

Teaching Inclusively



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Introductions

- Basic information
 - Name
 - Department
 - Teaching interests
- Question:
 - Why is inclusivity important in teaching?

Why is inclusivity important?

- We have an obligation to teach ALL students
- Critical thinking is most likely when we listen to all perspectives.
- Civility, collaboration, and other social skills of living in difference and community, and a broader multicultural democracy.
- Campus life is enhanced by giving all students belonging (Locks et al 2008), helping the Vanderbilt community be more cohesive.

Why are classrooms among the least inclusive spaces on campus?

Implicit Bias

“The attributes we associate with specific gender and racial labels are over learned — that is, they are habitual and unconscious.”

Bielby, W.T. (2000). “Minimizing Workplace Gender and Racial Bias.” *Contemporary Sociology*, 29 (1), 120-129.

Implicit Bias

“Merely encountering a member of a stereotyped group primes the trait constructs associated with, and in a sense, constituting the stereotype. Once activated, these constructs can function as implicit expectancies, spontaneously shaping the perceiver's perception, characterization, memory and judgment of the stereotyped target.”

Krieger, Linda Hamilton and Susan T. Fiske. (2006). “Behavioral Realism in Employment Discrimination Law: Implicit Bias and Disparate Treatment,” 94 *California Law Review*. 997.

Implicit Bias

An Example

Emails to faculty members from fictional prospective grad students requesting future mentoring were significantly more likely to get a reply if a stereotypically white male name was used, particularly when the faculty were in higher-paying disciplines and at private institutions.

Milkman, K.L., Akinola, M., and Chugh, D., (2014). What Happens Before? A Field Experiment Exploring How Pay and Representation Differentially Shape Bias on the Pathway into Organizations. *Social Science Research Network*.

Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat refers to being at risk of confirming, as a self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one’s social group (Steele & Aronson 1995)

Everyone is vulnerable to stereotype threat, at least in some circumstances

Stereotype Threat

- It increases cognitive load and significantly reduces performance for a diversity of students
 - Less privileged socioeconomic statuses (Croizet & Claire 1998; Spender and Castano 2007)
 - African Americans (Steele & Aronson 1995)
 - Latino/a students (Schmader & Johns 2003)
 - Women in math and science courses (Good, Aronson, & Harder 2008)
 - LGBT students at traditionally religious institutions (Love 1998)
 - Any stigmatized group (Marx, Stapel, & Muller 2005)

Microaggressions

- “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to a target group.” (Sue 2008)
 - They typically reveal prejudicial assumptions.
 - Impair classroom performance by creating emotional turmoil and depleting psychological resources for targeted groups (Sue 2005)
 - Can cause “hot moments” of conflict
- There are debates over the term and its use

Microaggressions

Example	Code
“There is only one race, the human race.”	Invisibility via color blindness
“You’re gay? You’ll have to give me some decorating tips.”	You all are the same. You are different and here for my entertainment.
“You are so articulate”	You are more intelligent than I expected. You are an alien.
“Why are you so quiet? You should speak up more.”	Your personality or communication values are a problem.
“Oh, so your from ___ high school? You’re going to need more academic support.”	You have a second class education and intelligence.

Content and Process

- Content and process may exclude some identities, groups.
- Why?
 - Departmental or faculty content choices
 - Course offerings – e.g., Religion not offer Islam course
 - Readings – e.g., only male authors
 - Examples/cases – e.g., only sports metaphors
 - Poor discussion planning
 - Poor facilitation
- Faculty fear → avoidance, neglect, implicit biases

What Can We Do?

Troubleshoot and brainstorm

How can one reduce implicit bias?

Implicit Bias

Uncover assumptions, biases

- Inventory one's own biases
 - (Not so) subtle prejudices may exist, e.g., some groups are likely to be more argumentative, conflictual, shy, irresponsible, low achieving...
 - Harvard IAT: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Implicit Bias

Uncover assumptions, biases

- Common assumptions that lead to exclusion
 - Altering achievement expectations for group
 - Students will seek help when they struggle
 - Poor writing suggests limited ability, intellect
 - Students will get issues only related to their group
 - Students of a group are authorities on their group
 - All students from a group share the same perspective

Implicit Bias

Be mindful and present

- Implicit bias is more likely ...
 - During "low-effort" cognitive processing
 - When certain traits are salient
 - During negative emotions
 - In conditions of ambiguity, uncertainty
 - In conditions of distraction or pressure
 - When organizations provide limited feedback about your behavior
- Occurs more often when you think of yourself as a knowledgeable, fair, or good person.

Implicit Bias

Exposure and Education

- Expose yourself to diverse groups
- Self-education about diverse groups and their histories, identities, disempowerment, movements

How can you make your course content inclusive?

Content Considerations

- Include multiple perspectives on each topic
- Include materials created by people of different backgrounds, and not as tokens
- Include materials that address underrepresented groups' experiences in ways that do not trivialize, marginalize
- Avoid dichotomies that exclude
- Include materials from intersectional groups

How can you plan accommodations, assignments, and lesson plans to be inclusive?

Planning

- Accommodations – holidays, disabilities...
 - Contact Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services (EAD) – 615-322-4705 – for more information on ways you can accommodate
- Grading
 - Assess all students' familiarities with course content and inform them about the criteria by which they will be assessed.
- Attendance
 - Those with highly visible differences (race, gender, disability...) can be penalized for absences because they are more obvious.

Planning

- Assessment
 - Avoid reliance on one or two modes of instruction and assessment. Use multiple forms of both to accommodate and assess the aptitudes of many
- Cultural references
 - Learn about the experiences of groups other than your own and incorporate them into class references, examples

Planning

- Collaborative, student-centered learning will tend towards inclusive classrooms because it supports...
 - Student engagement in the learning process
 - Stronger support system for success
 - Open, inclusive dialogue
 - Interpersonal familiarity, trust, and growth
 - Empathy for varied perspectives
 - Lower student anxieties of judgment, shame
 - Empowering student self-esteem, efficacy, voice
 - Models of civility, social responsibility
 - Collective problem solving

Planning

- For group discussions or projects
 - Use a variety of methods to form groups – assign students to heterogeneous groups, randomly assign students, but be careful about allowing students to form their own
 - Ensure members of dominant groups do not always assume leadership roles by defining individual roles
 - Remind students that each individual brings strengths (e.g., strength/weakness inventories)
 - Address group dysfunction promptly, especially if there is exclusion or harm
 - Allow for students to give each other feedback safely

What facilitation techniques promote inclusivity?

Facilitation

- Welcoming, supportive tone
- Language
 - Inclusive gender pronouns
 - Avoid coded language (e.g., “ghetto”)
 - Unintentionally mispronouncing names
- Fairness
 - Keeping track of who has spoken
 - Limit dominating speakers, support marginal speakers
 - Reflection and small groups

Facilitation

- Rapport
 - Establish norms of civility
 - Get to know your students via names, autobiographical assignments, office visits, frequent discussion....
 - Encourage critique of content, yourself
 - Be open to student reactions to course material and devote unanticipated time to relevant contributions

When Teaching Difference

- Encourage empathy across difference
 - Prompts that encourage role taking of out-groups
 - Historical, social constructions of identity
 - Deconstruct dominant categories, mythical norms
 - e.g., whiteness, masculinity, the middle class, heterosexuality, able bodied...
 - Reflection exercises about privilege (e.g., McIntosh’s “invisible knapsack”)
 - Intersectionality
 - Your own identity development, struggles?

How can one reduce stereotype threat?

Reducing Stereotype Threat

(Steele 2011; Stroessner & Good 2015)

- Have high standards, but affirm students' abilities
- Emphasize growth model for intelligence
- Provide external attributions for difficulty
- Encourage self-affirmation
- Provide role models in guests, authors, examples
- Be careful to not make comments that could be interpreted as dismissals
- Give consideration, attention to all students
- Encourage study groups

How can you manage microaggressions and the “hot moments” they can trigger?

Managing Conflicts, Microaggressions

- Managing Ourselves (Sue 2005; Warren 2006)
 - Breathe
 - Go from the “dance floor to the balcony”
 - Don’t take remarks personally
 - Know your biases, triggers, vulnerabilities
 - Model openness, respectful, non-reactive
 - Direct, engaged, not passive approach
- Have open discussions of difference (Sue 2005)
 - Express appreciation for student participation
 - Acknowledge prevalence of biases, prejudices
 - Encouraging reflection on biases, prejudices

Managing Conflicts, Microaggressions

- Teach to ALL students (Sue 2005)
 - Do not minimize experiences of prejudice
 - Don’t look to marginalized students as experts
 - Confront fallacious assumptions
- Finding Teaching Moments (Warren 2006)
 - Depersonalize the issues
 - Provide appropriate content knowledge
 - Talk with students outside of class
 - Fall back position – e.g., after cooling off period

Reflection and Assessment

- What strategies you have learned today that you might implement in training?
- Think of a challenging moment from the in your teaching and describe how you might have addressed the issue differently based on our discussion today.

Further Resources

- CFT Guide [Increasing Inclusivity in the Classroom](#)
 - [Hot Moments](#) (Bok Center)
 - CU Faculty Teaching Excellence Program [essays](#)
 - Michigan’s [Creating Inclusive College Classrooms](#)
 - [ReducingStereotypeThreat.org](#)
- CFT Guide [Difficult Dialogues](#)
- CFT Guide [Teaching Students with Disabilities](#)
- Learning community on teaching, gender, and sexuality