily activities

You have a family member or friend who has struggled to overcome addictions

Choosing to avoid the use of alcohol or other substances is an important value for you

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You identify as spiritual but not necessarily with a specific religious tradition

You identify as agnostic

You identify as atheist

You identify as pagan

You identify as Muslim

You identify as Hindu

You identify as Jewish

You identify as Buddhist

You identify as Christian

You identify as being of Indigenous or Native American descent

You identify as being of Middle Eastern descent

You identify as being of Hispanic or Latino descent

You identify as being of African descent

You identify as being of Asian descent

You identify as being of Pacific Islander descent

You identify as being of Caucasian descent

You identify as biracial or multiracial

You feel culturally aligned to your ethnic and racial heritage

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You identify as being male

You identify as being female

You identify outside of the gender binary

You identify as the sex or gender you were assigned at birth

You have had to / will have to ‘come out’ in order for people to know your sexual orientation and/or gender identity

You identify as being gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, or queer

You identify as being heterosexual

You have ever questioned your sexual orientation

**To the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand if:**

You ever bullied someone else

You have ever been bullied

You feel that you have been isolated because of an aspect of your identity

You feel that you have isolated another person because of an aspect of their identity

There is some aspect of your identity that is frequently misunderstood or oversimplified

You have misunderstood or oversimplified an aspect of someone else’s identity

You have ever struggled with aspects of someone else’s identity

You are excited about sharing a particular aspect of your culture with your new Reed community

You are excited to learn about the particular cultures and experiences of members of your new Reed community

There was a statement for which you could have stepped forward but chose not to.

Invite participants to share their own statements with the group.

**DEBRIEF DISCUSSION**

In large group, small groups, or pairs of two (depending on size of group):

* How are you feeling now?
* Were you aware of feeling a strong reaction to certain questions for which you stepped forward versus others?
* What did you notice about the statements (if applicable) for which no one stepped forward?
* What did you learn about yourself or others from this activity?

As a reminder, the purpose of this activity is to help create awareness about the differences and commonalities present within this group, and within the Reed community.

We encourage you to continue to ask each other questions and learn from each other, **always from a place of respect and honor,** as you begin this journey together.