Inclusive Classroom
Self-Assessment for University Educators

Name:

Today's diverse university community requires much more from educators. It requires that they acknowledge and accept students with different learning needs and learning styles, reflect diversity in the curriculum and course materials, be more aware of classroom and campus dynamics, and pay more attention to the learning experiences of students from diverse communities, backgrounds, and identities. The goal is to create an inclusive classroom and campus community that supports the success of all students by creating learning environments that sustain and support equitable educational outcomes for all students.

This self-assessment allows educators to reflect on their behaviours within the classroom and school community to help them identify what more they could do to create inclusive classrooms. It uses the work of www.edchange.org and the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard University, which uses principles from various approaches for thinking about diversity in educational institutions including resiliency theory, diversity pedagogy theory, funds of knowledge theory, and cultural proficiency. The self-assessment also uses some of ideas and concepts of Jack Nigro, Superintendent with the Halton Catholic District School Board.

The actions and behaviours included on the self-assessment are meant to be suggestions, are not a complete list of all possible actions, and do not guarantee the creation of an inclusive classroom. Educators should engage in formal and informal professional development to develop a range of pedagogical skills that best serve the needs of all their students.

The Inclusive Classroom Self-Assessment for University Educators is designed to give educators an opportunity to reflect on their day-to-day practices against important actions and competencies needed to support equitable and inclusive learning environments for students from diverse communities, backgrounds, and identities.

Completing the self-assessment:

Consider each of the statements and reflect on your day-to-day actions and behaviours in the classroom and on campus. Indicate how frequently you engage in or consider each. Circle the number that most accurately reflects your day-to-day classroom behaviours. Total your score for each section and calculate your total score on the final page.

Before you respond, take the time to think about examples of situations where you have (or could have) demonstrated the behaviour. Taking the time to reflect on each statement and responding honestly is key to this self-assessment - otherwise the tool will have little value in your development as an inclusive educator.

Inclusion Competency 1: Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness

Inclusive educators know that their teaching philosophies and practices are driven at least in part by their belief systems. As such, they are willing to engage in self-reflection in order to increase their self-awareness and to challenge their belief systems.

Harvard's Implicit Association Test offers an online tool to help you explore your biases. Access it at: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html

Inclusion Competency 2: Create an Inclusive Curriculum

Inclusive university educators study beyond what they were taught in university to understand the histories and contributions of various groups to world and Canadian history and society. They ensure that they supplement what is found in textbooks and other curriculum materials so that they provide course materials and activities that reflect the diversity, values, backgrounds, and experiences of all students.

Inclusion Competency 3: Create an Inclusive Learning Environment

An inclusive university educator believes in the right to equitable educational opportunity for all students, which includes the right to high expectations and a classroom environment that is engaging and which supports the learning of all students. Inclusive university educators also ensure that they have the knowledge and practical skills necessary to engage the diverse learning styles of all students.

Inclusion Competency 4: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Students

Inclusive university educators establish a culture of high expectations which reflect their belief that all students can learn. They reject the myth of colour-blindness and are open and honest about the various identities of each student and the different ways that students from diverse backgrounds are treated in universities and society. They are committed to meeting the diverse needs of all students and removing or reducing the barriers that they face.

Inclusion Competency 5: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Those in the University Community

Inclusive university educators are committed to understanding the situations faced by the students whom they serve, both on and off campus, and how these situations affect the performance and engagement of students. They use inclusive and respectful language and approaches in all interactions with students and other stakeholders in the diverse university community.

Inclusion Competency 6: Actively Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the University Community

Inclusive university educators understand that disparities in educational outcomes for various groups result from inequities in society, not deficits in particular cultures. As such, they work within their university community to eliminate inequalities and close opportunity gaps, rather than focusing on changing students' cultures.

Inclusive educators also support the creating of an inclusive university environment by demonstrating a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion efforts. This motivates others to do the same and inspires positive change within the university community.

Inclusion Competency 1: Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness

How well have I…	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1 Reflected on my own background, experiences, values, and beliefs to understand how they influence my thoughts, actions and how I view and interact with my students and others in my diverse university community	1	2	3	4	5
2 Reflected on my biases and prejudices and consciously tried to control my assumptions when making decisions about the competence or ability of students from diverse communities, backgrounds, and identities	1	2	3	4	5
3 Reflected on my biases and prejudices and how they influence the expectations I have of my students	1	2	3	4	5
4 Reflected on whether I rationalize or tolerate lack of participation from certain groups of students more than I would for other students and what assumptions I make about their silence	1	2	3	4	5
5 Ensured that I do not respond to the voice of certain groups of students as if they have more intellectual weight than the voices of other students	1	2	3	4	5
6 Recognized that I am more comfortable with students and others who are most similar to me and gone out of my way to ensure that I also interact comfortably with students and	1	2	3	4	5
7 Changed, as necessary, my teaching style, communication style, or behaviour from ways that are comfortable to me to ways that may be more helpful and better serve students and others from diverse communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
8 Reflected on my own cultural identity in order to understand how that identity affects my communication style, and how that may affect communication with students from different cultural communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
9 Reflected on my understanding of racism, homophobia, sexism, cultural biases, and poor learning conditions that might be obstacles to learning for many students	1	2	3	4	5
10 Examined my beliefs about student deficits and taken more responsibility for the success of my students	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring…

Total your score

Inclusion Competency 2: Create an Inclusive Curriculum

How well do I…	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1 Review textbooks and other course materials to ensure that they are free of implicit or explicit bias	1	2	3	4	5
2 Incorporate curriculum content, materials, visual aids, and examples that are relevant to the lives of all students and reflect the diversity of Canadian society	1	2	3	4	5
3 Offer an integrated curriculum so that students see themselves, their histories and their experiences reflected in the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
4 Educate myself so that I can identify and correct for biases that may be present in textbooks and other course materials	1	2	3	4	5
5 Cultivate in students the ability to analyze bias in course materials, classroom interactions and university policies	1	2	3	4	5
6 Provide relevant opportunities for authentic learning experiences and experiential learning for students from diverse communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
7 Regularly develop my knowledge and skills to support my ability to effectively teach in a diverse university community	1	2	3	4	5
8 Teach about critical diversity issues such as sexism, racism, poverty, and heterosexism. And despite false perceptions that some students are not "ready" for these conversations, understanding that students from marginalized communities already are experiencing these issues	1	2	3	4	5
9 Create assignments that encourage students to explore different gender, racial and cultural perspectives	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring…

Total your score

Inclusion Competency 3: Create an Inclusive Learning Environment

How well do I…	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1 Develop ground rules or norms that will guide how students are expected to interact with each other in the classroom and set expectations for an inclusive learning environment for all	1	2	3	4	5
2 Recognize biases and inequities reflected in interactions between students and appropriately and immediately respond to inappropriate behaviours when I see them because I understand that my silence may be seen as endorsement of these behaviours	1	2	3	4	5
3 Elicit anonymous feedback from my students and, when I do, model a willingness to be changed by their feedback as I expect them to be changed by mine	1	2	3	4	5
4 Encourage my students to think critically and ask critical questions about all of the information they receive, including that which they receive from me	1	2	3	4	5
5 Challenge myself to take personal responsibility before looking for fault elsewhere. For example, if I have one student who is falling behind or being disruptive, I will consider what I am doing or not doing that might be contributing to their disengagement before problematizing their behaviour or level of effort	1	2	3	4	5
6 Use multiple modes of instruction to account for the range of learning styles that may be present among a diverse group of students	1	2	3	4	5
7 Structure project groups so that membership and leadership roles are balanced across ethno-racial groups, learning abilities and gender	1	2	3	4	5
8 Anticipate sensitive areas in the subject matter being taught and plan in advance how I will handle sensitive topics or explosive moments	1	2	3	4	5
9 Ensure I do not create situations where students are placed in the position of being representatives of their gender, race, culture, or other social groups	1	2	3	4	5
10 Let students know from the very beginning that their thoughts have a place in the classroom, that we all have unique perspectives, and that these perspectives are an important component of the learning process	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score

Inclusion Competency 4: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Students

How well do I…	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1 Ensure that I treat each student first and foremost as an individual and don't make assumptions based on their gender, race, culture or other groups to which they appear to belong	1	2	3	4	5
2 Interact with all students in respectful, challenging and collaborative ways, both inside and outside of the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
3 Express high expectations of all students, regardless of their race, gender, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion and other characteristics, and provide the support required to help them meet these expectations	1	2	3	4	5
4 Ensure that I focus my efforts not only on the students that demonstrate that they are interested in learning but also those who appear to be disengaged	1	2	3	4	5
5 Understand that some students may require accommodation (based on religion or disability) and understand the process for providing that accommodation	1	2	3	4	5
6 Consider how I assign course work that requires access to specialized equipment	1	2	3	4	5
7 Reject the myth of colour-blindness and am honest about the various identities of each student and the different ways that students from diverse backgrounds are treated in universities and society, which create disparities in educational outcomes	1	2	3	4	5
8 Educate myself about how inequities related to race, gender, language, immigrant status, disability and other identities operate and affect my students and their performance and engagement at university	1	2	3	4	5
9 Ensure that I am not penalizing some students more often and more harshly than other students, for the same behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
10 Engage in restorative justice and try to ensure that no students are unjustly or more harshly penalized	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring…

Total your score

Inclusion Competency 5: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Those in the University Community

How often have I…	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always
1. Visited the communities from which my students come, including where they live, shop, eat, and pray, to enhance my ability to support their learning	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sought out and listened to the voices of those in the university community and the local diverse communities	1	2	3	4	5
3. Made course involvement accessible to low-income students who often work part-time and may not have a great deal of disposable income or students who may have children	1	2	3	4	5
4. Gotten out of the safety of my comfort zone by building relationships with those in my university community	1	2	3	4	5
5. Rejected deficit ideology (i.e., identifying the problem of inequality of outcomes as existing within individuals or cultures, rather than as symptoms of systemic educational and social conditions), and worked to find solutions to these problems	1	2	3	4	5
6. Kept reaching out to all students, even if I experience them as unresponsive, in the understanding that I may need to establish trust among students from communities that historically have experienced an educational system that maintains societal inequality or who have experienced hostility from educational institutions	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ensured that ongoing communication about their learning is in place to allow students to monitor and support their progress	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ensured that students and community members are engaged and welcomed as respected, valued partners in the university community	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ensured that I build partnerships between the university and community to enhance learning opportunities and well-being of students	1	2	3	4	5
10. Increased my understanding of the diverse communities from which my students are from, to ensure that I engage respectfully with all students and communities	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring…   **Total your score** [   ]

Inclusion Competency 6: Actively Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the University Community

How well do I…	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1. Talk positively about and deliver a consistent message of the value of a diverse and inclusive university environment	1	2	3	4	5
2. Help students and colleagues understand their role in creating an inclusive university environment	1	2	3	4	5
3. Recognize and respectfully address the concerns of students or colleagues who don't see the value of efforts to create an inclusive university environment for students from all communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assume responsibility for learning about the university's equity, diversity and inclusion efforts, and my roles and responsibilities to implement these efforts	1	2	3	4	5
5. Champion the university's equity, diversity and inclusion efforts and view it as an opportunity to improve the workplace and student success	1	2	3	4	5
6. Recognize the need for change and challenge the status quo	1	2	3	4	5
7. Foster conversations with colleagues about equity, diversity and inclusion concerns and issues	1	2	3	4	5
8. Work with my university community to ensure that we don't confuse celebrating diversity with creating equity, such as by responding to racial conflict with cultural celebrations	1	2	3	4	5
9. Understand systemic inequality, based on gender, race, and other characteristics, how it plays out in the university system, and how it affects the educational outcomes for various groups of students	1	2	3	4	5
10. Work to ensure that students from marginalized communities are not further marginalized on campus or in my classroom	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring…

Total your score

Scoring ... Transfer your scores for each Inclusive Competency below

Competency	Score
Inclusion Competency 1: Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness	
Inclusion Competency 2: Create an Inclusive Curriculum	
Inclusion Competency 3: Create an Inclusive Learning Environment	
Inclusion Competency 4: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Students	
Inclusion Competency 5: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Those in the University Community	
Inclusion Competency 6: Actively Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the University Community	
Total Score:	

Change Agent (Score 240 to 300)

Change agents are inclusive educators who are aware of biases in themselves and recognize the negative impact that comes from acting on these biases.

If your score falls in this range, you can make great contributions to the university community by finding ways to educate others and help them realize the value of equity, diversity, and inclusion. You could benefit from watching for blind spots to ensure that you are fully aware of your biases and your impact on others. You may also benefit from feedback from others because you "don't know what you don't know."

Examine the Inclusion Competencies for questions on which you scored lowest to identify areas in which you can improve.

Neutral (Score 180 to 240)

Educators in this category are somewhat aware of biases in themselves and others. They can increase and apply their knowledge to support the learning of all students according to their needs.

If your score falls in this range, you can examine the Inclusion Competencies for questions on which you scored lowest to identify areas in which you need to improve.

Unaware (Under 180)

While they may have good intentions, unaware educators don't realize that they may exhibit biased behaviours that marginalize students or create barriers to their success. While the scores of some unaware educators may put them in this category, their scores could also place them in the other two categories because they might frequently answer "Usually / Always" and "Very well / Extremely well" because they don't reflect on and are not aware of their own behaviours.

If your score falls in this range, you could benefit from feedback from others and ongoing learning through professional development and ongoing reading. You may also benefit from being more observant of the interactions in your classroom and learning more about the experiences of students who come from marginalized communities.