WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM?

"In inclusive classrooms, all students feel supported to learn and explore ideas, safe to express their views in a civil manner, and respected as individuals and members of groups; they view themselves as people who "belong" in a community of learners. Inclusive classrooms support rigorous academic work and deep learning by all students."[1]

"Inclusive classrooms are places in which thoughtfulness, mutual respect, and academic excellence are valued and promoted,"[2]

References: [1]http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/teaching/inclusive%20classrooms/default.xhtml; [2]http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1

5 DIMENSIONS OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

INTERPERSONAL AWARENESS

INTRAPERSONAL AWARENESS

CURRICULAR TRANSFORMATION

INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The following slides are ideas generated by first-year faculty in a new faculty development session Spring, 2016

Reference: Salazar, M., Norton, A., & Tuitt, F. (2009). Weaving promising practices for inclusive excellence into the higher education classroom. In L.B. Nilson and J.E. Miller (Eds.) *To improve the academy.* (pp. 208-226). Jossey-Bass.

INTERPERSONAL AWARENESS

Making time to build relationships with your students.

- Learn and use your students' preferred names.
- Learn about who your students are.
  - Have students write a short autobiography.
  - Have students fill out a questionnaire.
- Assign reflection essays about how they learn.
  - This could be discipline-specific.
- Require students to attend office hours.
- Design activities in which students get to know each other and share their own experiences.
  - Have students pair up and interview each other.
- Let them get to know you.
  - Have students come up with 20 questions to ask you.

INTRAPERSONAL AWARENESS

Examining the ideas, values, and assumptions that <u>you</u> bring to the classroom. Inclusive faculty are reflective practitioners.

- Keeping a list of who the professor calls on
- Keep an attendance list
- Make sure you stay in contact with students
- Share with students your own background and formative experiences
- Be aware of assumptions you might be making about students, e.g.
    - Students will seek help when they are struggling. Students will come to office hours if they need to.
    - Poor writing is a reflection of intellectual ability.
    - All students from a particular group share the same worldview or have had similar experiences.
- Anonymize exams
    - But problems with tracking progress
- Mid-semester evaluation
    - Be open to student feedback

CURRICULAR TRANSFORMATION

How to change your course content to be more inclusive.

- Statement on syllabus about classroom and office as a "safe space"
- Sensitivity/awareness of discomfort that topics could raise--even through analogy
- Diversity of assessments for different learning styles
- Mid-semester evaluations -- opening up dialogue about how class is going, different teaching and learning styles
- Being clear about different skill sets that students need to develop--understanding that they don't all come to classroom with same skills
- Making class a space where students feel comfortable asking questions

INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

How you organize your class sessions and design in-class activities.

- Assess and meet the needs of students in class
    - access: economic (make readings available online, don't assume they have laptops), learning needs (notes), sensitivities to multiple exceptions (holidays, planning events)
- Diversity in scholarship
    - diverse authors, theories
- Diversity in classroom activities
    - group work- be thoughtful how to choose groups and partners; vary the way you put people into groups
    - writing, types of writing assignments
    - varied types of activities in class; varied instructional strategies
- Make sure the central story itself is diverse- not a central story that leaves others on the periphery. Use examples and stories that aren't just from your own cultural experience

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Creating a safe and productive climate through your comments and behaviors.

- Collectively agree upon guidelines for having discussions on difficult topics
- During discussion, ask for "other voices" or "new voices" to enter the conversation; do not allow certain students to dominate
- Exercises where everyone is required to participate
  - Assigning roles based on student abilities
- Examples and material that speak to different disciplines, regions, and backgrounds
  - People have different disciplinary-educational backgrounds
  - Different educational experiences and expertise
  - Assignments that allow students to are flexible and relevant to their background and interests
- Liberating structures
  - Creating discussions that have everyone participate (e.g. pair and share; group discussion)
  - Poker chips or talking stick - structures inclusive discussion
  - Ask for "other voices" or "new voices" to enter the conversation; do not allow certain students to dominate discussion
- Don't force students to share background
  - Normalizing experiences (e.g. language students talking about family vacations)

A SELECTION OF RESOURCES: WEBSITES

from the University of Michigan: http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1

from Vanderbilt University: https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/diversity/

from Cornell University (includes other links):
http://cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/building-inclusive-classrooms/inclusive-teaching-strategies.html

from Elon University (includes other links as well as print resources, many of which are available at Sewanee in the Center for Teaching book collection): http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/teaching/inclusive%20classrooms/resources.xhtml

A shortcut to Elon's "What should I do more of?" practical tips and strategies:
http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/teaching/inclusive%20classrooms/practicalsuggestions.xhtml

an article from *Inside Higher Ed*:
https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/11/16/experts-consider-what-protests-over-racial-tensions-mean

from Harvard University (includes other links to tip sheets, such as "Dealing with Hot Moments"):
http://bokcenter.harvard.edu/classroom-dynamics-diversity

A SELECTION OF RESOURCES: WEBSITES

from the University of Missouri (with simple 2-page handout with helpful tips):
https://diversity.missouri.edu/learn/inclusive-classroom.php

From Evergreen State College (with extensive list of resources):
http://evergreen.edu/washingtoncenter/professionaldevelopment/inclusiveclassrooms.html

from National Education Association (NEA): http://www.nea.org/home/50031.htm

from the University of California, Berkeley (several links provided to other Centers as well):
http://mep.berkeley.edu/classroom

from the University of Virginia (associated with a large theme of "Teaching a Diverse Student Body"):
http://cte.virginia.edu/resources/teaching-a-diverse-student-body-practical-strategies-for-enhancing-our-students-learning/teaching-a-diverse-student-body-2/creating-an-inclusive-classroom-environment/

Cohen, et al. "The Mentors Dilemma: Providing Critical Feedback across the Racial Divide."
https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/the_mentors_dilemma.pdf

A SELECTION OF RESOURCES: PRINT

Salazar, M., Norton, A., & Tuitt, F. (2009). Weaving promising practices for inclusive excellence into the higher education classroom. In L.B. Nilson and J.E. Miller (Eds.) *To improve the academy.* (pp. 208-226). Jossey-Bass.

Books available to check out from the Center for Teaching or elsewhere in duPont Library:

Classroom communication and diversity: enhancing institutional practice / Robert G. Powell, Dana Caseau.

The art of discussion-based teaching : opening up conversation in the classroom / John E. Henning

McKeachie's teaching tips : strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers / Wilbert J. McKeachie, Marilla Svinicki (includes a relevant chapter)

Transforming classroom culture [electronic resource] ; Inclusive pedagogical practices / Edited by Arlene Dallalfar, Esther Kingston-Mann, Tim Sieber

Kimberly Tanner. Structure Matters: Twenty-One Teaching Strategies to Promote Student Engagement and Cultivate Classroom Equity. CBE Life Sci Educ. 2013 Fall; 12(3): 322–331. http://www.lifescied.org/content/12/3/322.full.pdf+html