Inclusive Pedagogy Online: Faculty Development and Effective Strategies

This research project aims to identify (1) effective professional development strategies for online faculty in diversity, equity, and inclusion and, after faculty participate in an intensive workshop about research-based approaches for inclusive online teaching, (2) what strategies resonate with them most immediately after the workshop and are reported as being most effective approximately one year into implementing them in their online courses. The research also assesses how these approaches are being applied in courses requiring difficult dialogues across disciplinary contexts.

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Use Design as a Starting Point

Key QM standards provide a starting point for thinking about equity and inclusion in the online classroom. These standards can guide faculty to initially design or update the design of an online course. (*QM standard language in bold.*)

- Equitable and inclusive course policies, **clearly stated**. (Standard 1.4)
- **Instructor introduction** encourages communication. (Standard 1.8)
- **Students introduce themselves to the class** and faculty respond warmly and directly to each student. (Standard 1.9)
- Transparent assessment design is used to **identify the relationship between the activity and the learning objective** and to **clearly set out evaluation criteria**. (Standards 2.4 and 3.3)
- Students are provided timely and actionable feedback emphasizing a growth mindset through **multiple opportunities to track their learning**. (Standard 3.5)
- The course promotes **interaction through active learning** and the instructor is visibly involved in and supporting that work. (Standards 5.2, 5.3, and 6.2).
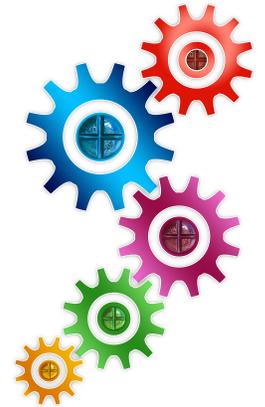
## Planned Changes vs. Implementation

In our study, the inclusive approaches that faculty reported that they planned to implement immediately after the workshop were not necessarily the same as the strategies that they found to be most effective one year later. For example, many faculty indicated that they wanted to include an inclusion statement in their course syllabus, but that was not rated the most effective approach in the follow-up survey.

Particularly during especially challenging times (e.g., COVID), faculty may understandably gravitate toward strategies that are easiest to apply (e.g., adding a syllabus statement). However, approaches that are more time-consuming, like implementing and managing flexible course policies, may have more impact on student success. Faculty developers should consider the time and support faculty may need to successfully implement research-based inclusive teaching strategies in their online courses.

(Emerging) Effective Strategies

While this research is ongoing, the inclusive teaching strategies that faculty have reported being most effective in their online teaching are:

1. Flexible course policies (e.g., for late work)
2. Syllabus statement about diversity and inclusion
3. Diversifying curricular materials (e.g., who is an "expert" voice in the class, who is represented in images in the course site, etc.)
4. Discussion facilitation using a cross-cultural dialogue framework
5. Transparent prompts (e.g., clarity in assignment details)
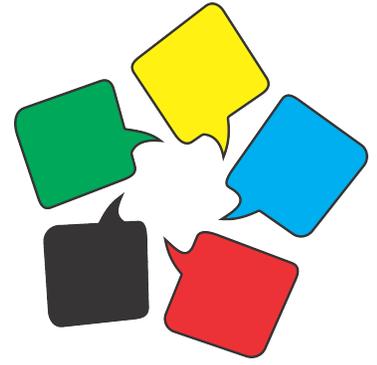
Expanding QM Course Design through Inclusive Facilitation

- Faculty teaching Difference, Power & Discrimination courses are expanding course design elements as teaching tools to humanize the classroom, build rapport with and among students, and engender trust to facilitate conversations about difficult topics such as racial discrimination.

- Course design elements can be modified to illustrate institutional discrimination in active learning assignments designed to simiualte experiences of inequality.

Resources for Further Exploration

- [Online Teaching Principles](#), OSU Ecampus
- Osei-Kofi, N., Boovy, B., & Furman, K. (Eds.). (2022). *Transformative approaches to social justice education: equity and access in the college classroom.* Routledge.
- Winkelmes, M., Bernacki, M., Butler, J., Zochowski, M., Golanics, J., & Harriss Weavilm, K. (2016). A teaching intervention that increases underserved college students' success. *Peer Review, 18*(1/2).