

How to Create a Gender-Inclusive Learning Environment

The following tips are suggestions on how to create a gender-inclusive learning environment; faculty should implement strategies with which they agree. Increased awareness surrounding identity and expression has given universities the opportunity to create a more inclusive environment for all students. However, when searching for a list of best practices for classroom inclusivity, educators will quickly find that there is conflicting research regarding how to best create an inclusive environment. This document addresses some of the common challenges to gender-inclusive teaching and offers some suggestions for creating a classroom that welcomes all students.

CREATING A CULTURE OF RESPECT

One of the most important aspects of creating a safe and inclusive learning environment is creating a culture of respect, starting on (or before) the first day of class. Below are some suggestions on how to foster respect in your classroom:

- 1** Utilize inclusive language, such as everyone, students, learners, or scholars. (Harbin, n.d; Brundin, 2018)
- 2** Respect your students' privacy and only share their personal information after receiving their consent. (Harbin, n.d.)
- 3** Consider ways to display your support for a gender-inclusive learning environment in or outside your office.
- 4** Model inclusive behavior.

- Apologize if you make a mistake when identifying a student (Harbin, n.d.: Levin, 2018; Brundin, 2018).

- Do not allow your students to bully anybody or use students' personal information as insults (Brundin, 2018).

- 5** Do not be "gender-blind."

- Saying that you do not care what gender your students are is similar to when people say they do not see color. It is dismissing your students' lived experiences and identities instead of validating them (Brundin, 2018).

- 6 Send a "housekeeping" email on the first day of class.
 - Email your students information about your course, including which textbooks are required, and ask them to inform you of their name (Levin, 2018; Harbin, n.d.).
- 7 Create a pre-class survey that provides a safe space for students to disclose their name and other information they may wish to divulge (Harbin, n.d.).
- 8 Ask students to fill out index cards with their name, and then be sure to update the class list (Brundin, 2018).

The above suggestions are just a few ways that you can make your classroom more accessible and inclusive for non-binary students.

For more information on creating an inclusive classroom, please visit our [Inclusive Teaching Toolbox](#).

REFERENCES

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