Inclusive Teaching: A Mindset and a Practice

As we embark on the Annual Teaching Inclusively Workshop, we wanted to share more information and initial feedback on our Inclusive Classroom Workshop.

Nearly every University department is on the annual training schedule, with almost 12% of departments already completed. In this first year, we focus our Canvas modules on the topics of Why teach inclusively? How implicit bias impacts your teaching; and Key components of teaching inclusively. These framing modules help support the ISU Strategic Plan to “enhance and cultivate the ISU Experience where faculty, staff, students, and visitors are safe and feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued by the university and each other.”

Initial feedback regarding the pre-workshop modules has been quite positive, with comments such as:

"I was once an international student myself, so I can really appreciate an inclusive environment. It's hard enough for students to be away from their family and live in a unfamiliar community. It's even harder if the community is not welcoming and accepting to them. Although Iowa State University takes pride in our land-grant mission, and inclusive principles, it is up to us, the instructors, to actually apply those principles to our everyday teaching practice."

"I was secure in the fact that I am here to just teach [this] subject. However, what I think that I have been missing is exactly why I failed at my first attempt at college. I needed to feel like I belonged and that I could achieve great things. By being more inclusive, I can help students break their own mental barriers and help them succeed."

During the face-to-face portion of the workshop, participants discuss course design, teaching strategies, and evaluation practices. These baseline teaching practices encourage “The act of creating environments, in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued. An inclusive climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions so that all people can fully participate in the University's opportunities” (UC-Berkeley).

Participants have shared appreciation for the resources and the opportunity to dialogue with departmental colleagues. For example, when asked what new insight do you have, representative comments have included:

"The wide range of resources available to improve the learning environment and the variety of approaches to reach the same goal."

"Different methods my colleagues have used to encourage participation. My colleagues are a big resource, and I should engage them more often."

Indeed, following the workshop, 99% strongly agree or somewhat agree* to the statement: "I recognize why teaching inclusively is important"

Recently, an undergraduate student responded publicly to the importance of the Inclusive Classroom Workshops, indicating, "If you don't think that this matters in your field, it does. It matters to other students here at Iowa State and me."

As we embark on this first semester of workshops, we encourage you to consider Inclusive Classroom Teaching as a Mindset. Given our interactions that we have with students, it is our opportunity and responsibility to help our students persist in their field of interest at Iowa State (Killpack et al., 2016).

Teaching inclusively is also a Practice. Take a moment and ask yourself, “What am I doing today to promote an inclusive classroom? What can I do in my classroom this week to make it more inclusive? What changes can I promote in my department, program, or institution to promote the success of all of our students?”
Our students came here to learn from and with the best. Our mindset and practices can help support all students belong and thrive. It is up to us to make that happen!

Find out more from CELT's Creating an Inclusive Classroom webpage.

With a joy for teaching,

Sara Marcketti, Director
Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

References

*88% strongly agree, 11% somewhat agree

Using Quality Matters to make your Canvas course more inclusive
Quality Matters is an instrument to help evaluate online and blended course design. In this week’s teaching tip, let’s look at how Specific Review Standard 4.5: “A variety of instructional materials is used in the course” can be used to make your Canvas course more inclusive.

Specifically, this is a reminder that inclusion of diverse instructional materials means increased student exposure to new content through a variety of contexts. You might ask your students to:

- Read the textbook chapters.
- Watch an existing video offering a different angle on an explanation of a challenging concept: in Nursing 360, Dr. Wangerin uses the Studio functionality to allow her students to comment on the embedded videos.
- Watch a short video where you relate the new concepts to everyday life. For example, you may toss a coin to explain the concept of probability.
- Watch a video you record with a guest lecturer: in Purchasing and Supply Management 553, Dr. Cantor co-hosts short informative lectures with an industry’s leader to explain the subtleties of e-procurement.
- Record a one-minute summary of a scholarly journal article that supports understanding of new content.
- Watch short video announcements: Dr. Ruble creates dynamic 5-minute video communications to anticipate questions on newly-covered material or explain the learning challenges her students had with new content in the past in her Communication Studies 210.

Visit the Quality Matters at ISU webpage to learn more about other standards in the QM Rubric, available workshops and individual consultations.
CELT Faculty Spotlight: Susan Yager

In our teaching tips, we are highlighting the work of successful instructors and staff from across Iowa State University. We have asked them to share their highlights from the classroom, ideas for successful teaching and learning, and share their favorite CELT program.

Dr. Susan Yager, Morrill Professor of English, is in her 29th year at ISU. In that time, she has taught many discussion-intensive courses. Here are her suggestions related to strategies to create an inclusive classroom:

“In the best discussions, the instructor almost disappears. To get to that point, I try to avoid putting students on the spot. For example, asking for a show of hands on an opinion makes a follow-up easier: ‘For those of you who agreed, what are some reasons...?’ On the other hand, if some students are very talkative, I’ll privately ask them to help others participate by limiting their own responses.

Dr. Yager, a former Associate Director of CELT, finds it hard to choose a favorite CELT experience. “The great thing about working at CELT was the chance to learn from so many great instructors,” she recalled. One of her favorite recent experiences was the CELT Course Design Institute, which helped her think about designing an online course. She added, “Teaching online requires a whole new way of thinking about discussion, so I still have a lot to learn.”

Learn more by registering via Learn@ISU to attend Dr. Yager’s Award-Winning Seminar Series: Online course design for seasoned professors, Apr. 1 (12:10-1 p.m.) or by participating in the Course Design Institute — more information coming soon!

Learning Online: Canvas and Beyond

Canvas update released January 18, 2020

Details include:

- **Rich Content Editor** — This optional feature includes an improved user experience and updated functionality. To enable the new Rich Content Editor, go to your Canvas course Settings, click Feature Options at the top, then click the toggle to On to enable.

- **Attendance Checkbox** — Instructors may now choose to not count attendance toward the final grade.

- **Gradebook** — For assignments with a manual posting policy, comments can be posted without requiring a grade. Additionally, the Student Name column includes additional sorting options.

For more Canvas News & Updates, be sure to check MyCanvas Teacher at ISU.

Need help?

Stop by our CELT Open Labs. Visit CELT’s Canvas Open Labs webpage (http://bit.ly/canvas-open-lab) for days, times, and location or contact Canvas 24/7 support by clicking on the ?Help icon on the Global Navigation menu (far left of your screen) in Canvas for the 24/7 support options.
Grammarly

Grammarly is a digital writing tool that provides grammar and spell checking, plagiarism detection services, and suggestions about writing clarity, concision, vocabulary, style, and tone.

Grammarly was first brought to campus by Dr. Jim Ranalli, Assistant Professor in English, as part of a Miller Faculty Fellowship funded through the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. Dr. Ranalli shares:

"As a teacher of courses in which writing is a big part of the assessment and in which the students are often writers of English as a second language, I really value Grammarly for its capacity to reduce the number of distracting grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors that can undermine my ability to focus on higher-level issues—things like demonstration of learning, critical thinking, and use of genre conventions—that I'm usually more interested in. I also find that requiring students to use Grammarly as part of course assessment helps them recognize its benefits and integrate it into their normal writing workflows."

Grammarly is not just for students! Dr. Ranalli also uses Grammarly in his professional communications: "even one minor error is more than I want going out in any of my professional communication with colleagues, students, or other audiences."

See how you can sign up by visiting the Grammarly page in MyCanvas Teacher.

CELT's Upcoming Programs

To view our program descriptions and the most up-to-date schedule, visit CELT's Event and Registration webpage (http://bit.ly/celtevents):

- Seminar, CELT Teaching Talks: Course design conversations, Jan. 27 (12:10-1:00 p.m.)
- Workshop, Learning Assessment Techniques, Jan. 28 (12:10-1:00 pm)
- Teaching and Learning Circle: Powerful Learning Tools: Unleash the Science of Learning, Jan. 29 (3-4:40 pm)
- Meeting, Team-Based Learning (TBL) Teaching and Learning Community, Jan. 31 (1:10-2:30 p.m.)
- Seminar, Discuss Published Education Research in Your Discipline, Feb. 3 (4:10-5 p.m.)
- Award-Winning Seminar Series: Engaging students through creative projects, Feb 4 (12:10-1 p.m.)
- Webinar, Navigating controversial topics in the classroom, Feb. 4 (4:10-5 p.m., Online only via WebEx registration page: http://bit.ly/2N5kmaH)
- Workshop, Free Textbooks and More: Open Educational Resources (OER) panel and workshop, Feb. 5 (12:10-1:30 p.m.)
- Workshop, Teaching Gen Z: In the Classroom and Beyond, Feb 6 (2:10-3:30 p.m.)
- Seminar, ISU Online Learning Community (ISU-OLC), Feb. 7 (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- Teaching and Learning Circle: Transparent Design in Higher Education Teaching and Leadership, Feb. 11 (12:10-1:00 p.m.)

How to Register

For in-person events, register via the Learn@ISU website (http://learn.iastate.edu) or email your name, department, name of the event, date of the event to celt@iastate.edu.