

DIVERSITY CHECKLIST: GUIDELINES FOR COURSE PLANNING

As instructors, it is important to foster an environment that respects diversity and fosters an open environment in which all students are able participate and learn. Below is a list of issues to keep in mind when designing and leading a course:

- Consider including a diversity statement in the course syllabus (For an example, please visit <http://www.education.uiowa.edu/coedean/policies/syllabus/index.html#diversity>). In addition, include Penn State's anti-discrimination policy, found at <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/ad42.html>.
- Create a safe classroom environment through ground rules of discussion. Establish a contract with your students that outline rules for respectful classroom conduct.
- Use gender neutral language in lectures, presentations, assignments, and exams.
- Be aware of gender used in examples. Use a mix of male and female examples, if possible consider including gender identities outside of the traditional binary. Use examples with women and underrepresented students in desirable roles.
- Include in your syllabus procedures for making up assignments that are missed due to religious holidays.
- Choose a textbook with gender neutral terms when possible. Check to see if examples and photographs include people of multiple genders and of various races and nationalities.
- If you do need to use materials that are not written in gender neutral language, such as older books and articles, point this out to your students. You may use this as an opportunity to discuss how gender issues have evolved over time in your discipline.
- When assigning students tasks, each task assigned should be non-gender specific and of equal contribution. When possible avoid splitting your class by gender because there may be some in your course who are transgender, or gender non-conforming/gender expansive, or who do not identify as either a man or a woman or they may identify as both.
- How students are evaluated should match course objectives. The evaluation procedure should be made clear through a grading rubric.
- Ensure all students are able to participate in class discussion and group activities.
- Ask students how to pronounce their names and work hard to pronounce them correctly. Also, ask students how they would like to be addressed in class. It may be easier to ask students to what their names (first and last) are on the first day of class rather than calling out roll to avoid mispronouncing names and to all students to use nicknames or a name that is not on the roll.
- Assume that not all students in a class are heterosexual.
- Assume that some of your students are non-Christians.

- Do not make assumptions about a student's race or ethnicity based on appearance.
- Do not single out a student to represent his/her/their group.
- Clarify expectations for classroom activities. Stereotyping is most likely to occur when situations are ambiguous. When situations are made clear, stereotyping is avoided.
- Provide an opportunity for students to give anonymous feedback on classroom climate. A drop box in an online course management system may be used for students to submit anonymous feedback.
- Address your students consistently. If you refer to students you perceive to be male students by using their first and last names, be sure to use first and last names for students you perceive to be female or gender expansive.
- Use a random system for asking questions or encouraging class participation. A random system of participation solicitation will give every student an equal chance of participating in classroom discussion or activities.
- Monitor class discussions to make sure that one group (or person) is not dominating classroom discussion.
- Allow students to finish their question or comment before answering or responding. In class discussions, monitor discussion to make sure each student is able to complete their question or response.
- In group presentations, require each student to speak.
- For multiple group tasks, use a rotating leader system. This allows for different members of the group to serve in a leadership position.
- Make sure small groups are composed of students from different social identity groups. However, if possible, groups should contain more than one member from each group to avoid tokenism.

Adapted from Dawn Miller, Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence, Penn State University
<http://www.csuchico.edu/diversity/diversity-inclusive-teaching/documents/DiversityChecklist.pdf>

SYLLABI STATEMENTS

Feel free to use some of these statements in your course syllabi. These are just examples, please feel free to edit or adapt them for your individual course.

Inclusive Excellence Statement

SMC recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. Students in this class are encouraged to speak up and participate during class meetings. Because the class will represent a diversity of individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences, every member of this class must show respect for every other member of this class. If you feel your differences may in some way isolate you from SMC's community or if you have a need of any specific accommodations, please speak with the instructor early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help you become an active and engaged member of our class and community.

Safe Zone Statement

I am part of the Safe Zone Ally community network of trained Saint Mary's College of California faculty/staff/students who are available to listen and support you in a safe and confidential manner. As a Safe Zone Ally, I can help you connect with resources on campus to address concerns you may face that interfere with your academic and social success on campus as it relates to issues surrounding sexual orientation/gender identity. My goal is to help you be successful and to maintain a safe and equitable campus.

LGBTQ Equality Statement

I am firmly committed to diversity, creating and maintaining an inclusive community, and equality in all areas of campus life, including specifically members of the LGBTQ community. In this class I will work to promote an anti-discriminatory environment where everyone feels safe and welcome. I recognize that discrimination can be direct or indirect and take place at both institutional and personal levels. I believe that such discrimination is unacceptable and I am committed to providing equality of opportunity for all by eliminating any and all discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimization. The success of this policy relies on the support and understanding of everyone in this class. We all have a responsibility not to be offensive to each other, or to participate in, or condone harassment or discrimination of any kind.

Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Differently Abled

Students who have any accommodations, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the [Student Disability Services \(SDS\)](#) office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact SDS at (925) 631-4358 if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal

approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options.

Additional syllabi resources <https://accessiblesyllabus.tulane.edu/>