

Example of an Inclusion Statement for a STEM Syllabus

From *Cori Fata-Hartley's Introductory Biology Course*

Throughout this course, we will work together to create an inclusive learning environment in which all individuals are included, valued, and respected. Members of the teaching staff and the student population come from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds and hold diverse beliefs. We will encourage the exploration of and engagement in both divergent scientific approaches and diverse learning methods. Diversity is an essential component of the scientific research. Dr. Scott Miller, professor of political science sums up the value of diversity as follows:

"The problems we face in the world are very complicated. Any one of us can get stuck. If we're in an organization where everyone thinks in the same way, everyone will get stuck in the same place. But if we have people with diverse tools, they'll get stuck in different places. One person can do their best, and then someone else can come in and improve on it. ...Breakthroughs in science increasingly come from teams of bright, diverse people."

To create an environment that appeals to a variety of learners, the scientific material in this course will be presented in a variety of formats. A range of teaching methods shown through educational research to be effective for student learning will be used including various active and group learning methods. These methods will not necessarily appeal to all learners. If you find you are struggling with the material, you are encouraged to discuss your difficulties with Dr. Fata-Hartley.



Another significant component of an inclusive learning environment includes classroom conduct. The class meetings will not be conducted as a traditional lecture wherein the instructor talks for the entire time and students take notes. Rather, mini-lectures from Dr. Fata-Hartley will be punctuated with interactive, problem solving sessions. It is essential that students are respectful of other students as well as the teaching staff in this type of learning environment. Students are expected to refrain from behaviors that can disrupt other students and the teaching staff.

- Class meetings begin promptly at 10:20 a.m. You should be seated and ready to begin class.
- Class meetings end at 11:40 a.m. Refrain from leaving early or noisily packing up before 11:40 am.
- Do not use computers or other electronic devices for non-class activities. Phones should be turned off. Students engaged in Facebook, Twitter, texting, emailing, etc., will be asked to leave.
- Do not talk when the teaching team or other students are presenting material or asking/answering questions.
- Respect scientific opinions and input of other students. Ideas, questions, or responses from your peers should never be met with disapproving or mocking gestures or comments.
- Respect the teaching team. Pay attention and participate. Full participation by all creates a more inclusive learning environment and improves learning.

In return, the teaching team will be respectful of the BS161 students.

- Class meetings will begin and end on time.
- The teaching team will respect the work and input of students. We will not demean or degrade students.
- The teaching team will be prepared and organized for class meetings.
- The instructor will follow the syllabus. If any changes are necessitated, students will be given advance warning.
- The instructor will be responsible for maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment.