

Exploring Practices in the Classroom

Module 4 : Designing Inclusive Classrooms

Spring 2019 | Guest Instructor Taylor Tai

0. TEACHING PLAN SUMMARY

I taught this class session as a guest lecturer for “Exploring Practices in the Classroom” which is a Delta course for graduate students interested in improving their teaching skills.

Learning objectives:

- Recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion for student learning
- Reflect on personal spheres of influence and positionality
- Identify and apply teaching strategies that promote inclusion

Overview:

1. Class Opening (Check in + Just-in-time feedback + Discussion set-up)
2. Why inclusive teaching matters
3. Strategies for the classroom (case studies)
4. Wrap-up (resources, one min paper)

1. CLASS OPENING (~10 min)

A. Check-in: One word check in (with optional short explanation).

B. Just in time feedback: 1-2 people share a teaching challenge. The group brainstorms how to respond. Speaker gives a ~1 min overview of challenge(s) including who is involved, what theme is at play (class climate, student preparation, etc.), and what can the group help with. Others listen actively, then ask clarifying questions. Respond in line with the speaker’s “ask”.

C. Discussion Set-up: Remind students we’re going to be covering difficult topics, and may be approaching “diversity” in a more personal and direct manner than other classes/workshops. If anyone needs a break, please take it in the way that works for you (walk out, be silent, voice your discomfort, etc.). Also note these discussions are not hypothetical, and may be emotional or distressing for the people around you. Don’t speak about marginalized folks as if they’re not in the room.

2. WHY INCLUSIVE TEACHING MATTERS (20 min)

A. Context for inclusive teaching (3 min)

Introduce context for discussing diversity and inclusion at UW-Madison to help students understand the population that they're teaching here. Emphasize that classroom trends can trickle up into large-scale field trends (e.g., how science faculty at UW are almost entirely white), so how we conduct our classes matters.

Give students a couple of minutes to look over the handout on their own during quiet time. See end of this document for the handout.

B. Reflect on the homework assignment below OR the handout from A (5 min).

What would you like to share about your reflection? It could be one of the events you wrote about for homework, a theme (i.e. gender inclusion, cultural competence), a question, or an observation.

“Think of a time you felt marginalized in a class, or were aware that someone else was marginalized. Write a short paragraph describing the events, and a reflection on how the situation could have been prevented or handled better. You can also note any questions you have about how to deal with a situation like this. If you have not experienced or observed marginalization in the classroom, consider how your identity, background, or environment may have allowed you to avoid such situations. We'll reflect more on this at the end of class.”

C. Identifying a stake in inclusive teaching (12 min).

- Given your personal experiences, teaching goals, and our group reflection, what are **your** motivations for promoting diversity and inclusion in your classroom? Write down at least three. It may be helpful to consider what you lose when your classroom isn't inclusive, as well as what your students lose in the short and long term. (5 min, end @ 3:53)

- Let's place these motivations into three categories: personal motivation, professional responsibility, and systemic change. I'll describe these categories and then let students share their reasons. Together, we'll place students' reasons into a big venn diagram on the board. If there are gaps, we can brainstorm a few motivations to go in the blank categories. (7 min, end @ 4:00)

3. STRATEGIES FOR THE CLASSROOM (25 min)

A. Possible definitions of inclusive teaching (for reference - we won't go over these)

"Inclusive teaching therefore refers to the creation of a learning environment which provides all students, regardless of their background, with the opportunity to fulfill their own learning potential and support other students who may wish to learn from them."
- Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning. (2017). Connecting with your students

"Content and other course objectives are explicitly viewed from multiple perspectives and varied experiences of a range of groups... and help students understand...how they construct knowledge in any field or discipline."
- Flinders University, Australia

B. Case Studies (number students off 1-3 and have them work in these roles).

Take 7 minutes to read your case study and answer the questions below alone. Then, form your group of 3 to discuss for another 7 minutes. Ones should answer question one, twos answer question two, and threes answer question three before opening up to free-form discussion. We'll then report out main points and strategies as a large group.

1. Is there a conflict? What is it? What are the identities and inequities involved in the scenario?
2. What would you do *in the moment* if you were involved in the scenario personally? Refer to the handout with inclusive strategies at the back of the packet. How would you implement these strategies in your case study?
3. What could have been done *in advance* to prevent or ease this scenario (e.g., syllabus design, classroom discussion guidelines, policies, etc.)?

4. WRAP UP (5 min)

A. Suggest resources for inclusive teaching (White Fragility, CIRTL workshops, etc.)

B. Remind students that they will ALWAYS make mistakes in this, but the thing they can always do right is provide safe avenues for student feedback and accept criticism with gratitude

C. End of meeting questions (Minute Paper):

What is one thing from our discussion that you could incorporate into your teaching? If you have not personally experienced or noticed marginalization in the classroom, what about your identity, background, or environment has facilitated this? Whose perspective might you overlook on a regular basis based on your privilege, and what kind of googling, reading, conversing is needed to fill your gaps in understanding before designing or leading a class?"

HANDOUT: CONTEXT FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHING @ UW-MADISON

1. [“Survey: Half of UW-Madison students of color don’t feel they ‘belong’ on campus”](#).

Cap Times, Pat Schneider, 2017.

In 2017, UW-Madison conducted a campus wide climate survey to gather data on student experiences. The results revealed that 58% of students of color who considered leaving UW-Madison cited campus culture or climate as the reason. A few more of the notable student responses are below.

Feeling “very or extremely often” that they belong on campus:

average: 69%

students of color: ~50%

students with a disability: 56%

LGBQ students: 51%

transgender or non-binary students: 35%

“Very or extremely often” feeling safe, welcome, and respected:

average: 80%

students of color: ~67%

students with a disability: ~67%

transgender or non-binary students: ~50%

Feeling respected by other students in study groups or projects:

white students: 90%

students of color: 75%

international students: 80%

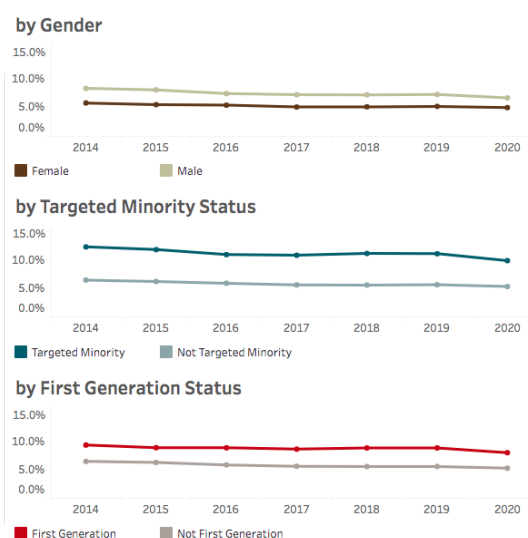
transgender or non-binary students: 63%

2. [APIR UW-Madison D/F and Drop Rates](#)

APIR keeps statistics on the rates of undergraduates who receive grades of D or F -- or drop courses entirely -- at UW-Madison. These data show disparities in who succeeds at our university.

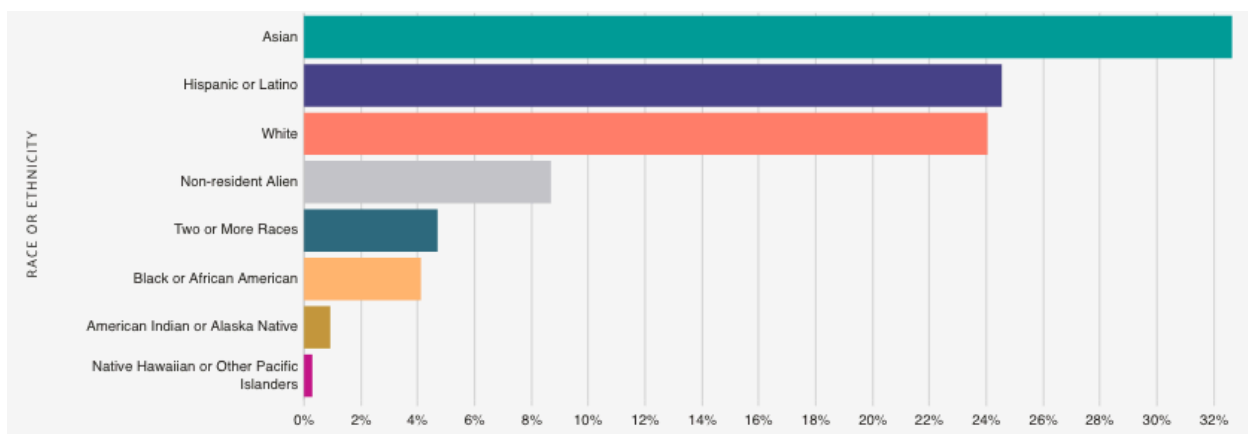
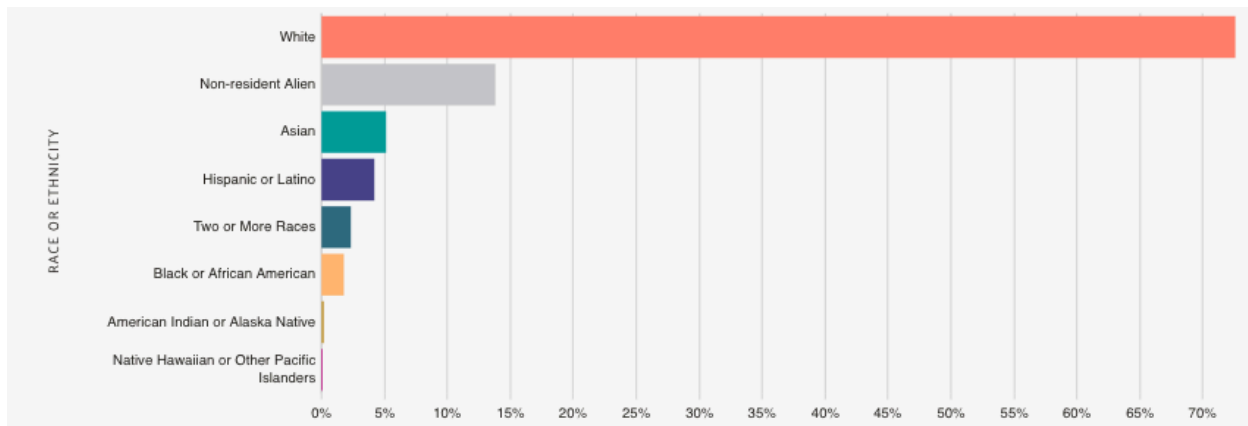
On the right, you can see the D/F/Drop rates separated by gender, “targeted minority” status, and whether students were the first in their family to attend college.

More detailed statistics (e.g., broken down by course or department) are available at apir.wisc.edu.



2. [UW-Madison Degrees Awarded in 2007 \(Data USA\)](#)

(top chart is for UW-Madison; bottom chart is for UC-Riverside, for comparison)



[“OPINION — LIKE CLOCKWORK: RACIAL ERASURE HINDERS STUDENTS’ OF COLOR EXPERIENCES”](#) diversity.wisc.edu, Sam Jones & Kavitha Babu, 2019

“In 2000, a *Daily Cardinal* reporter discovered that UW had [photoshopped the face of a black student](#) into the cover photo for the 2001-2002 application booklet.

In 2016, a [Sellery resident](#) posted photos of Adolf Hitler and swastikas on his dorm room door.

In 2017, the sacred [fire circle at Dejepe](#) Residence Hall was vandalized with the words “Columbus Rules 1492.”

In 2018, a student [filed a hate-bias complaint](#) due to the inclusion of two UW alumni’s names in various spaces in Memorial Union — despite the fact that they were members of a student society that took on the name Ku Klux Klan.

Also in 2018, student Ali Khan expressed frustration over a political science class titled “Terrorism” which Khan found “neocolonialist” and greatly simplified the concept of Jihad in a “one-dimensional, single-faceted, and inherently violent” way.

Last spring, a “Make America White Again” and “Mass immigration is white genocide” [stickers](#) were plastered on campus light posts.”