

Creating an Inclusive Classroom Climate

GTA Training, August 29, 2012

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Agenda

1. Introduce the concept of "classroom/campus climate" and the importance of a GTA in creating, and maintaining, it!
2. Introduce UMD's Strategic Plan Goal 2
3. Examples of inclusive, or non-inclusive (maybe even offensive) behavior.
4. What "tools" GTAs may use when dealing with such behavior.
5. Introduce the concept of Intercultural Competence.
6. What resources exist at UMD for further education/assistance?
7. What else do YOU want/need??

My approach

- Reading (Parker Palmer)
 - ...*“good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher”* (Palmer, 1997, p.2).
- Experiential
- Learner-centered
 - The learner-centered classroom
<http://www.nea.org/home/34219.htm>
 - A clear rationale for learner-centered teaching
<http://www.nea.org/home/34221.htm>

Making the case

- **It's your job/responsibility**
<http://www.d.umn.edu/vcaa/TeachingLearning.html>
- Goal 2
- Mary Armstrong

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UMD's Strategic Plan Goal 2

- Strategic Plan
 - ***Goal 2: Create a positive and inclusive campus climate for all by advancing equity, diversity, and social justice. **** —
- Campus Climate

Making the case

- It's your job/responsibility
<http://www.d.umn.edu/vcaa/TeachingLearning.html>
- Goal 2
- **Mary Armstrong-"regardless of what you teach!"**

Crafting an Inclusive Classroom (No Matter What You Teach)

- <http://www.nea.org/home/50031.htm>
- [faculty testimonial]- Last night, I opened the latest issue of *Thought and Action*, the NEA's journal, to find a compelling article by Mary Armstrong called "Small World: Crafting an Inclusive Classroom (No Matter What You Teach)". It hit home for me and may for other faculty as well.

For the past year I have had conversations with you, Paula, that go something like "Well, I can do that in some of my classes, but in others it is not at all related to the content", to which you respond, "It doesn't matter, xxx; I can think of all kinds of ways you could do this with xxx, for example" and I say, "Nah, it just won't work for some of my "sciency" classes, but for others, I would really like to do this". Your prodding, Paula, made me curious to read this article and ...BOOM!...Mary Armstrong hit me between the eyes. She writes, **"It is my contention that every single classroom - from Soil Science to Ethnic Studies - can function as an incubator for inclusivity"**. She goes on to explain that it has nothing to do with content, and furthermore, nothing to do with how diverse the student make-up of the classroom happens to be.

Classroom Discussion Method

- 1. Individual Reflection
 - Think about a particular example from your own GTA/educational experiences thus far that exemplify to you
 - a. An example from an inclusive classroom
 - b. An example from a non-inclusive classroom/educational experience
 - c. An example of something offensive (include how it was handled)
 - Spend 5 minutes in reflective writing on any or all of these

2. In small groups

- Find your piece of colored paper
- Find your group
- Discuss:
 - 1. Introduce yourself:
 - Name (how to pronounce/where it comes from)
 - Where do you come from (family/country of origin as well as undergraduate degree)
 - Major/TA assignment (how does it connect to yourself and your own story)
 - 2. Share examples (provide specifics if you can):
 - A. Inclusive classroom
 - B. Non-inclusive/exclusive
 - C. Offensive

Jigsaw Group

- Based on k-12 classroom research on inclusive classrooms
- Makes everyone an expert
- Share your lists/examples and come up with themes

3. Large group report out/discussion

- Share themes (inclusive climate) on poster board and report to large group
- Add in discussion...
- Meta-level:
 - What did you notice about the way you were put into groups?
 - Under-represented students...Students of color, international students, introverted students, etc. ...often report discomfort when it comes to group work. Best practices for multicultural education/inclusive classrooms are to establish the groups (variety of ways to do this))
 - Everyone gets the same information
 - Similarities and differences between groups/units
 - Any universal examples?
 - Cultural differences?

What Is an inclusive classroom?

University of Michigan http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1

- Inclusive classrooms are classrooms in which instructors and students work together to create and sustain an **environment in which everyone feels safe, supported, and encouraged to express her or his views and concerns**. In these classrooms, the content is explicitly viewed from the **multiple perspectives** and varied experiences of a range of groups. Content is presented in a manner that **reduces all students' experiences of marginalization** and, wherever possible, helps students understand that individuals' experiences, values, and perspectives influence how they construct knowledge in any field or discipline. Instructors in inclusive classrooms use **a variety of teaching methods** in order to facilitate the academic achievement of all students. Inclusive classrooms are places in which thoughtfulness. In an inclusive classroom, instructors attempt to be responsive to students on both an individual and a cultural level.

The ABC approach to creating climates of engagement on diverse campuses.

- **A**ffirming Identity
- **B**uilding Community
- **C**ultivating Leadership

“An individual who is a minority (race, gender, sexual orientation, class) must have a **strong, positive identity** based in the minority status, and have **membership in an effective "affinity group"** before a really **healthy multicultural community** can be built” (Beverly Tatum, 2007)

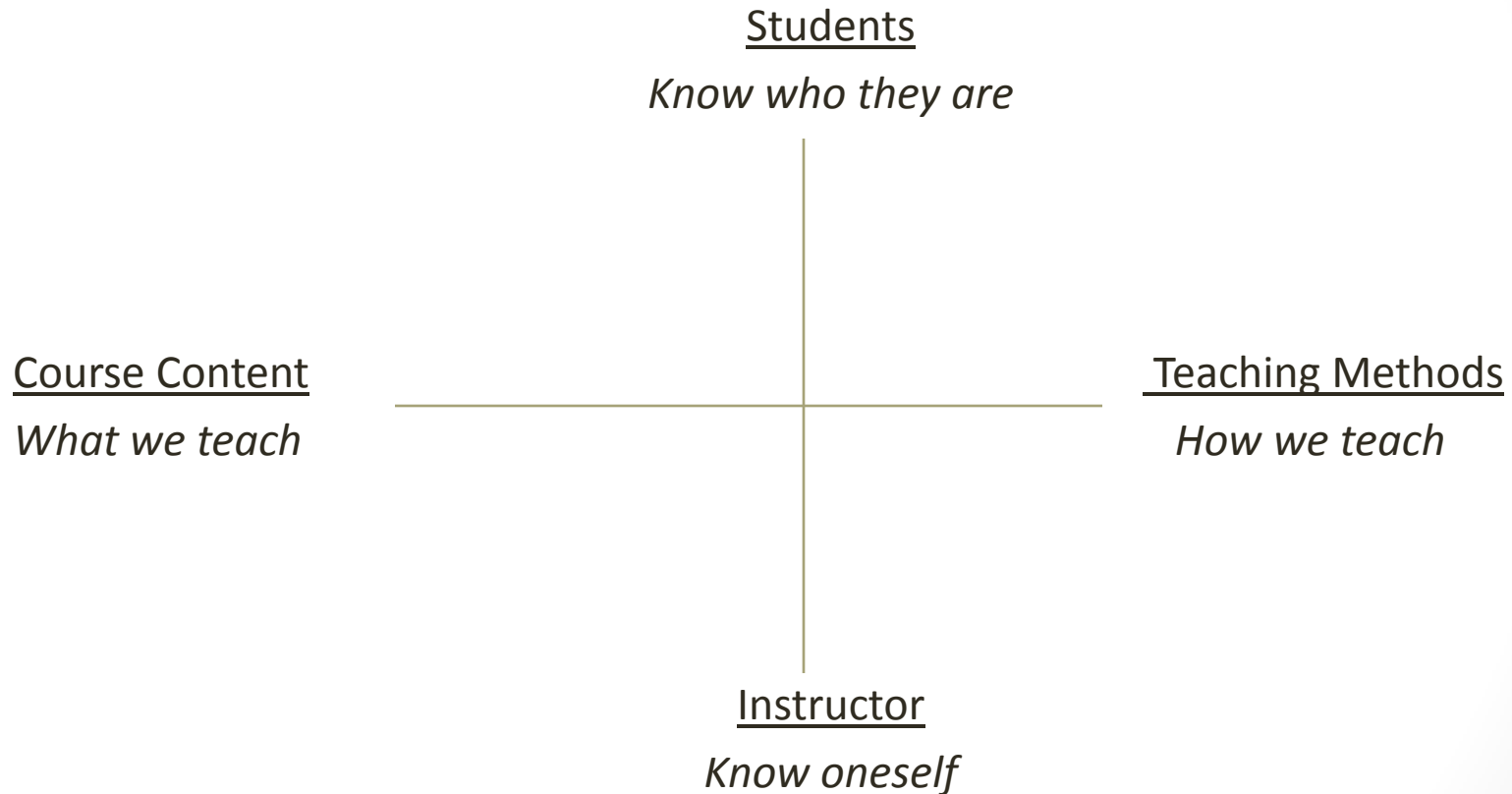
Back to UMD – Goal 2

- ***Goal 2: Create a positive and inclusive campus climate for all by advancing equity, diversity, and social justice.***
- <http://www.d.umn.edu/chancellor/climate/definitions.html>

Defined as multicultural education

- <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/multicultural/whatis/index.html>
- Or universal design

Four-Quadrant Analysis of Teaching and Learning (Adams & Love, In Skubikowski, Wright and Graf (2011, p.8))



Establish and Maintain *

- Prevention
- Connecting with students
- Manage/address when it happens

Prevention

- Statement on syllabus
 - Examples:
[https://sites.google.com/a/d.umn.edu/divcom curric integration/home/syllabus-creation](https://sites.google.com/a/d.umn.edu/divcom_curric_integration/home/syllabus-creation)
- Talk about the climate for the classroom on the first day/week
- Touchstone to refer to if student fall short

Set clear expectations

- <http://www.uww.edu/learn/diversity/safeclassroom.php>

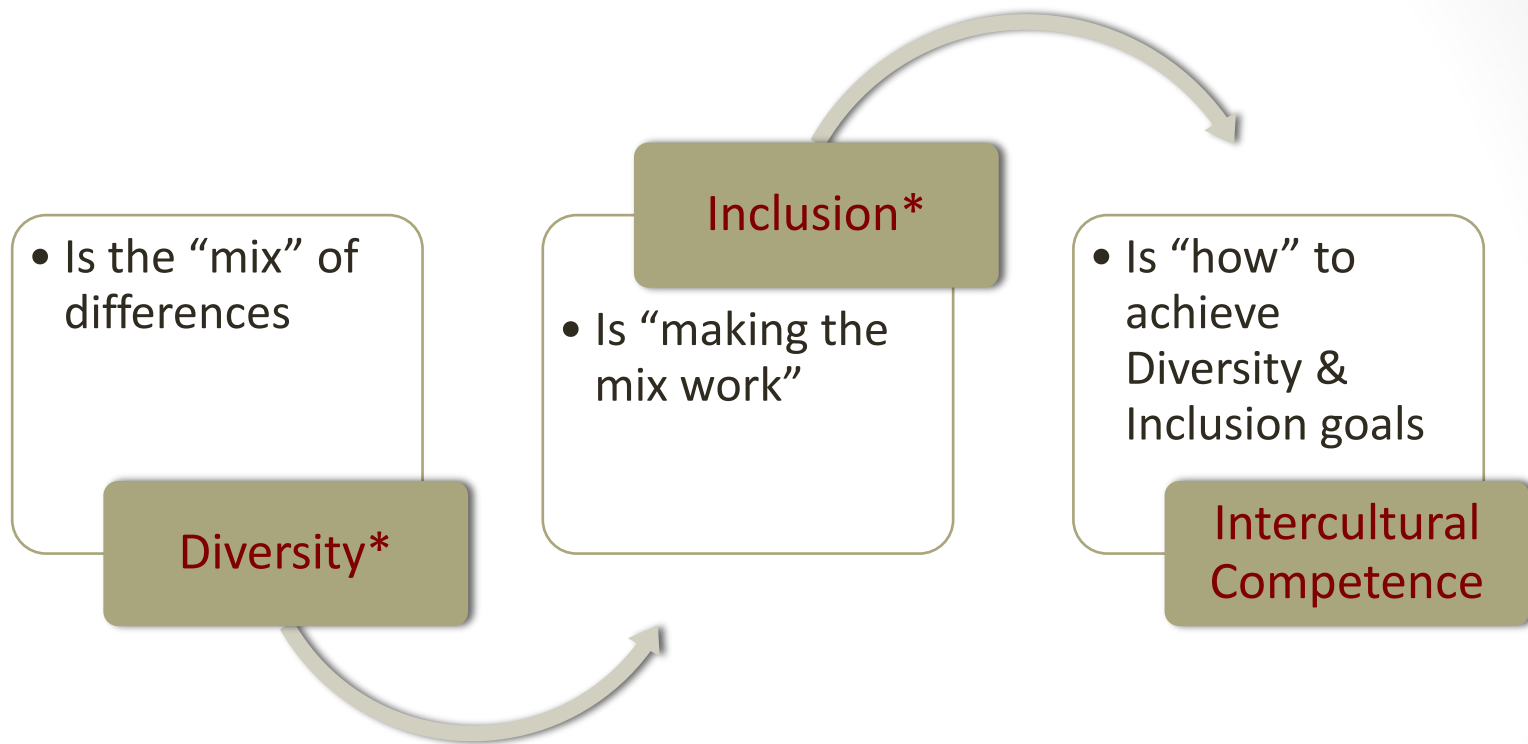
Maintain

- Address problems when they arise
- *Multicultural Teaching: A Rich Resource for Learning across the Disciplines***
(p.3)http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/prod/groups/ohr/@pub/@ohr/@ctl/documents/asset/ohr_asset_097640.doc
- Use “I statements” as opposed to overgeneralizing about a group of people, or treating their own experience as applicable to all situations.
<http://www.uww.edu/learn/diversity/safeclassroom.php>
- Use as a teachable moment: (helping the students to think about
it)<http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/hotmoments.html>
- UMD – Disruptive classroom guidelines
http://www.d.umn.edu/vcaa/documents/ClassroomDisruption1_000.pdf

Resource Page

- Teaching and Learning:
 - UM Center for Teaching and Learning <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/>
 - UMD's Instructional Development Center <http://www.d.umn.edu/ids/>
- Multicultural Classroom:
 - *What Is Multicultural Learning*
<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/multicultural/whatis/index.html>
 - *Multicultural Teaching: A Rich Resource for Learning across the Disciplines***
http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/prod/groups/ohr/@pub/@ohr/@ctl/documents/asset/ohr_asset_097640.doc
 - *Resources for Multicultural Teaching and Learning*
<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/multicultural/resources/index.html>
 - *Multicultural Teaching and Learning Resources*
<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/multicultural/index.html>
 - *Berkeley Resource* <http://mep.berkeley.edu/classroom>
- UMD Office of Cultural Diversity <http://www.d.umn.edu/mlrc/>
- Classroom Disruption:
 - http://www.d.umn.edu/vcaa/documents/ClassroomDisruption1_000.pdf
- Curriculum Integration Ideas:
 - https://sites.google.com/a/d.umn.edu/divcom_curric_integration/home/

Three Key Concepts



* Adapted from Andres Tapias, (2009) The Inclusion Paradox. Chicago: Hewitt Associates by Hammer (2011).

Intercultural Competence

- *Core competency **needed** for the 21st century*
- The **capability** to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior to cultural commonality & difference
 - Deep cultural self-awareness
 - Deep understanding of the experiences of people from difference cultural communities—in perceptions, values, beliefs, behavior and practices
 - Ability to adapt—or bridge—across cultural differences

D.I.E Model

- <http://www.intercultural.org/die.php>
- Describe
- Interpret
- Evaluate/Navigate

Intercultural Competence

- Those who are most effective interculturally:
 - Are secure in their beliefs and appreciate learning about the beliefs and perspectives of others
 - They don't have to convince you to believe what they believe in order to value, respect, work together, etc.

What else?

- Questions
- Concerns
- Additional needs for next time