

Inclusive Classrooms

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Tell us about a time when
you felt you were excluded
in an academic setting?

Did that feel inclusive?

Why or why not?

An Inclusive Classroom Means...

The instructor and students move away from assumptions that some students are lacking...



and move toward the idea that learning environments and course designs lacking structure are a problem.

An inclusive classroom is **structured** in:

Course Design

- Objectives
- Syllabus
- Opportunities for practice
- Assessments
- Projects and Assignments

Who's being left behind?

AND

Class Environment



Photo credit : Viji Sathy

Who's not being heard?

Take Home Message:

Unstructured learning environments can lead to unfairness, feelings of exclusion, and collisions of students' cultural background with the learning environment.

Adding structure to learning environments can mitigate unfairness, promote feelings of inclusion, and promote student success.

After today you should be able to:

- Describe techniques that add structure and equity to a classroom.
- Discuss strategies that promote inclusion in planning for challenging classroom discussions.
- Give examples of how students feel included/excluded in a classroom.

Introductions

Kelly Hogan;

she

Faculty in Biology at UNC-CH and
Assistant Dean of Instructional Innovation for
the College of Arts and Sciences

Viji Sathy (“Vidg-jee”);

she

Faculty in Psychology & Neuroscience and
Special Projects Assistant for the Senior
Associate Dean of Undergraduate
Education

Erin Malloy;

she

Faculty in Psychiatry and Social Medicine
Director of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry
and Director of Center for Faculty Excellence

Each table has a scenario. Brainstorm tips for the professor to bring structure and equity to the class.

(5 minutes)

The person whose hometown is the farthest away is the reporter for the group. The reporter will give us a few best tips in 60 seconds.

“Discussion Rules”

- We’re going to read each scenario and hear from each group for 60 seconds.
- Viji, Kelly and Erin will share some of their pre-brainstormed ideas and they will also keep time to ensure each scenario is heard.
- We’ll have some time at the end for more open discussions on these scenarios too so write down your ideas if you are not heard!

SCENARIO 1

- Liliana is excited to take a course on Latino/a history. However, she hates talking in front of the class, and it's a pretty big class. She's done the readings and loves the discussion in class, but she's afraid the professor thinks she isn't engaged enough because she never raises her hand to speak.
- Brandon is enjoying this course. He loves how the professor gives scenarios and asks the students to pose ideas. He enjoys participating a lot and appreciates how interactive the class is.

What tips do you have for this professor to bring more structure to the class that promotes equity for both students?



Practical tips:

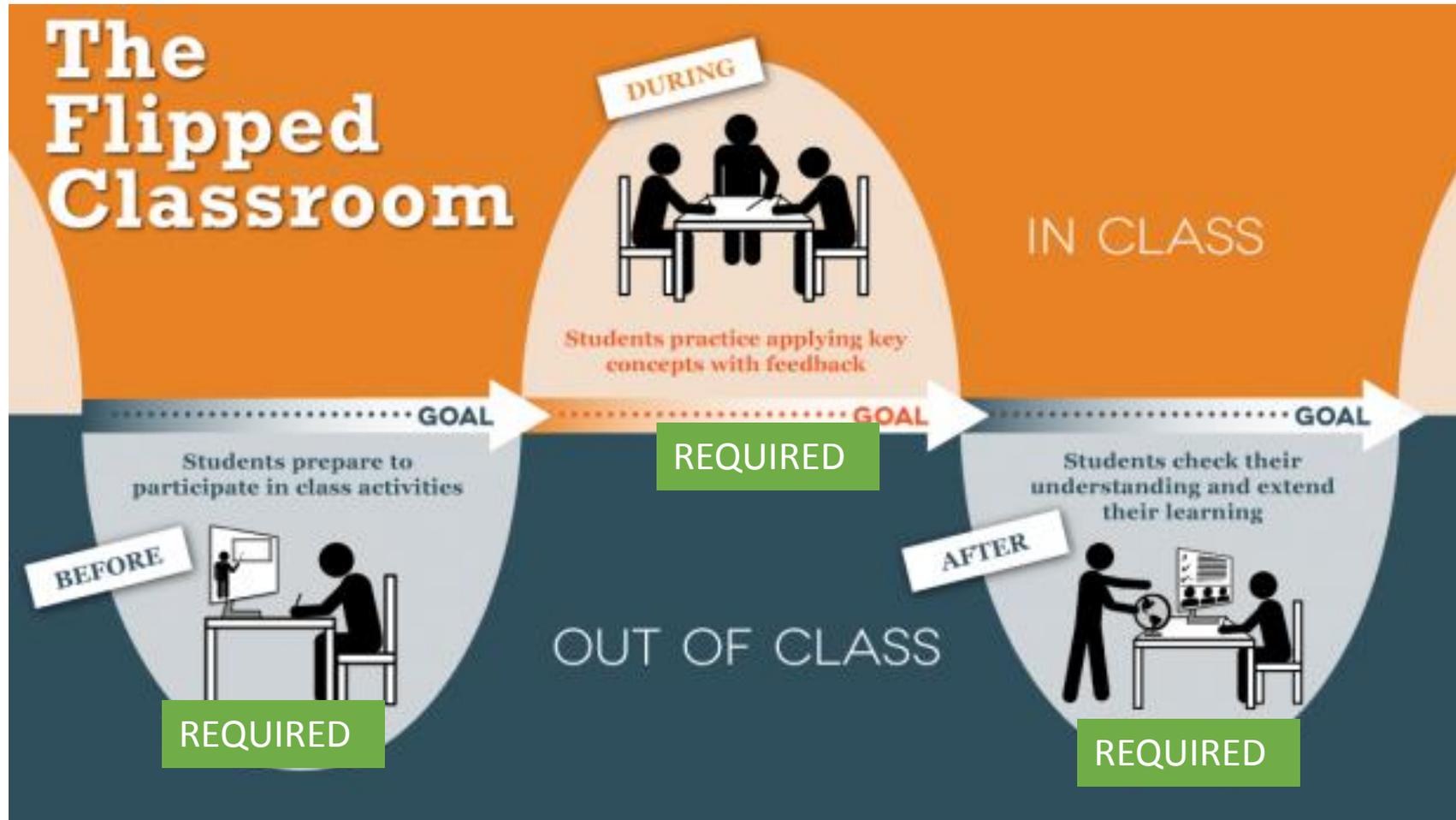
- Wait for multiple hands.
- Routinely use small groups rather than all large class discussion.
- Use random calling to reduce bias in who is called upon. (You might only want to do this after students have had time to work in groups.)
- Use technology or paper to collect answers so you can see all student ideas.
- Allow quiet THINK time in the think-pair-share. (Introverts need this time.)
- Be explicit about promoting access and equity for all students. Tell students, “you all belong here and I want to hear from all of you.”

SCENARIO 2

- An introductory biology course is taught by a professor that gives three exams and a final. The syllabus lists topics and the professor sticks to these topics each day with a clear lecture via Powerpoint slides. The professor is an engaging lecturer, that many students like. There is a textbook and an on-campus help center that the professor sends struggling students to.
- John is struggling student. He is from rural NC and neither of his parents attended college. He failed his first exam and it seems that everyone else knew what to study and how to study. High school was a breeze, but he doesn't even know where to begin to approach this class.

What tips do you have for this professor to bring more structure to the class that promotes equity for this student?

HIGH STRUCTURE COURSES:





Practical tips:

- Course structure with required (not optional) practice before, during, and after class.
- Syllabus that has clear dates/deadlines specific readings, goals, etc.
- Objectives presented for each lesson with less “telling” and more “asking” so students can learn what they know and don’t know.
- Assessments that align with objectives.
- Collect assessment evidence from every student, every class.
- Low stakes practice assessments to help the student practice high stakes assessments.
- Many lower stakes quizzes rather than 3 high stakes exams.
- Explicitly acknowledging the differences that exist with students and that with a growth mindset all students can achieve.

SCENARIO 3

In the news is recent controversy over legislation related to access to contraception and pregnancy termination. A professor is planning to teach a class that includes embryology and fetal development. The professor has noticed, in their efforts to promote an inclusive learning environment, that there are wide variations in the students in the class: some much more outspoken than others, some very conservative and others liberal. The professor predicts that discussion will be challenging around this topic.

What tips do you have for this professor to deal with this challenging topic? And to aid in managing discussion that may become contentious?



Practical tips:

- Include respectful communication in learning objectives for the course.
- Set up “ground rules” that define respectful communication in the class.
- Select preparation reading that will be read by all—consider length, density, relevance.
- Choose “grounding” in-class content such as a video, audio selection, in-class reading that can be used as an anchor for discussion.
- Set up discussion with acknowledgement that there will be differing views.
- Develop and implement a case to discuss.
- Give a writing prompt to allow students to organize their thoughts before discussion.
- Consider a "warm-up" writing prompt to take view opposite of student’s own.
- Assign viewpoints to pairs to encourage taking others’ perspective.
- Reinforce appropriate communication and behaviors.
- Model respectful communication.

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- Describe techniques that add structure and equity to a classroom.



- Discuss strategies that promote inclusion in planning for challenging classroom discussions.

- Give examples of how students feel included/excluded in a classroom.

Carolina Conversations Fall 2016



Student Prompt:

“I wish my professor knew that I feel included when ____.”

Predict what students said here.

[Pollev.com/ilovestats](https://pollev.com/ilovestats)



Photo credit: Viji Sathy

I feel included when...

- when I can express my thoughts/answers/opinions through things like poll everywhere or raising hands because **I am extremely shy in large groups**
- I'm allowed to ask questions to my classmates without **interrupting a lecture**
- I am **called upon with notice** so I feel prepared
- when I have **time to think before I respond** to a question or comment

I feel included when...

- my professor makes **eye contact** and asks direct questions to me
- my professor takes the time to **learn my name**
- my teacher is willing to **discuss disagreement in a welcoming and kind way**
- **professors seek input** from the class during lectures
- I have the **chance to interact with my professor outside of class.**
- **pronouns are asked** and respected
- they **assign reading** that were written by more than just white people
- **queer people are used in examples** in classroom discussion of history, culture, etc.

We also asked...

“I wish my professor knew that I DON'T feel included when ____.”



Photo credit: Viji Sathy

I DON'T feel included when...

- the classroom is solely lecture style with **no room for questions/sharing of ideas**
- all the professor does is talk. It is often the case where **the professor only talks** and goes through the lecture slides. This makes me feel like the 'learning' aspect is not important
- the class lectures are **regurgitating the textbook**
- I am in a **non-active classroom** setting

I DON'T feel included when...

- faculty let certain **students hijack or dominate class** discussions
- my grade depends on speaking out in class because this makes me feel like **I do not belong** or am somehow doing something wrong by being shy or introverted
- when an entire class goes by and **I haven't had the chance to speak** (even if it's just working with a neighbor)
- the professor says to talk to a neighbor but neighbor has other friends and I am left **isolated**
- they let students pick their own groups because **I usually don't know many people** in the class

I DON'T feel included when

- professors **assume** my gender identity or sexual orientation
- they **generalize** about Christians or Republicans/Conservatives
- they **assume** that my knowledge on a particular topic is equivalent to that of my neighbor and quickly move forward in the lecture
- a professor **assumes** I have the money for course materials
- I am **treated differently** as an international student

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- Projects and Assignments

AND

Class Environment



Reflection:

What is one thing you would do because of the time you've thought on this topic, please give one specific example?

We'll ask each person for a few words quickly.
"Whip around" activity.

After today you should be able to:

<http://bit.ly/InclusiveTeachingTips>

- ✓ Describe techniques that add structure and equity to a classroom.
- ✓ Discuss strategies that promote inclusion in planning for challenging classroom discussions.
- ✓ Give examples of how students feel included/excluded in a classroom.

Questions, Comments? Contact us at:

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