Diversity and Inclusion in Master Syllabi

The Snow College administration, faculty, staff and students are committed to building a more equitable and inclusive environment that focuses on building a college community, where everyone has the opportunity to develop physically, emotionally and intellectually.
Snow College is dedicated to:
- Embracing every person for who they are and who they wish to become;
- Fostering a culture of care and respect;
- Addressing inequality and promoting equity;
- Nurturing the self-discovery and self-worth of every student.

In accordance with the institution's strategic plan, we commit to: "Review our programs and pedagogies in order to identify opportunities to be more inclusive, to broaden our students' experience, and to amplify awareness of inequities." Source: Snow College's Diversity and Inclusion Commitment Statement

Inclusion and diversity is a main priority of the Snow College Strategic Plan. Goal two under academics states "Reevaluate and revise curriculum in all delivery formats to reflect quality, inclusivity, [and] contemporary content in academic disciplines." As such, the Curriculum Committee is now looking for language and evidence in master syllabi demonstrating how the course content and pedagogy contribute to this priority.

When reading through instructions for Master Syllabus creation and using Argos, you will now find two statements that need to be addressed involving **Inclusion** located under the (a) Pedagogy Statement and **Diversity** located under (b) Course Content.

a. **Pedagogy**: Please include a clear statement on how the teaching method(s) promote inclusivity.
b. **Course Content**: Please also explain specifically how the content of this course addresses diversity.

Inclusion: Inclusion entails involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. An inclusive classroom promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members.

When addressing inclusion, consider that students are more likely to succeed when they find community in the classroom. What particular strategies does the course employ to help all students feel included? What **specific** pedagogical techniques are implemented to help students from a variety of backgrounds succeed? How does the course prepare students to engage effectively and inclusively with difference and diversity in the wider civic and professional world beyond the classroom?

Inclusive teaching isn't simply teaching about current events or "diversity issues." (Though this may be a fine start!) It is creating a safe and welcoming classroom environment where students feel like their opinions, insights, backgrounds, and cultures add value. Besides teaching content and skills, our role as instructor is to help all students learn and feel included regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, socioeconomic background, ideology, and personality traits.

Diversity:
Diversity is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs.

When addressing diversity, consider how the content of the course addresses diversity. For example, there is an easy tendency to teach a course from one narrow perspective, but such tendencies compromise student learning and engagement. In order to develop the course syllabus beyond narrow or exclusive perspectives, consider the

following questions: How, specifically, can you assure that the content of this course is representative of diverse perspectives and ideas? How do you encourage students of a variety of backgrounds to find relevance in the course materials/content? What, specifically, do you do to ensure that this content matters to all students, while still also challenging them to consider ideas from the perspective of others?

As you write your statements, it is recommended that you are **specific and explicit**. For instance, be explicit that you are using these pedagogical methods in order to foster an inclusive and diverse classroom. Further, it is not enough to simply say that all students, regardless of background, are welcome in your classroom, but rather you should be specific in what methods will be used to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds feel included. The Curriculum Committees is not looking for cut and paste sentences for these statements but rather a thoughtful examination of how you intend to address and incorporate the differences and similarities of students in your courses. These statements are, among other things, a chance for us to reflect on (and perhaps, as appropriate, further research, educate ourselves on, discuss, and improve) how we as instructors, departments, and programs design and teach our courses with more careful and deliberate attention and commitment to diversity and inclusion.

GENERAL RESOURCES

- **Inclusive Pedagogy by Kyle Reyes** – in this webinar to Snow College on October 26, 2020 (link to the recording coming soon!) he emphasized relevance and building a sense of community.
- **Resources from Universities Teaching and Learning Centers**– Many universities have teaching and learning centers that have published helpful guides on this topic. Here are a few:
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy from Georgetown ([link](#))
  - o Checklist of Inclusive Teaching Strategies from Craven Community College ([link](#))
  - o Increasing Inclusivity in the Classroom form Vanderbilt ([link](#))
  - o Diversity in the Classroom from UCLA ([link](#)) and specific to STEM ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy from Colorado State ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogies from Dickinson College ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy from Iowa State ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Teaching Strategies from Yale ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy from San Diego State University ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy from Virginia Tech ([link](#))
  - o Diversity and Inclusive Teaching form the University of Delaware ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy Resources from San Diego State University ([link](#))
  - o Inclusive Pedagogy Resources from Virginia Tech ([link](#))
- **Other**:
  - o AAC&U [Resources](#), [Statements](#), & [Publications](#) on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusive Excellence.
  - o *Chronicle of Higher Education* on "[How to Make Your Teaching More Inclusive](#)" (2019).