EQUITY-MINDED CLASSROOM CHECKLIST

Reflect on your equity-awareness

How you think about your students matters—deeply

☐ Test yourself for bias: Take the Implicit Association Test (IAT)—or enroll in CETL’s Inclusive Teaching Program
☐ Treat high percentages of student failure as an opportunity to examine or modify course delivery or structure
☐ Make sure your course materials (a reflection of you) are student centered and bias-free
☐ Do an item analysis for any high-stakes (midterm/final) assignment you give to determine validity
☐ Perform an equity gap analysis of your course(s): Who is most likely to pass? Is there a pattern?

Practice equity in assignments

Tell students what the ground rules are

☐ Share your criteria and standards for successful task completion (rubrics, sample papers/projects)
☐ Weigh your assignments evenly; avoid any assignment worth more than 30% of a grade
☐ Time due dates thoughtfully
☐ Grade inclusively: avoid curving; it limits numbers of who can excel and is a proven disincentive to study

Give students choices and time to demonstrate they are learning

☐ Use formative assessments early so students can discover their knowledge and skills-gaps with time to adjust/persist; examples include low-stakes quizzes, quick writes, homework, and discussion participation
☐ Allow students to earn their grade in a variety of ways—avoid high-stakes, summative assessments like midterm/final-only evaluations; repeated assessments are better than one-time testing

Help students participate and belong

Assume all students want to be part of a learning community

Practice Presence

☐ Make an attempt to learn students’ names
☐ Use proximity with, and call on all students, equitably; treat all questions and concerns with interest

When online

☐ Let students know when and how to contact you with questions or concerns
☐ Send a message to students who are not participating based on your gradebook or logs
☐ Create short (1-5 minute) videos to introduce each week. Only-audio also works

Experience is powerful

Relate course material to the rich, lived experience of students

☐ Measure students’ prior knowledge about course topics using a knowledge survey or questionnaire
☐ Use personal anecdotes to make material relevant
☐ Incorporate the heritage language of students (and culturally-relevant examples) in course materials
☐ Use metaphors to represent difficult content

Promote engagement inside and outside the course

☐ Require at least one office-hours visit, which can be in a group
☐ Require or encourage students to seek regular advising, internships, and networking with faculty
☐ Include university support services in your syllabus so students know where to go for help
Communicate
Your instructional materials should avoid ‘hidden curriculum’

Be crystal clear
- Make sure your syllabus is accessible
- Write student learning outcomes (objectives) for students, not experts
- Link course activities directly to course goals
- Use simple, friendly language in prompts and directions
- Make an assignment transparent: Specify purpose, all related tasks, and criteria for evaluation

Show your subject matter organization
- Review the previous week, outline your lecture, and recap each session
- Use a diagram or concept map to show how your discipline organizes knowledge
- Tell students what the discipline values and how (e.g. creativity, ingenuity, problem-solving)
- Show students how to read writing genres from the discipline

Foster Self-Awareness
- Ask students to set a learning goal for a personal connection to the material
- Use reflection to help students think about how they approach assignments and tests
- Teach students to take notes; provide “skeleton notes,” partial-lecture note handouts students can download
- Share study skills that worked for you when you were a student

Give and Solicit Feedback
Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement in the college classroom.

Structure feedback
- Check randomly for student understanding in class (muddiest point, minute-paper, pair and share, cold calling, clickers or other peer response systems). You want to know how ALL students are doing
- Post grades in Canvas using Speed Grader so students can track their progress and eliminate surprises
- Solicit feedback at the mid-term in case you need to make adjustments; don’t wait until the end of semester
- Use peers to give feedback: Peer discussion improves student performance

Give the right kind of feedback
- Praise student work and effort, not intelligence; students who believe they can get better with hard work perform better
- Give feedback no later than ten days following a due date
- Provide feedback to correct, not just incorrect, responses
- Allow students to think about why they did/not do well on an assignment via reflection.
Useful Resources


