Building Community: Preparing For the ‘New’ Student
Seminar for Teaching Inclusivity
Candy McCorkle, Ph.D.
Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion
Western Michigan University

Defining Community

- Community is a sense of connection with others as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests and/or goals.
- In a community members have a sense of belonging.
- Today your table will be a community.
- Based on the two definitions I have given, discuss the attributes that make your table a community and list them on the 3x5 card at your table.

Belonging is essential to community

- Inclusion is another word for belonging
  - A mindset
  - An attitude
  - A belief
  - Not a favor for someone
  - Not a program
  - Not synonymous for conforming to the social norms
Currently our classrooms do not foster inclusion, instead they foster exclusion or a false diversity
Classrooms needs to utilize purposeful technology
Include global connections
Expose learners to new cultures
Learning spaces should be student centered

Beliefs set the focus
- Social and Emotional Learning
- Learning together
- Reduce Barriers to Learning

As the instructor our beliefs about our students set the focus on how we approach teaching
- I believe all of my students can be successful
- Every student can learn
- How do I get my students to value different experiences, people, cultures and worldviews
- How can I help each of my students work to their strengths
**Emotional and Social Learning**

- This teaches students:
  - Self-regulation
  - Collaboration
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Empathy
  - Generosity

- Students need to learn:
  - That how we feel impacts how learn
  - The environment impacts our focus
  - Each of us have strengths and weaknesses
  - We all have different intelligences
  - When we work from our strengths it builds confidence
  - Tasks that challenge us help us to develop

**Learning Together**

- Encourage interdependence in students
- Build Relationships helps to recognize others abilities
- Building relationships encourages a sense of accountability and responsibility
- Collaboration fosters using one another strengths to create a effective problem solving
- Collaboration also helps us to appreciate diversity

**Reducing Barriers to Learning**

- Create tasks that can adapt to a learners abilities
- Create spaces that are inclusive to all learners
- Use a variety of teaching and sources
- Use different method of assessing comprehension and mastery
- Utilize tasks that challenge and allow for demonstration of different levels of abilities
- Provide multiple forms of feedback
An inclusive classroom is building a community that is accessible to all.