

Sexism and racism are so embedded in curriculum material that it requires a conscious effort to create a classroom climate that is truly inclusive. The questions below have been helpful to instructors in examining their texts and lectures. How have teachers' choices of materials and patterns of classroom interaction affected you?

Checklist for Inclusive Teaching

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Texts, Lectures, and Course Content

- Are you and your texts' language sex-neutral, using words with relation to both sexes whenever this is the author's intent? If your texts use the masculine generic, do you point this out in the classroom?
- Is content addressed equitably to men, to women, people of color?
- Do you and your texts portray equitably the activities, achievements, concerns, and experiences of women and people of color? If your texts do not, do you provide supplemental materials? Do you bring omissions to the attention of your students?
- Do you and your texts present the careers, roles, interests, and abilities of women and people of color without stereotyping? If there are stereotypes in your texts, do you point this out?
- Do you and your texts' examples and illustrations (both verbal and graphic) represent an equitable balance in terms of gender and race? If your texts do not, do you point this out?
- Do your texts and lectures reflect values that are free of sex and race bias, and if not, do you discuss your/their biases and values with your students?
- Do your texts incorporate new research and theory generated by feminist and ethnic scholarship? If not, do you point out areas in which feminist and ethnic studies are modifying perceived ideas? Do you provide additional bibliographic references for students who want to pursue these issues? When you order books for the library, do they reflect these issues?
- Do your exams and assignments for papers, projects, etc. allow and encourage students to explore the nature, roles, status, contributions and experience of women and people of color?
- Do your texts and materials make clear that not everyone is heterosexual?

Classroom Interactions

- Are you conscious of sex- or race-related expectations you may hold about student performance?

- How do you react to uses of language (accent, dialect, etc.) that depart from standard English or that are different from your own? Do you discount the speaker's intelligence and information?
- What is the number of males versus females or of various cultural and racial groups called on to answer questions? Which students do you call by name? Why?
- Which of these categories of students participate in class more frequently through answering questions or making comments? Is the number disproportional enough that you should encourage some students to participate more frequently?
- Do interruptions occur when an individual is talking? If so, who does the interrupting? If one group of students is dominating classroom interaction, what do you do about it?
- Is your verbal response to students positive? Aversive? Encouraging? Is it the same for all students? If not, what is the reason? (Valid reasons occur from time to time for reacting or responding to a particular student in a highly specific manner.)
- Do you tend to face or address one section of the classroom more than others? Do you establish eye contact with certain students more than others? What are the gestures, postures, facial expressions, etc. used and are they different for men, women, people of color?

Reference:

Kesselman, Amy, Lily D. McNair, and Nancy Schniedewind. Women Images and Realities : A Multicultural Anthology. 3rd Ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003. 76-115.