

# Inclusive Classrooms

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Tell us about a time when  
you felt you were excluded  
in an academic setting?

# Did that feel inclusive?

Why or why not?

# **An Inclusive Classroom Means...**

**The instructor and students move away from assumptions that some students are lacking...**



Photo credit :  
Kelly Hogan

**and move toward the idea that learning environments and course designs lacking structure are a problem.**

# An inclusive classroom is structured in:

## Course Design

- Objectives
- Syllabus
- Opportunities for practice
- Assessments
- Projects and Assignments

Who's being left behind?

**AND**

## Class Environment



Photo credit : Viji Sathy

Who's not being heard?

At the Carolina Conversations event on September 19, we:

- Explicitly stated the goals and expectations.
- Modeled an inclusive classroom and provided practical tips as we moved through event.
- Put forth some “rules” for discussion (a working agreement)
- Made time for people to introduce themselves to others and get a sense for who was in the room.
- Implemented an empathy activity to help “hear” from people anonymously through writing/technology.
- Facilitated small group conversations and larger group discussions.
- Collected ideas (via sticky notes) about ways we can all support professors trying to create inclusive classrooms.

# WORKING AGREEMENT

Don't assume,  
be mindful,  
be flexible, &  
extend yourself.

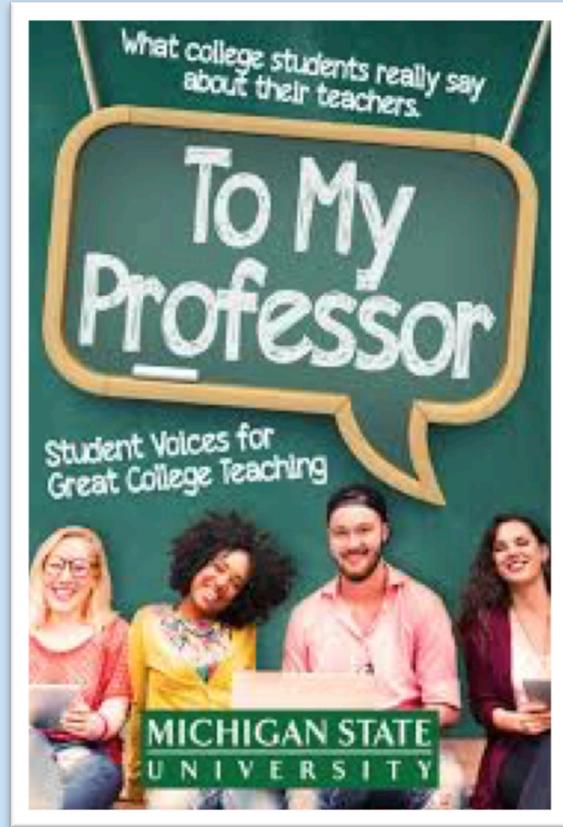
Structured class  
environment

**Some specifics for this session:**

- *Please do not use names of students/faculty/staff.*
- *Understand that we are all learning & may not use the right words YET.*
- *Others?*

tip

Try a working agreement in any of your group settings.



*“In the end, most college students and instructors all want great teaching, and we all respect the power of dialogue. So here it is.”*

“I wish my students knew that one of the challenges I face supporting diverse students in the classroom is \_\_\_\_\_.”

“not knowing if holding conversation around “differences” is welcomed by students.”

“diversity issues are outside the scope of my course.”

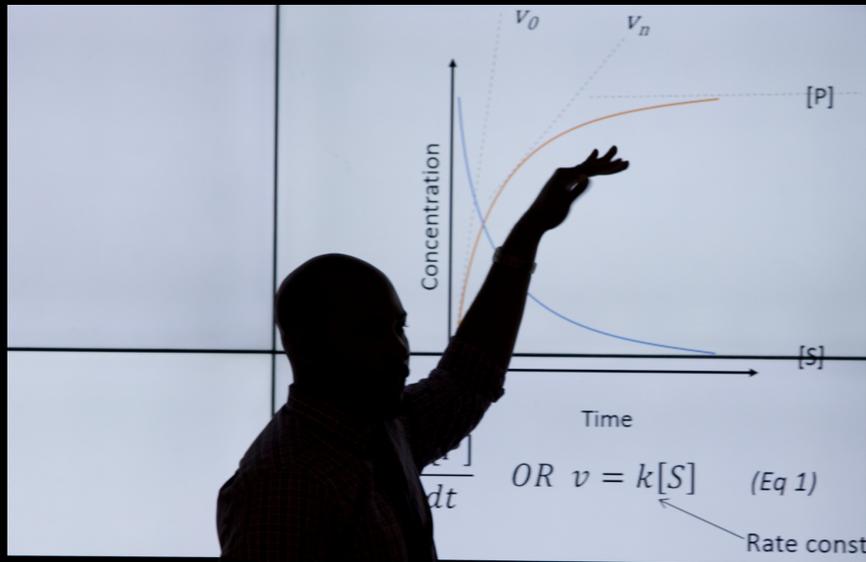


Photo credit: Viji Sathy

~3 minutes

- Complete the following sentence  
(no need to rewrite prompt):

“I wish my students knew that one of the challenges I face supporting diverse students in the classroom is \_\_\_\_\_”

- Swap your card with someone behind you or in another group.
- Swap again with someone.
- Swap again...

You're encouraged to try to get cards moving to far different parts of the room.

Structured class  
environment

tip

The notecard swap is one of many ways you can get ideas out anonymously.

- With one or two people around you, take turns reading the card in front of you.
- Choose at least one card that you want to share with the whole room.
- Identify one person in your group who could read this card to the room.

~2 minutes

Structured class  
environment

tip

Take note that every  
idea is expressed  
before choosing one to  
promote.

“I wish my students knew that one of the challenges I face supporting diverse students in the classroom is \_\_\_\_\_”

## Student Prompt:

“I wish my professor knew that  
I feel included when \_\_\_\_ and  
I don't feel included when \_\_\_\_.”



Photo credit: Viji Sathy

# I feel included when...

- I'm allowed to ask questions to my classmates without **interrupting a lecture**
- students are able to **volunteer their ideas** whether it be by raising hands or by mobile/computer submissions
- I am **called upon with notice** so I feel prepared
- when I have **time to think before I respond** to a question or comment
- when I have the opportunity to **participate without talking**
- when I can express my thoughts/answers/opinions through things like poll everywhere or raising hands because **I am extremely shy in large groups**

# I feel included when...

- my teacher is willing to **discuss disagreement in a welcoming and kind way**
- **professors seek input** from the class during lectures
- I have the **chance to interact with my professor outside of class**. When a professor recognizes me outside of the classroom, that's a nice feeling
- **pronouns are asked** and respected
- they **assign reading** that were written by more than just white people
- **queer people are used in examples** in classroom discussion of history, culture, etc.
- my professor makes **eye contact** and asks direct questions to me
- my professor takes the time to **learn my name**

I DON'T feel included when...

- the classroom is solely lecture style with **no room for questions/sharing of ideas**
- all the professor does is talk. It is often the case where **the professor only talks** and goes through the lecture slides. This makes me feel like the 'learning' aspect is not important
- the class lectures are **regurgitating the textbook**
- I am in a **non-active classroom** setting

I DON'T feel included when...

- the professor says to talk to a neighbor but neighbor has other friends and I am left **isolated**
- they let students pick their own groups because **I usually don't know many people** in the class
- faculty let certain **students hijack or dominate class** discussions
- my grade depends on speaking out in class because this makes me feel like **I do not belong** or am somehow doing something wrong by being shy or introverted
- 'participation grades' are only given to **those who speak** to the class
- when an entire class goes by and **I haven't had the chance to speak** (even if it's just working with a neighbor)

I DON'T feel included when

- professors **project an identity** on me based on the way that I look
- they **assume** the gender of students, and ask them gender specific things (i.e. as a boy or as a girl, do you feel this way; boys over here, girls over there; etc.)
- they **assume** my gender identity or sexual orientation
- they **generalize** about Christians or Republicans/Conservatives
- they **assume** that my knowledge on a particular topic is equivalent to that of my neighbor and quickly moves forward in the lecture
- a professor **assumes** I have the resources for course materials
- I am **treated differently** as an international student

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Who's being left behind?

**AND**

## Class Environment



Who's not being heard?

What can we do to support  
professors trying to create inclusive  
classrooms?

# Faculty and staff said...

We can seek departmental support for professors who want to improve their teaching in ways that might be time/energy intensive (i.e. let them take a semester to redo course and count that as their teaching expectation)

We can encourage the use of many forms of participation to hear from (hand raising, poll-ev, calling on students)

Draw the attention of colleagues to these issues; emphasize that non-participation may have reasons other than lack of preparation or lack of effort

# Students said...

We can talk to professors about ideas they have about making a classroom more inclusive during office hours.

We can be more open to working with classmates we do not know.

We can tell professors when they do a particularly good job at facilitating a difficult conversation in the classroom.

**Don't assume,  
be mindful,  
be flexible, &  
extend yourself.**