

Inclusivity

- Everyone participates
- Equality – level playing field
- What might keep people from being treated equally? Solutions?
 - Location in class (back of the room) → instructor parts attention to all parts of class
 - Lack of interest
 - Lack of personal investment
 - Fear, don't want to be picked on (asked questions)
 - Language barriers
- Gently try to draw out students that appear shy
- Create community guidelines
- Make sure everyone understands terms/language used
- Direct students to resources
- Set a good tone from day 1
 - Create a safe environment at the beginning
 - Ice breakers – get people comfortable
 - Small talk
- Language barriers?
 - Give time for students to respond
 - Don't rush students
 - Helps students find the right word
 - Have students write out answers
- What to avoid in a class
 - Hurrying student (especially when language problem)
 - Make students aware of resources – Access and Diversity
 - Idioms and humour can be excluding
 - Sarcasm can be a problem
 - Create a safe space for all students
 - Don't pick favourites
- What are barriers to inclusivity?
 - Lack of academic background
 - No friends in class
 - Lack of confidence
 - Shy
 - Cultural differences
 - Have experienced discrimination

- Not at university by choice
- Try to vary assessments or questioning
 - Group work → self-selected groups vs. instructor-selected vs. random
 - Enforcing English only could be a barrier to inclusion
 - Getting everyone involved – breaking the ice
 - Highlighting diverse strengths of students in class
 - Create safe space
- What prevents inclusivity?
 - Awkward/negative atmosphere
 - Time (eg. Biol 140 – very scheduled)
 - Language – even if English is 1st language. Lack of vocabulary can be exclusionary
 - Inappropriate jokes/comments
 - For sensitive topics instructor may need to take the lead/rephrase statements where intention was not to offend
 - Can acknowledge that a comment could be offensive

Time Management

DO:

- Make a schedule/to do list*
 - Short: long term*
- Establish a routine
 - But be flexible*
- Be realistic about time requirements/demands*
- Use time efficiently*
 - Eg. When on bus, e-mailing
- Get a calendar to schedule your time**
- Establish priorities/deadlines*
- Write thing down (hard copy)
- Keep a balanced life (decrease stress) – go for a walk, bake cookies
- Seek advice/help from others
- Block certain websites during key hours (decrease procrastination)
- Clarify common questions on Connect or blog
- Be clear on when you will respond to emails
- Exams: mark question by question
- Papers: organize by quality (eg. After reading one section)

DON'T:

- Forget to eat!
- Be too strict (increase stress)
- Procrastinate (minimize)

Participatory Learning

- Group work designed into course**
- Facilitate group formation (helps shy ones)
 - Force them to change groups
- Make learning environments comfortable
- Community guidelines → use it as icebreakers
- Chat them up → encourage them**
- Allow silence – guide them through material
- Getting first answer is often the hardest
- Mixing up groups to balance relationships
- Role playing → demonstration
- “Are there any questions?”
 - “Do you understand concept X?”
- Walk around and talk to students
- Adjust your style to the class you have
- Have them write ideas and then share with neighbours
 - Start with YES/NO question
- Take turns answering questions
- Snack to bribe them!

Grading

Concerns/challenges in grading

- Plagiarism – report to your supervisor ASAP
- Providing consistent and constructive feedback
 - Mark the same question for all papers all at the same time
 - Follow a rubric, provide feedback accordingly
- Do not wait until the last moment to start marking
 - Communicate readily with your supervisor if you do not feel comfortable about how you were instructed to mark
 - How to standardize marking between various TAs?
 - When it is hard to read the handwriting of your students?

- How to be efficient in marking tasks?
 - Break down the task to small chunks of work
- Very important to provide specific feedback so students know where they went wrong and how to improve
- Communicate with other TAs and instructors readily to assure yourself that you are doing fine
- Timely turn around time
- Keep track of common student mistakes and report back to the supervisor

Classroom Management

- Be upfront if you know you have a “weakness”
- Prepare students for what is going to take place
- Circulate and monitor progress. Make suggestions to keep on track
- Be aware of resources available
- Create comfortable environment and be approachable
- Patience/keep your cool
- Give rotational responsibilities to groups for lab cleanup
- Keep a schedule/allocate time
- Inform students about schedule and activities for each session
- Recognize there is only so much you can do if people are distracted
- Use guidelines!
- Be explicit about expectations
- “Pass the ball” in a review session

TA/Faculty Relations

- Early communication
 - As question/issues arise. Eg. Grading
 - TA/Faculty rules clearly defined → Clarity
 - Negotiating between multiple faculty
- Teaching hours
 - Not matching estimates?
 - Documenting actual time
 - Tips for being efficient: rubric, discussion
- Last minute instructions. Eg. Late grading rubrics
 - Communicate needs
 - Advise to faculty concerns
 - Response to faculty concerns
 - Clarifying concepts/issues

- Students in need
- Absent Faculty
 - Lab support needed → who is the other support staff?
 - Ask for support → suggestions, ideas for help