



Demystifying Inclusive Pedagogy

Demystifying Inclusive Pedagogy

Centre for Teaching & Learning

Concordia University Library

Tiohtiá:ke (Montreal)



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Thank you, Rachel Harris, for providing the support and enthusiasm to enable us to start our foray into authoring Pressbooks.

Land acknowledgement

When you read these words, it is an opportunity to connect with your relationship to the land on which you are situated. This is an invitation for you to reflect on your relationship to its Indigenous and other peoples, the land, its waters, and all other living things.



Close-up view of dramatic shadows on surface waves of the Kaniatarowanenneh (St. Lawrence seaway) running through the city of Montreal.

I/We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on [unceded Indigenous lands](#). The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtià:ke/Montréal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.



Closeup of the bark of a tree in Tiothtiá:ke (Montreal).

You may discover more about Concordia's land acknowledgement, including its history, [at this webpage](#).

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About the Centre for Teaching and Learning

The [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#) (CTL) at Concordia University provides support and resources to the teaching community. We use evidence-based approaches to support excellence, opportunity and inclusion for all of the academic community.

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Accessibility statement

This resource has been designed using the following accessibility features:

- All images which are not decorative have authored alternative text. Decorative images have empty quotes.
- Properly structured pages and use of headings.
- This book is available in PDF and, for eReaders in EPUB and MOBI formats.

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Introduction

When it comes to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning experience for students, it can be hard to know where to start.

Inclusive Pedagogy can be considered an umbrella term that can be broken down into three key elements:

- [course design](#),
- [classroom environment](#), and
- [course delivery](#).

Separating and distinguishing between all three can help make inclusive teaching feel more manageable and less like a one-size-fits-all model.

These pages contain an overview of what each element encompasses, important considerations for instructors who seek to integrate inclusive teaching into their practice, and a discussion of how inclusive teaching impacts students.

It is important to remember that just as inclusive teaching aims to be responsive to and reflective of diverse learners in the classroom (Gumport, 2000), these options are intended to be **flexible and adaptive to the diverse courses, disciplines, and teaching experiences of instructors** at Concordia. It is equally important to note that instructors should **adopt small changes** from the guidelines to gradually integrate inclusive practices in their approach to teaching and learning.

Summary

Inclusive Pedagogy is about making decisions about course design, course delivery, and classroom environment to facilitate and sustain a more inclusive learning experience for students. Though there are many different ways to adopt and integrate these practices into teaching, the focus lies in selecting and incorporating the methods that best suit the instructor. Just like a menu offers a variety of options to cater to different tastes and preferences, inclusive pedagogy provides a range of approaches so that instructors have the flexibility to pick and choose strategies that align with their teaching style, subject matter, and the needs of their students. While every instructor may be working from a different starting point when incorporating inclusive pedagogies, the shared outcome is to set the foundation for creating an equitable and student-centred course (Guðjónsdóttir & Óskarsdóttir, 2016).

References

- Guðjónsdóttir, H., & Óskarsdóttir, E. (2016). Inclusive education, pedagogy and practice. *Science education towards inclusion*, 7–22.
- Gumport, P. J. (2000). Academic restructuring: Organizational change and institutional imperatives. *Higher Education*, 39(1), 67–91.

I

Course design

Summary

Course design is about the design of the course, including its activities, materials, and assignments (Hogan & Sathy, 2022; Waitoller & Thorius, 2016; Wrigley, 2005). The following presents evidence-based guidelines for adopting a more inclusive course design.

References

- Hogan, K. A., & Sathy, V. (2022). *Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom*. West Virginia University Press.
- Waitoller, F. R., & Thorius, K. A. K. (2016). Cross-pollinating culturally sustaining pedagogy and universal design for learning: Toward an inclusive pedagogy that accounts for Dis/Ability. *Harvard Educational Review*, 86(3), 366–389, 473–474.
- Wrigley, T. (2005). Inclusive pedagogies — restoring agency and voice to the learner. *Revista Iberoamericana Sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio En Educación*, 3(1), 297–315.

1

Course topics

Explore topics from a range of perspectives, lenses, and vantage points (Tuitt, 2009).

Impact: Allows students to gain a deeper understanding of complex topics while showing the value of differing viewpoints and fostering critical thinking skills. Depending on the topics selected, this strategy can foster an appreciation for diverse cultures, identities, ideas, and ways of knowing.

Example: Exploring topics from a range of perspectives, lenses, and vantage points

For example, exploring the topic of Public Health can be done using:

- A race-conscious lens, where students learn to pay attention to race while analyzing problems, searching for solutions, and defining successful policy
- A gender-conscious lens, where students learn to pay attention to gender norms, gender-based discrimination, and gender inequities as social determinants of healthcare outcomes
- A systems-thinking lens, where students learn to understand the complex structures, patterns, and relationships within and across different aspects of public health

Explanation

Approaching a topic from multiple perspectives, lenses, and voices helps to deepen understanding of course content by broadening the field of study. By normalizing and comprehending social diversity, students can learn to see diversity and considerations of equity as the norm and a necessary framework for working in their field. When instructors include these voices in the classroom, it helps to legitimize different perspectives on a topic, including views that value race, gender, and other axes of social difference as important ways of thinking about course content and the discipline as a whole. More than just demonstrating and validating the different paths students can take when working in the field, engaging with multiple and differing perspectives helps students develop their own voices and opinions.

Build topics around authors that represent different approaches.

Impact: Helps students develop critical thinking and reflection skills as they engage with different ways of seeing, thinking, and knowing about a topic. Weighing each author's work equally in the course also reinforces the validity of different perspectives, preparing students to engage with different ways of being, thinking, and expressing, as well as multiple perspectives, effectively in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

References

Tuitt, F. A. (2009). Standing on the outside looking in: Implications for practice. In M. F. Howard-Hamilton, C. L. Morelon-Quano, S. D. Johnson, R. Windle-Wagner, & L. Santigue (Eds.), *Standing on the outside looking in: Underrepresented students' experiences in advanced degree programs* (pp. 224–256). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Course structure

Set specific dates for deadlines of assignments and completion of readings.

Impact: Allows students with diverse needs, such as students with disabilities, student parents, and students with full-time employment, to plan their time effectively and seek necessary accommodations from instructors.

Ensure students are aware of upcoming in-class activities that will require active participation.

Impact: Allows students with disabilities to prepare the use of assistive technologies or request alternative formats for in-class activities and discussions in advance so instructors can support equal participation of all students. Listing specific dates also allows students with conflicting cultural or religious observances to inform instructors in advance to make adjustments for engaging with classroom learning.

Set student-friendly learning outcomes (knowledge students can expect to learn) and skill outcomes (skills students can expect to gain).

Impact: Setting measurable goals helps students develop a sense of purpose and direction. With a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn, all learners can take ownership of their learning and feel empowered to succeed, which is particularly important for students from groups that are historically marginalized in education systems, such as women, students who are racialized, and students who are LGBTQ+.

Plan a sequence of course topics, lesson plans, assignments, materials, and activities that build on one another (Fink, 2003).

Impact: Students can easily grasp content by connecting new information with previously learned concepts. This approach also helps appropriately pace learning for students and distributes cognitive load by planning learning to be achieved incrementally rather than simultaneously.

References

Fink, L.D. (2003). *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Assessment

Share clear assessment criteria with an evaluation rubric and clear learning outcomes for assignments (Guðjónsdóttir & Óskarsdóttir, 2016).

Impact: Clarifying assessment criteria ensures that all students understand the expectations and requirements of an assignment, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. This promotes equal opportunities for all learners to have their efforts recognized and evaluated fairly.

Create clear assignment descriptions, including the learning students will be applying (explaining course concepts, investigating course concepts, challenging course concepts, etc.) and reference the course content (lectures, chapters, class activities) that will help students complete the assignment.

Impact: Helps students understand how the assignment relates to the course material, providing a clear roadmap for the completion of work. Including course concepts in descriptions helps students grasp the underlying principles and theories they must apply. Ensuring students understand the purpose and objective motivates students to delve deeper into the course topic and develop a more comprehensive understanding.

Provide choices and multiple options for assignments, including choice between different topics and choice between different formats of assignment (oral presentation, podcast, game, poem, comic, video, etc.), in as much as possible.

Impact: Allows students to choose assignments that align with their strengths, interests, learning preferences and abilities. This also reinforces the notion that students are in control of their learning and can be trusted to know the best way to express their understanding, positioning instructors as facilitator and supporter of learning.

Adopt self-assessment and student reflection as a component of assignment grading.

Impact: Encourages students to gain a deeper understanding of their strengths and challenges. Promoting opportunities for students to express in their own words their needs and experiences helps instructors identify and address any barriers to learning and provide tailored support based on student reflections. This also emphasizes the role of self-reflection in learning, including reflection on how one is learning and how they are impacting the learning of others.

References

Guðjónsdóttir, H., & Óskarsdóttir, E. (2016). Inclusive education, pedagogy and practice. *Science education towards inclusion*, 7–22.

4

Learning activities

Use project-based learning activities and assignments that include collaboration and/or opportunities for exploring diverse perspectives (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006).

Impact: Allows students to self-direct their learning. This provides opportunities to pursue individually and culturally relevant materials, helping students connect their learning to their own lives and backgrounds. In collaborative project-based learning, students can learn teamwork and

cooperation by working with their peers and learning to support one another.

Example: Use project-based learning activities and assignments

In a Physics course focusing on gravitational waves, an instructor can use a group project-based learning assignment to highlight the collaborative nature of research and developments within the field. This might involve:

- First, dividing students into groups, each selecting a specialized discovery or theory on gravitational waves (e.g. Theory of Relativity, Rotating Black Holes, etc.). Second, instructing groups to research their assigned topic, focusing on the contributions of scientists from diverse cultural, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds and genders toward the topic and the dynamics of their collaboration, as well as the genealogy of ideas and research that influenced the discovery or theory chosen by the group.
- Finally, tasking each group with creating a presentation or report summarizing their findings that highlight their group's collaboration experience, describes the dynamics of collaboration between scientists on the research topic, and critically examines the notion of individual attribution in scientific knowledge.

Explanation

Project-based learning encourages students to think critically, challenge assumptions, and ask questions in assignments and activities designed for exploration instead of finding the correct answer. Offering the element of choice permits students to seek opportunities to learn more on a subject, especially those that align with their passions, interests, and strengths. In the example provided, students can recognize the validity of different ways of approaching and thinking about a subject. Tracking the development and re-development of theories over time, including the mistakes, multiple tries, and revisions, helps to humanize the field of study by highlighting the social aspects of knowledge construction, like bias, conflict, and ego. The subject matter and nature of group work emphasize the necessity of learning to work with and understand others. Experimentation and reframing course content teach students to see the complexity of real-world issues and view topics from different perspectives, fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter and the people around them.

Use problem-based learning activities and assignments, including case studies, that incorporate diverse cultural perspectives.

Impact: Encourages students to actively engage with different viewpoints and perspectives, promoting empathy, understanding, and respect for diversity. Focusing on real-world problems shows the practical application of course concepts to various social contexts and cultures, enabling students to see themselves represented in the learning material.

Use discussion-based learning activities that include questions to prompt an examination of a topic from varied perspectives, including providing students with a warm-up writing prompt on readings to prepare for in-class discussion.

Impact: Helps students reflect on the readings, gather their thoughts before engaging in a discussion, and feel more confident participating in class. Discussion-based activities can create a

supportive environment where students share their unique perspectives and experiences. By learning to actively listen and engage with diverse viewpoints, students develop a broader understanding of their peers and build rapport with their fellow learners.

Assigning specific roles for students to guide generative class discussions and rotate these roles regularly, including students mapping interactions between speakers, noting points of confusion, tracking decisions and next actions (where applicable), and tracking emotions in discussion (where applicable; Gudjonsdottir & Óskarsdóttir, 2016).

Impact: Allows for active participation and engagement of all students, regardless of their ability and level of comfort speaking in class. This creates multiple avenues for students to contribute to and shape class culture and learning.

Example: Have multiple roles for students during class discussions, including students mapping interactions between speakers, noting points of confusion, tracking decisions and next actions (where applicable), and tracking emotions in discussion (where applicable).

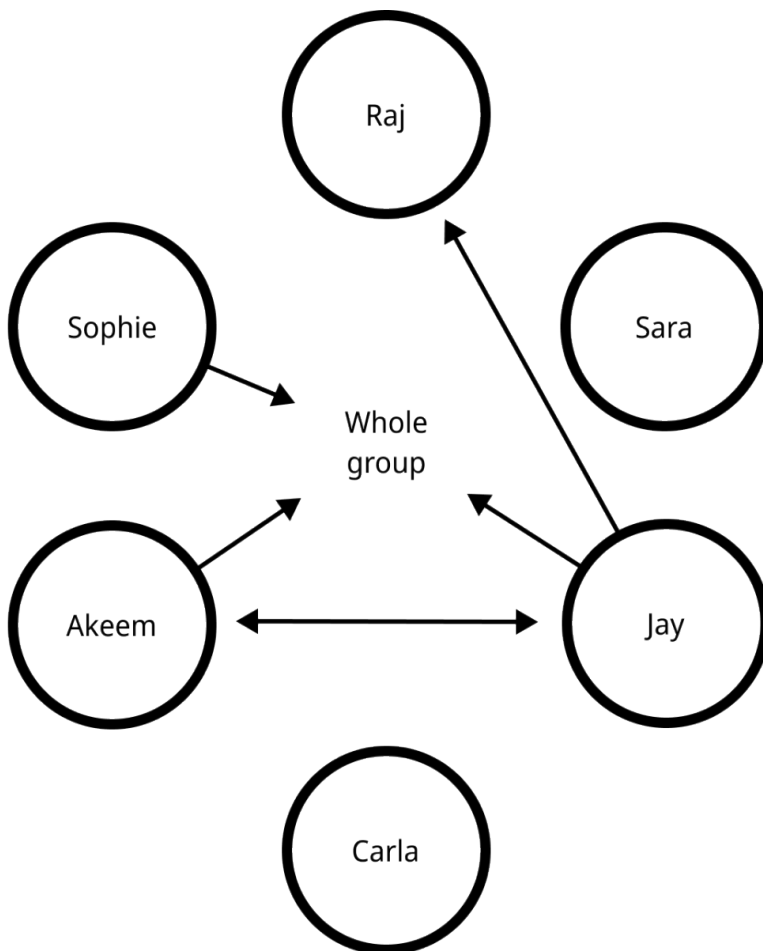


Figure 1: Diagram of Discussion Interaction

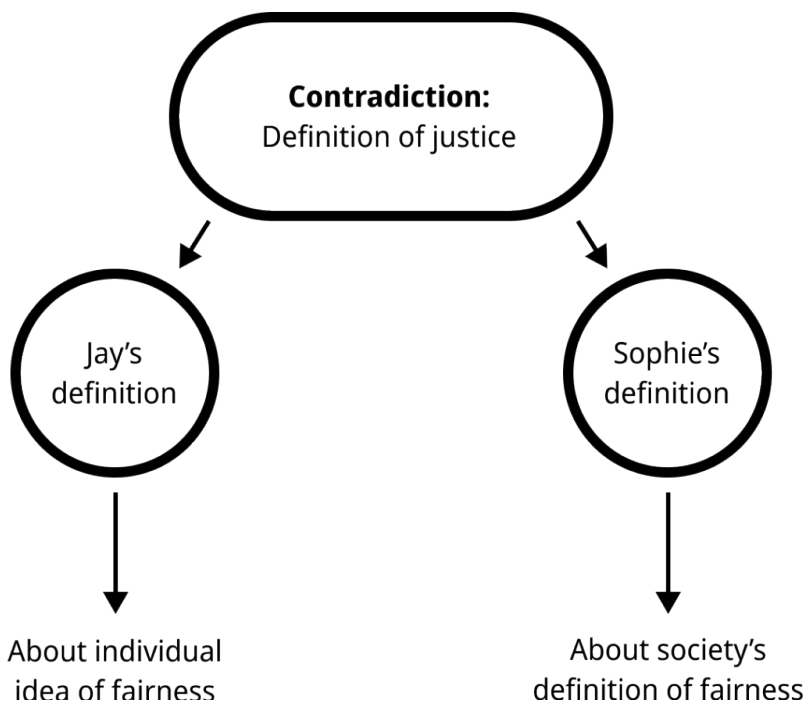


Figure 2: Diagram of Contradiction in Discussion

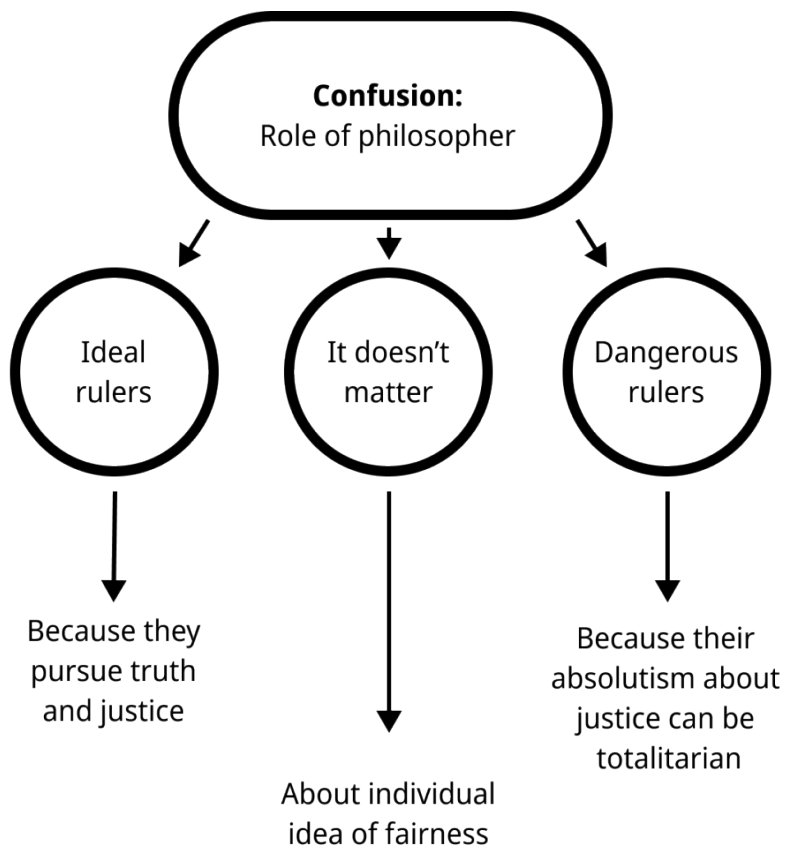


Figure 3: Diagram of Confusion in Discussion

A 15-minute class discussion on *The Republic of Plato* (1945) can be organized to include the following roles for students.

- Six student speakers were tasked with sharing their thoughts and opinions on the assigned reading.
- One student to track the interactions between the student speakers.
- One student to track the points of confusion present over the course of the discussion.

Explanation

Tracking aspects of discussion, like exchanges of ideas, helps students recognize and reflect on how they listen to and engage with others. This can help support intentional student interactions that encourage respect and understanding between peers and build on one another's ideas. In Figure 1, the visual representation of the discussion displays a balance between addressing the whole group of speakers and exchanging ideas between individual students. As we can see, not every student is speaking in the discussion.

Tracking aspects like confusion highlights the role of confusion in learning while also creating a space where students' ideas are acknowledged and supported. In Figure 2, the discussion contains contradicting ideas and questions around the comprehension of course concepts expressed. There appears to be a division in the definition of justice that leads to further confusion about the role of philosophers in Figure 3.

All of this information can be used to not only engage students but for instructors to identify struggles with course content, disengagement, and overall classroom atmosphere. Activities like these enable instructors to adjust teaching strategies to better meet the student's needs.

Offer varied participation options, including written responses to readings and class lectures, small group discussions, and video blogs (Hogan & Sathy, 2022).

IMPACT: Provides options for students with different learning preferences and abilities, allowing students to choose the method that best suits their strengths and interests. This will enable students to build confidence and learn from each other's perspectives by framing course content differently and engagingly. Introducing opportunities for students to select what works best for them also indicates to students that their unique backgrounds and experiences will be valued and supported.

References

Guðjónsdóttir, H., & Óskarsdóttir, E. (2016). Inclusive education, pedagogy and practice. *Science education towards inclusion*, 7–22.

Hogan, K. A., & Sathy, V. (2022). *Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom*. West Virginia University Press.

Krajcik, J.S. & Blumenfeld, P. (2006). Project-based learning. In Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.), *the Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences*. New York: Cambridge.

Plato, & Cornford, F. M. (1945). *The republic of plato*. Oxford University Press.

Lectures and lesson plans

Provide a course schedule that outlines learning goals, readings, and activities for the day to help students stay organized and anticipate what is coming. (Hogan & Sathy, 2022).

Impact: Helps students understand the objectives of each class, providing a roadmap to support their success. Including activities in the course, schedule helps students prepare for interactive and collaborative learning experiences by allowing them to anticipate the type of activities they will engage in during class, fostering a sense of inclusivity and active participation. This also communicates to students the instructor's thoughts and purpose behind the class structure, introducing transparency and clarity into the classroom.

Balance the ratio of lecture to other aspects of class, including questions, discussion, and use of audio or visual materials to ensure and maintain greater overall student engagement.

Impact: Helps engage different student strengths and abilities. Balancing lecture and instruction also allows students to interact with their peers, building rapport between students to reduce anonymity and build a classroom culture predicated on mutual exchange and giving voice to everyone in the room.

Include guest speakers, such as subject experts and workers in the field, where possible, to provide multiple and authentic perspectives on a topic.

Impact: Allows students to develop links between larger context, histories, and ideas within their discipline and their manifestations in the real world. Inviting different voices from the field also presents opportunities for students to see varied representations of career paths and expertise that enable them to learn about different ways of knowing and knowledge production, including oral histories, emotions, and intuition.

Example – Include guest speakers, including subject experts and workers in the field where possible, to provide multiple and authentic perspectives on a topic

In a Civil Engineering course, a worker in the field of materials engineering might give a guest lecture on designing custom bikes for an Olympic athlete. In this lecture, the speaker might highlight:

- An Engineer's considerations to design the perfect bike, like the use of an aluminum frame to use lightweight material to enhance speed; or heavier frame materials for accommodating elements like heavy rain or winds
 - An Athlete's considerations in designing the perfect bike, like the feeling of the handlebars in an athlete's hands; or the use of local materials from their hometown
 - Different ways of seeing and knowing a product as perfect and the validity of each perspective
 - Working with clients to balance the technical, practical, and personal design considerations
-

References

Hogan, K. A., & Sathy, V. (2022). *Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom*. West Virginia University Press.

6

Materials

Provide a range of teaching materials used (PowerPoints, infographics, pictures, audio clips, podcasts, songs, documentaries, film and television clips, poems, YouTube videos, etc.; Waitoller & Thorius, 2016).

Impact: Helps students visualize concepts, making abstract ideas more concrete and understandable. Incorporating various teaching materials allows students to connect with the content differently and provide diverse contexts for and representations of course concepts. This approach promotes inclusivity by providing multiple avenues for students to engage with and see themselves in the material.

Aim for user-friendly formats, such as PowerPoints and handouts, and simplicity in the content design; avoid overloading students with text and images.

Impact: Reduces cognitive load, making it easier for students to understand and retain the content, particularly beneficial for students with learning disabilities or attention difficulties. A balance between text and images also ensures that information is presented in multiple formats. Visual aids and images can enhance understanding, especially for students who are visual learners or may have language barriers. However, excessive images can be overwhelming and distract from the main message.

Consider access to materials, including cost barriers and methods of sharing materials.

Impact: Helps ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learning materials by removing financial barriers that may prevent them from accessing course resources. Employing open educational resources (OER) and Creative Commons licenses encourages the sharing and adaptation of materials, fosters inclusivity and accommodates diverse learning needs. Students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds can fully participate in learning when cost barriers are addressed. Use the course Moodle to quickly disseminate materials, ensuring that students can access them anytime and anywhere.

Offer a range of perspectives represented in materials, including opposing viewpoints on a topic and perspectives from other disciplines (Tuitt, 2009).

Impact: Problematizes binary thinking, like us-them or right-wrong approaches, and instead surfaces the complexity of course content, learning, and knowledge. This helps students become aware of the multiple narratives around a particular topic and attuned to whose narratives are uplifted and privileged and whose are invisible and marginalized. Drawing attention to these dynamics in knowledge production supports reflection and critical thinking skills and normalizes

students adopting differing perspectives among peers.

References

Tuitt, F. A. (2009). Standing on the outside looking in: Implications for practice. In M. F. Howard-Hamilton, C. L. Morelon-Quano, S. D. Johnson, R. Windle-Wagner, & L. Santigue (Eds.), *Standing on the outside looking in: Underrepresented students' experiences in advanced degree programs* (pp. 224–256). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Waitoller, F. R., & Thorius, K. A. K. (2016). Cross-pollinating culturally sustaining pedagogy and universal design for learning: Toward an inclusive pedagogy that accounts for Dis/Ability. *Harvard Educational Review*, 86(3), 366–389, 473–474.

II

Classroom environment

Summary

The classroom environment is about facilitating and sustaining the dynamics and culture of the learning space, like setting norms and leading the space (Ambrose et al., 2010; Davis, 2009; Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013; Weimer, 2013). The following presents evidence-based guidelines for establishing a more inclusive classroom environment.

References

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. John Wiley & Sons.

Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Steele, D. M., & Cohn-Vargas, B. (2013). *Identity safe classrooms, grades K-5: Places to belong and learn*. Corwin Press.

Weimer, M. (2013). *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

7

Participation

Define how students will share answers and opinions in class, including raising hands and using digital tools (Davis, 2009).

Impact: Ensures equitable participation and engagement among students. By establishing clear

guidelines, students with diverse abilities and differing levels of comfort speaking in class are given clear guidance on participating. The more students are aware of the expectations and methods for sharing, the more comfortable and confident they feel engaging in the classroom.

Plan how to address and welcome students sharing multiple viewpoints.

Impact: Ensures that all students feel heard and respected, fostering an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are valued and integrated into the learning process. By engaging with diverse viewpoints, students are exposed to different ideas and perspectives, which broadens their understanding of the subject matter. Creating a plan to address and engage with multiple views also allows instructors to proactively navigate disagreement and conflict within the classroom.

Example: Plan how to address and welcome students sharing multiple viewpoints

For example, in a Psychology lecture about the construction and development of human personality, students may question the theories of Bandura (1977) and Fiske (1949) and begin to discuss their different opinions on how personalities are constructed. The instructor might approach this discussion by:

- Being on the lookout for students ignoring the viewpoints that their peers share and referring back to, responding to, or restating the overlooked comments (Davis, 2009)
- Crediting and referencing student comments made in the discussion later in class (“As Farheen said...”) as a way of distributing focus away from theorists and instructors as the primary sources of knowledge (Davis, 2009)
- Redirecting the conversation to discuss the potential assumptions behind specific theories of personality development

Allowing students to express their learning is integral to creating a classroom environment inclusive of differing perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds. Responding to different viewpoints, directly and indirectly, signals to students that an instructor is paying attention and, importantly, values all student contributions. Outside of a discussion space, instructors can build multiple viewpoints within a discipline into course materials and treat them equally in lectures and on the syllabus. It is essential to recognize that while some students may readily challenge the perspectives of theorists and instructors, some students are brought up to believe that challenging people in positions of authority is disrespectful and, therefore, not permissible. By emphasizing that there are multiple expressions of learning and critical thinking, instructors can validate the different dispositions of students.

Decide how to address students who frequently share in class discussions to allow all students to participate.

Impact: Creates space and boundaries for self-expression in the classroom. Implementing strategies, such as setting time limits for each student’s contribution or alternating participation methods, such as live polls, helps demonstrate that all students’ contributions are valued. This helps reorient understandings of what student engagement and learning looks like in the classroom and adapt to students’ capacities and communication styles.

Facilitate class discussions, including establishing and enforcing discussion guidelines and managing

differences of opinions (Weimer, 2013).

Impact: Fosters a learning environment of respect and compassion between students, allowing students to express their ideas without judgement or discrimination. Discussion-based learning can offer opportunities to engage in constructive dialogue, learn from diverse perspectives, and develop critical thinking skills, which allows instructors to highlight the significance and interplay between oneself, subjectivity, and learning with others.

References

Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H. (1977). *Social learning theory* (Vol. 1). Prentice Hall: Englewood cliffs.

Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Fiske, D. W. (1949). Consistency of the factorial structures of personality ratings from different sources. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 44(3), 329–344.

Weimer, M. (2013). *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

8

Relationships

Create class guidelines clarifying how students will be working with and interacting with each other during the course, including in-class activities, working in pairs, giving feedback, group projects, notes-sharing, discussion forums, online polls, etc. (Weimer, 2013).

Impact: Facilitates an environment that encourages learning with others and seeing the benefit of engaging with one's peers. When students get to know each other, they become more aware of each other's strengths, weaknesses, and unique perspectives. This awareness can promote a sense of belonging and ensures that students with diverse backgrounds and abilities are valued and included in the learning process.

Use icebreakers and introductory activities, including sharing interests related to the course and learning backgrounds, that facilitate students learning more about their peers.

Impact: Allows students to connect with one another, fostering a sense of belonging and individuality early in the course. By sharing more about themselves, students can find common ground and build relationships based on shared experiences. This helps frame the classroom as a space for expressing unique ideas, experiences, and interests.

Use strategies to reduce anonymity, including asking students to state their name when they speak during class and creating name tags (Ambrose et al., 2010).

Impact: Promotes a sense of belonging and community within the classroom, making it easier for students to engage in discussions and feel comfortable participating. Emphasizing the learning of

names, in particular, helps create a more personalized and inclusive learning environment and underscores the reality that students speak and build knowledge from their own standpoint.

References

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. John Wiley & Sons.

Weimer, M. (2013). *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

9

Culture

Set and communicate a list of general classroom guidelines to students, including participation, how to engage with one another, cellphone and device policy, talking during lectures, etc. (Weimer, 2013).

Impact: Provides consistency and order for students to understand instructor expectations and develop a sense of predictability. Presenting guidelines acknowledges the uncertain and uncomfortable nature of group learning by making explicit the values and expectations of the learning environment and not assuming that all students arrive with the same understanding of the classroom and its norms.

Establish how students demonstrate knowledge to one another, including whether students will be collaborative or competitive in the classroom.

Impact: Allows students to understand their relationship with their peers. Being clear about how students will share their understandings and insights helps students be conscious of how they interact with, listen to, and respond to the contributions of their peers. Clarity around this aspect of the learning environment can help avoid unnecessary pressure and stress for some students, leading to anxiety and a fear of failure that hinders their ability to learn and participate.

Define what place disagreement has in the classroom, including if it is welcome and how the instructor will handle it.

Impact: Raises consciousness about how we perceive and understand others' opinions and perspectives. Acknowledging the reality of disagreement in the classroom demonstrates to students that instructors will notice and handle these moments. Vocalizing this aspect of an instructor's approach helps students understand the how and why of an instructor's teaching methods and anticipate what may happen when a disagreement arises.

Decide how to address and frame student responses, including viewing responses as "right" or "wrong" and redirecting misinformation (Weimer, 2013).

Impact: Prepares instructors to give feedback to students in a constructive manner. Addressing and framing responses helps to enhance critical thinking skills by encouraging students to reflect

on their responses and consider alternative perspectives. By promoting a growth mindset, students learn that making mistakes is a part of the learning process. Normalizing the idea of humility as part of learning helps ease students' worries about being embarrassed or ridiculed in the classroom.

Consider the tone of the course and each class, including whether it is exploratory, instructive, reflective, formal, casual, experimental, etc.

Impact: Indicates how an instructor will lead the classroom, contributing to students' sense of belonging and autonomy they will experience in the space. A course and class's tone can indicate to students an instructor's level of flexibility, approachability, and willingness to make accommodations for students with specific circumstances.

Determine class breaks, including length of time, points in class, and how many in a single class.

Impact: Allows students to have sufficient time to rest, recharge, and engage in self-care activities, which promotes their overall well-being and enhances their ability to focus and participate actively in the learning process. Considering the point in class when scheduling breaks ensures that students have opportunities to take breaks at strategic moments, such as after a mentally demanding task or before transitioning to a new topic.

Develop strategies to help you approach and address disruptions and rowdiness, including identifying actions and behaviour.

Impact: Adopts proactive strategies to prepare for student disruptions and rowdiness, helping instructors avoid reactive or avoidant classroom management techniques that can negatively impact students' sense of safety and belonging. Considering what approach to take can help instructors normalize these moments. Particularly for disabled or neurodivergent students in the classroom to express themselves in ways that suit their needs, an instructor's strategies contribute to a positive learning environment where students can trust instructors to lead.

Use inclusive language and affirm current terminology within the course discipline (Davis, 2009).

Impact: Helps foster a sense of belonging and acceptance among students. Employing outdated language from textbooks, research, or the field of study fails to uphold the historical context or mitigate its influence or meaning. Exclusionary language in the classroom imparts the notion that it is also acceptable for students. Staying up-to-date with inclusive terminology within a discipline helps to avoid marginalizing or excluding students based on their gender, race, country of origin, or other identities. This allows instructors to use accurate and relevant terminology that reflects the current understanding of the subject matter.

Example: Use inclusive language and affirm current terminology within the course discipline

In an Economics lecture on the criminalization of poverty, an instructor might deploy the term "unhoused person" to refer to people who are living without permanent or stable housing and affirm this term as a way of preserving human dignity while also highlighting the social responsibility and systemic failures that underpin the issue (Finley, 2015).

Explanation

While the evolution of terminology can be rapid, the language used in the classroom can make a difference to students. Language simultaneously transforms mindsets and is the foundation on which learning is built and expressed. Adopting more inclusive terminology helps normalize considerations of issues like gender, ability, and class. In the example above, the use of updated terminology leads to the humanity of the people are the center of the course content. Using current language also helps frame contemporary frameworks on a topic, in this case, the systemic rather than individual roots of poverty, and role model inclusive terminology for students.

References

Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Finley, S. (2015). Embodied homelessness: The pros/thesis of art research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(6), 504–509.

Weimer, M. (2013). *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

III

Course delivery

Summary

Course delivery is about teaching and presenting course content (Waitoller & Thorius, 2016). The following presents evidence-based guidelines for developing a more inclusive approach to your course delivery.

References

Waitoller, F. R., & Thorius, K. A. K. (2016). Cross-pollinating culturally sustaining pedagogy and universal design for learning: Toward an inclusive pedagogy that accounts for Dis/Ability. *Harvard Educational Review*, 86(3), 366–389, 473–474.

10

Structure

Use a straightforward, linear, and clear structure for each class, including a sequence of content and activities.

Impact: Helps students easily understand the class flow, making it easier to follow along and comprehend the content being taught. A linear structure for lessons also helps students with different strengths and abilities stay on track and understand the presented content, providing a predictable framework to facilitate better preparation for each class, participating actively, and

engaging with the material.

11

Questions

Plan intentional time for student questions in each class (Davis, 2009).

Impact: Promotes a student-centred approach to learning and fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment for students in the learning process. Prioritizing time creates a learning environment where students feel comfortable asking questions, seeking clarification, and being heard. This fosters a non-judgmental learning space where students are encouraged and able to actively seek support in their learning during class time.

Repeat student questions and comments when posed to the whole class so that everyone can hear what is being asked.

Impact: Ensures that all students, including those with hearing impairments or those who may have missed the original question, can hear and understand what is being asked. This creates a sense of belonging, where every student feels valued and heard, regardless of their background, language proficiency, or communication preferences. The repetition also validates contributions and encourages active participation, boosting students' confidence and self-esteem as they feel acknowledged and empowered in the classroom.

Allow silence and time when soliciting questions from students, including giving time to process information and formulate questions (Davis, 2009).

Impact: Gives students with different processing speeds the opportunity to understand the information and formulate thoughtful questions fully. This creates a safe and inclusive environment where students feel comfortable taking their time to process information and ask questions without feeling rushed or pressured. It also encourages critical thinking skills as students can reflect on information and formulate well-thought-out responses and questions.

Example: Allow silence and time when soliciting questions from students, including giving time to process information and formulate questions

When asking students in a course on Linear Algebra if they have any questions about the midterm, an instructor can count in their head to forty or fifty seconds to wait for students to review materials and form their questions.

Explanation

Giving time to students to think about and phrase their questions to instructors without pressure gives space for reflection. Providing space for processing emphasizes the role of the instructor as a source of learning support, even during times of assessment, like assignments and examinations. Rushing students or repeatedly asking if they have questions without giving them time to reflect can pressure them and prevent students who need help and guidance from reaching out in the future.

References

Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

12

Oral delivery

Use simple, clear language, avoiding jargon and cultural references (Davis, 2009).

Impact: Ensures all students can understand the presented information, regardless of their language proficiency or cognitive abilities. By avoiding jargon and cultural references specifically, instructors can prevent confusion and ensure that students with different backgrounds and levels of knowledge can comprehend the content.

Define new terms introduced in lectures and provide a glossary on Moodle.

Impact: Helps students understand and engage with the content, regardless of their background knowledge or prior experiences. It ensures that all students have equal access to the information being taught. Instructors can use various strategies, such as tracking and compiling terminology for lesson plans and providing concise, one-sentence definitions. This also demonstrates an instructor's investment in the learning of students.

Example: Define new terms that are introduced in lectures and provide a glossary on Moodle that students can refer back to

In today's lecture on Single-Celled Organisms, we covered the following terms:

- Organelles: Structures that have one or more specific jobs to perform in the cell
- Protein Quinary Structure: The arrangement and interaction of multiple protein subunits to form a functional protein complex
- Plasmid: A hereditary particle or any extrachromosomal hereditary determinant

Explanation

Providing a list of terminology or concepts covered in each class helps provide structure and transparency to the course that can level the playing field for all students. Not only can it help facilitate effective notetaking, but it also supports students that may not quickly grasp key learnings from lectures or struggle to understand key concepts or how different concepts fit together. Sharing the topics covered in a class can make the content feel less overwhelming for students, especially the technical and complex aspects of a topic. Creating these kinds of learning aids can also demonstrate that there are no tricks or surprises in the course. This can significantly reduce barriers for students of different learning backgrounds while also building a supportive student-instructor dynamic. (Hogan & Sathy, 2022).

Face students when speaking.

Impact: Ensures all students, including those with hearing impairments, can understand the

instructor. This allows students to observe facial expressions and body language, enhancing comprehension and engagement in the learning process. Instructors can also demonstrate respect and acknowledge each student's presence and participation.

Read aloud materials that are presented visually, including slides (Hogan & Sathy, 2022).

Impact: Ensures that students with visual impairments can access the content through auditory means while helping students who struggle with reading or comprehension better understand the material by hearing it read aloud. Reading aloud visual materials accommodates learners who prefer listening and processing information through spoken words. It also benefits learners who can simultaneously observe the slides and connect the visual content with the spoken words, reinforcing their understanding.

Pace lecture delivery, including speaking voice volume and speed.

Impact: Ensures that all students can hear and understand the lecture content, including those with hearing impairments or auditory processing difficulties. Adjusting speaking speed can help students with cognitive disabilities or language barriers to comprehend and retain information more effectively. Instructors can use pauses, repetition, and clear transitions between topics to help students process and organize information, making the lecture more accessible to all learners.

References

Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Hogan, K. A., & Sathy, V. (2022). *Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom*. West Virginia University Press.

13

General

Provide oral and written instructions, including assignments, in-class activities, and steps for accessing digital platforms (Hogan & Sathy, 2022).

Impact: Supports students with multiple means to process information effectively. Written instructions provide a visual reference that students can refer back to when needed. This is particularly helpful for students who require additional time to process information or those who benefit from reviewing instructions multiple times.

Clarify the expectations of students in the course and your teaching philosophy, including explaining how you teach.

Impact: This brings transparency to the classroom by providing students with a clear understanding of an instructor's teaching methods, learning goals, and approach to teaching and learning. Centring and sharing this information openly also creates space for students to seek

clarity around how an instructor values individual differences and implements strategies to accommodate diverse needs.

Use examples to reframe course content, including explaining examples and using multiple examples (Waitoller & Thorius, 2016).

Impact: Lowers barriers to accessing and engaging with course content by breaking down complex concepts into more straightforward, more understandable terms. Explaining examples allows instructors to provide additional context and clarify any potential confusion, ensuring all students fully grasp the intended message. Using multiple examples helps ensure that everyone can connect with at least one example while providing a broader perspective and allowing for a deeper understanding of the content that accommodates different learning and cultural backgrounds.

References

Hogan, K. A., & Sathy, V. (2022). *Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom*. West Virginia University Press.

Waitoller, F. R., & Thorius, K. A. K. (2016). Cross-pollinating culturally sustaining pedagogy and universal design for learning: Toward an inclusive pedagogy that accounts for Dis/Ability. *Harvard Educational Review*, 86(3), 366–389, 473–474.

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Versioning history

This page provides a record of edits and changes made to this book since its initial publication. If the change is minor, the version number increases by 0.1. If the edits involve substantial updates, the version number increases to the next full number. Due to the guide's continuous updating, the addition or removal of a resource is not recorded on this page.

Version	Date	Change	Affected web page
1.0	September 2023	Original publication	N/A