SIMPLE TIPS FOR INFUSING DIVERSITY CONTENT INTO YOUR CLASSES

Creating a learning environment that promotes the feelings of inclusion among your students is one of the most important, and sometimes, challenging parts of being an educator. Researchers have found that feeling a sense of inclusion enhances academic success (Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods, 2007; Glass & Westmont, 2014; Kivlighan, Abbas, Gloria, Aguinaga, Frank, & Frost, 2018). Below are some tips for infusing diversity and inclusion into your classroom:

Include the Contributions of Underrepresented and Under-appreciated Individuals in Your Field

It is important to recognize the achievement of diverse experts in your field. First, it may allow some students to specifically see themselves represented in their area of choice. This can make the discipline feel more welcoming (Boucher & Murphy, 2015). Additionally, it presents a more accurate representation of the backgrounds of those who do and have contributed to the subject. Below are some tips for how to incorporate diversity into your class assignments and discussion regarding the major contributors in your field:

Assign a "biography" project where a student or group of students choose to present on an expert from a list of diverse contributors to your field.

Show images, video clips, documentaries, or films about underrepresented and appreciated major contributors to your field
(For example, you could show *The Imitation Game* which shows the challenges and persecution of scientist Alan Turing faced as a homosexual in the 1940s)

Invite current researchers and practitioners in your field to speak to your class about the ways in which their social identities shape their work and their professional identity.

Assign readings from a diverse group of authors, in order to gain multiple perspectives.

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Use Inclusive Examples

When creating examples and anecdotes to help explain course content, **be cognizant of the language you use and who you are excluding** through your use of language and choice of examples.

When you are giving examples, be sure to use **masculine, female, and gender-neutral pronouns**. Research shows that when only masculine pronouns are used, the listeners relate the pronouns to only men (Harvard Extension School, n. d.)

MASCULINE	FEMININE	GENDER-NEUTRAL
He	She	They
Him	Her	Their
His	Hers	Theirs

When using examples that include **interpersonal relationships** (significant others, families, etc.) include:

same-sex couples (with or without children) as families

interracial relationships and families

multi-ethnic relationships and families

child-free couples as families

When looking for images for your PowerPoints, **choose photos that also include underrepresented populations** in your examples so that students who come from those populations can see themselves succeeding in the class

Use relevant and current real world examples from various contexts and backgrounds

The above are just a few ways that you can make your classroom more inclusive through infusing diverse examples and representation in your teaching practice. For other examples, please refer to our Inclusive Teaching Toolbox.

Reference

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