TEACHING FOR EQUITY

DESIGNING INCLUSIVE SYLLABI, ASSIGNMENTS, AND CLASSROOMS

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AGENDA

- Introductions and warm-up writing

- Bard student data

- Building our baseline: Understanding diversity, equity, and inclusion

- Some barriers to inclusion

    e.g., problematic assumptions, stereotype threat, "color-blind" ideology

- Workshopping syllabi and assignments for inclusive practice

- Looking ahead to Day One and Q&A/discussion

INTRODUCTIONS

Tell the group your name, your department, the gender pronouns you use if you do, and one thing about you that has nothing to do with anything remotely academic or intellectual.

1. Think and jot down:

Reflect on your educational journey as a student and write to this prompt:

- How did I get here? Think about your journey before, during, and after college and grad school. Think about your family, where you grew up, how you were raised--anything that seems relevant to your sitting in this room today, as a new faculty member at Bard.

2. Think and jot down:

Now think about the students you expect you will encounter at Bard:

- What are your assumptions and expectations about them? What do you hypothesize about the educational journeys that brought them here?

DISCUSS WITH A PARTNER

Share some of what you wrote and thought about based on the two prompts with a partner.

If time permits, reflect on how your educational journey and that of the students you are about to teach may be different.

SOME FACTS ABOUT BARD STUDENTS

Demographic data (self-reported) on 2018-19 enrolled students using U.S. Department of Education categories, from Bard's Office for Institutional Planning and Research:

Bard College 2018-19	Degree-Seeking First-Time First Year	Degree-Seeking Undergraduates (include first-time first-year) and part-time students	Percentage
Nonresident aliens	74	207	11.5%
Hispanic/Latino	57	177	9.8%
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	28	117	6.5%
White, non-Hispanic	268	1,026	56.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	0	3	0.2%
Asian, non-Hispanic	16	74	4.1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	0	0	0.0%
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	19	83	4.6%
Race and/or ethnicity unknown	24	117	6.5%
TOTAL	486	1,804	Note: 1,773 of these are full-time

Pell Eligible Students	117	412	22.8%

SOME FACTS ABOUT BARD STUDENTS

Percentage of students who accessed disability services in 2018-19:   *18%*

SOME FACTS ABOUT BARD STUDENTS

From Admissions Office:

Attended public high school: 53%

Attended independent school: 46%

Attended home school: 1%

Identified as female   60%

Identified as male   40%

SOME FACTS ABOUT BARD STUDENTS

From Dean of Students Office (informal):

Number of students in last two years who completed a form to request a name change related to non-binary status: *14*

SOME FACTS ABOUT BARD STUDENTS

From the Registrar's Office:

Entering first-year students with GPAs
below 2.0 after completing first semester   *3.6% (17)*

If students who leave are included   *5% (25)*

WHAT IT ADDS UP TO

Students come to Bard with a wide array of experiences, life circumstances, and identities AND a wide range of study skills, levels of preparation, and opportunities to succeed immediately at a place like Bard.

Is teaching everyone exactly the same way--or just teaching the way <u>we</u> were taught--going to serve students best?

THE CASE FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHING

Review the article by Kevin Gannon from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and mark it up for ideas that stand out to you.

- What is inclusive teaching?
- Why is it important?
- How do you see this being relevant to your work in the classroom at Bard?

INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS AND PEDAGOGY:

- Foster a sense of belonging in academic spaces

- Begin from a recognition of your identity and your students'

- Include a multiplicity of voices (among students, in the curriculum, etc.)

- Use Universal Design principles

- Establish norms and communicate clear expectations

- Reduce stereotype threat

- Function from an awareness of whiteness and institutional racism

- Address "hot" moments with humility and a spirit of moving forward

INCLUSIVE SYLLABI AND ASSIGNMENTS:

- Communicate clear expectations around grading/performance
- Provide scaffolds that help students work toward success over the course of the semester (rather than assuming they have all the tools to succeed on day one) – especially important for 100-level/intro courses
- Vary assessments appropriately so that students with different strengths have various opportunities to succeed
- Make students aware of the various supports available that can help them succeed
- Avoid language that makes assumptions based on gender
- Include statements that clarify accessibility for students with disabilities

BARRIERS TO INCLUSION: PROBLEMATIC ASSUMPTIONS

1. **Assumption:** Students will seek help when they are struggling with a class.

1. **Assumption:** Students who are affiliated with a particular group (gender, race, ethnic, etc.) are experts on issues related to that group and feel *comfortable* being seen as information sources to the rest of the class and the instructor who are not members of that group. AND/OR European American students do not have opinions about issues of race or ethnicity and members of other groups do have opinions about these issues.

2. **Assumption:** Older students or students with physical disabilities are slower learners and require more attention from the instructor.

BARRIERS TO INCLUSION: STEREOTYPE THREAT

- Stereotype threat refers to being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group (**Steele & Aronson, 1995).**

REDUCING STEREOTYPE THREAT

- Reframing the task
- Deemphasizing threatened social identities
- Encouraging self-affirmation
- Emphasizing high standards with assurances of capability
- Providing role models
- Providing external attributions for difficulty
- Emphasizing an incremental view of ability

ADDRESSING CHALLENGING OR "HOT" MOMENTS

- *"Sometimes things seem to explode in the classroom, and what do we do then? Knowing strategies for turning difficult encounters into learning opportunities enables us to address important, but hot, topics -- religion, politics, race, class, gender -- in our classroom discussions.*

- Hot moments occur when people's feelings -- often conflictual -- rise to a point that threatens teaching and learning. They can occur during the discussion of issues people feel deeply about, or as a result of classroom dynamics in any field.

MANAGING OURSELVES

- 1. Hold Steady
- 2. Breathe
- 3. Don't personalize remarks
- 4. Know yourself

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

1. How we think about the moment
2. Helping the students think about it
3. Don't avoid the issue
4. Having a fallback position

UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- At its core, UDL encompasses three principles- that instructors should provide students with multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. Instructors should

- (a) provide content or materials in multiple formats

- (b) give learners multiple ways to show what they know

- (c) use multiple methods of motivating learners.

SYLLABUS AND ASSIGNMENT WORKSHOP

Think of this work as *expanding,* rather than *correcting,* what you and your colleagues are doing. (We are all moving forward in this process.)

Each person should take 15 minutes to do the following:
1. Share your syllabus and/or assignment and talk about the context of the class it's from.
2. Reflect on some of the principles of inclusion we've talked about today and find your strengths. Where are you already doing some of these things with your syllabus, your assignments, or your class?
3. Where do you think there might be places your syllabus, assignment, or class could be more inclusive? (Brainstorm this with your partner or partners.)

IMAGINING DAY ONE

Picture your first day. Brainstorm briefly on some ways you might want to begin laying a foundation for an inclusive classroom.You might think about:

- Syllabus design/diversity and inclusion statement
- Classroom layout
- Hearing all voices
- Pedagogical strategies
- Setting classroom norms/agreements

RESOURCES AT BARD TO SUPPORT STUDENT AND FACULTY SUCCESS

For Students:

- Learning Commons (tutors and writing fellows)

- Office of Disability Support Services

- Class deans and academic advisors

- Passion to Persist (STEM mentoring and support)

- Counseling Services

RESOURCES AT BARD TO SUPPORT STUDENT AND FACULTY SUCCESS

For faculty:

- Center for Faculty and Curricular Development

- NCFDD

- Council for Inclusive Excellence (First breakfast meeting: Friday, 9/13)

- Reading groups (First luncheon: Friday, 9/20)

INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY RESOURCES

- https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/CUE_equity_design_principles.pdf
- Increasing Inclusivity in the Classroom | Center for Teaching | Vanderbilt University
- Creating Inclusive College Classrooms | CRLT
- Institutional Racism in Higher Education
- The Anti-racism Toolkit » Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies
- CTE - Inclusive Teaching Strategies
- Case Studies in Inclusive Teaching in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics | CIRTL Network
- ReducingStereotypeThreat.org
- ProjectImplicit
- Inclusive Excellence – Center for Faculty Development – University of St. Thomas – Minnesota
- Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom | Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning
- Inclusive Pedagogy and Diversity: Education for the 21st Century - Ball State University

QUESTIONS? THOUGHTS?

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