

Inclusive teaching practices tips & checklist

Last update: 8/9/19

Inclusive teaching and learning respects diversity of the students and their experiences and actively engages, includes, and challenges all students. Our students come from all over the world with different backgrounds and experiences. The practice of inclusive teaching acknowledges and challenges biases and stereotypes that can undermine students' success and sense of belonging. Inclusive teaching creates a better classroom for all learners.

This checklist covers most of the basic best practice strategies for inclusive teaching and universal design of instruction. What practices are you trying?

Contact [Disability Support Services](#) if you need support for students with disabilities.

Strategy	Examples	Have tried	Want to try
Create a welcoming environment			
Examine assumptions.	1. Reflect on your assumptions about students. What stereotypical notions do you hold about some student groups or backgrounds?		
Establish an inclusive environment for all students.	2. Include a syllabus statement that fosters an inclusive learning environment (use the latest Mines syllabus template from Trefny, see the bottom of this document for example text that you might add on fostering an inclusive classroom).		
	3. Be explicit about promoting equity and access for all students.		
	4. Respect, adhere to, and follow up (privately) on the disability accommodation letter for students. Maintain confidentiality. Remember that accommodations are not advantages, but a means of providing each student with full access to their education and an opportunity to effectively demonstrate what they have learned.		
	5. Accommodate students. Life happens and students are people too. Be compassionate and understanding of illness, religious holidays, and other stresses. At the beginning of the semester, ask your students to let you know in advance of any issues that will affect their participation in class or complete assignments on time.		
	6. Ensure that resources and assistance provided both in and outside of class is equally available and accessible to everyone. E.g. offer and record office hours with Zoom, post relevant information for the whole class.		
	7. Ensure that your TAs or graders are applying these tips, too.		
Reduce anonymity.	8. Know and use preferred names and pronouns.		
	9. Build rapport and get to know students and their individual perspectives and experiences (e.g., greet students as they enter class, interact with students before and/or after class).		
Model inclusive language, behavior, and attitudes.	10. Avoid using masculine pronouns for students, e.g. "Hey guys"		
	11. Provide context when using idioms, metaphors, pop culture references, etc.		
	12. Use language that acknowledges and values different experiences/perspectives.		
Incorporate multiple and diverse examples, resources, and perspectives.	13. Identify whether certain perspectives are missing or underrepresented in course materials.		
	14. Use examples/illustrations across multiple domains and/or representing a variety of perspectives and populations to 1) help students understand the applicability of concepts in diverse contexts and 2) help students relate to the material.		
	15. Include materials, readings, and images that reflect contributions and perspectives from groups historically underrepresented in the field.		
	16. When inviting guest lecturers/visitors, include diverse contributions/perspectives.		

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Add Structure			
Establish, communicate, and reinforce norms and expectations for interactions, participation, and engagement.	17. Establish, use, and enforce established classroom norms that foster a positive and inclusive environment and establish ground rules for respectful interaction in the class (e.g., no interrupting, rule of 3 where you have to wait until 3 people talk before you contribute again, consider other perspectives and suspend judgment).		
	18. Communicate expectations for participation and engagement early and often.		
	19. Encourage and monitor student participation during class and activities. Be aware when a few students (or students from one group [e.g., male students]) dominate a conversation in small groups or entire class discussions.		
	20. Respond to classroom conflict/disruption promptly, consistently and respectfully.		
	21. Facilitate active listening (e.g., incorporate paraphrasing and questioning strategies into discussions).		
	22. Show respect for all questions and comments.		
Establish, communicate, and reinforce norms and expectations for group work.	23. Ensure that leadership and roles for teams and group work are shared/rotated and clearly defined.		
	24. Where appropriate for learning outcomes, use a variety of methods to assigning groups and change groups throughout the semester. While diverse teams are important, don't isolate and separate the women and underrepresented students.		
Use varied active-learning strategies.	25. Use a variety of teaching strategies, such as active learning strategies.		
	26. Provide alternative means for contributing to the discussion (e.g. clickers, poll everywhere, comments submitted on notecards).		
Encourage a growth mindset/ Acknowledge that failure and struggle are a part of learning			
Promote a growth mindset about intelligence.	27. Convey the idea that intelligence is not a reflection of fixed, natural abilities, but can change and grow over time (Dweck 2006). E.g. avoid describing student performance as a sign of natural ability (or lack of ability), avoid statements like "some people have trouble with math/writing/critical thinking."		
	28. Cultivate an environment where it is okay to make mistakes, and leverage those mistakes to improve learning. Encourage cognitive risk-taking and dignify errors.		
	29. Help students develop a growth mindset (e.g. in office hours or during feedback, identify specific areas that are challenging and help students identify strategies to improve).		
	30. Resist a single right answer. Ask students to generate and articulate multiple solutions and/or approaches to problems.		
	31. Incorporate assignments and assessments that are low-stakes in addition to high-stakes exams, papers, and projects.		
Provide feedback that helps students to improve.	32. Promote fairness and transparency by sharing the criteria (rubrics) by which you use to evaluate students' work.		
	33. Provide constructive and encouraging feedback on how to improve comprehension or performance. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. "Wise feedback": 1) assurance that you are providing critical feedback because you have high standards 2) specific comments on where student work does/does not meet those standards, and 3) confidence that students can meet those standards (Cohen 1999, Yeager 2014). b. "Strategy feedback": identify specific areas for improvement and practice (Dweck 2012). 		

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Encourage students to utilize resources (available through course and campus).	34. Help students learn about and encourage all to take advantage of academic assistance resources; e.g. tutoring via CASA. Not all students are aware of or comfortable seeking out campus resources.		
	35. Reduce the stigma of office hours and encourage students to take advantage of out of class support: routinely remind students of the times, encourage them to schedule a meeting if they aren't available during office hours, consider requiring students to come to office hours, be welcoming when students come.		
Work to refine and improve your teaching practices			
Set up processes to get feedback on the course climate.	36. Ask a colleague or Trefny staff to observe your teaching and provide feedback.		
	37. Participate in workshops (e.g. Trefny Center) or conferences (e.g. ASEE) to learn new teaching strategies and improve your teaching.		
	38. Provide opportunities for students to reflect on the course and give feedback (e.g. an anonymous mid-semester survey) and reflect on integrating those changes into your class.		

These tips were compiled from the [Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning](#) (they also have an [inclusive classroom practices checklist](#)), [Imperial College London](#), [Washington University in St. Louis](#), [University of Arizona](#), and [University of Michigan](#).

Sample statement for your syllabus:

Diversity & Inclusion at Mines and in this Class

At Colorado School of Mines, we understand that a diverse and inclusive learning environment inspires creativity and innovation, which are essential to the engineering process. We also know that in order to address current and emerging national and global challenges, it is important to learn with and from people who have different backgrounds, thoughts, and experiences.

Our students represent every state in the nation and more than 90 countries around the world, and we continue to make progress in the areas of diversity and inclusion by providing [Diversity and Inclusion programs and services](#) to support these efforts.

In an ideal world, science would be objective. However, much of science is subjective and is historically built on a small subset of privileged voices. In this class, we will make an effort to read papers from a diverse group of scientists, but limits still exist on this diversity. I acknowledge that it is possible that there may be both overt and covert biases in the material due to the lens with which it was written, even though the material is primarily of a scientific nature. Integrating a diverse set of experiences is important for a more comprehensive understanding of science. I would like to discuss issues of diversity in our field as part of the course from time to time.

If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, visit the [Mines counseling center](#). I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.