

Please Note: This is *not* a 'checklist'. Using these strategies does *not* guarantee an inclusive learning environment. Creating inclusive courses requires effort, attention, and intention.

Strategies for Inclusive Courses

Design an Inclusive Course Curriculum

Select course content, materials, and resources that are relevant and inclusive to a variety of students.

- Use visuals that do not reinforce stereotypes, but do include diverse participants.
- Choose readings that consciously reflect the diversity of contributors to your field; consider whether tradition-based reading lists represent past or present stereotypes.
- Use varied names and socio-cultural contexts in test questions, assignments, and case studies.
- Analyze the content of your examples, analogies, colloquialisms, assumptions, and humor. Who might resonate with them? Who could be excluded by them?
- Invite guest speakers who have varied backgrounds and experiences and are sensitive to the diversity of your students.
- Recognize that your choices of materials, readings, and content organization reflect your perspectives, interests, and possible biases.
- Investigate and teach the conflicts of your field to incorporate diverse perspectives to acknowledge the value of learning through contrasts and disagreements.
- Consider your academic traditions and the biases that they may inadvertently reinforce.
- Deliberately choose course materials with students' varied financial resources in mind.
- Ensure that course materials are accessible for all students (e.g., pictures have alternative text, videos are correctly captioned, use formatting styles).
- Review content for implicit exclusions by asking what perspectives and whose voices are missing.

Provide Varied Opportunities for Success/Achievement

- Allow students to demonstrate their learning and accumulate grade points in a variety of ways.
- Foster student choice and control by allowing students to select the weighting of different aspects of the course or selecting select topics to study.
- Provide explicit information about the purpose of assignments, the skills/knowledge gained, steps students should follow
- Use grading rubrics or matrices to communicate that all students will be assessed using the same standards (rather than stereotypes or assumptions).
- Allow students to collaborate/cooperate on homework and class assignments.
- Offer a variety of ways for students to participate in class other than speaking aloud.
- Provide information about how students should allocate time on assignments and help them prioritize tasks.

Motivate Learning/Establish Relevance

- Relate specific topics within a course to previous and future topics.
- Provide students opportunities to make connections inside and outside of the course.
- Situate the course in a broader global and/or societal context.
- Connect the course to other courses within or outside of the major.
- Discuss how the course will help students function more effectively with a diversity of people.
- Use personal anecdotes to create interest among students.

Meet your students as individuals & create opportunities for students to do the same

- Examine your background and experiences and how they impact your pedagogy (so that you understand how your students see you!).
- Learn and use students' preferred names and pronouns.
- Make the effort to correctly pronounce students' names; not doing so may signal that you do not see them as individuals or that they are not worth your time.
- Avoid making assumptions; let people self-identify their experiences and identities.
- Avoid assuming the gender of any student.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn about each other and from each other.
- Do not ask or expect students to represent an entire group, either by look or by request.
- Learn about and honor cultural differences in nonverbal and verbal communication (e.g., use of personal space, directness, use of storytelling).
- Ask about students' interests in, experiences with, and concerns about the subject matter.
- Ask about students' interests, backgrounds, social identities, learning habits.
- Do not ask individuals with hidden disabilities to identify themselves in class.
- Do not assume all students speak English fluently or that all students understand cultural or popular references.
- Ensure that the physical classroom space is inclusive for all students (e.g. are students who are alternately-abled marginalized in some way?).
- Avoid religious holidays when scheduling tests and consider religious fasting when offering food.
- Avoid expressing racially charged or other political opinions.

Create an Inclusive Course Environment

- Set high standards and communicate your confidence that students are capable of achieving them.
- Express or demonstrate pride in student achievement.
- Let your students know that you believe each has important contributions to make.
- Applaud creative solutions and sincere efforts to learn.
- Help students understand that intelligence is not a fixed ability, not all academic challenges are a result of personal inadequacies, and many academic challenges can be overcome. Share how you or others have overcome academic challenges.
- Talk to students about how they learn best and how to adopt helpful strategies.
- Early in the course, invite students to create class norms, such as ground rules for discussion. Revisit and or revise these norms as needed throughout the semester.
- Use a variety of strategies to encourage contributions and reduce over-participation by verbally assertive students (e.g. use a queue, ask to hear from other students, wait for several hands to be raised before calling on students, or use writing, pairs, or small groups to seed discussion).
- Create a culture of shared-purpose by periodically collecting feedback to learn how students are experiencing your course.
- Avoid assuming that a student needs assistance or expressing surprise when a student does well, which can convey that you have low expectations and could further hinder learning.
- Do not ignore or change the subject when students voice negative comments about a group; silence implies agreement.
- Make diversity and the free-exchange of ideas an early discussion topic. Assist students to identify similarities and differences in their contributions or viewpoints.
- Do acknowledge events/incidents that may communicate that some students' are not welcome or valued; acknowledge differential impacts on students may impact some students' learning.
- Use inclusive language (e.g. "people" vs. "mankind" and "everyone" vs. "you guys").



Teach Inclusively

- Use a variety of teaching methods; do not rely solely on lectures and didactic questions.
- Use pictures, schematics, graphs, simple sketches, films, and demonstrations.
- Provide a balance of concrete information (facts, data, real or hypothetical experiments) and abstract concepts (principles, theories, models).
- Anticipate disagreements, expect respect during the exchange of disagreement, and acknowledge the value of learning through contrasts and conflicts.
- Validate and recognize students' experiences as worthy knowledge. Build on students' prior knowledge.
- Consider integrating into assignments historical interviews, autobiographical writing, and activities that students will do in their future professions.
- Encourage multiple perspectives (as opposed to consensus) in discussions.
- Balance material that emphasizes practical problem-solving methods with that emphasizing fundamental understanding.
- Provide brief intervals during class for students to think about what they have heard, seen, & learned.
- Provide opportunities for students to use or apply the course material/content.
- Have students work on class activities in pairs, triads, or small groups.
- Assign group membership randomly. Do not allow students to choose their own groups.
- Allow students to work on projects that explore their own social identities or the impacts of different identities within your field.
- Provide both verbal and written instructions; this can be helpful for students with processing disabilities as well as second-language learners).

