



Student Learning Outcomes in an Inclusive Environment

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Introduction

- Our society is becoming more global and diverse every day. It is also becoming more evident that an inclusive curriculum offers a better education than a traditional curriculum.
 - Inclusive curriculum – an approach to course and unit design and to teaching and learning practice which aims to improve access and successful participation in education of groups traditionally excluded from tertiary education through a focus on multiple world views (What we know).
 - Traditional curriculum – An approach to course and unit design that focuses on the instructor's own worldview and/or traditions without any focus on educational groups that are often marginalized in education (What I know).
- Benefits from an inclusive curriculum include (AAC&U, 2019)...
 - Improves opportunities for intensive dialogue
 - Improves opportunities for service learning
 - Increases academic validation (Students' feeling like their contributions are valued, encouraged, and supported). Increased academic validation leads to higher re-enrollment.
 - Improves students' understanding of their role and place in a global community.

Student Learning Outcomes in an Inclusive Environment

- SLOs may already be preexisting, being modified, or being created when the decision is made to incorporate an inclusive element into them.
- **All** outcomes can have inclusive elements. This is not restricted to courses that have an ES or HIPs designation. **All** programs should strive to have program outcomes and course outcomes that foster inclusive environments.
- No matter where you are at, you can always make an outcome inclusive, so don't worry.



Steps Towards Inclusive Outcomes

Just follow a few simple steps...



1. Understand the purpose of inclusive and multicultural education when designing or adjusting your outcomes.
2. Answer a four simple questions
3. Modify or create the outcome as an inclusive outcome
4. Develop an inclusive assessment for your outcome that takes the previous steps into account
5. Collect student feedback and change as needed

Step 1. Understanding

- Understand the purpose of inclusive and multicultural education when designing or adjusting the outcomes (National Association for Multicultural Education, 2019).
 - To respect and appreciate cultural diversity.
 - To promote the understanding of unique cultural and ethnic heritage.
 - To promote the development of culturally responsible and responsive curricula.
 - To facilitate acquisition of the attitudes, skills, and knowledge to function in various cultures.
 - To achieve social, political, economic, and educational equity.

Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else. – Margaret Mead

Step 2. Questions

- Answer a few short questions



- Are you providing opportunities for learning in order to advance diverse education, equity, and social justice? Yes or No
- Are students being challenged by the topics, discussions, or assignments? Yes or No
- Are some folks uncomfortable (in a good way)? Yes or No
- Does the outcome connect to larger goals at the program and the university levels (Strategic Plan Goal 5)? Yes or No

The answer to all of these questions should be, **“Yes!”**

Step 3. Inclusive Outcomes

- Modify or create an outcome
 - Understand your students to the best of your ability and try to develop ideas that can involve all of your students, especially those who may bring a unique perspective.
 - Incorporate opportunities for students to share their experiences with the class for a more enriching educational experience for everyone, including the faculty member.
 - Select outcomes that focus on higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation). This will help promote activities and assessments that will encourage students to think out loud and to think critically.

Step 3. Inclusive Outcomes continued

- Modify or create an outcome
 - In addition to content specific outcomes, include outcomes that increase awareness and understanding of different perspectives (have students summarize and explain).
 - Develop outcomes that use critical-thinking approaches, such as the ability to identify and question assumptions, evaluate an argument, or to pose counter-arguments.
 - Have students apply different lenses to analyze the same topic (historical, economical, or literary). Students should be able to understand why certain lenses are used.
 - Have students practice improving communication that is thoughtful and respectful to others.

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment

- Develop an assessment that takes the previous steps into account
 - Work feedback into your assessments that encourages student growth. Be supportive, don't admonish.
 - Have students be aware of their growth and to possibly keep a reflective journal with questions and attitude shifts that they may have had during the course. This can provide feedback on how to improve the course.
 - Assessments should specifically address the purpose (Step 1) of an inclusive education.

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- Culturally responsive pedagogy uses students' cultures in an asset-based approach instead of a deficit-based approach in order to make content relevant to them.
 - This increases skill acquisition, engagement, and learning outcomes.
 - Be attentive to how students may understand questions, tasks, and assignments differently.
 - Choose assessments that offer the greatest chance for different student groups to show their learning.

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- Don't fall for the “three musketeers” fallacy, which states one assessment for all and all students for one assessment.
- Try using different measures to allow students different ways to show their knowledge and skills. This can be done by offering a choice of paper, poster, project, etc.
- One measure does not promote equity among students.

The reality is that this takes a lot of work and a lot of time. Each assignment option must have a rubric and be a valid and equal measure.

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- The everyday expertise framework allows students to fold in cultural and life experiences into how they demonstrate their knowledge and skills with others.
- Learners will have different levels of knowledge and expertise based on their experiences and environments.
- Caution must be taken that assessments don't marginalize students and make them feel like their life experiences don't count because they don't align with traditional college assessments.

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- The culturally relevant component of assessment involves SLOs and assessment are mindful of student differences and employs methods that are appropriate for different student groups (student centered).
- “Students who experience validation from faculty and integrate academically and socially are more likely to persist and be successful.”
- Assessment can help with students’ sense of belonging.

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- Culturally responsive assessment is thought of as assessment that is mindful of student populations, using language that is appropriate when creating SLOs and planning assessments.
- Assessment originates from learning outcomes and must be aligned to foster outcomes.
- Outcomes language must serve as a guide for students to understand departmental and program expectations, as well as understand how their educational experiences will prepare them for their future (NILOA, 2016).

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- Course-level assessments that are culturally responsive (such as the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Intercultural Knowledge or portfolios) can lead to more appropriate and holistic assessments for all students.
- Be mindful of how culture affects student meaning-making processes, cognition, and demonstrations of learning.

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- You can theoretically make changes by disaggregating your data, but this has many challenges associated with it.
- By disaggregating data by certain groups, you can gain a better understanding of how each group is learning if done with care and caution.
 - Be careful of sample size, statistical analyses used, identification of meaningful groups, and confounding variables.
 - I actually do not recommend this unless you have a large sample size of at least 100 per group and use advanced statistical techniques such as SEM or HLM.

Montenegro & Janokowski, 2017

Step 4. Inclusive Assessment Continued

- Using assessment tools and approaches that only account for the majority can lead to groups outside of the majority to be at a significant disadvantage and can lead to a decrease in the quality of education and a disconnect between students and the institution.
- We must allow students to show their knowledge.
- “Students are highly varied in customs, identity, and understanding.”

Step 5. Reflection & Closing the Loop

- Collect student and colleague feedback and change as needed.
 - Ask students how they feel about assignments and how it made them think about things differently, if at all.
 - Reinforce open-mindedness and celebrate differences.
 - Provide resources to help students deal with emotional stresses that may occur (counseling center).
 - Change assessments and/or outcomes as necessary, this is a dynamic process.

Putting Theory to Practice

- Below are three example outcomes, what are some possible assessments we can use to assess them that would be inclusive?
 - Students will be able to summarize NAGPRA and identify and explain how different cultures may interpret (areas of potential effect when conducting) a cultural resource management project (archaeology).
 - Students will be able to apply public health theory to revise a (vaccination) policy that incorporates the beliefs, attitudes, and skills of multiple cultures (nursing).
 - Students will be able to develop a lesson plan that explains how (historical) lenses impact how the subject is taught and portrayed at the local, national, and global level (education).

Conclusion

- Include inclusive practices in your outcomes (or at least some of them).
- Make sure course level outcomes connect to program and university outcomes and goals.
- Provide assessments that encourage the principles of an inclusive education and align with your outcomes.
- Adjust outcomes and assessments as necessary
- Always ensure a positive environment and provide support to your students.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead

Questions & Discussion

- Any questions, thoughts, or comments?

Resources

- National Association for Multicultural Education:
https://www.nameorg.org/mission_goals_objectives.php
- Association of American Colleges & Universities: <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/diversity-teaching-and-learning-affirming-students-empowered>
- AAC&U VALUE Rubric on Intercultural Knowledge:
<https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/intercultural-knowledge>
- The Teaching Center at Washington University in St. Louis:
<https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/inclusive-teaching-learning/strategies-for-inclusive-teaching/>
- Equity and Assessment: Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment. Montenegro & Jankowski, 2017. NILOA.