

Faculty Conversations About Teaching

Inclusive Teaching



Dr. Yook teaches courses in intercultural communication, small group communication, and public speaking.

At Mason, she frequently teaches COMM 301, Foundations of Interpersonal Communication & COMM 305, Foundations of Intercultural Communication.

Her research focuses on the intersections of instructional communication and intercultural communication

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What I've Tried

"One thing unique about my partner is...": A simple ice-breaker that facilitates learning about one's peer is to have students work in pairs to learn about each others' cultural background and share it with the class as they introduce their peer. By sharing their roots, students can realize that all students come from multicultural backgrounds that make the mosaic of the U.S. culture.

What I'm Exploring

Diverse groups, diverse examples (e.g. names in exams), discussion questions that reflect diversity or "What are your privileges, provided by your social background, family support, and situation that others may not have?" will sensitize students to become more empathetic to other cultures and prepare them to be more sensitive global citizens.

Teaching Tip

Embracing diversity can be encouraged and modeled by instructors, not only by the content and activities taught, but also by the manner in which we address students, structure class groups, and questions we ask. Simply learning how to pronounce a student's ethnic name correctly, showing that you respect and have interest in their ethnic cultures, and asking thought-provoking questions such as "How might this theory play out differently in a different culture?"

Faculty Conversations about Teaching: Inclusive Teaching

Julie Owen, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Leadership and Integrative Studies, School of Integrative Studies (SIS)



Dr. Owen teaches courses on socially responsible leadership, civic engagement, and community-based research.

At Mason, she frequently teaches INTS 405 Women and Leadership; & INTS 595 Research Methods for Social Change.

She is recipient of CTFE Teaching Excellence Award (2012).

Her current research involves leadership development among college students.

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What I've Tried

Individual Story Telling – In every class I teach, student sign up (1-2 students per class session) to share brief authentic stories about their lives and what they care about. These stories are usually linked to class themes and serve to showcase diverse perspectives and build an inclusive learning community. This is not a 'hot seat' exercise where students are interrogated by peers, rather we treat these stories as gifts. Story Telling examples include: Moment of Obligation (MOO) and Gendered Perspective Story (GPS).

Questions I'm Exploring

- How do we make explicit the complexities of power within education and prepare individuals and collectives to navigate it?
- How can we interrogate/ deconstruct dominant narratives? Whose voices are missing/silenced in classroom content and processes?
- How do we understand intersectional identities (of ourselves and of our students) in the classroom? To what extent are we engaged in examining our own assumptions, preferences, blind spots, identities?
- How do our own values/philosophies/identities shape the curriculum and culture of our programs/classes? What are implications for introducing critical perspectives in the classroom as they relate to intersecting identities?
- Do the social locations of those practicing education replicate dominant norms?

Recommended Readings

Adams, M., Bell, L. A., Goodman, D. J., & Joshi, K. Y. (2016). Teaching for diversity and social justice [3rd edition]. NY: Routledge.

Arao B., Clemens K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces. In Landreman L. M. (Ed.), The art of effective facilitation: Reflections from social justice educators (135-150). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Nash, R. J., Bradley, D. L., & Chickering, A. (2008). How to talk about hot topics on campus: From polarization to moral conversations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

TRY IT!

How might you apply these ideas, tips & best practices to a course you are currently teaching?

What additional information or resources might you need in order to try it?

For info and guidance, please contact The Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning.



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