



ACUE

Student Success
Through Exceptional
Teaching

Create an Inclusive Syllabus

Narrator [00:00:09] Your syllabus, like a website's homepage, is your students' first impression of the course and of you. Design with equity in mind. Include a diversity statement, clearly communicating that all students have value and bring unique perspectives worthy of consideration. Signal your intention to accommodate students' varied learning needs and identities and to eliminate any barriers to success with an accessibility statement and course policies that demonstrate respect for who your students are and how they learn. Ensure your students know how to inform you about absences for religious holidays and that your grading system builds in opportunities for failure, learning, and growth. Be sure your tone is warm and inviting and student-friendly. Define terms like the "Bursar's Office" and "matriculation" that may not yet be in a student's vocabulary. These actions speak volumes. Students feel welcome and valued. Plus, they view you as an ally and supporter who is ready to help them succeed.

Marlo Goldstein Hode, PhD; Senior Manager, Strategic Diversity Initiatives; University of Missouri—St. Louis [00:01:12] So one of the important things you want to include in your syllabus to communicate to students that diversity and inclusion is important to their education and specifically to your discipline would be a diversity statement. So your diversity statement is very clear in making the point to students that it's important not only to have a diversity of experiences and voices within the classroom, but also within the curriculum. And this is important for their education and enhances, and enhances everybody's ability to learn. So the diversity statement is very important. And then, of course, you want to have inclusive policies. So you want to make sure that you have some policies that address different religious holidays or celebrations. You want to go beyond the ADA policy for accommodations and recognize that people might need accommodations for other reasons besides disability. For example, if you have a friend or you yourself have health problems, you might also need some accommodations. So sort of just addressing the different things. You might also address resources that are available, for example, students who might be experiencing food scarcity. Or you might, definitely all students, all instructors should make the whatever counseling services are available, should highlight those and normalize the experience of seeking out counseling and addressing, being in school is stressful, particularly if you have, you know, other responsibilities and other things going on, which everybody does. So putting all of those things in your syllabus, talking about them in the first day, having your own pronouns in your syllabus so students don't make any assumptions about what your, what your gender identity is or, you know, that they shouldn't make any assumptions about anybody else's. So putting all that information in your syllabus upfront communicates to students that you see them, you recognize that they have different needs and might need different supports, and that you're aware and you're there.