Every Learner Is Welcome

Putting Inclusivity at the Forefront of Your Teaching;

Pedagogical Strategies and Activities

A presentation by Prof. Sue Ellen Christian, School of Communication

BroncosFIRST Faculty Fellow '16-'17

This presentation will:

- Define inclusive teaching/diverse learners (slides #2-7)
- Briefly discuss implicit bias and stereotype threat as they affect learning – resource list included (8-27)
- Give a snapshot of some elements of WMU's undergraduate population (28-40)
- Hear from some actual students (40-47)
- Explore and model teaching strategies (48-67)
- Invite us to learn from one another's successes and challenges

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Think about the environments in which you learned best as a young student
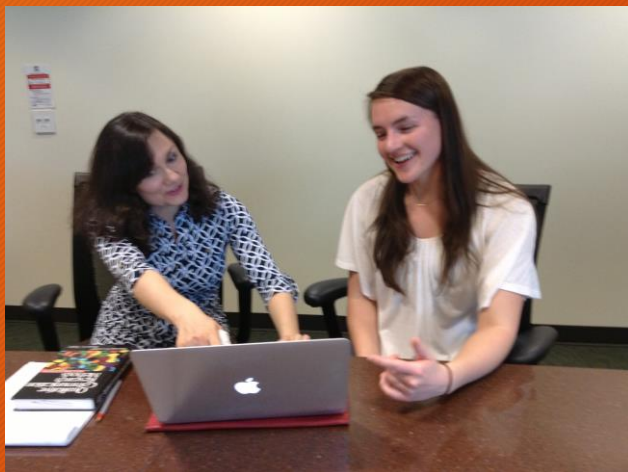

You Are Getting Young, You Are Getting Very, Very Young....

Write the common characteristics of those environments on the white board

How can learning environments today include some of those characteristics?

Inclusive Teaching Seeks to Address Difference on Many Fronts

- Differences in Student **Learning Styles**

- Differences in Student **Experiences**

- Differences in Student **Educational**
- **Preparation**

- Differences in Student **Demographics**

The Inclusive Teaching Motto

Implicit Bias

An implicit stereotype is one that is relatively inaccessible to conscious awareness and/or control. Even if you say that men and women are equally good at math, it is possible that you associate math more strongly with men without being actively aware of it. --Project Implicit

It's an "automatic preference" that predicts discriminatory behavior. Even if you implicitly espouse egalitarian views. -- Banaji & Greenwald, 2013, pp. 46-47

Implicit biases are automatic

Implicit attitudes or stereotypes are activated *unconsciously* and *involuntarily*. They are not the same as biases that a person might try to hide because they're unpopular or socially incorrect.

Social scientists believe that implicit biases are learned as young as age 3, and may be fueled by stereotypes perpetrated in the media, or beliefs passed along by parents, peers, and other community members.

SOURCE: NEA Today

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Take a moment and take an Implicit Bias test

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
Select the choice that allows for a touch screen if on your mobile phone

Implicit Bias Affects Teaching

"When asked about any specific Black student, White teachers were about 30 percent less likely than Black teachers to predict he or she would someday earn a college degree. For White students, the teachers' predictions, or expectations, were about the same."

- Who Believes in Me? The Effect of Student-Teacher Demographic Match on Teacher Expectations (2015)

Biases in General Affect Our Teaching

The fundamental attribution error causes us to assign cause to someone's character (a fixed trait) as opposed to circumstances.

In-group bias leads us to award positive traits and motivations to those like us.

To Combat Your Biases

- Recognize we all have them
- Grow your awareness of your biases
- Actively work to counteract them – the habit of replacement with a positive or neutral stance
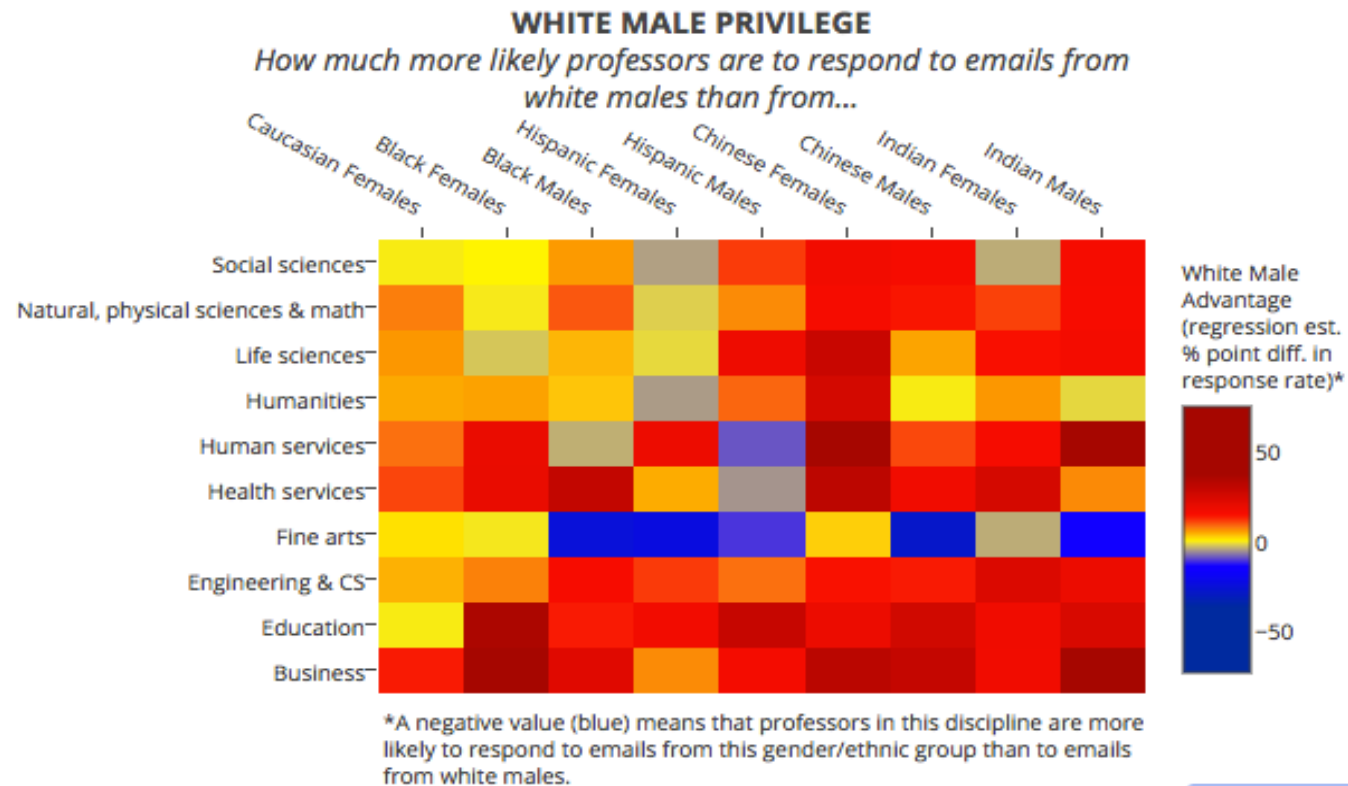
A *very* short & eclectic list of inclusion resources

- Racial Anxiety
- Stroop Test (color words)
- What is male privilege? (The whole Feminism 101 blog has a good research foundation.)
- NPR interview with Claude Steele on combatting stereotype threat
- Five interesting statistical plots on gender
- Vernā Davis, TED talk on 3 things to overcome biases
- #IfTheyGunnedMeDown website

- Stella Young, TED Talk on "I'm not your inspiration" – on physical disability
- Seeing Gender – Graphics
- 10 tips for college students with disabilities

Female Profs Favor White Males

WHITE MALE PRIVILEGE

How much more likely professors are to respond to emails from white males than from...

Columns: Caucasian Females, Black Females, Black Males, Hispanic Females, Hispanic Males, Chinese Females, Chinese Males, Indian Females, Indian Males

Rows: Social sciences, Natural, physical sciences & math, Life sciences, Humanities, Human services, Health services, Fine arts, Engineering & CS, Education, Business

White Male Advantage (regression est. % point diff. in response rate)*

50 / 0 / −50

*A negative value (blue) means that professors in this discipline are more likely to respond to emails from this gender/ethnic group than to emails from white males.

Milkman, Katherine L., et. al. "What Happens Before", 2014.

EDIT CHART

Basically, in every department outside the Fine Arts, emails signed with a "white male" name received more attention than almost any of the others – even when the professors were themselves women or members of a minority group.

Biases Are Enacted When We Are ...

confronted with ambiguous or incomplete information; when under time constraints; and situations of heavy cognitive load

In other words, when teaching!

- Source: Bertrand, Dolly Chugh, and Sendhil Mullainathan, "Implicit Discrimination," American Economic Review 95, no. 2 (2005): 94–98.

What is Inclusive Teaching?

"Inclusive teaching strategies refer to any number of teaching approaches that address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities. These strategies contribute to an overall inclusive learning environment, in which students feel equally valued."

--Cornell Univ. Center for Teaching Excellence

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Every learner is different

Benefits of Inclusive Teaching

➢ Educators can connect with a variety of students.
➢ Educators are prepared for controversial material and discussions.
➢ Students find relevance in course materials.
➢ Students feel comfortable and share ideas/thoughts/questions.
➢ Students are more likely to experience success in your course through activities that support their learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds.

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"Diverse Learners" – A Definition

In the classroom, "**diversity**" applies to learning styles, cultural and ethnic background, educational background, language and support from home.

Classrooms are not "culturally neutral"

"Students cannot check their sociocultural identities at the door . . .

Source: Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M. & Lovett, M.C. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass. (pp. 169-170)

"Therefore, it is important that the pedagogical strategies we employ in the classroom reflect an understanding of social identity development so that we can anticipate the tensions that might occur in the classroom and be proactive about them."

Source: Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M. & Lovett, M.C. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass. (pp. 169-170)

Teaching with student differences in mind helps each student learn how he/she/they learns. Think of your role as equipping students with their own set of tools to learn best. No learning style is "right" or "wrong." No learner is better than another.

Write for 1 minute

How do you adjust your teaching to acknowledge:

- Different learning styles?
- Different life experiences?
- Different educational backgrounds?

Write for 1 more minute

How do you adjust your teaching to ***celebrate***:

- Different learning styles?
- Different life experiences?
- Different educational backgrounds?

Inclusive Learning Seems Like:

A. The latest pedagogical trend; this is helpful stuff!

B. The latest pedagogical trend; this is exhausting.

C. More ways in which I have to coddle students

D. Worth doing but it's never as easy as these workshops make it sound

E. Yet another way I will put my foot in my mouth in front of 60 students

F. More work

G. It could be OK once I get the hang of it

H. All of the above

A Partial Look at Who Is In the Seats

Understanding Where are Learners Have Been Helps Us Meet Them Where They're At

About 7 in 10 were in the top half of their h.s. graduating class

About 3 in 10 were in the bottom half of their h.s. graduating class.

Source: WMU Fact Book, 2016

Educational Standing of 1st-year UG students, 2016

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1 in 2 undergraduate students scored between 18 and 23 on the ACT composite (scoring range is 1-36)

Academic Preparedness of 1st-year UG students, 2016

Socio-Economic Diversity ⓘ

39% of students

have a family income less than $40k and receive an income-based federal Pell Grant to help pay for college.

Total Undergraduates @WMU, 2016

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1 in 4 students had a GPA of 3.75 or higher

A little more than 1 in 4 had a high school GPA of between 2.5 and 2.99

1st-time, 1st-year students at WMU, 2016

UG students, 2016

- 12,793 white
- 2,260 black or African-American
- 1,011 Hispanic/Latino
- 709 non-resident aliens
- 324 Asian
- 79 American Indian or Alaska native
- 14 Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 642 two or more races, non-Hispanic
- 152 race or ethnicity unknown

UG students, 2016

Race/Ethnicity ℹ️

- **73%** White
- **12%** Black
- **5%** Hispanic
- **3%** Non-resident alien
- **3%** Two or more races
- **2%** Asian
- **1%** Unknown
- **<1%** American Indian/Alaska Native
- **<1%** Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

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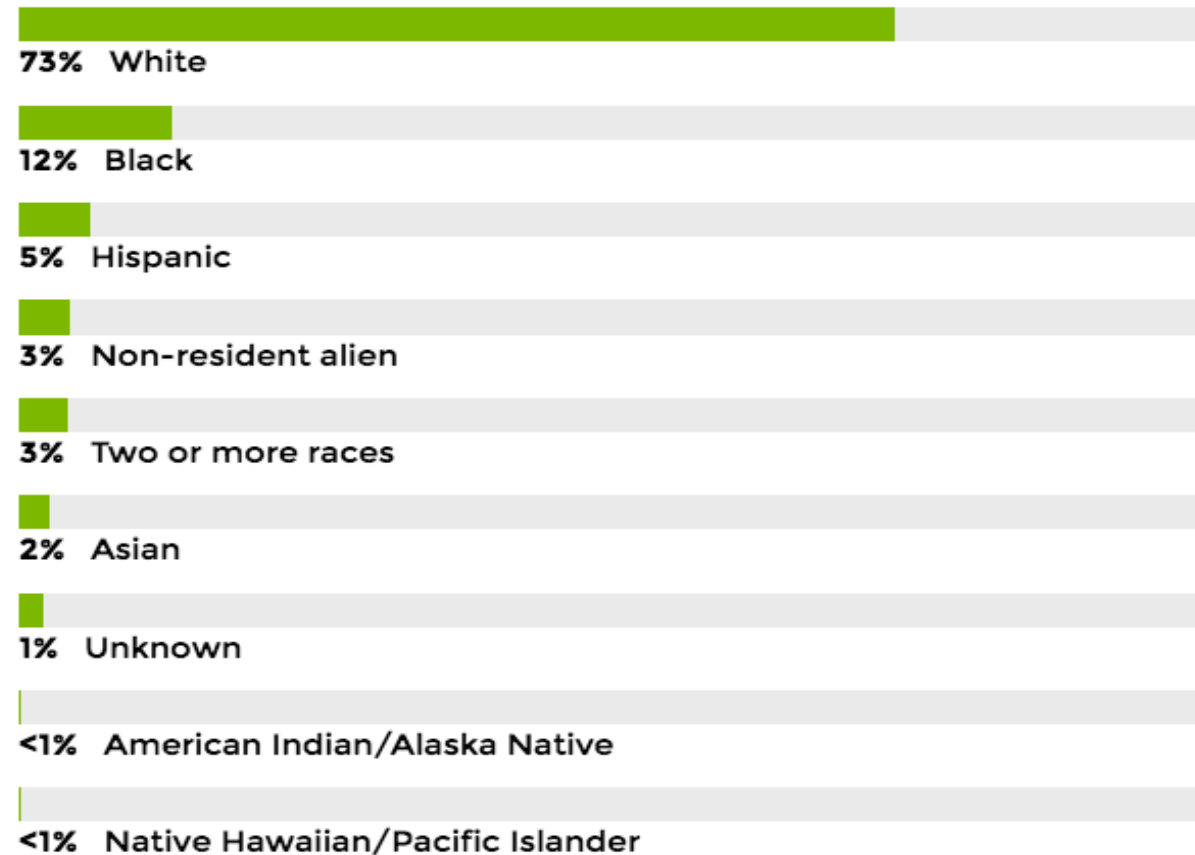
Undergraduate Graduate Rate in Six Years (2009 cohort)
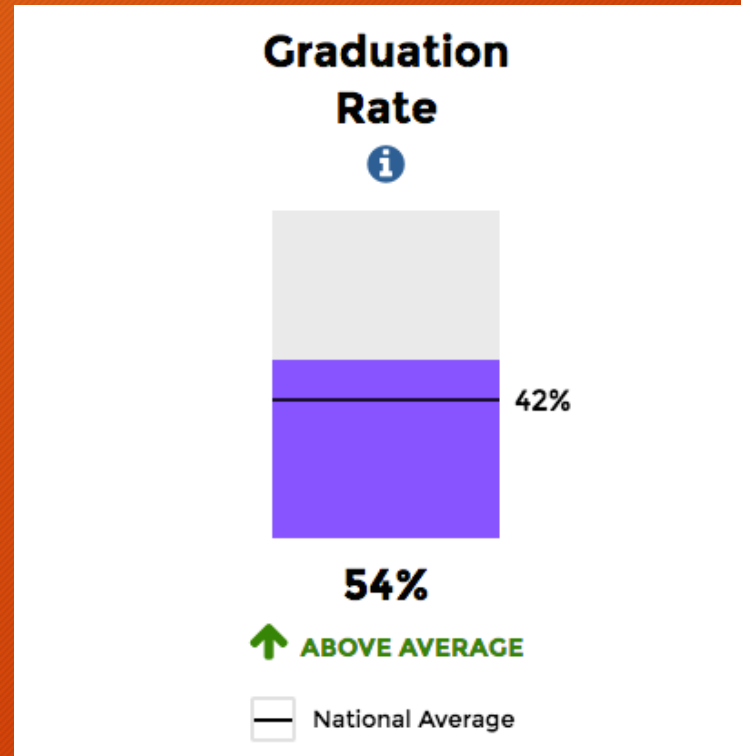
Student Body

Large

18,450 undergraduate students

84 % Full-time / **16** % Part-time

Also, many students work while in school full-time

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Returning UG students from F15 to F16

78.6%

Child and Family Development:
234 females
6 males

Criminal Justice:
249 white
197 students of color

Aviation:
720 males; 82 females

Public Relations:
67 females; 13 males

General Psych:
43 students of color
117 white students

Don't Assume They Know What To Do

"We got accepted here but a lot of us are lost. I'm a first-generation college student. Someone who might have been struggling because I felt so out of place and I didn't know how to talk to my classmates -- not because they were Caucasian...but because I felt they knew what they were doing. They have their parents they can talk to. I didn't have parents or older siblings to talk to. I was lost; just help me."

--Michelle

Reach Out & Offer Services

"If you see us struggling, instead of saying, 'You're in college, you should do better,' you should take time after class and say, 'Do you need help? Come talk to me; don't be afraid. Here are tutoring hours, here are my office hours.'

It's easy to give a grade. It takes a real professor to say 'You're in my class I don't want to see you fail.'"

--Michelle

"I'm always the only": Avoid Making A Learner a Spokesperson for a Group

"At the graduate level, I am always the only one or one of two African American students in the room. It's very uncomfortable. I often feel as if I'm not fully a part of the classroom atmosphere. In the past I felt as if I had to step outside of my character or work really hard to represent not just myself but my culture. I'm the only person there and I feel a responsibility."

--Kendra

Offer Diversity in Curriculum Materials

"There are times when I feel as if I could connect to the material better if the world that I relate to was in the conversation. When there is a presence of something you identify with, you are able to grasp the material more effectively.

Profs could offer examples from diverse demographics, or consciously pick reading material that doesn't exclude students of color or students from underrepresented backgrounds."

--Kendra

Making Ground Rules Clear Helps

"How I've seen inclusion used, at the beginning of class, they lay out in their syllabus that this is an inclusive environment. When they actually talk about certain things, a lot of professors use different cultures and different perspectives on things to ensure everyone is included. They aren't taking the Eurocentric take on this. A lot of professors when they do talk about classroom etiquette, they say respect each others' opinions and respect diversity and civility."

--Lucas

International students speak about their experiences at WMU

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- Move the mouse over the icon to hear students' input

Teaching Ideas

From Start to Finish

Roughly 1 in 10 faculty

- Only 166 of 1,446 of WMU's instructional faculty are members of minority groups.

Talk with a Neighbor →

Reflective Questions to ask Yourself:

How might my own culture-bound assumptions influence my interactions with students?

How might the backgrounds and experiences of my students influence their motivation, engagement, and learning in my classroom?

How can I modify course materials, activities, assignments, and/or exams to be more accessible to all students in my classes?

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Look at Your Course Content

- What are your discipline's conventions and assumptions?
- How might students with varying backgrounds respond to them?
- What positive learning outcomes can come from respecting difference in the classroom? How can you highlight these?

Sample Syllabus Statements
(note use of 1ˢᵗ person)

- Diversity Statement: In this class, we will support an inclusive learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. The class atmosphere will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in our understanding how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from our own.

- Learner Needs: Please let me know immediately if you have special concerns or learning challenges. We need to have a productive learning environment for all. I cannot help you with learning issues if you don't let me know until the end of the semester.

Put Diversity in Your Syllabus

- Include a statement that you value diversity of backgrounds, learners, opinions, etc.

- Include civility or discussion guidelines to establish a learning environment of respect and productive dialogue

- Ask students with special needs to communicate with you immediately so you can work together to address needs

To Start The Semester

1 Offer a personal connection—handshake, smile, acknowledgment

2 Introduce yourself with preferred name and preferred pronouns. Have students do the same when attendance is taken first day of class.

3 Class warm-up focuses on meeting new people. e.g. share markers for nameplates, greet everyone in your row with a fistbump, make up a team name for your row/table

4 Discuss learning styles. Discuss how you will seek to address different styles, but begin now with student accountability. Offer a learning styles assessment due the next class.

5 Acknowledge our differences and celebrate them. Acknowledge exclusion. And reject it.

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Learning Styles Assessments

- https://www.edutopia.org/multiple-intelligences-assessment

- http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles-quiz.shtml

- Have students hand in the assessment and identify at least 5 things they will do this semester to learn your course's content

- Offer appropriate WMU resources as needed

Establishing Expectations & Tone

- What do you want your students to know about your expectations regarding creating and maintaining a classroom space where differences are respected and valued?

- Is your teaching statement &/or syllabus inclusive of different types of diversity, including, but not limited to: race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, religion, and disability?

- Could you have the class determine rules of engagement/civility?

Using Fault Lines

Robert C. Maynard, the first African-American editor of a major metropolitan daily, the Oakland Tribune, said "there are five enduring forces that shape lives and social tensions in this country: race, class, gender, generation and geography . . . And by acknowledging our own faultlines – the frame of reference for all of our own experiences – we can correct for missing pieces in the way we interpret an event or issue."

Source: Lehrman, S. "How to Cross Your 'Faultlines.'" *Diversity Toolbox*. Society of Professional Journalists.

Learner Fault Lines

A teaching adaptation of the *5 Fault Lines* developed by journalist and publisher Robert C. Maynard. See: MIJE.ORG

1 GENERATION

2 GENDER/SEXUAL ORIENTATION

3 GEOGRAPHY

4 CLASS/INCOME

5 RACE/ETHNICITY

6 PHYSICAL ABILITY

7 LEARNING STYLES & HISTORY

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Sample First-Day Assignment

- "5 Things You Wouldn't Know About Me By Looking At Me" -- prepare a PPT with 5 slides to share to either the whole class or in smaller groups or as a summary

- Immediately builds class cohesion

- Establishes course-long approach to inquiry beyond stereotypes

- Sets course tone of curiosity *and* respect; allows me to model responses

- Can be serious or funny, deep or superficial

SEE EXAMPLES

To Start Any Class

1 — Continue your effort at personal connection: handshake, smile, acknowledgment. Follow up on email exchange or how a sports event or second shift went, or how other classes are going.

2 — Offer an opportunity to interact with peers: Compose a Tweet together on today's topic and post it with the class hashtag, or snap a selfie and post to Instagram with a cat pun.

3 — Check in on current course content: How did the assignment go? What was most interesting part? Most difficult? Use index cards or a White Board Barf to identify +/- areas.

4 — Gather to seek clarity on respective areas for 5 minutes. Adjust or accommodate as needed.

5 — When relevant, acknowledge exclusion or difference within the context of today's content. Discuss its impacts or establish that you will at a specific point in the semester.

Inclusive Lecturing

- Use inclusive examples
- Ask who is missing from the narrative and why that matters
- Wonder aloud why something is as it is
- Use open-ended questions
- Encourage critical thinking about messaging – why does history depict this situation in this way? Who was the author of that history? Who owns the narrative?
- What is the context?

Offer content and instruction in different ways

- Provide PPTs with space for notes
- Say key ideas out loud not once but two or three times.
- Allow time for small-group discussions on key ideas
- Assign class note-takers for the day
- Mandate or offer points for office hour visits
- One-on-one check-ins; even in large classes, this is possible by pulling students aside during group activities.
- Videos/Audio/Articles – supply worksheets to guide attention to key points

MOVE AROUND

- Have students get up and talk to a classmate they haven't met
- Write answers on the board
- Students discuss in pairs while standing up
- Students write on Post-It notes on walls for mind mapping or idea generation
- As an educator, look to cross pollenate ideas and people whenever possible in any class session
- As an educator, take your microphone into the lecture hall and sit down and talk from there for a bit. Interview a willing student about what they are confused about.

Tough Topics

- Set the ground rules for civility
- Invite multiple perspectives
- Separate effect from intention. Discuss the impact of words or a point of view. "Some people find that argument offensive because…."
- Stay rooted in the text or content that prompted the discussion

Some Tools for Different Learners

Visual Learners

- Text2MindMap – mapping ideas
- Dippity -- timeline
- Zeemaps – create interactive maps
- Wordle – wordcloud
- Wordpress – free website to share ideas, images, blog posts

Kinesthetic Learners

- Experiential learning opportunities
- Hands-on projects
- Role play
- Flashcards
- Take breaks
- Finger fidgets

Disabilities and mental health concerns

ADA compliance/disabilities

- Consider texts with alternate forms (digital)
- Clear copies are essential for students needing to have the materials scanned into electronic format, enlarged, or Brailled
- Captioned videos
- Post course material online
- Disability information must remain confidential
- Include a statement in your syllabus to contact you re. accommodations

Mental health issues

- Offer warnings re. graphic videos
- Be aware of potential student sensitivity or history to sexual assault/domestic violence/suicide
- Avoid disparaging terminology
- Acknowledge your missteps

Resource: BroncosFIRST Directory

BroncosFIRST created a comprehensive directory of student success services:

Resources:

WMU Institutional Research, 2016 Common Data Set
College Board
College Scorecard
Academic Advancement Network, MSU
Cornell University Center for Teaching Excellence
Univ. of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching
Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Center for Teaching and Learning
Univ. of Minnesota's Center for Educational Innovation

This presentation will be available on the WMU Office of Faculty Development website.

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