

Fostering Inclusive Classrooms

Practical Strategies for Educators

Prepared by Rain Liu, on behalf of the Committee on Unity and Engagement (CUE) • March 31, 2025

As educators, our teaching choices send powerful messages. What we assign, whose voices we center, and how we handle difficult conversations all shape how students learn, feel included, and grow intellectually.

This resource highlights key strategies from our recent CUE workshop that facilitate teaching practices. Whether you're teaching now or preparing to, we hope these ideas support your inclusive teaching journey.



Why Representation Matters

- Course content communicates **who and what is valued**.
- Diverse perspectives improve **critical thinking and empathy** for *all* students.
- Exposure to varied voices enhances **problem-solving** and broadens worldviews.



How to Diversify Your Course Materials

- **Audit your syllabus:** Who's represented? Who's missing?
- Include authors from different races, genders, and regions - consider voices from the Global South, LGBTQ+ scholars, and Indigenous experts.
- **Expand formats:** Add videos, blogs, community narratives, or guest speakers.
- Let students choose project topics or materials to reflect their interests and identities.



Key Takeaways

- Representation enhances learning outcomes.
- Tough topics require empathy, structure, and reflection.
- Inclusive teaching is not an "add-on"—it's part of effective pedagogy.



Navigating Sensitive Topics

- Topics like race, gender, trauma, and politics often surface - and they matter.
- Acknowledge that learning happens at the **edge of discomfort**.
- Prepare by setting discussion norms: curiosity, respect, and listening.
- Use structure: think-pair-share, anonymous questions, or small group formats.
- Avoid pretending to be neutral; facilitate with care, clarity, and reflection.



Inclusive Teaching Amid Political Pushback

- Frame your approach around **best pedagogical practices**.
- Use clear rationales: "Diverse texts build critical engagement."
- Ground decisions in **learning goals**, not labels.
- Collaborate with teaching centers and colleagues for shared support.

Additional Resource: [5 Strategies to Continue DEI Work in the Face of Backlash - Seramont](#)

Let's continue this important work—together!