Inclusive Teaching Strategies: Reflecting on Your Practice

Do you or would you use any of the following strategies?

✓ = I use this in my teaching
~ = I sort of use this in my teaching
X = I do not use this in my teaching
✩ = I would like to try this, though I may need more information or resources

U-M Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT). Some content adapted from Linse & Weinstein, Shreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence, Penn State, 2015. For information about the research behind these strategies, see http://crlt.umich.edu/node/90467.
**Instructor-Student Interactions**

- Learn and use students’ names -- what they choose to be called and how they pronounce it.
- Clarify how you want students to address you, especially if you teach students from a range of educational and cultural backgrounds.
- Distribute a student background questionnaire early in the term to learn about students’ experience with the course topics, educational background, professional ambitions, general interests, etc.
- Encourage students to visit office hours, and use that time to ask about their experiences with course topics as well as their interests outside the class.
- Communicate high expectations and your belief that all students can succeed.
- Allow for productive risk and failure. Make it known that struggle and challenge are important parts of the learning process, not signs of student deficiency.
- Seek multiple answers or perspectives to questions.
- Avoid making generalizations about student experiences.
- Avoid making jokes at students’ expense.
- Refrain from asking individual students to speak for a social identity group.
- Communicate concern for students’ well-being, and share information about campus resources (e.g., Counseling & Psychological Services, Sexual Assault Prevention & Awareness Center, Services for Students with Disabilities).
- Communicate in writing and person your goal of making learning equally accessible to all students. Welcome requests for documented accommodations as a chance to include everyone more fully in learning.
- Model productive disagreement, showing how to critique a statement or idea rather than the speaker.
- Elicit formative feedback from students about their learning experiences in the course (e.g. facilitated Mid-Semester Feedback session or survey).
- Ask a trusted colleague or CRLT consultant to observe your class and collect data about how you include or interact with different students.

**Student-Student Interactions**

- Encourage students to learn and use one another’s names.
- Use icebreakers regularly so students can learn about one another.
- Establish guidelines, ground rules, or community agreements for class participation.
- In class, have students work in pairs, triads, or small groups.
- Have students write and share about how their background can contribute to a particular class activity.
- For long-term teams, structure in check-ins and opportunities for peer feedback about group process.
- On the syllabus, identify collaboration or perspective-taking as skills students will build in the course.
- In class, explain the value of collaboration for learning. Speak of students’ diverse perspectives as an asset.
- Provide students opportunities to reflect on what they learned through collaborative activities (formal or informal).
- Deliberately assign students to small, heterogeneous groups that do not isolate underrepresented students.
- Have students complete a self-assessment inventory and discuss with peers.
- Set up study groups that deliberately group students with different strengths.
- Have students complete low-stakes small group activities that help them see and value the contributions of others.
- Establish ways for students to intervene if they feel a certain perspective is being undervalued or not acknowledged.
- Stop or intervene in a discussion if comments become disparaging or devalue other students’ experiences.