

Diversity & Inclusion

Syllabus Statements

The following resources are drawn from multiple U.S. institutions and can serve as examples of inclusive language for syllabus creation.

Brown University

When crafting a diversity statement, you might consider the following questions:

- What are your discipline's conventions and assumptions? How might students with varying backgrounds respond to them?
- What role does your respect for and engagement with diversity in the classroom play in your personal teaching philosophy?
- What positive learning outcomes can come from respecting difference in the classroom? How can you highlight these?
- What do you want your students to know about your expectations regarding creating and maintaining a classroom space where differences are respected and valued?
- Is your statement inclusive of different types of diversity, including, but not limited to: race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, religion, and disability?
- Which campus resources would you like to direct your students to for further support?
- What kind of classroom environment would your students like to see? How might you include them in the conversation about standards for classroom civility?

Sample Statement;

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Important note: Given the sensitive and challenging nature of the material discussed in class, it is imperative that there be an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom. I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention. If and when this occurs, there are several ways to alleviate some of the discomfort or hurt you may experience:

1. Discuss the situation privately with me. I am always open to listening to students' experiences, and want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
2. Discuss the situation with the class. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability for all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
3. Notify me of the issue through another source such as your academic advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue.

Link for more information; <https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/statements>