

INCLUSIVE TEACHING RESOURCE

AN INTRODUCTION TO INCLUSIVE TEACHING.

This resource is part of the **Inclusive Teaching Toolkit** which is designed to assist faculty in understanding the concepts of inclusive teaching and incorporating these ideas into your classroom. This toolkit is part of the [GWSPH DEI Initiative](#) that is being developed to respond to a societal call for social justice by changing the way GWSPH works to integrate DEI into every sphere of our work. This initiative encompasses Academics, Research, Practice, and Operations. The **Inclusive Teaching Toolkit** is one of many aspects of the Academic branch of the initiative

What is inclusive teaching?

Inclusive teaching is a mindset accompanied by specific actions to design and teach your course in a way that “fosters talent in all students, but especially those who come from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education.”¹ It means “embracing student diversity in all forms – race, ethnicity, gender, disability, socioeconomic background, ideology, even personality traits like introversion – as an asset.”¹ In sum, you want to ask yourself who might be being left out by my teaching approach and what can I do to change that?

Why isn't it enough to embrace standard good teaching practices?

You will find that many of the suggestions for making your classroom more inclusive are ideas that you might consider standard good teaching practices. Conversely, you may feel that some of these suggestions are too much hand-holding and that students should be able to tackle these issues on their own. With an inclusive teaching mindset, adopting these suggestions helps make your course an equalizer instead of one that reinforces past inequities

Why is course structure important?

You will see that many of the suggestions offer more structure to your course. While all students may benefit from structure, some students will really benefit and need that structure to succeed. Too little structure may leave too many students behind. You can think of it as the difference between throwing a party and hoping people make friends versus throwing a party and including ice-breaker activities to help people meet each other. In the first scenario, extroverts are likely to meet others while introverts may not. In the second scenario, extroverts are not harmed by ice-breaker events but introverts may be much more successful meeting others with the additional structure in place.¹

What is a growth mindset v. a fixed mindset and how do these mindsets connect to inclusive teaching?

A growth mindset is a belief that intelligence can be developed. Individuals with a growth mindset believe they will gain knowledge if they work hard, work through struggles, use effective strategies, and ask for help. A fixed mindset is a belief that intelligence is fixed at birth. Students with a fixed mindset may view school as a threatening place where they need to prove themselves, think they would not have to put in more effort if they were smart, want to avoid “looking dumb,” and may shy away from challenges and disengage if they struggle.^{2,3} An inclusive teaching mindset recognizes that some students in your class may have a fixed mindset and incorporates strategies to promote a growth mindset in all students.

Do I need to worry about inclusive teaching if I do not teach about diversity issues in my course?

Yes! Part of inclusive teaching is being able to discuss sensitive issues such as bias and racism, but there is more to it than that. Inclusive teaching is not about your subject matter, it is about helping all students flourish regardless of the subject matter. In addition, sensitive issues can arise in all types of courses.

Sources:

1. Sathy, V. & Hogan, K. (2019 July). How to make your teaching more inclusive. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Available at https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-to-make-your-teaching-more-inclusive/?cid=gen_sign_in&cid2=gen_login_refresh
2. Mindset Scholars Network. Growth mindset. Available at <https://mindsetscholarsnetwork.org/learning-mindsets/growth-mindset/>
3. Romero, C. (2015, July). What we know about a growth mindset from scientific research. Mindset Scholars Network. Available at <http://mindsetscholarsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/What-We-Know-About-Growth-Mindset.pdf>