

The Role of Culture & Equity in the Classroom: Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment

EDNU 9984

2 Semester Credits/Units

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Syllabus

Course Overview

Welcome to **Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment**. This class was created as part of a three-course series entitled **The Role of Culture & Equity in the Classroom**. The three courses in this series are:

- **The Role of Culture & Equity in the Classroom - Yours, Mine, and Ours**
- **The Role of Culture & Equity in the Classroom - Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment**
- **The Role Culture & Equity in the Classroom- Creating Culturally Responsive Lesson Plans**

This series is designed to help teachers develop the tools needed to create a Culturally Responsive Environment for all students. When a student feels different or left out in his or her classroom, it significantly reduces that student's ability and desire to learn. The content learned in this series, **The Role of Culture & Equity in the Classroom**, will teach you how to connect with your students and create an inclusive classroom environment that will open the door to learning for every child you work with.

Although **Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment**, is **NOT** a prerequisite for the other two courses, it does provide a foundation for them. The book titled, *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You, Second Edition*, by Bonnie M. Davis, will be used for all three classes. This book is available for purchase at www.Amazon.com

Course Objectives

In this course participants will have an opportunity to:

1. Understand the term Culturally Responsive
2. Discover what a culturally inclusive/culturally responsive environment looks like in the classroom
3. Create a culturally inclusive/culturally responsive classroom environment
4. Learn how to build and maintain relationships with students & families from all cultures.

Course Relation to Professional Standards

This course aligns to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

TEACHERS ARE COMMITTED TO STUDENTS AND THEIR LEARNING.

- a) Teachers Recognize Individual Differences in Their Students and Adjust Their Practice Accordingly
- b) Teachers treat students equitably

TEACHERS THINK SYSTEMATICALLY ABOUT THEIR PRACTICE AND LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE.

- a) Teachers Make Difficult Choices That Test Their Professional Judgment
- b) Teachers Use Feedback and Research to Improve Their Practice and Positively Impact Student Learning

This course aligns with National Student Standards

NL-Eng-K12.1 READING FOR PERSPECTIVE

- a) Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, themselves, and of the cultures of the US and the world...

NL-ENG – K-12.9 MULTICULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

- a) Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions and social roles.

How to Submit Coursework

Preparation: Prepare assignments in either Word or PDF formatting. Mac users of Page can save their work as a Word file. Make sure you place your full name, course number and assignment number at the top of each page. **Place assignments in ONE document for each section before submitting.**

Document titles: Title/number each of your assignments to correspond with the syllabus

Place the completed document in the assignment submission area found on the course page. You will receive feedback from your instructor, but don't wait for it to continue with your coursework.

Each completed assignment in this course is submitted to the instructor for review. You will receive feedback from your instructor within 2-5days indicating successful completion of the assignment or the need for revision. Assignment grades will be averaged for the final course grade.

Grading rubrics for written projects and for presentation projects are found in this document.

Course Assignments

Section A

A1. Before you begin this class

Prior to reading the material for this class or completing assignments, describe what you think a culturally responsive/inclusive classroom environment looks like and includes.

A2. Take notes on all reading assignments

Read and take notes on the following chapters in the book, *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You* by Bonnie M. Davis. Please DO NOT submit the answers to the questions located within the chapters assigned. These are for your review and reflection only.

- Chapter 7 pgs. 75-87
- Chapter 8 pgs. 89-94
- Chapter 9 pgs. 95-110
- Chapter 10 pgs. 111-122
- Chapter 11 pgs. 123-133

In addition, **read and take notes** on sections 1-20, from the article *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education* at <http://www.tolerance.org/critical-practices>, (if you have taken notes on this article from another class in this series, you may use those notes for this assignment)

Also **read and take notes** on, *Start Where Your Students Are*, by Robyn Jackson, at <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb10/vol67/num05/Start-Where-Your-Students-Are.aspx>

A Needed Resource

Register at www.tolerance.org—this is a great website for articles, lessons, and culturally responsive activity ideas.

A3. Understand the term Culturally Responsive

- a. Online find the term Culturally Responsive Teaching or Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. **Write the definition in your own words.**
- b. **Find and read** an article discussing Culturally Responsive Teaching or Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.
- c. **Write a one page summary** of the article. Include the title, author and website link. Within the summary answer the following questions:
 - i. What were the main points of this article?
 - ii. What was one ah-ha for you?
 - iii. How might you use the information learned in your classroom?

A4. What does Culturally Responsive Teaching/Pedagogy look like in the classroom?

- a. **Review** chapters 7-11 in your text *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You*, the article, *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education*, sections 1-20, and *Start Where Your Students Are*, by Robyn Jackson.
 - i. **Write a 3 page paper** stating points you found in these readings related to Culturally Responsive Teaching/Pedagogy. Explain how these specific pieces of information will assist you in creating a classroom that is welcoming and inclusive for ALL student

Section B

B1. Interview a Culturally Responsive Teacher

- a. Identify a teacher who works well with a diverse group of students. If your student population is not racially diverse, you will still have students who are diverse intellectually, economically, by gender, handicapped/non-handicapped, etc.
- b. **Interview the teacher**, asking the following questions:
 - I. Identify the diverse population of students in your classroom.
 - II. How do you create an environment in your classroom where every child feels welcome?
 - III. How do you include families in your classroom and make them feel welcome?
- c. **Write a one-page summary of your interview.**

B2. Take a Walk, Look, and See

- a. **Walk around your school building.** Observe the following:
 - i. Does the Main office reflect a variety of cultures? Do you believe the setting makes all people, parents & students, feel welcomed and honored?
 - ii. Walk the hallways. What appears on the walls? Do the posters and displays reflect the races & cultures of the student population of your building?
 - iii. Look at the library. What books are on display? Are the books available representative of the students' races & cultures in your building?
 - iv. Look at your own classroom. Do the bulletin boards, seating arrangements, books and materials reflect the various races & cultures of your students?
- b. **Write a one-page reflection of your walk.** Do you believe your building environment reflects the various races and cultures of students & families in your building? **If yes**, describe the setting and how you believe it promotes a culturally responsive/inclusive environment. **If no**, how might you work to change the look of your building to make it a more welcoming and culturally responsive/inclusive for students and families?

B3. Creating Culturally Responsive Bulletin Boards

- a. Create 2 bulletin boards that reflect individual races/cultures, understanding difference, the various cultures represented in your classroom, anti-bullying, parent involvement, etc. (be creative).
- b. Take pictures of the bulletin boards or create a pictorial representation of what each bulletin board would look like.
- c. Number the bulletin boards
- d. Write 2-3 paragraphs for each bulletin board. Explain each bulletin board and the rationale for developing it.
- e. Scan and upload your pictures and submit to the B3 Assignment.

B4. Creating Your Own Culturally Inclusive Classroom (Putting it all together)

- a. **Draw the layout of your classroom.** Include the following:
 - i. 4 walls.
 - ii. In words, describe **or** show what would appear on each wall.
 - iii. Location of desks, both students and teacher
 - iv. Specify the use of your space, example: reading area, art area, book center, etc.
- b. **Write a one-page description your classroom.** Explain how the physical layout and wall displays create a culturally responsive/inclusive classroom environment for students and parents.

B5. Write a letter to your co-workers encouraging them to create a culturally responsive/inclusive classroom. Describe what steps they would need to take to create this type of classroom.

End of Course

Course Assessment Rubric

EXCELLENT Meets or Exceeds Course Objectives: A to A-	ACCEPTABLE Majority of Work Meets Course Objectives; B+ to B-	NOT ACCEPTABLE Needs Considerable Improvement: Resubmit Work Suggested: C or below
All work is very well organized.	Most work is generally well organized.	Work shows little or no organization.
Answers are well thought out and demonstrates reflection on the material.	Answers are complete and demonstrate some reflection on the material.	Answers are brief and do not demonstrate any reflection on the material.
Assignment use specific examples or references from multiple sources.	Assignment use specific examples or references from just a few sources.	Assignment do not use specific examples or references from the readings.
All assignment are completed using complete sentences.	The majority of the assignments are completed using complete sentences.	Assignments are not completed in complete sentences.
Work is free of spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has few spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.