

Inclusive Teaching

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ISW Day 1

Aug 4, 2026

Before we get started

Guidelines:

- Let's be sensitive and thoughtful
- Let's ask questions and share respectfully
- This is a big topic, we can't cover it comprehensively
 - We'll do a deep dive into some very real and practical applications

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Learning Objectives (LOs):

- Define terms associated with inclusive teaching and use in practice by means of examples.
- Given dubious teaching practices describe why they may be problematic and propose alternatives.

Some terms

In **pairs** or **threes** define and/or come up with examples of the following:

- Growth mindset
- Microaggression
- Stereotype threat
- Over-contributor
- Grade-surprise
- Hidden curriculum

Some terms

Growth mindset

- Success is not based on innate talent but cultivated through hard work

Microaggression

- Demeaning remark/action that stem from hidden biases

Stereotype threat

- Knowledge of stereotype can produce additional cognitive load for members of certain groups

Over-contributor

- A student who contributes too much in a shared space

Grade-surprise

- Misalignment in expectation regarding grades

Hidden curriculum

- Non-content knowledge relating to navigating and being successful in university

Examples: Step 1

With your friend(s) think about one of the following examples:

- ① An instructor asks a question to the class and calls on the first person who raises their hand.
- ② The midterm is coming up and students are nervous. The instructor says: "Don't worry, you're all really smart."
- ③ While discussing a problem that took humanity hundreds of years an instructor remarks: "You don't have to do it from scratch, some clever guy figured this out."
- ④ A student in your class constantly asks questions, often citing material beyond the scope of the course.
- ⑤ You're a first year student, and your grade on your first midterm is the lowest grade you've ever received.

Who are the people involved? What are they thinking, feeling?

Examples: Step 2

With your friend(s) think about one of the following examples:

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- ② The midterm is coming up and students are nervous. The instructor says: "Don't worry, you're all really smart."
- ③ While discussing a problem that took humanity hundreds of years an instructor remarks: "You don't have to do it from scratch, some clever guy figured this out."
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How can we as instructors make improvements?

Case 1

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- The student who answered is probably a fast thinking individual who is confident and feels they belong.
- Other students in the class didn't get a chance to think about the problem.
- Students may get the idea that speed is an expectation.
- Instructor might just be happy they got a response and not think about the implications.
- Instead: ask a question and wait for 30 seconds, or wait for 5 hands, or think/pair/share it.

Case 2

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- Attributing success to being “smart” is very “fixed-mindset.”
- Students who don’t feel they belong may be triggered.
- Instead: “Hard work and good peer support is the way to succeed in this course.”

Case 3

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- Represents the field as being populated by “clever guys.”
- Misrepresents progress as being due to the individual.
- Instead: “It took us a long time to figure this out, but now we can learn from others.”

Case 4

A student in your class constantly asks questions, often citing material beyond the scope of the course.

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- Maybe the student is intentionally show-boating. Maybe they're just sheltered.
 - Learning to contribute meaningfully to the discussion instead of selfishly is a hard skill to learn.
- Other students in the class can be really discouraged by this.
- Instead: have a conversation with your over-contributors on contributing in a way that moves the conversation in a good direction for everyone and bring other questions to office hours.

Case 5

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- You might think “university grades are lower” or “I need to work harder.”
 - Perhaps if you understand the hidden curriculum (privileged or well supported)
- You might think “I don't belong here.”
 - Particularly hard for first-generation students.
- Try: talk to your students about what particular grades mean or restructure your grading scheme (mastery based grading).

Summary

Individually: What's one thing you'd like to remember from this session moving forward?

Thanks!

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