Toolkit for the Classroom: Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion in the Classroom

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Roselle - Microaggressions in the Classroom

Key concepts
- Identities are dynamic and fluid (positional)
- Marginalizations and power/privilege is relational
- People experience marginalization and oppression due to the power structures in society
- Everyone experiences marginalization, but some more than others - depending on their compound identities.
- People don't have to hold a position of marginalization to have empathy for others

Bias - What is it?
- As a result of shortcuts in our brain to hold and sort mental data
- Bias can be unconscious and lead to the implementation of biased views in organizations
- Bias is really a neutral term for prejudice that can be experienced in various ways
- Bias can be expressed verbally, physically or environmentally
- Bias may occur briefly (one time) or regularly
- Bias can communicate ideas of belonging and importance

    Eg. Ample right-handed desks in a lecture hall vs. limited number of left-handed desks. What does this tell a student about what we value at the institution?
    - Example: right handed desks in a lecture hall
    - What does that tell a student about what we value at the institution
- Bias is really a neutral term for a prejudice that be experienced one way or another

Resource: Project Implicit - https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
Examine your own biases about race, gender, mental health, and more using this online tool

Results of Institutional Bias in Higher Education
- Learning can be deeply impacted and result in disengagement, dissatisfaction, impact one's sense of belonging and safety, and have psychological impacts (anxiety, depression, lower confidence, loss of academic drive, and diminished cognition).
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Definition: Microaggressions, Derald Sue

https://www.tc.columbia.edu/articles/2015/november/derald-sue-talks-with-pbs-about-microaggressions-on-campuses/

Confronting Microaggressions
- Avoid blaming the individual and instead, critique the idea/action of the person
- Make the invisible visible
    - Name/call out institutional power structures
    - Encourage students to speak up when they're uncomfortable
    - Empower learners to speak up for one another
- Model behavior by sharing stories and keeping an open mind
- Bring in educational opportunities that dovetail with curriculum

Janet Arnold - Student Accommodations

Common Challenges from Students
- Reading and understanding slides as quickly as other students
- Being asked to answer a question or comment when they did not put their hands up
- Public speaking and developing ideas on the fly

Experiences and barriers are different, even for people who have similar accommodations"

Motto: "Reasonable and appropriate accommodation"
- Students are supposed to meet privately with their instructor about the accommodation
    - Faculty have the right to say *no* if the student approaches them with a letter of accommodation at the end of class

Resources
- MRFA Accommodations Infographic
- Faculty Appeal Process Steps

D.A. Dirks - Inclusivity in the Classroom

Things provided to students at the start of a course
- Classroom agreements
- Short biography
    - Goal: To demonstrate the "professors are human people too"
    - Important to humanize ourselves to students

Course Outline Design
- Student responsibilities
- Faculty responsibilities
- Statement on learning differences or challenges

Strategy: 10 minutes at the end of every class, revisit relevant aspects of the course outline and class agreement. Students are given multiple opportunities to get clarification and answer questions which leads to a more positive and inclusive class environment.

Pronouns in the Classroom Workshop - Terminology

Trans: "Umbrella term that refers to transgender and gender-queer/nonbinary identifies."

Cisgender or Cis: Often confused with transgender. That is, if one is cisgender, then the person's assigned sex at birth, gender identity, and gender expression all match up as society experts

Genderism: "Create a system of rewards and punishments for expressing gender in socially acceptable ways"

Authentic gender model - something that represents everybody rather than a few

https://truecolorsfund.org/2018/02/15/gender-pronouns-explained/

Other Resources

Prezi for pronouns presentation: https://prezi.com/jg_fef56t9ax/pronouns-workshop/

Practice with Pronouns: https://www.practicewithpronouns.com/#/?_k=gtqvc0

Family-friendly syllabi examples: https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/childcare/family-friendly-syllabi-examples

True Colors: He, She, They, Ze? Gender Pronouns Explained: http://truecolorsunited.org/2018/02/15/gender-pronouns-explained/