



UCLA TFT Faculty Workshop and Lunch
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Climate and Title IX

Session 4

Fostering a Growth Mindset by Teaching Inclusively

Facilitators:

Erin Sanders O'Leary, Ph.D.

Director, UCLA Center for Education Innovation &
Learning in the Sciences (CEILS)

Rachel Kennison, MSW, Ph.D.

Associate Director, UCLA Center for Education Innovation & Learning in the
Sciences (CEILS) for Professional Development and Student Engagement

Panelists:

Professor Raquel Barreto

Department of Theater

Professor Gina Kim

Department of Film, Television and Digital Media

Professor Sean Metzger

Department of Theater

Professor Ellen Scott

Department of Film, Television and Digital Media

Instructional Strategies for Creating Inclusive Classrooms

Motivate learning/establish relevance

- Situate the course in a broader global and/or social context.
- Connect the course to other courses within or outside the major.
- Discuss how the course will help students function more effectively with a diversity of people.
- Relate specific topics within a course to previous and future topics.
- Provide students opportunities to make connections inside and outside of the course.
- Use personal anecdotes to create interest among students.

Get to know your students as individuals and create opportunities for students to do the same

- Examine your background and experiences (so that you understand how your students see you).
- Consider your academic traditions and possible biases.
- Learn students' names.
- Ask about students' interests.
- Ask about students' experiences with and concerns about the subject matter.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn about each other.

Design an inclusive course curriculum

- Use visuals that do not reinforce stereotypes, but do include diverse participants
- Choose readings or films that consciously reflect the diversity of contributors to your field; consider whether tradition-based reading lists represent past stereotypes (or present ones).
- Use varied names and socio-cultural contexts in test questions, assignments, and case studies.
- Analyze the content of your examples, analogies, and humor; too narrow a perspective may ostracize students who have differences.
- Recognize how your choices of materials, readings, and content organization reflect your perspectives, interests, and possible biases.
- Teach the conflicts of your field to incorporate diverse perspectives.

Create an inclusive course environment

- Set high standards and communicate your confidence that each student can achieve them.
- Let your students know that you believe each has important contributions to make.
- Applaud creative solutions and sincere efforts to learn.
- Help students understand that intelligence is not a fixed ability, not all academic challenges are a result of personal inadequacies, and many academic challenges can be overcome.
- Talk to students about how they learn best and how to adopt compensatory learning strategies.
- Do not ask or expect students to represent an entire group (e.g. tokenism).
- Encourage multiple perspectives (as opposed to consensus) in discussions.

Handout from: Linse & Weinstein, Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence, Penn State, 2015

- Establish ground rules.
- Use a variety of strategies to encourage contributions and to reduce over-participation by verbally assertive students.
- Create a culture of shared-purpose by periodically collecting feedback to learn how students are experiencing your course.
- Avoid assuming that a student needs assistance, which can convey that you have low expectations and further hinder their learning.
- Do not ignore or change the subject when students voice negative comments about a group.
- Make diversity and the free-exchange of ideas an early discussion topic.

Teach inclusively

- Use a variety of teaching methods; do not rely solely on lectures and didactic questions.
- Use pictures, schematics, graphs, simple sketches, films, and demonstrations.
- Provide a balance of concrete information (facts, data, real or hypothetical scenarios) and abstract concepts (principles, theories, models).
- Balance material that emphasizes practical problem-solving methods with that emphasizing fundamental understanding.
- Provide brief intervals during class for students to use or apply the course material/content.
- Have students work on class activities in pairs, triads, or small groups.

Provide varied opportunities for success/achievement

- Allow students to accumulate grade points in a variety of ways.
- Allow students to select the weighting of different aspects of the course.
- Provide explicit information about your grading criteria using matrices or rubrics.
- Allow students to collaborate/cooperate on homework and class assignments.
- Offer a variety of ways for students to participate in class other than speaking aloud.

What goes in a meaningful and inclusive course syllabus?

Adapted from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/syllabus-design/>

Guidelines for an Inclusive Syllabus: This resource has been developed as a tool to help instructors incorporate specific strategies into their teaching and course design to foster an inclusive classroom environment. Identify which strategies you have use as well as those you have not yet incorporated. Try experimenting with different strategies each term. Articulate these efforts in your promotion and tenure files to evidence your inclusive teaching practices.

Learning Outcomes	These give students a concrete idea of what they will get out of the course. Use action verbs that lend themselves to measurement and seek higher levels of learning. Your course must also have learning outcomes for WASC accreditation purposes (see https://www.wscuc.org/content/2013-handbook-accreditation/).
Student-Centered Language	Your syllabus should be written in first-person, and the tone, text, and course policies should convey a welcoming, supportive, and encouraging climate for all students.
Contact Information	Tell students how they can reach you and your Teaching Assistants (TAs). This includes office location, office hours, preferred method of contact (email, phone, CCLE discussion board), and course website URL.
Course Description	Hook students into your course with a brief 1-3 paragraphs description. This may include explanations about why students should care about the course, what is compelling about the topic, why you are personally passionate about the material, and how the course fits into the larger curricular framework (if applicable).
Required Materials	List the required reading and viewing materials, equipment, supplies, software, and technology such as classroom polling tools (iClicker, apps for smart devices). Make copies of materials available in Powell library or negotiate reduced pricing for socioeconomically disadvantaged students through publisher. Select materials that feature diverse authors, playwrights, composers, scientists, and researchers.
Community Expectations and Classroom Norms	Communicate to your students that you want them to be successful, while also setting clear boundaries around your availability (especially for very large classes). You may include an explicit statement about how to succeed in your classroom. Consider challenges students have faced in your courses in the past and what you could have communicated more clearly early on that may have helped prevent those issues. Establish a culture of participation by awarding points for group work and engagement in class activities.
Assessment of Learning and Academic Policies	This includes grading procedures, class attendance expectations, late assignment policies, and standards for academic integrity. Provide information about how grades will be calculated for the course. Assigning grades based on learning, not ranking of students, motivates student engagement with their peers during class and outside class (study groups) and conveys a message consistent with a collaborative learning environment. Provide many opportunities for practice and giving students feedback on

	<p>their learning process using low-stakes assessments such as homework and reading quizzes. Require multiple high-stakes assessments (e.g., at least 2 midterms + final exam; papers, performances, or other creative projects with opportunities to revise/repeat/resubmit assignments) where students may demonstrate their mastery of learning outcomes. Link all assignments to course learning outcome(s), making explicit what students should get out of completing assignments beyond getting a good grade.</p>
Course Schedule	<p>Provide a logically sequenced course schedule with topics/concepts listed chronologically by class period, along with readings and other assignments required of students together with due dates, specifying whether items need to be completed before, during, or after class meetings. From this information, students have a clear understanding of their responsibilities each week.</p>
Resources	<p>This includes both academic resources and support services for students. For example, how to study, where to find academic help, and how to access resources supporting personal well-being. For list you should either include in your syllabus or post on your course website, see https://ceils.ucla.edu/resources-for-your-students/.</p>
Accommodations	<p>This can include any language about making your course more accessible, such as accommodating religious observances. The UCLA Center for Accessible Education suggests the following statement be included in all course syllabi: <i>"Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310) 825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. When possible, students should contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more information visit www.cae.ucla.edu."</i></p>
Inclusivity Statement	<p>This could be included in your community expectations (see above), or can be a separate more general statement. For example: <i>"UCLA's Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provides resources, events, and information about current initiatives at UCLA to support equality for all members of the UCLA community. I hope that you will communicate with me or your TA if you experience anything in this course that does not support an inclusive environment, and you can also report any incidents you may witness or experience on campus to the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion on their website (https://equity.ucla.edu)."</i></p>
Disclaimer	<p>You may wish to include a disclaimer about possible changes to the class. For example: <i>"This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the professor reserves the right to modify, supplement and make changes as the course needs arise."</i></p>

Additional resources available on CEILS website

CEILS Teaching Guide: Syllabus Design
(other resources and a downloadable and editable syllabus template)

<https://ceils.ucla.edu/resources/teaching-guides/syllabus-design/>

Lay theories of intelligence: beliefs about whether intelligence is fixed or malleable

- Personal lay theories of intelligence: an individual's beliefs about the nature of intelligence
- Organizational lay theories of intelligence: the shared beliefs of people within an organization about the nature of intelligence

An "organization" can be a company, university, department, classroom, etc.; the key is that a group of people within the context set, and maintain, the expectations about how to succeed

	Entity Theory of Intelligence	Incremental Theory of Intelligence
Definition	intelligence is an innate human characteristic that is relatively fixed across the lifespan; fixed mindset	intelligence is an expandable human characteristic that people can cultivate and develop with hard work and effort; growth mindset
Goal	Demonstrate ability, prove self	Develop ability, seek learning opportunities
Response to challenges	Question ability, withdraw effort, become defensive	Persist, try new strategies
Key <i>explicit</i> message	You either "have it" or you don't.	With time and effort you can become smarter.
Key <i>implicit</i> message	Only certain people are smart. (Group-based stereotypes about intelligence are relevant)	Anyone can be seen as smart. (Group-based stereotypes about intelligence are irrelevant)

How do theories of intelligence impact how professors engage with their students?

→ Instructors who hold an entity (v. incremental) theory are:

- Quicker to judge students as having low ability
- More likely to offer comforting, but unhelpful, strategies following initial failure (e.g., assign less homework, suggest dropping the course, explain that not everyone is cut out for that field)

→ Students can quickly (and accurately) glean their professors' theories of intelligence

How do people and organizations communicate lay theories of intelligence?

→ Recruitment materials:

- Entity theory: Emphasis on attracting people "who have the intelligence and abilities to succeed"
- Incremental theory: Emphasis on attracting people "who are motivated to find environments and working strategies that help them learn, discover, and grow"

→ Setting expectations:

- Entity theory: "Look to your left, and look to your right. By the end of this year, only 1 of you will have an A in this class."
- Incremental theory: "This class will be difficult, but if you are diligent in your studies and put in consistent effort, you can succeed."

→ After poor performance:

- Entity theory: "You might want to think about dropping this course, because it will be pretty hard to come back from this. You just might not be cut out for this field."
- Incremental theory: "What study tactics did you use to prepare for this exam? Let's talk through some different strategies you can use for next time."

How do people respond to different organizational lay theories of intelligence?

→ During moments of evaluation...

- Entity organization: people emphasize intelligence
- Incremental organization: people emphasize motivation

→ In day-to-day perceptions of climate...

- People from underrepresented and/or stigmatized groups trust entity organizations less than incremental organizations
- People from underrepresented and/or stigmatized groups expect to be stereotyped more in entity (v. incremental) organizations
- Entity organizations trigger stereotype threat (and, as a result, academic underperformance) more so than incremental organizations
 - * *Stereotype threat* is the fear of confirming, or being seen to confirm, negative stereotypes about one's group
 - * For more on stereotype threat and its pernicious effects, read "A Threat in the Air: How Stereotypes Shape Intellectual Identity and Performance" by Claude Steele, *American Psychologist* (1997)

In studies comparing the impact of personal theories of intelligence and organizational theories of intelligence, organizational theories of intelligence carry more weight. Thus, what you say to students about their ability to succeed can matter more than what they personally believe.

Additional Reading

[Mindset](#) by Carol Dweck (2006)

["A Company I Can Trust? Organizational Lay Theories Moderate Stereotype Threat for Women"](#)

Katherine Emerson & Mary Murphy, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (2015)

["A Culture of Genius: How an Organization's Lay Theory Shapes People's Cognition, Affect, and Behavior"](#)

Mary Murphy & Carol Dweck, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (2010)

["It's Ok—Not Everyone Can Be Good at Math: Instructors with an Entity Theory Comfort \(and Demotivate\) Students"](#)

Aneeta Rattan, Catherine Good, & Carol Dweck, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* (2012)