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What is a Summer Institute on Scientific Teaching?

- One-week intensive workshop that trains college instructors in evidence-based teaching
- Models the scientific teaching principles promoted
- Led by trained facilitators and leaders
- Provides opportunities for you to learn educational theory AND immediately apply it to the development of your own teaching materials

NORTHEAST REGIONAL INSTITUTE
University of Connecticut
Program Goal:

to inspire and empower participants to transform undergraduate learning and teaching through evidence-based teaching practices.

What is Scientific Teaching?

• Applies the spirit and rigor of science to teaching methods
• Is informed by evidence-based research
• Has positive, measurable (scientific) results in students’ ability to succeed in today’s classrooms
Welcome to the Scientific Teaching in Practice Webinar Series!
A Focus on Underrepresented Students: 
*Practical Strategies for Inclusive Teaching and Mentoring*

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Let’s find out who is on the webinar
Which type of institution do you work at?

(A) Community college or technical college
(B) Liberal arts college
(C) Four-year regional comprehensive institution
(D) Four-year public research-intensive university
(E) Four-year private university
(F) Another type of institution
Do you work at a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI, HSI, Tribal) or HBCU?

(A) Yes
(B) No
Scenario #1

It is the third week of the semester. Sasha, a first-year student, appears upset as she is leaving your class, and you stop to ask if she is okay.

Sasha says that she finds the school to be less friendly than she expected based on her admissions experience.

In class on Monday, one student referenced “low-income parents who don’t care” in a way that made Sasha feel uncomfortable with both you as the professor and her classmates, as no one contradicted the statement. You reflect back on the moment; you remember thinking, at the time, the speaker was making a valid point.

In class today, she got back her first quiz. Sasha says: “You gave me a 6/10. My parents are working long hours. I’m the first in my family to go to college. I’m doubting my decision to come here.”
Which aspect of the scenario strikes you the most?

(A) Sasha’s admissions experience vs. her current reality.
(B) Sasha’s feeling of isolation among her peers.
(C) How you and Sasha experienced Monday’s class differently.
(D) Sasha’s first quiz and what went wrong.
(E) How Sasha’s parents’ stressors may affect Sasha.
Changing Demographics

“New Majority” on college campuses today

- To include first-generation, low-income, community college transfer, historically underrepresented racial-minority students, among others

37% of college students are 25+
46%: first-generation college

Hope Center for College, Community and Justice
→ national survey on food insecurity

“That’s more than one third of all students sitting in our college classrooms.”

64% of college students work, and 40% of them work full time.

https://medium.com/@charlottelouisewest/its-time-to-stop-accepting-that-food-insecurity-is-a-normal-part-of-college-521fb7e7813f
However...institutions vary widely in demographic profile and who is centered.

Example: Low-income and first-generation college students
What about faculty + peer interactions?
One challenge: (In)visibility

Some underrepresented students are less visible to one another (and to fac/staff)
We do not know how to reach out if we do not want to assume someone’s identity


What about your campus?

Do you know your campus data?
• Who is on your campus and in your classes?
• Who may be less visible to you?

What could you embed into practice?
• Syllabus statements re: campus resources
• Embed academic resources into core courses
• Invest in the training of peer mentors
• Rename office hours as “student hours” and integrate into the experiences of all students
Was any of this new to you?

(A) I learned something new
(B) Not new to me - but my colleagues need to learn this
(C) My colleagues and I are using these strategies
Scenario #2

From the very first class meeting of your upper-level seminar, you notice that Mark, an African American man, is an eager participant. So eager in fact that he jumps in almost every other turn.

Several times when you tried to explain a concept in class, he actually talked over you. Subtle turning of your body toward another part of the room does not work. You notice other students in the class are growing weary.

Mark is the only African American student in the seminar.
What is going on?

*Please Share!*

1) What is the problem, as you see it?
2) What could help Mark, this class, and professor?
Underrepresented as Compositional (#s)

Often calculated as relative to proportion in population overall and may be conveyed using an infographic.
Minoritized status (instead of minority)

“Persons are not born into a minority status nor are they minoritized in every social context (e.g., their families, racially homogeneous friendship groups, or places of worship).

Instead, they are rendered minorities in particular situations and institutional environments that sustain an overrepresentation of Whiteness” (Harper, 2012, p. 9).


See also: Benitez, Jr., M. (2010). Resituating culture center within a social justice framework: Is 97 there room for examining whiteness? In L.D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture centers in higher education: Perspective on identity; theory; and practice* (pp. 119-134). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publications.
Solo status and hypervisibility

Solo students may feel they are performing for their entire racial or gender group

Instructors may be more apt to notice the participation of “solo” students

May be hypervisible

Strategies for Mark’s Class

What could have happened before this point?  What could happen now?
Strategies for Mark’s Class

What could have happened before this point? What could happen now?

Community commitments
Explain participation norms
Connect to each student (even if in small groups)
Reflect on who will be “solo”
Strategies for Mark’s Class

What could have happened before this point?

- Community commitments
- Explain participation norms
- Connect to each student (even if in small groups)
- Reflect on who will be “solo”

What could happen now?

- Connect with Mark individually
- Press “reset” – start with a new way to assign roles (spokesperson, notetaker), to reassure everyone will get to be a spokesperson
- Help students to connect to each other
Which of these strategies do you currently use?

(A) Classroom commitments to build community  
(B) Explain participation norms; have students set goals  
(C) Meet with students individually/in groups early on  
(D) Reflect on “solo” students; how I can support them
Shifting gears:
Reflecting on Sasha and Mark
Students ask...

**FACTORS**

Capacity
- Self-efficacy, Performance

Interest
- Relevance, Feasibility

Belongingness
- Identity, Recognition

**QUESTIONS**

“Can I do this work? Am I capable?”

“Do I want to do this? Is it possible?”

“Is this my community...Do I belong?”

Packard (2015); Packard & Babineau (2009); Carlone & Johnson (2007)
Inclusive Pedagogy and Identity

“Even though some of us might wish to conceptualize our classrooms as culturally neutral or might choose to ignore the cultural dimensions, students cannot check their sociocultural identities at the door...Therefore, it is important that the pedagogical strategies we employ in the classroom reflect an understanding of social identity development so that we can anticipate the tensions that might occur in the classroom and be proactive about them” (Ambrose et al., 2010, p. 169-170).
Three Practical Strategies

1. Recognize your students’ progress and their identities as assets
2. Navigate your spaces to map your campus assets and gaps
3. Talk to your colleagues
#1. Inclusive teaching and mentoring requires recognition

Lack of recognition

After disclosing her Section 8 housing status in order to navigate an administrative matter, her faculty advisor’s attitude was unsupportive when she wanted to take on a thesis.

He said, “People in your situation, you know, I mean, do you really want to take on this work?” [I felt] as if “the advisor is like, this oppressor on campus.”

Recognition

“She encouraged me to become a TA the next semester. I couldn’t believe it.”

“He talked to me after class about what I had said.”

“When the 4th professor stopped to ask me what I was doing next, I thought: maybe I should be doing something.”

Recognize larger groups

• Frequently-named Professors: more apt to embed messages in class
• Rarely-named Professors: more apt to rely on one-one meetings

⇒ embed messages in class
⇒ rotate students through group hours

Prepare TAs and Peer Mentors to do the same

#2. Navigate your spaces to map your assets (and gaps)


#3. Talk to your colleagues

“Let’s look at our student data together. I’m troubled by what I see.”

“Did you hear what Corey is doing in class? Could a few of us try some of the same things?”


What might you try?

(A) Stop a student or email to notice their progress
(B) Share messages in class or group settings
(C) Revisit how you prepare TAs, peer mentors, and groups
(D) Navigate your spaces to analyze images and resources
(E) Learn more about my campus data
Closing Note and Survey Link

Post-Webinar Survey Link

https://yalesurvey.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5oHTtz2kmhmzPTf

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