

**THE DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION PRESENTS**
An Instructor Workshop

PRESENTED ON
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REFRAMING YOUR COURSE

**INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES FOR
SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT**

WORKSHOP PACKET

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STUDENT CONVERSATIONS

GOAL: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN IN-CLASS DISCOURSE THAT INVITES A VARIETY OF PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS

Inclusive Strategies - Classroom Interaction

- Select specific dates (3-4) in your course schedule where the lecture/discussion is focused on discussing the topic of that day from a variety of perspectives. (Prep accordingly)
- Present material that challenges or critiques the main textbook/course materials. Establish that your main text is written from a specific worldview and may not have considered other perspectives. If possible, present ideas those contradictory/opposing views.
- Regularly ask your students, when presenting concepts, questions that challenge what's being presented. **See examples below:**
 - Do you buy that? Does anybody **not** buy that?
 - Is this the only way to think about it?
 - What does this concept leave out?/Can everyone benefit from this concept/process?

Inclusive Strategies - Classroom Conduct

- At day one, set up a classroom environment that rejects "agreement" culture. The goal is substantive discourse, not sheep manufacturing.
- Recognize that what may be "taboo" for you is no longer considered a sensitive conversation by your students. Catch up with the future.
- Set boundaries and an atmosphere of honesty when covering sensitive topics. Follow-up and assess, or "read", the room.

GRADING TECHNIQUES

GOAL: USE ASSESSMENT IN A WAY THAT MEASURES LEARNING IN A VARIETY OF WAYS.

Inclusive Strategies - Examinations

- When using exams as assessment, consider the variety of ways that a test can be administered. See the following below:
 - Multiple Choice, True/False, Multiple Answer, Essay, Short Answer, Oral, Online, Open Book/Note. (There are more)
- Avoid examination goals that are designed to challenge personal attributes more than content-based learning. See examples below:
 - Testing for fatigue/perseverance (lots of questions, not enough time)
 - Avoid unnecessary language that makes statements/questions difficult to comprehend.

AVOID

- True or False: An individual may increase chances of mistakes on a ***perfunctory*** review of the manuscript.

BETTER

- True or False: An individual may increase chances of mistakes on a ***sloppy*** review of the manuscript.

Inclusive Strategies - Classroom Conduct

- Reframe assignments and activities to allow flexibility in execution and break the expectation of tradition.
 - Encourage creativity
 - Support alternative presentation formats (still substantive)
 - Be mindful of requirements that restrict success due to economic or accessibility

ASSIGNMENTS/CLASSROOM LEARNING

GOAL: NATURALLY INCORPORATE CULTURAL COMPETENCE INTO THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR COURSE

Inclusive Strategies - Assignments (Major and/or Minor)

- As a part of your syllabus' diversity statement, connect cultural competence's relationship to your course and express how it will be used during the semester. (Hold yourself accountable)
- Engage in strategic student inventory or strategic polling of your students (for course preparation)
 - Learn their backgrounds, experiences, challenges, and aspirations **as told by them** (not your assumptions)
 - Reframe activities or assignments that allow you to collect this information while also reaching your course goals (it can be done)
- Sometimes "difficult" topics are delayed or saved for the end of the textbook. As a result, these topics get covered during the end of the semester when students are distracted or too stressed to absorb it.
 - **Reframe your course schedule/assignments** to allow students the time, and mindset, to engage with these complex topics.

Inclusive Strategies - Classroom Structure

- Introduce visuals of the scholars related to your course. Seek out opportunities to highlight **new** voices beyond the traditional ones.
 - Take advantage of the conference websites to get started
 - Encourage students to share their resources with you
- Diversify the examples/visuals being used in class. Representation matters to students.
 - Reframe case studies/examples/atmosphere/scenarios to connect with today's society and topics
 - Including: Names, Pronouns, Ethnicity, Pictures, Music, and Ability

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

GOAL: PRESENT A VARIETY OF RESOURCES AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS TO SUPPORT EQUIFINALITY

Inclusive Strategies - Resources

- Actively **seek out** resources that present anti-racist views and challenge supremacy. If you must use a traditional text, use your instructor freedom to fill in what's missing and follow-up with supplementary materials.
- Consider that there are a variety of resources, even in research, that may be helpful to students and/or course preparation.
 - Academic Journals
 - **Critical, Performance, Rhetorical**, Qualitative, and Quantitative.
 - Encourage students to recognize different research presentations as **valuable** and **substantive**.
- Consider options in choosing primary resources for your course
 - Textbook / Popular Press / Academic Journal Articles
- After choosing a primary option, consider secondary options from other channels
 - Video / Podcast / Documentary / Guest Speakers

Inclusive Strategies - Supplementary Materials

- Reframe the narrative about resources being used in your course
 - Discuss other materials (beyond main resources) as materials that **enhance** course learning.
- State why you chose the materials you're using for the course. It helps to hear the instructor actively support the materials as chosen and not assuming them as obligatory.

COLLEGIAL COLLABORATION

GOAL: CAPITALIZE ON THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE AMONG THE DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY.

Inclusive Strategies - Internal Collaboration

- With early notice, invite peers to your course to emphasize a topic within their strengths.
 - Guest speaker, Special guest highlight, Judge, etc.
- Discover ways to work together on a course assignment or project. You can also support each other by looking over a syllabus/assignment for feedback.
- Take time to share ideas and successes of past semesters with your peers.

Inclusive Strategies - External Collaboration

- Reframe the narrative of underrepresented groups in the local community. Seek out natural partnerships with organizations, or individuals, who can help bring a learning outcome to life.
 - **Community organization, Community individual, Local political figure, Alum/Recent alum from underrepresented group**

- **Local Springfield Contacts**

NAACP - Springfield, MO

<https://www.naacpspringfieldmo.org/about-us/who-we-are>

The GLO Center - Springfield, MO

https://www.glocenter.org/board_of_directors

ADA Information & Compliance - Springfield, MO

<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/2079/ADA-Information-Compliance>

WORKSHOP NOTES: