



## Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom

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*Book Review:*

## **Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom**

By Kelly A. Hogan and Viji Sathy  
West Virginia University Press, 2022, 272 pages  
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*Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom* is an excellent resource for college faculty. Kelly Hogan and Viji Sathy have nearly twenty-five years of postsecondary teaching experience and are contributors to the Association of College and University Educators’ (ACUE) toolkit on inclusive teaching. This book draws from their work as practitioners and researchers and functions as a practical guide for seasoned and new faculty seeking useful insights and strategies for inclusive teaching techniques.

*Inclusive Teaching* is comprised of seven chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 establish the groundwork for the following five chapters. Chapter 1 frames inclusive teaching as a pedagogical practice and acknowledges that some students are left behind by many common teaching strategies. Hogan and Sathy point out that inclusive teaching is relevant to all disciplines and involves more than merely offering readings from diverse scholars. They argue that employing inclusive teaching requires teaching to be highly structured. In Chapter 2, they define “high-structure teaching” as teaching which requires students to perform work before, during, and after each class. This high-structure teaching requires student engagement from pre-class preparation through post-class homework and scaffolds this learning to ensure mastery. They provide helpful, practical examples of activities that can be used to give more structure to a course, such as low-stakes quizzes that hold students accountable for required pre-reading. Hogan and Sathy each discuss how high-structure teaching closed equity gaps in their classrooms. The sensible strategies offered in this chapter are practical, specific, and accessible.

Chapter 3 discusses ways to incorporate inclusive teaching into course design and a course syllabus. Hogan and Sathy provide helpful examples of student-centered syllabus language and

inclusive classroom policies that incorporate a growth mindset while establishing high expectations. Chapter 4 provides inclusive teaching approaches applicable to the start of a term, highlighting how some faculty create inclusion by sending a welcoming email to students prior to the start of a course. It also includes several easily applied recommendations on ways to “break the ice” on the first day while creating a safe learning environment by acknowledging preferred pronouns and using alternative strategies to collect personal student information while protecting privacy. Chapter 5 presents an extensive discussion of how to apply inclusive teaching to the classroom environment so that students will be more likely to actively participate and learn. The authors provide a series of questions that educators can use to determine how directions can be provided in more accessible ways or how class discussions can be facilitated using inclusive practices. Chapter 6 focuses on strategies beyond the classroom. This chapter is particularly rich, covering inclusive practices for office hours and course policies, homework assignments, grading, and exams. Chapter 7 suggests ways that self-reflection and student feedback can be used to refine inclusive teaching practices in order to strengthen teaching for future terms. As faculty themselves, Hogan and Sathy extend this conversation to recommendations for documenting inclusive teaching practices in faculty tenure portfolios.

*Inclusive Teaching* is a valuable resource for teaching faculty at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The practical guidance Hogan and Sathy provide is suitable for college teachers new to inclusive teaching and for experienced practitioners already sensitive to the vital need for inclusion in higher education. Those new to inclusive teaching will find this book to be an invaluable guide for organizing their courses to promote inclusion without becoming overwhelmed by theory. Those inspired to research more extensively will find references integrated into the book that will guide them toward an even deeper understanding of research-based strategies and theories related to course design, successful practices, and inclusive instruction.

*Inclusive Teaching* is further strengthened by its inclusion of student reactions and sample materials related to the strategies discussed in the texts. Their demonstration of inclusive language for syllabus design in Chapter 3 incorporates examples of both effective diversity statements and inclusive language. One sample inclusion statement denotes the instructor’s commitment to inclusivity but also provides avenues for recourse in the event that the instructor, for example, inadvertently schedules an exam during a significant religious holiday (pg. 58). Faculty who are in the early stages of course design will find Hogan and Sathy’s discussion of backward design in Chapter 3 useful as well. They recognize that inclusive teaching extends beyond the formal boundaries of the traditional classroom and into areas such as office hours and grading. In Chapter 6, they elaborate on how communication over email and through assignment feedback conveys high standards and facilitates a growth mindset—strategies that promote inclusion—through use of techniques such as watching out for language that might shame or discourage students.

As in the first two chapters, the strategies in Chapters 3 through 7 are accessible and supported by real-world applications. Their recommendations for helping students understand the function of office hours is particularly illuminating. For example, Sathy provides students with a graphic to help them understand how office hours can be used, a strategy that resulted in more students visiting her (p. 165). Given such examples, it is clear that the text was written with instructors in mind. Throughout the book, faculty are encouraged to reflect on questions that guide the reading and that promote self-awareness and improved practice. These questions allow faculty to interrogate their own thinking as well as the intent of their course design and its impact on students. If there is any criticism to be levied against the book, it is that some of the examples provided are fairly rudimentary, such as their recommendation to use table signs or seating charts

to learn students' names. However, the fact that recommendations like this are included may speak to the very need for them.

Aside from this minor drawback, this book is a valuable addition to the field and a complement to texts such as *Creating the Path to Success in the Classroom: Teaching to Close the Graduation Gap for Minority, First-Generation, and Academic Underprepared Students* by Kathleen F. Gabriel. While Gabriel's (2018) text is centered on the traditional instructional experience, Hogan and Sathy expand inclusive teaching to interactions occurring both inside and outside of typical instructional spaces. They provide many concrete, credible, and well-researched teaching strategies drawn from their own classroom experiences. Even faculty already well-versed in universal design for learning, trauma-informed teaching, and inclusive instruction will find it of value.

## References

- Gabriel, K. F. (2018). *Creating the path to success in the classroom: Teaching to close the graduation gap for minority, first-generation, and academic underprepared students*. Stylus.
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