

Faculty Conversations About Teaching

Creating Inclusive Spaces for Mason Students



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What I've Tried

Decolonize the syllabus – take a look at your list of *required* readings. Whose voices are represented in terms of identity (race, gender, class, religion, sexuality, disability, nationality, political status [i.e. disenfranchised, etc.]?)

Create assignments that connect academic subjects to self-exploration – I have experimented with several types of assignments. For example, asking for transcultural reflections that allow students to think about the past and/or other cultures in relationship to their own time and culture. **Also, an assignment on intersectionality.**

Define terms and sensitize students to discriminatory language, images, etc. – Help students to understand that vocabulary they use every day may be (unwittingly) offensive.

Ask students in the classroom to decide for themselves how they would like to be addressed (pronouns as well as racial, ethnic, religious or other group identity).

What I'm Exploring

Using open-access sources – All students must be able to access all sources, ideally with equitable ease.

I would like to explore teaching about being an ally. --How can we use inclusive teaching strategies to make sure that everyone feels empowered to make our classroom, our university, and our world a better place?

What does “inclusive spaces” mean to Mason students? – Beyond the literature and statistics produced by scholars, what are student experiences and needs at our university? How can faculty partner with other units at Mason in order to extend inclusiveness to the whole of the Mason student experience?

I Recommend...

Stearns Center Website:

<https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/teaching/creating-inclusive-classrooms>

