Advancing Equity and Inclusion in the Classroom

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“The first question is: Can learning take place if in fact it silences the voices of people it is supposed to teach? And the answer is: Yes. People learn they don’t count.”

AGENDA

• Why an inclusive teaching approach?
• Activity: Scenario Discussions
• Questions & additional resources
Inclusive Teaching Strategies

Inclusive teaching strategies refer to any number of teaching approaches that invite students with a diversity of backgrounds, abilities, and learning preferences into a learning experience. These strategies contribute to an educational environment that conveys that all students are valued and respected participants. The goal of inclusive teaching is to motivate students to take intellectual risks not to reside in a comfortable or “safe” space.
Pair-Share Exercise

Turn to a person near you and discuss one thing that you have experienced as a teacher or learner that has invited students – particularly SOURCE students (Students of underrepresented cultures and ethnicities), trans students, first generation college students, and international students- to experience a sense of belonging.

Take 5 minutes
Incorporating diverse perspectives into a course allows you to:

- Connect with and reach out to a wider range of students.
- Help students gain an understanding of, and respect for multiple perspectives, experiences, and cultural backgrounds.
- Develop critical thinking skills and empathy.
Scenarios

The following situations are meant to serve as launching sites for discussion, reflection, and debate. These are inspired by, but not identical to, situations that staff and faculty have encountered at the college.

Take 10 minutes to discuss your scenario.
Scenario One

You learn from a student in your class that another student, Alex, is upset that they have been mis-gendered by you and by other students. Alex rarely speaks in class and you had assumed Alex used “she/her” gender pronouns. When you check the moodle site, Alex’s pronoun is “not set.” You are 6 weeks into the semester and feel uncomfortable asking about students’ pronouns at this point. **What would you do upon learning of Alex’s concern? What could the professor have done earlier to avoid this mistake? Are there ways you can imagine learning students’ pronouns and preferred first names?**
Scenario Two

You are concerned about a student who missed several classes, is silent during discussion, and never makes a deadline. They are falling behind in class and it’s nearing the middle of the semester. The student’s writing is satisfactory and their essays indicate they have a basic grasp of the material. You are concerned that the student may be struggling with depression or anxiety and that it is preventing them from participating successfully in class…but you aren’t sure.

What is the professor’s responsibility to the student in this scenario? How can you support this student’s academic work moving forward?
Scenario Three

One month into the semester, the Center for Academic Support and Advising (CASA) contacted you to request flexibility and understanding because one of your students was assaulted over the weekend. You reached out to the student by email to show support. You have a three class absence policy. The student missed one class earlier in the semester and two classes immediately after the assault. The student submitted the next two assignments late without communicating with you. The student then missed three more classes because they were hospitalized due to PTSD. They emailed you that they intend to return for the next class. It near the withdrawal deadline and you have not received the proposal for the final project. You are worried the student will not successfully complete the course. You are considering reaching out to the student to ask them to withdraw from the course.

What are your concerns with this scenario? What can the professor do in this situation? What could the professor have done before this moment? What can the professor do after this moment?
Scenario Four

You are teaching a writing course in which students discuss short stories and workshop their own writing during class time. After a male student shared a “coming of age” story that detailed a sexual encounter, a female student visited you during office hours. She was angry and said she felt that the class had been unsafe for her. She refused to attend classes in which male students will be talking explicitly about women’s bodies.

What do you do? Is there anything that you could have done earlier in the semester to prepare for the student’s concern? What do you do moving forward in semester?
Additional Resources

- Center for Teaching and Learning Website
  [ctl.hampshire.edu](http://ctl.hampshire.edu)

- Pedagogy, Diversity, & Power Seminar
  Mondays, 3:00pm-5:00pm
  Oct. 2, 16, 30, Nov 30, and Dec. 4

- ENGAGE! Hampshire’s Community Education Conference
  Tuesday, October 24th- propose sessions and participate!

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