

Voices in the Classroom

Strategies for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Students

- ✓ Don't assume all your students are straight.
- ✓ Don't always use straight lifestyle examples in class.
- ✓ Confront homophobia in your classroom interactions.
- ✓ Avoid humor at our expense.
- ✓ Ask us about our private lives to the same extent that you ask straight people.

Strategies for Students with Strong Religious Beliefs

- ✓ Realize as a teacher that the way you see your students is conditioned by your religious faith.
- ✓ Realize that our faith stance and our academic perspective do coexist harmoniously.

Strategies for Women

- ✓ Use non-gender-specific language.
- ✓ If material is available, use women's research in your course.
- ✓ Offer support group sessions if some women feel alienated in class.
- ✓ Use last names only on lab reports to avoid gender bias in grading.
- ✓ Have a safe suggestion box for students to critique your gender-related teaching style.

Strategies for International Students

- ✓ Write key words and concepts on overheads or chalkboard to support a spoken lecture.
- ✓ Allow extra time on exams for students who speak English as a second language.
- ✓ Remember that insider jokes and explanatory stories only make sense to insiders.
- ✓ Offer alternative ways to gain class participation credit.
- ✓ Encourage foreign students to bring a knowledgeable friend to office hour appointments.

Strategies for Students of Color

- ✓ Call on us to speak in class; assume our perspective is valuable.
- ✓ Don't ask us to speak for our entire "race."
- ✓ Don't think we are experts on issues of race and racism.
- ✓ Don't assume that we are academically and economically disadvantaged.
- ✓ Expect us to be good students.

Strategies for Students with Disabilities

- ✓ Hold me to the same academic standards as my peers while making reasonable accommodations for my disabling condition.
- ✓ Include a syllabus statement that encourages me to discuss accommodation requests with you during office hours early in the semester.
- ✓ Maintain the confidentiality of my disability status.
- ✓ Ask me about teaching strategies that may help me learn in your course.
- ✓ Remember that I am a student who also happens to be disabled, not a disabled student. For example, I may use a wheelchair to get around campus but I am not wheelchair bound.
- ✓ Know that you represent the university in its legal responsibility to provide equal access to education.

Suggestions collected from Cornell students and compiled by the Multicultural Classroom Project.