

Resources

Community Building

These resources are curated or developed for the Amherst College Course Design Seminar for Flexible Teaching, Summer 2020. They are available to anyone in our Amherst College community. This is a living document that links to the community building resource folder. We encourage you to add to this list!

How will you get to know your students as learners and as humans? How will they get to know you? How will they get to know each other? We encourage you to create a space in which students are your partners (and potential colleagues) in building a learning community.

Note: Our own identities, just as our students' identities, impact the ways we show up in the classroom and how our students respond to us. Consider which strategies you might use in your course, which you would absolutely not use, and why.

Note 2: There may be *unlearning* that needs to happen in order to create an inclusive community!

- [Community Building Innovative Teaching Amherst Faculty Examples](#) (Center for Teaching and Learning website)
- [Inclusive Teaching with NameCoach](#) (ATS resource)
- [Zoom-Friendly Warmups and Icebreakers](#) - A list of activities that adapt well to a remote environment, compiled by Eugene Korsunskiy at Dartmouth College
- [Community Norms for Remote Teaching](#) (Amherst College CTL)
- [Strategies and Tools for Building and Maintaining Community in the Classroom](#) (from the Amherst College Center for Community Engagement)
- [Five Ways to Build Community in Online Classrooms](#) (Faculty Focus)
- [How to Design Effective Online Group Work](#) (Mary Bart, Faculty Focus)
- [Building Community e-Learning Kit](#) (McGill)
- [Humanizing Online Teaching](#)
- [How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching](#)
- Bryan Dewsbury - Get to Know Your Students (Even before class begins)
 - "[Inclusive Teaching](#)" ([Guide](#) they are referring to in the article)

- [Talk](#) at Elon (if you want to jump to 16:00 he talks about "getting educated" and "gathering information")
 - "[This I Believe](#)" is the essay he requires his students before class
- Building Social and Cultural Capital
 - "[Not Made For "FGLIs": Social Capital, Cultural Capital, and the FirstGeneration Low-Income Experience at Yale University](#)" (José Yobani López Sánchez, 2018)
 - FGLI students experience social challenges, stemming largely from exclusion, of varying degrees as a result of lacking social and cultural capital, and therefore need social support in the form of spaces that validate and seek to understand their experiences.
 - FGLI students are capable of understanding the nuance in how they are affected by social and cultural capital, how to shape spaces to reflect and debate collaboratively, and to envision what needs to change, but require support from within their own community before being able to express their thoughts comfortably and engage critically.
 - The work to enact these changes must come from the students, and the institution should empower its students to lead this change and listen with humility throughout the process.
- Beverly Tatum writes and teaches extensively about inclusive pedagogies as integral to education. She identifies the "abc"s of creating "...effective learning environments in which students feel invested and engaged..." ([Can We Talk about Race? And Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation](#), 2007, 114) These are:
 - Affirming identity
 - Building Community
 - Cultivating Leadership
- Hanover Research, [Best Practices in Online Learning for At-Risk Students](#) (April 2020)
 - Faculty should strive for frequent and consistent interactions with online learners while providing positive affirmation in feedback.
 - Promote peer-to-peer interaction through icebreaker introductions, collaborative work, and student presentations.
 - Understand your students' technical/digital abilities and provide support to navigate online learning

Communicating support for students as learners and as humans

- Provide feedback early and often!
- Provide opportunities for them to give you feedback about their learning.
- Supporting them during a challenging time
 - [Trauma-Informed Teaching](#) (Mays Imad, 2020, 27, 28 - 31)
 - Students may have a hard time
 - Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies
 1. Foster emotional, intellectual, physical, and interpersonal safety.
 2. Build trustworthiness and transparency.

3. Facilitate peer support.
 4. Promote collaboration.
 5. Empower voice and choice.
 6. Pay attention to cultural, historical, and gender issues.
- [Cognitive Load](#)

Additional Resources

Asai, D. (2019). To learn inclusion skills, make it personal. *Nature*, 565, 537.

Dewsbury, B. & Brame, C.J. (2019). Inclusive Teaching. *CBE-Life Sciences Education*, 18(2), 1-5.

Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Ballantine Books.

Jack, Anthony (2019). *The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges Are Failing Disadvantaged Students*. Harvard University Press.

Feito, Jose (2007). Allowing not-knowing in a dialogic discussion. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, vol. 1, no. 1. [available:

<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1020&context=ij-sotl>]

In this article, Professor Feito shares his experiences in identifying what kinds of dialogic interactions lead to student interactions and seminar discussions that are deeply engaging, student-centered, and lead to productive synthesis. By inviting students each week to take notes of the interactions, Professor Feito and his students identify how “allowing not knowing” - i.e. valuing uncertainty as creating space for others - promotes meaningful, productive interactions. As the students observed and took note of what kind of discourse moved the discussions forward in productive, interesting ways, they started to use phrasings and dialogic strategies that supported their peers and created a collaborative seminar.