Four Strategies to Engage the Multicultural Classroom

Tuesday, April 10, 2012

Presented by:
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Mathew L. Ouellett, Associate Director of the Center for Teaching & Faculty Development, partners with faculty and academic administrators campus-wide on initiatives that support teaching excellence, respect, and inclusion; directs the Lilly Fellows Program; and is a lecturer in the Department of Student Development.

In her role as Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity and with research expertise in diversity and faculty professional development, Dr. Stanley is primarily responsible for (1) assessing and monitoring the efforts and progress in diversifying the faculty, staff, and student bodies, (2) assisting the President and Provost in holding units accountable for progress in achieving diversity and promoting a supportive climate for diversity, and (3) planning and implementing programs to ensure diversity and equity among students, faculty, and staff by working with Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Heads, and the leadership of the faculty, student, and staff governing bodies.

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Four Strategies to Engage the Multicultural Classroom

April 10, 2012

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Our presenters:

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Seminar Goals
1. Define “diversity” broadly
2. Learn a framework for multicultural course design
3. Apply strategies to sustain critical discussion and sustain engagement
4. Identify future professional development goals for multicultural teaching

Case Study: How would you respond?
A colleague casually mentions, “I don’t really have any diversity issues in my courses because all my students are white.”

Intersectional Approach to Social Identities and Diversity
Individual social identities are best understood as multiple, embedded in systemic dynamics, and, by nature, interlocking.
Case Study: How would you respond?

A colleague asks, “What makes a course multicultural?”

Who are you?

Who are students?

Campus Climate and Culture
List one example, from any one of the 4 quadrants, of a multicultural learning outcome goal for a course you teach.

3 Multicultural course design questions

1. What do you most want students to learn (content knowledge), to be able to do (skills), and to value (habits of the mind) at the end of your multicultural course?

2. What learning activities are most appropriate for engaging students in mastering these multicultural goals?
3 Multicultural course design questions

3. How are the strategies for student assessment, feedback, and evaluation aligned with your central multicultural learning goals?

Expecting the unexpected

Do you have a pedagogical ‘parachute’ (or two) that you can use when you just don’t know what is the right thing to do/say next?

Expecting the unexpected

Adopt proactive and reactive strategies useful in facilitating critical dialogues
Sustaining critical discussion

- Set climate for learning
- Scaffold risk levels
- Link the personal with the systemic

Slow down, get students to slow down

“Are there other perspectives on this topic?”

Slow down, get students to slow down

“Can you tell me more? How did you come to believe this to be true?”
Slow down, get students to slow down

Use dyad discussions: “What do you think just happened?”

Slow down, get students to slow down

Use brief writing prompts: “How do you feel in this moment?”

Slow down, get students to slow down

Use group discussions: “What do we need from each other to continue?”
Slow down, get students to slow down

“I’m going to think about what just happened/ got said and we’ll come back to this first thing in our next class.”

Next Steps

What is one concrete strategy you’ll implement after this seminar?

Next Steps

What is a goal you might pursue for your multicultural development in the future?
Open questions

“I sometimes hear my colleagues ask…”

We’d like to know what you think!

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