Ready, Set, Engage:

Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

Facilitated by:

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With

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- Discussion why inclusion matters

- Offer student perspectives on a positive learning environment

- Share our teaching strategies as a group

Towards Inclusion

- Reduce or remove any systemic barriers to increase participation

- Reallocate resources to increase access

- Create spaces, environments and attitudes that are welcoming, positive and non-discriminatory

- Question and challenge normalized behaviours that may exclude people

Planning with intention to include diverse learners can reduce the need to accommodate and supports students who may never ask for help:

- Try to anticipate different learning styles and needs

- Build some flexibility in your course for change

- Consider diverse materials and perspectives

- Scaffold assignments and provide feedback opportunities

- Create a supportive student environment

- Seek advice (on syllabus and teaching) from colleagues and other student support offices.

"Listening to student voices is an essential step to help us all become more responsive to the complexity of student learning needs and to empower students to participate in improving learning."

-- student alumni, Leanne Simpson

Student Ideas from An Access*Ability* Services:
Top Ten Suggestions for Inclusive Teaching

1. Create a welcoming environment on the first day.

2. Be available to meet students

3. Provide a descriptive syllabus

4. Offer regular breaks

5. Make lectures available electronically

Top 10 Student Suggestions for Inclusive Teaching

6. Use a variety of teaching methods

7. Reduce unnecessary learning barriers

8. Break class activities and assignments into steps

9. Support student use of note-takers and other learning assistants

10. Support student use of technology and assistive devices

"Lecture slides posted before classes made it easier to understand assigned material, formulate questions/issues/ideas about material ahead of time so that I could participate in the lecture."

"I like to know the professors expectations. The rubric also helps me check in to make sure I have not missed any components of the task."

"It was very helpful to be "shown" how to use the equipment needed for labs rather than just having to rely on written instructions in the manual or on the equipment."

"By taking the time to show me different ways of approaching work, instructors have reduced my stress levels and made me feel more capable of achieving success at university."

What dynamics or environments in and out of the classroom create a positive learning environment?

CTL Faculty and Teaching Showcase, 2017

What strategies or practices do you already use in the classroom to promote positive teaching environments? What teaching practices do you plan to use in your courses?

Group activity:

In pairs or small groups, look at the student responses to a short survey on an "ideal" learning environment.

Burgstahler, S. (Ed.). (2017). Universal design in higher education. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Council of Ontario Universities. (2017). Introduction to accessible education. Retrieved from http://www.accessiblecampus.ca/tools-resources/educators-tool-kit/introduction-accessible-education/

For more support for faculty on Equity and Diversity issues, please contact:

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For advice on writing support in teaching and assignments, you can contact:

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