

# Equitable Syllabus Workshop



# Thank you!

**Special thank you to ESP members and alumni who  
helped gather resources, workshop language, and  
lead previous iterations of this project**

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# Workshop Agenda

Introduction to the Equitable Syllabus Project

Community Agreement

Activity 1: Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

Activity 2: Deconstruction and Reflection

Activity 3: Resource Sharing

Next Steps



# [ESP]


## Equitable Syllabus Project

ITP/IMA departmental initiative geared towards creating tools and frameworks for equity-aligned inquiry into the content and form of the curricula and syllabi

# Meet the Team!




Project Manager




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Student Lead

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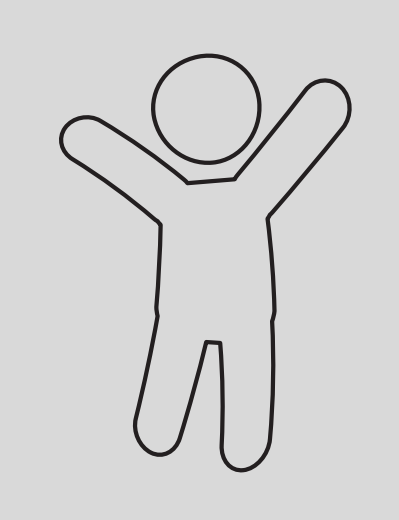
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# Current Projects



## Critical Pedagogy Guide

Reframing the TSOA  
Mandatory Statements  
& identifying rhetorical  
shortcomings in syllabi

## Syllabus Review Workshop

Inviting educators to  
rework their syllabi  
through equity-aligned  
practices and languages

## Research Service

Pairing educators with  
student research  
specialists to diversify the  
voices and content of  
their curricula

## Research Database

Archiving the resources  
compiled from the  
research service for  
community and public  
use

# Research Service

We offer faculty and adjuncts an opportunity to work with an ITP/IMA research assistant focusing on expanding the voices represented in their curriculum.

The research process can last anywhere from 3 weeks to a more sustained multiple-month engagement.

Our goal is to help you create an equitable syllabus with the ability to empower your students to learn with more agency, access, and accomodation. Through course content that is reflective of student's intersectional realities, teaching and learning can become a mutual process of exchange in which both students and faculty grow and learn from one another.

# Research Service



Research Service Intake Questionnaire



# 08 Community Agreement

What are some guidelines we can co-create for engaging in this space with each other?

- Practice active listening
- Use “I” statements
- Listen to your body!! Do what you need to do
- Be kind and gentle to one another
- It’s okay to ask not fully formed questions
- Ask clarifying questions
- Take space and make space
- Ask before touching & be mindful of other people’s thoughts and ideas
- It’s okay to pause to process first

# Additional Ways to Engage

Use “I” statements

Maintain confidentiality

Take space and make space

Practice active listening

Acknowledge the liveliness of language

Respond to your body



# Activity 1: Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

# Core Ideas

## WELCOMING

In their tone and content, communicate care, support, respect, and inclusion as class norms.

## VALIDATING

In their tone and content communicate a belief in students' ability to be successful.

## DEMYSTIFYING

Provide students with information they need to successfully complete the course in clear, plain language with limited to no academic jargon.

# Core Ideas

## CREATING A PARTNERSHIP

Communicate the instructor's commitment to working with students to ensure their success.

## REPRESENTING

Communicate the value of students' racial backgrounds and lived experiences as sources of learning and knowledge by including them in assignments, readings, and other materials.

## DECONSTRUCTING

Promote awareness and critical examination of social inequalities, privilege, and dominant racialized norms.



# Activity 1: Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

## Part One: Strategize in Pairs

In pairs, take 10 minutes to discuss strategies to apply the core ideas introduced in the two previous slides in your own learning environments. Each pair should start out with one core idea, but is free to move to another. Feel free to take notes on [this document](#)

## Part Two: Share with the Group

After the time is up with the pairs, we will reconvene as a group and talk through some of the strategies that came up in the first part of this exercise.

# Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

## 1. Create an inclusive and accessible course climate

Learn about your students

Build connection and community

Address conflict directly

# Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

## 2. Build transparency into all aspects of the teaching and learning process

Make the hidden curriculum visible to all students

Be explicit about expectations and criteria

Help students see the relevance of the course and field of study

Implement metacognitive strategies, such as modeling.



# Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

## 3. Center and amplify diverse perspectives, especially those that have been historically marginalized

Build a curriculum that centers marginalized perspectives

Make diverse role models visible to students

Use multiple examples and metaphors

Draw explicit connections to practitioners in the field

# Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

## 4. Provide multiple modes of assessment and continuous feedback

Integrate formative assessments for learning

Create multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning

Offer consistent and timely feedback

Hold all students to high standards and convey confidence in  
their abilities

# Inclusive Pedagogy Principles

## 5. Engage in ongoing critical self-reflection

What are my identities? How do others perceive me?

What are my implicit and explicit biases? Do I perpetuate, neutralize, or challenge stereotypes in my class?

How do I handle challenges in the classroom?

How might the ways I set up classroom spaces and activities foster inclusion or marginalization?




**Again and again, it was necessary  
to remind everyone that no  
education is politically neutral**

bell hooks (Teaching to Transgress p.35)



# Activity 2: Deconstruction and Reflection



**And I saw for the first time that there can be, and usually is, some degree of pain involved in giving up old ways of thinking and knowing and learning new approaches. I respect that pain. And I include recognition of it now when I teach, that is to say, I teach about shifting paradigms and talk about the discomfort it can cause.**

bell hooks (Teaching to Transgress p.43)

# Activity 2: Deconstructing and Reflection

## Part One: Individual Deconstruction

Individually, take 10 minutes to review your own syllabi and respond to the following prompts:

- Reflect on the notes you made in your syllabus about the audiences being served. How would you describe what you found?
- Are there any patterns that you found surprising? Why or why not?
- Based on these patterns, for whom would you say your syllabus is written?  
Does this match who you thought the audience for your syllabus is?
- Are there any changes you'd like to make to your syllabus based on this activity? When considering syllabus changes, which changes would you say are within your control and could be immediately implemented?

# Activity 2: Deconstructing and Reflection

## Part Two: Individual Reflection

1. Which aspects of equity-minded practice are generally present in your syllabus? Which are generally absent?
2. Imagine you're a student reading the syllabus on the first day of class. Do you feel that the instructor is willing to provide opportunities and resources for you to do well in the course? Why or why not?
3. Imagining yourself again as a student reading your syllabus, do you feel that the instructor assumes that you want to learn and cares for your development as scholars and human beings? Why or why not?

Feel free to take notes on [this document](#)



# Activity 2: Deconstructing and Reflection

## Part Two: Individual Reflection

4. Imagine you are a student from a minoritized group reading your syllabus on the first day of class.

Do you feel the instructor and the course speak to your experiences? Do you feel like the instructor is

an advocate for racial equity?

5. What did you learn from completing this exercise?

Feel free to take notes on [this document](#)



# Activity 3: Resource Sharing

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What are some resources that you have found helpful while writing your syllabus?

Who are some of the voices you want to amplify with your class?

What works have you drawn inspiration from lately?

Feel free to share resources in [this document](#) as well.



# Next Steps

# Next Steps




Find an accountability partner

Work with librarians at NYU Division of Libraries

Sign up for the ESP Research Service

Look through the ESP Research Database on our website

Email us at [esp@itp.nyu.edu](mailto:esp@itp.nyu.edu) if you have questions



**The teacher is no longer merely the-  
one-who-teaches, but one who is  
himself taught in dialogue with the  
students, who in turn while being  
taught also teach. They become  
jointly responsible for a process in  
which all grow**

Paulo Friere (Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 80)

**Thanks for coming!**

