

Actively Inclusive Spaces: Creating and Maintaining Equitable and Welcoming Classrooms

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Inclusive Classrooms Checklist

Are you hoping to create and maintain a more inclusive environment? Keep these points in mind:

Welcoming Others to the Classroom

- ☐ Use correct names and pronouns in introductions, in writing, and on an ongoing basis.
- ☐ Include your pronouns on your syllabus, Canvas profile, and email signature.
- ☐ Bring your whole self to class (connect with and build understanding of others – students included – through sharing experiences).
- ☐ Set student and instructor expectations and group norms to create a safe and brave space.
- ☐ Employ collaboratively developed norms/expectations when a member of the class loses focus.
- ☐ Model respectful and inclusive speech and behavior.

Maintaining Inclusive Classrooms

- ☐ Demonstrate your attention to and respect for students' diverse styles, needs, and experiences.
- ☐ Check in with your students, embedded tutors, SIAs, etc. often, and use their feedback to improve or enhance the environment.
- ☐ Do not assume that struggling students will come to you; be approachable, but also be willing to approach them.
- ☐ Willingly and enthusiastically apply “Oops! Ouch! Educate” to all of your interactions.
- ☐ Keep campus and community resources on hand and share them with students.
- ☐ Attend ally and other equity- and inclusion-focused trainings. Refresh your trainings at least every three to five years.
- ☐ When possible, post group expectations and other reflections of your commitment to equity and inclusion in your classroom, on Canvas, and even on yourself!

Using Privilege for Good

- ☐ Do not shy away from challenging topics; instead, promote visibility. For example, teach writers, educators, ideologies, etc. from people of various identity groups, and create spaces for dialogue among marginalized groups.
- ☐ Shut down negative comments or offensive language: period. Speak up for persons who are or may be disadvantaged.
- ☐ Use inclusive language on your syllabus and class handouts.
- ☐ Vary your activities, assignments, and examples so that they do not solely reflect ideals of a dominant group. For instance, avoid heteronormative language in your discussions, as well as examples that may privilege socioeconomically advantaged groups.
- ☐ Evaluate your course policies and assignments regularly, and remove unnecessary barriers.
- ☐ Do not deny your own privileges; use them to further yourself as a mobile safe space, and continue to learn about privilege and power.

Resources for Further Study

One of the many exciting aspects of equity and inclusion is that there is constantly new information available. It is important to stay up-to-date. Recommended resources include these:

For Classroom-Based Equity Tools

- ASPIRE - National Alliance for Inclusive and Diverse STEM Faculty
- CA Perkins Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee
- AAC & U - Article on Taking Equity-Minded Action to Close Equity Gaps
<https://www.aacu.org/peerreview/2017/Spring/Malcom-Piqueux>
- USC Rossier School of Education's Center for Urban Education (CUE)
 - What is Equity Mindedness? - <https://cue.usc.edu/about/equity/equity-mindedness/>
 - The Equity ScoreCardTM - <https://cue.usc.edu/tools/the-equity-scorecard/>
- University of Michigan Inclusive Teaching Site
<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/2017/08/16/social-identity-wheel/>
- Ally Programs/other campus professional development

For General Information on Equity- and Inclusion-Related Topics

- Robin Diangelo's *White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*
- Allan G. Johnson's *Privilege, Power, and Difference*
- Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist*
- Ijeoma Oluo's *So You Want to Talk about Race*
- Derald Wing Sue's *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*
- Derald Wing Sue's *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding Difficult Dialogues on Race*
- CCCD's Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Compliance website
- GWC's Equity Office website

Questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact Sacha Moore at smoore@gwc.cccd.edu.