10 INCLUSIVE ONLINE TEACHING PRACTICES

While online teaching and learning can be challenging for faculty and students alike, research has shown that students from underrepresented groups often face additional challenges. By implementing inclusive teaching practices, faculty can create online learning environments where ALL student feel like they belong and can learn at high levels. Some of the practices offered here do take a little time to implement, while others are simple yet meaningful. All efforts matter because even a small act of inclusion can go a long way towards meeting our commitment to build and foster **Inclusive Excellence** at UMSL.

1 **ENSURE YOUR COURSE REFLECTS A DIVERSE SOCIETY AND WORLD.** Be intentional when selecting your multimedia (**images**, videos, blogs), required readings, and illustrative examples so that your course site and curriculum reflect diverse people, voices, and viewpoints. Seek articles from publications outside of your discipline's main journals, in journals published outside the U.S., and in open-access databases.

2 **ENSURE YOUR COURSE DOCUMENTS AND VIDEOS ARE ACCESSIBLE.** Making your course media (videos, course documents, PowerPoints, etc.) accessible benefits all of your students! **Click here** for a resource with instructions for each type of media.

3 **ENSURE YOUR SYLLABUS SETS THE TONE FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.** An inclusive syllabus includes policies and resources that help ensure all students are supported in their learning process. **Click here** for an example of an inclusive syllabus. Adding a diversity statement that explains why diversity and inclusion are important to the educational process both generally and in your course specifically helps students understand the importance and relevance of diversity and inclusion. **Click here** to see examples of diversity statements. Be sure to post your syllabus on your course site and consider creating an automated low-stakes quiz about the syllabus to help ensure that students read it. **Click here** for some example syllabus activities.

4 **USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE.** Students feel acknowledged when we adopt current terminology about various identity groups. However, terminology evolves and changes, so it requires a willingness to continue learning, to make mistakes, and to ask questions. **Using inclusive language** can help build a stronger campus community and further our ability to thrive in an increasingly diverse environment.

5 **SHARE YOUR GENDER PRONOUNS.** Model inclusion and send a message that your course is a safe space for students across the gender spectrum by including your pronouns on your syllabus, on your signature line, and in your Canvas profile. For Zoom classes, add pronouns to your name and encourage students to do the same. It is also helpful to explain why this practice is important by including a link to information such as **www.mypronouns.org**

6
LEARN AND USE STUDENTS' PREFERRED NAMES. Remember that students' preferred names may not always match what is on your roster. Ask students ensure that their preferred name appears in Canvas and on Zoom meetings. Using students' names when you interact synchronously or asynchronously helps them feel seen by you.

7
ENGAGE STUDENTS IN A SMALL GROUP INTRODUCTIONS ACTIVITY. Providing an opportunity for students to learn more about each other on the first day will help everyone feel more comfortable and start to develop a sense of belonging and community. Providing a set of prompts and asking students to post (or record a video) about their interests and aspirations in a discussion forum gives all students an opportunity to share something about themselves. If you are meeting with your students on Zoom, you can put them in pairs or in small group breakout rooms for an introduction activity. **Click here** for an example online student introduction activity.

8
USE A STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR STUDENTS. A survey can help you learn about your students' work experience and plans for the future; find out what they are most looking forward to and most concerned about related to your course; understand their communication preferences so you know best how to reach them; and get to know them as people by asking about their hobbies and/or family. Keeping this information handy in a spreadsheet for reference will help you customize the course (examples, speakers, assignments) to make it relevant to their interests, as well as allow you individualize your students so that you can better teach them. **Click here** to view sample survey questions.

9
OFFER OFFICE HOURS OR "STUDENT HOURS" THAT ARE INCLUSIVE OF DIVERSE STUDENT NEEDS. Remove barriers to students meeting with you by offering a variety of times (lengths of meeting and time of day), formats (e.g. video conference, phone, text message, email) and structures (e.g. one-on-one and in groups). Promote your office hours in a way that is visually engaging and encouraging. **Click here** for an example. You might also refer to your office hours as "student hours," since some students have the misconception, or may have received implicit messages, that "office hours" is the time instructors set aside to work in their offices and should not be disturbed. By referring to the time as "student hours," you send a clear message that this time is for them.

10
SET EXPECTATIONS FOR VALUING DIFFERENCES THROUGH RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE. Engaging students in a discussion about online communication norms and guidelines at the very beginning of a course is an essential step in fostering community and creating a productive learning environment. Facilitate synchronous or asynchronous online discussion asking students to describe behaviors that make people feel like their ideas and contributions are valued, as well as behaviors that make people feel their contributions are not valued. Then decide, together, on a list of guidelines to help ensure that everyone feels valued and included in the course discussions. **Click here** to view example activities for setting community norms and guidelines.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Inclusive Teaching and Learning Online.
Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning.

Diversity and Inclusion.
Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. Yale University.

Teaching in Racially Diverse College Classrooms.
Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University

Creating a Positive Classroom Climate for Diversity.
UCLA Diversity & Faculty Development.

Want to reach all of your students? **Here's how to make your teaching more inclusive.** The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Inclusive Teaching Practices Toolkit.
Association of College and University Educators (ACUE).

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