

Creating Inclusive Teaching Environments

IT ALL STARTS WITH YOU

Inclusive classrooms are spaces in which instructors and students work together to create and sustain an environment in which everyone feels safe, supported, and encouraged to express one's views and concerns. These environments are places in which thoughtfulness, mutual respect, and academic excellence are valued and promoted. The components below are to aid in the process of enhancing your curricular and co-curricular experience to the overall mission and vision of your academic college or school and the institution.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL COMPONENTS

Targeted areas for overall success include:

- 1) Centering relationships in your instruction
- 2) Reflecting on implicit bias & harmful assumptions
- 3) The selection of teaching and learning frameworks
- 4) Providing ongoing support to your students

CLASSROOM LEVEL COMPONENTS

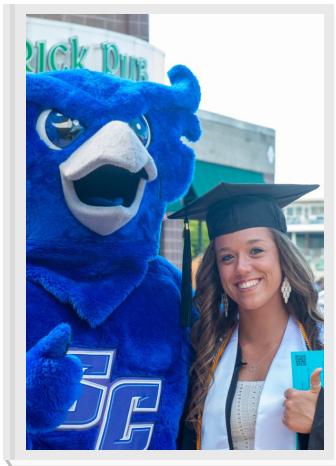
Targeted areas for overall success include:

- 1) A shared understanding of goals and outcomes
- 2) An understanding of power dynamics within the classroom
- 3) The incorporation of universal design principles into your practice
- 4) Your decisions, comments, and behaviors during the process of teaching

COMMUNITY LEVEL COMPONENTS

Targeted areas for overall success include:

- 1) The overall alignment with institutional mission and vision
- 2) Centering the strengths and talents students bring to your classroom
- 3) Leverage colleagues and institutional resources with intention
- 4) Acknowledging the influence of historical and current traumas occurring throughout various communities (e.g. racism, COVID, & health)



Practical Strategies & Information

Strategies for Understanding Implicit Bias

Introspection: Explore and identify your own prejudices by taking implicit association tests or through other means of self-analysis.

Perspective-taking: Consider experiences from the point of view of the person being stereotyped. You can do this by reading or watching content that discusses those experiences or directly interacting with people from those groups.

Learn to slow down: Before interacting with people from certain groups, pause and reflect to reduce reflexive actions. Consider positive examples of people from that stereotyped group, such as public figures or personal friends.

Individuation: Evaluate people based on their personal characteristics rather than those affiliated with their group. This could include connecting over shared interests.

Check your messaging: As opposed to saying things like “we don’t see color,” use statements that welcome and embrace multiculturalism or other differences.

National Disability Association Core Universal Design Principles

Principle 1: Equitable Use – The design for your handouts, visual aids, and activities are useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Principle 2: Flexibility in Use – The design for your handouts, visual aids, and activities accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use – The use of your handouts, visual aids, and activities is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Principle 4: Perceptible Information – The design of your handouts, visual aids, and activities communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Principle 5: Tolerance for Error – The design of your handouts, visual aids, and activities minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Principle 6: Low Physical Effort – The design of your handouts, visual aids, and activities can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue

Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use – Your handouts, visual aids, and activities have Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

References

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- University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (2022). *Creating inclusive college classrooms*. Retrieved from: https://crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1
- Villines, Z. (2020, July 22). What is racial trauma? Causes, symptoms, and how to cope. Retrieved October 28, 2020, from <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/racial-trauma>
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