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Inclusion in the Curriculum: How to Weave Diversity into Online Teaching

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Course Content (readings, lectures, media)

Disseminate concepts of diversity, identity, and inclusion; ensure content is accessible and acknowledges biases; choices of text and media are made mindfully to include a range of materials to represent issues of race, gender, age, disability, cultural heritage.

Synchronous and Asynchronous Communication

Use weekly discussion boards, chats, online meetings, announcements, launch page of course website to provide ongoing communication about daily experiences with inclusion issues and solutions.

“The persuasive and positive influence of peers is a promising area of prejudice reduction...highlighting the communicative and normative nature of prejudice change.” (Paluck & Green, 2009)

Inclusive Learning & Teaching

Assignments (directly related to learning outcomes, consideration for diverse learning styles and needs)

Invite/require students to reflect on issues of identity, diversity, and inclusion in assignments. “

Sample assignment for SLIS706 Introduction to Information Technology: *You have been hired to design an IT space in your academic library. Based on the course lectures, the literature, and examples from best practices, what considerations would be needed to ensure equity of access and universal design?*

Learning Technologies (for diverse learning styles and needs)

Choose learning technologies that have usability and accessibility design built-in, e.g., ADA compliance (or exceeding those basic requirements) Blackboard Accessibility metrics; allow flexibility when requiring students to present work using IT and social media

The legal definition of “accessible” is that “a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability.” (Burgstahler, 2017)

References

- Burgstahler, S. (2017, January 30). ADA compliance for online course design. *Educause Review*. <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2017/1/ada-compliance-for-online-course-design>.
- Paluck, E. L. & Green, D. P. (2009). Prejudice reduction: What works? A review and assessment of research and practice. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60, 339-367. <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163607>.