CREATING A MORE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

OPEN WORKSHOP
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The typical classroom environment supports and inspires certain students better than others.

Careful research suggests concrete steps we can take to make our teaching more effective and more inclusive.
Making Classes More Effective and Inclusive—
A Shortlist of Strategies

1. Introduce your students to BLOOM’S TAXONOMY.
2. Construct your courses using BACKWARD DESIGN.
3. Employ ACTIVE LEARNING techniques.
4. Foster a GROWTH MINDSET.
5. Modify and limit the effects of IMPLICIT BIASES.
6. Understand STEREOTYPE THREAT and reduce it with VALUES AFFIRMATION and WISE FEEDBACK.
1. Introduce your students to BLOOM’S TAXONOMY.

Using a topic or concept from your course,
- What might a student be able to do at level 1?
- What might a student do at a higher level?

2. Construct your courses using BACKWARD DESIGN.

Standard course planning
- Choose textbook
- Create syllabus
- Write/revise lectures, notes, prepare PowerPoint presentations
- Write homework, exam questions

versus

Backward design
- Formulate broad learning goals
- Set specific learning objectives
- Design assignments (formative and summative)
- Prepare learning activities

Student-centered

e.g., Understanding by Design (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998/2005)

Figure from Wood, 2009. Ann Rev Cell Dev Bio
Designing your course

* **Uncover the material.**

* Define and communicate your course objectives, and design your course around them.

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Start by identifying desired results. What broad learning goals do you have for the students in your course?

- Write down one or two ideas or competencies you want students to take away from your course. [3 min.]
- Discuss your goals with the person sitting next to you, and refine your response. [3 min.]
- Share your responses with the group. [3 min.]
Essential competencies in economics
(from Allgood and Bayer 2016)

1. Apply the scientific process to economic phenomena
2. Analyze and evaluate behavior and outcomes using economic concepts and models
3. Use quantitative approaches in economics
4. Think critically about economic methods and their application
5. Communicate economic ideas in diverse collaborations

3. Employ ACTIVE LEARNING techniques.

In-class inquiry and problem-solving activities allow students to engage in higher order thinking and to construct understanding.

Active learning produces strong increases in student performance, with disproportionate benefits for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and for female students in male-dominated fields.

- Think – Pair – Share [3 minutes each]
- One-minute papers
- Peer instruction

➢ Write down a prompt you could use for a Think-Pair-Share activity in your class.
4. Foster a GROWTH MINDSET.

- Intelligence is not a fixed trait.
- Intelligence expands through effort, mistakes, and perseverance.
- Math ability (and economic intuition) can be developed.

Encouraging students to see intelligence as malleable raises academic enjoyment, engagement, and performance. (Aronson, Fried & Good Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 2002)

Teachers with growth mindsets allow a broader range of students to do well. (Rheinberg, 2000, Dweck, 2008)

- Write down something you can do to foster a growth mindset in your students.

5. Understand and address IMPLICIT BIASES.

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<th>Implicitly biased</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly unbiased</td>
<td>Most of us</td>
<td>A few</td>
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</table>

Decades of careful research indicate that race, gender, and other perceived group affiliations operate as heuristics, with powerful, unconscious effects on our judgments and actions. (e.g., Greenwald & Banaji 1995)

We all have biases that operate without our awareness or intent.
GENDER-SCIENCE IMPLICIT ASSOCIATION

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<th>Association</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong automatic association</td>
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IMPLICIT ASSOCIATION TESTS

- **Arab-Muslim/Arab-Muslim - Other People** (AAT): This AAT requires the ability to distinguish terms that are likely to belong to Arab-Muslim versus people of other nationalities or religions.
- **Gender - Teen** (AAT): These AATs often reveal subconscious links between gender and other factors.
- **Presidential Popularity** (AAT): This AAT is based on whether Barack Obama and his predecessor were perceived positively.
- **Bilateral** (AAT): This AAT measures the ability to recognize posture and facial features.
- **Skin Tone** (AAT): This AAT measures the ability to recognize skin tone and facial features.
- **Asian-American/Asian-European-American** (AAT): This AAT requires the ability to recognize Asian and Asian-American faces and images of places that are either American or Asian.
- **Age - Young - Old** (AAT): This AAT measures the ability to distinguish between young and old.
- **Race - Black - White** (AAT): This AAT measures the ability to distinguish between black and white.
- **Weight** (AAT): This AAT measures the ability to distinguish between people of different weights.
- **Religion** (AAT): This AAT measures the ability to recognize people of different religions.
- **Terrorist** (AAT): This AAT requires the ability to recognize terrorists and images of terrorists.
- **Weapons** (AAT): This AAT requires the ability to recognize weapons and images of weapons.
IMPLICIT BIAS

- How might implicit bias affect our classes?
- What might we do to reduce the effects of implicit bias in our classes?

Subject: Prospective Doctoral Student (On Campus Today/Next Monday)

Dear Professor,

I am writing you because I am a prospective doctoral student with considerable interest in your research. My plan is to apply to doctoral programs this coming fall, and I am eager to learn as much as I can about research opportunities in the meantime.

I will be on campus [today/next Monday], and although I know it is short notice, I was wondering if you might have 10 minutes when you would be willing to meet with me to briefly talk about your work and any possible opportunities for me to get involved in your research. Any time that would be convenient for you would be fine with me, as meeting with you is my first priority during this campus visit.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Student’s Name]
A FIELD EXPERIMENT SET IN ACADEMIA

- Subjects—6,548 faculty in 89 disciplines at 259 universities—received an email from a prospective doctoral student requesting a brief meeting.
- The gender (male, female) and race (Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, Chinese, Indian) of the student, as signaled by the name, was randomly assigned.


Response rates to minorities/females are in parentheses.

BIASES CAN BE MODIFIED…

“Perspective taking combats automatic expressions of racial bias”
(Todd, Bodenhausen, Richeson, Galinsky Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 2011)

BIASES CAN BE CONTROLLED…

6. Understand and reduce STEREOTYPE THREAT.

“Performance in academic contexts can be harmed by the awareness that one’s behavior might be viewed through the lens of racial stereotypes.”
(Steele and Aronson 1995)

✓ Offer WISE FEEDBACK (i.e., give fair and specific feedback, delivered with an invocation of high standards and an assurance of the student’s capacity to reach those standards) (Cohen, Steele, and Ross 1999; Yeager et al. 2014)

✓ Provide opportunities for VALUES AFFIRMATION (i.e., have students reflect on the things most important to them, such as family and life goals) (Myska et al. 2010; Walton and Cohen 2011)

✓ Represent difficulties as both normal and temporary (e.g., have students write to future program participants communicating a growth mindset) (Walton and Cohen 2011)

➢ Write an email to someone not here today explaining why you think creating a more inclusive classroom environment is important.

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