

Checklist for Decolonizing the Syllabus: Designing a Diverse and Inclusive Syllabus

Course Policies and Values

What values will shape your teaching in the course and what policies will guide you? What values do you intend to instill in this course? (Examples: Inquiry, community, discipline, deliberation, critical thinking, value of difference)

- Land Acknowledgement Statement:** Consider including a statement such as the following in your syllabus. What would be your purpose for including/not including it?: I/We would like to recognize and acknowledge that we are on the lands of the Muskogee Creek, Hitchiti, Oconee, and Miccosukee peoples. These lands were the traditional territory of these Native Peoples/Nations prior to their forced removal; these lands continue to carry the stories of native peoples and their struggles for survival and identity.
- Inclusiveness:** How can your syllabus help you create an inclusive atmosphere that welcomes all students? Some instructors include statements inviting participation from all students, honoring student diversity and differing points of view, or inviting requests for disability accommodations. Do you have an inclusiveness statement? Why or why not?
- People:** Who will likely be in your class? (Consider students of different genders, age, class, ability, religion, language, geographic region, sexual orientation, ability/disability, first generation college, other invisible status, etc.) How have you accommodated and/or created your syllabus, readings, and assignments that reflect that diversity?
- Pedagogy:** What are the pedagogical choices available to you in your discipline and how diverse are they? (Examples: circle the ones you use: lecture, team-based learning, problem-based learning, the Socratic method, simulations, role-play, debate, service learning. List others you might use that are not included on this list). We know that students have different learning styles. Does your class engage with multiple pedagogies and different formats/genres that students may demonstrate their understanding of course content?
- Content:** Are different perspectives and viewpoints offered in the course syllabus and assignments? Do you include research and writings from authors of diverse racial-ethnic backgrounds? Gender backgrounds? Sexual orientation? Gender and race-ethnicity will typically be easier to discover with a quick search.
- Climate:** How will differences of positionality, opinion, and thinking be handled in the classroom? How can you create safe and supporting spaces for both visible and invisible minorities?

- ❑ **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** To what extent do teaching activities meet the needs of diverse learners, diverse learning styles, diverse ways of processing information, diverse performative styles? (Examples: Experiential learning, collaborative group work, individual activities, peer teaching/editing/sharing, one-on-one instructor time.)
- ❑ **Fixed and flexible options:** Is divergent, creative thinking rewarded in your class, or do assessments require students to conform to one common norm of demonstrating knowledge?
- ❑ **Fair and clear assessment criteria:** Are rubrics, checklists, rationales for grading provided for each assignment?
- ❑ **Shared teaching:** Do students have shared responsibility in their (and their fellow students') learning? For example, do students lead discussion groups, reteach concepts, or otherwise contribute to the teaching?
- ❑ **Disability Accommodation and Inclusive Learning Statement:** Do you include hyperlinks to campus and other resources?
- ❑ **Diversity Statement:** Do you have one for your classes? We have yet to formulate a CLAS diversity statement that can be included in our syllabi uniformly.
- ❑ **Pronoun Policy:** Do you have students introduce themselves with their pronouns? Do you make it known that if you get a student's pronoun wrong, that they can correct you?
- ❑ **Stereotyping:** Does your syllabus, the language you use in it, or the language you use in your assignments rely on stereo typified ideas of race, class, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation groups? For example, do you have assignments that pair ideas of race-ethnicity, poverty, and gender? If so, how can you best revise those assignments?