

## ASSIGNMENT #1 B: INCLUSIVE TEACHING STATEMENT

A diversity or inclusivity statement in a teaching portfolio sets the tone for your teaching and learning. It affirms that the courses you teach will embrace the campus values of inclusivity, diversity and multiculturalism and recognizes the strengths and breadth that learners from all types of different backgrounds bring to a classroom, department, and institution.

### Goals:

- To represent the learning environment we wish to teach in, and the effective ways in which to bring this about.
- To embrace a global inclusivity philosophy that may permeate our teaching portfolio contents.

### Learning Outcomes:

- A declaration or promise that stands as a contract for the learning environment you would assure in which a diverse body of learners may advance.
- Evidence of these goals in examples and applications for the classroom and syllabus activities/plans.

### Research and Readings:

- [Inclusivity Statement](#)  
Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan  
Creating Inclusive College Classrooms, Shari Saunders and Diana Kardia (1997)  
[http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3\\_1](http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1)
- Evidence Based Strategies and Practices, University of Pennsylvania  
<https://wwwctl.upenn.edu/evidence-based-strategies-and-practices>
- Eight Actions to Reduce Racism in College Classrooms *When professors are part of the problem*  
Shaun R. Harper and Charles H. F. Davis III American Association of University Professors (2016)  
<https://www.aaup.org/article/eight-actions-reduce-racism-college-classrooms#.YCrJpy1h2gQ>
- The 2017 *Guide for Inclusive Teaching at Columbia* <https://ctl.columbia.edu/>
- RISD Resource Sites:
  - RISD Office of Intercultural Student Engagement
  - RISD Center for Social Equity and Inclusion
  - 2017-18 RISD Graduate Student Handbook of Collegiate Teaching page 27, pages 35-36  
<http://academicaffairs.risd.edu/faculty-teaching/teach/inclusive-pedagogy/resources>
- Search for other samples of inclusivity statements for your own discipline in learning centers sites or from professional discipline sites.
- Speak to faculty at RISD to learn how they effectively assure and collaborate for an inclusive classroom.

## Application:

Put your own aspirations and ideas about diverse areas for learning and give samples of successful past experiences you have encountered, researched, or read about as evidence to your ideas. Imagine class projects, readings, demonstrations, podcasts, videos, slide lectures, guest artists, critiques, resources, field trips as being broader and more inclusive and diverse, global, and equitable. Give specific examples in your statement.

## Assessment:

### Basic Competency

- Sufficient explanation for ways of teaching and learning with diverse student bodies and diverse learning styles.
- Examples of addressing inclusivity in the classroom projects or documents. An awareness of approaches to inclusive classrooms is shown.

### Advanced Competency

- Specific and dynamic evidence of the broader ideas of inclusive classrooms brought to one's own discipline.
- Integration of ideas presented in articles and websites into one's statement for future proposed teaching and learning.
- Reflective assessments about the transactional nature of the classroom today and how one's teaching can advance learning.

Terminology around inclusive teaching is constantly evolving. The 2017 *Guide for Inclusive Teaching at Columbia* <https://ctl.columbia.edu/> offers an overview of five inclusive teaching principles with practical, accessible, usable strategies and a glossary of terms and concepts of inclusivity.

- Principle 1: Establish and support a class climate that fosters belonging for all students.
- Principle 2: Set explicit student expectations.
- Principle 3: Select course content that recognizes diversity and acknowledges barriers to inclusion.
- Principle 4: Design all course elements for accessibility.
- Principle 5: Reflect on one's beliefs about teaching to maximize self-awareness and commitment to inclusion.

**Accessibility** is the consideration of various barriers to full participation in teaching and learning activities. Accessible learning environments allow students with disabilities to "acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as students without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use" (Center for Applied Special Technology). Components of accessibility could include accommodations for assignments, adjustments in physical space or with classroom technology, or providing alternative assessments.

**Colorblind ideology** is a belief that assumes institutional racism and discrimination have been largely eradicated, and that “equal opportunity, one’s qualifications, not one’s color or ethnicity, should be the mechanism by which upward mobility is achieved” (Gallagher, 2003, 22). This belief can lead to a dismissal of social and cultural factors still affecting many people of color, as well as a rejection of policies that attempt to address existing inequalities (e.g., affirmative action).

**Course climate** is the “intellectual, social, emotional, and physical environments in which our students learn. Climate is determined by a constellation of interacting factors that include faculty-student interaction, the tone instructors set, instances of stereotyping or tokenism, the course demographics (for example, relative size of racial and other social groups enrolled in the course), student-student interaction, and the range of perspectives represented in the course content and materials. All of these factors can operate outside as well as inside the classroom” (Ambrose et al., 2010, 170).

**Cultural learning assumptions** are often unspoken expectations shaped by affiliation with a broadly stable set of attitudes and beliefs shared by a group of people. These assumptions could give rise to habits of learning and assumptions about the ways teaching and learning are practiced (Gurung and Prieto, 2009).

**Growth mindset** is “based on the belief that...although people may differ in every which way—in their initial talents and aptitudes, interests, or temperaments— everyone can change and grow through application and experience” (Dweck, 2016, 7). This idea stands in contrast to a “fixed mindset,” characterized by the belief that one’s qualities are carved in stone and unchangeable.

**Implicit bias** “refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control” (Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2015, 61).

**Intercultural competency** is the “ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, to shift frames of reference appropriately and adapt behavior to cultural context” (Deardorff, 2006, 249).

**Intersectionality** is a concept used in critical theory to highlight the interconnected nature of socially constructed categories (such as race, class, and gender) as they apply to a given individual or group. This concept can be key to illuminating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage (Mitchell, Simmons, and Greyerbiehl, 2014).

**Learner-centered** teaching calls for students to actively engage in their learning process and for faculty members to facilitate that process, rather than relying on faculty to do the “heavy lifting” (Weimer 2013).

**Learning objectives** specify the knowledge, information, and skills instructors want students to have at the end of the course. Learning objectives are generally student-oriented (i.e., “at the end of this course, students should be able to \_\_\_\_\_”), focus on concrete actions and behaviors, and should be measurable.

**Microaggressions** are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (Sue et al., 2009, 183). While Sue et al.’s definition specifically indicates race as the focus of bias, the term has since been expanded to apply to a variety of identity factors, such as sexuality, gender, and ability.

**Monocultural education** is “an education largely reflective of one reality and usually biased toward the dominant group” (Ginsberg and Wlodkowski, 2009, 25).

**Positionality** is the way one's social location or position is assigned and negotiated as the result of combining various social factors or identities (e.g., race, sex, class, gender, ability, sexual orientation) (Hearn, 2012).

**Rubrics** are "a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics divide an assignment into component parts and provide a detailed description of what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable levels of performance of each of those parts" (Stevens and Levi, 2013, 3).

**Stereotype threat** is defined as "being at risk of confirming, as a self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's social group" (Stroessner and Good, 2011, 1). Stereotype threat can occur related to many different facets of identity, including race, ethnicity, and gender. In educational settings, research has demonstrated students' performance may be negatively impacted "by the awareness that one's behavior might be viewed through the lens of stereotypes" if those identities (or stereotypes related to those identities) are highlighted prior to the performance (Stroessner and Good, 2011). Situations that highlight one's social identity factors (e.g., asking demographic questions before an assessment) can activate stereotype threat.

**Tokenism** is the practice of making a cursory or symbolic effort to employ inclusive practices to give the appearance of inclusiveness and fairness. In the classroom, this could involve an instructor asking a student to act as spokesperson for a certain identity group, or hiring a TA from an underrepresented group to assuage criticism about inclusiveness and diversity in the classroom.

**Underrepresented groups or individuals** have been shown to be underrepresented nationally in their fields relative to their number in the general population; typically refers to members of racial/ ethnic minority groups (African-American or Black, Hispanic or Latino, American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders), and individuals with disabilities (National Institute of General Medical Sciences).