

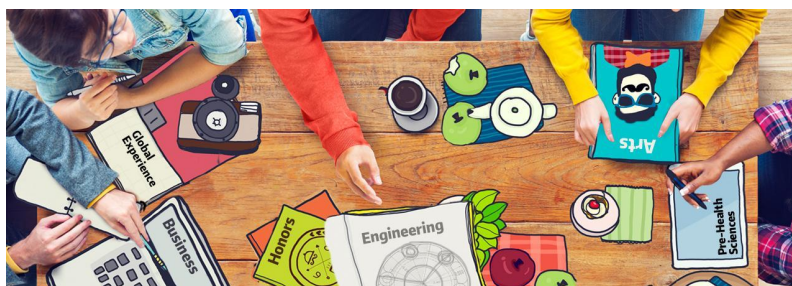
FOSTERING LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN THE CLASSROOM



What is the Value of a Student Learning Community?

Learn by Doing. Join a Living and Learning Village
 When you belong to a village, you live and learn in an inclusive, one-of-a-kind community and make lifelong friends in the process.

<https://housing.dasa.ncsu.edu/living-and-learning-villages/>



Professional vs Student Learning Community?

- What is your definition of a Learning Community?
- How does a professional learning community differ from a student learning community?



What might a Learning Community Look Like in Your Classroom?

- What are some ways you are currently fostering learning communities in or out of your classroom?
- An opportunity for students to engage/collaborate with each other?
- Team Projects? Make your discipline relevant to students. How does BIOLOGY “help” during epidemics, environmental disasters, feeding the growing world population?
- Brainstorm!

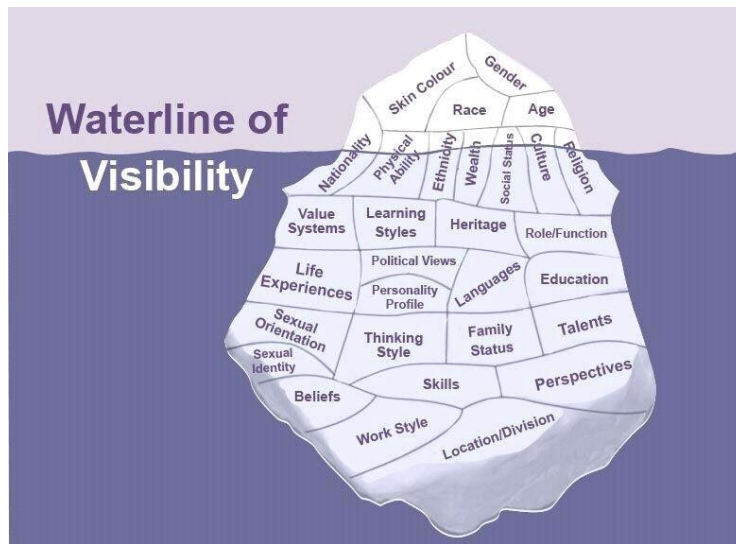
Group Work

- Some students claim to “hate” group work.
- Why? Can we design group work so students see the value? What IS the value?
- First project should be low stakes - ask for Reflection. If group did not do well, have them assess how they can improve.

How Can You Make Sure the Group Work is Inclusive?

- Establish classroom ground-rules that promote respectful, inclusive interactions.
- Define group member roles and rotate those roles each time.
- Move throughout the room to monitor group conversations and watch for uneven participation in a group. Mix up the groups for the next assignment.

Have Students Think About



Write 1 Thing That is Unique About You (Below the Water Line) and Share.

- Could be simple and not terribly revealing: I'm an avid knitter. Or: I love tennis.
- Could also be something that gives the group something to think about or discuss:
- I came from a family that thought "girls only went to college to find a husband"

How Can You Teach More Inclusively?

- Be reflective as you teach.
- How might an assignment affect a student from a different culture, gender, socio-economic status....?
- Include materials that represent various perspectives and include issues of diversity as part of the learning goals of your course. Use examples of people from under-represented cultures as leaders in your field.





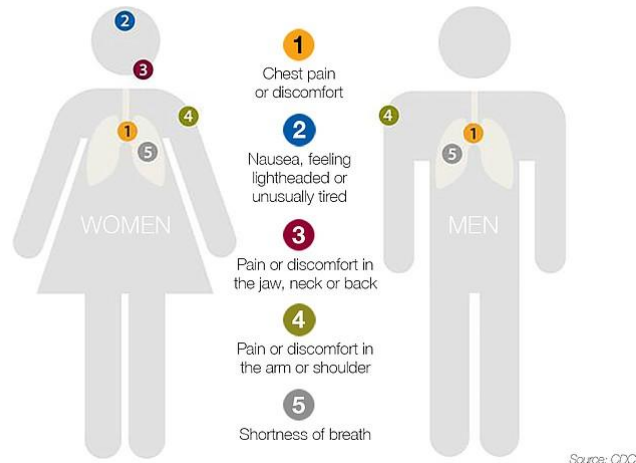
How Can You Teach More Inclusively? ...And why does Diversity Matter?

- Under-represented students leave STEM or don't go into STEM fields due to the academic climate.
- <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/01/180123102002.htm>

Diversity Matters

- For many years, heart attack studies were only done on men

5 Major Symptoms of a Heart Attack



How Do You Know if You Were Successful in Creating a Learning Community?

- Classroom Dynamics
- Student Surveys
 - Do you study with any students in this class for this or another class? If so, what class?
 - Did you schedule any classes for the next semester with students from this class? Or have you made plans to stay in touch with someone in this class after the semester is over?
- Having Specific Questions on End-of-Semester Student Evaluations

Did Your Learning Communities Translate into More Student Success?

- How do you measure that?
 - Retention in the Major or at the University
 - Decreased time to graduation
 - Higher GPAs
- How do you know that the Learning Community was a significant factor in promoting Student Success?

Assessment for Your Purposes

- What do you want to know? –Maxine Atkinson
- How can you answer that? Pre and post-assessments. Cohort analysis. Surveys.
- How can you publish that? Data presentation.
- Where? Teaching journals within your discipline. Teaching blogs. Chronicle of Higher Education.

Acknowledgements/Resources

- <http://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/teaching-methods/group-work-in-class/facilitating-in-class-group-work/>
- <file:///C:/Users/ldparks/Downloads/LearningCommunities.pdf>
- <https://www.ctl.uga.edu/ta-handbook/creating-an-inclusive-learning-environment>