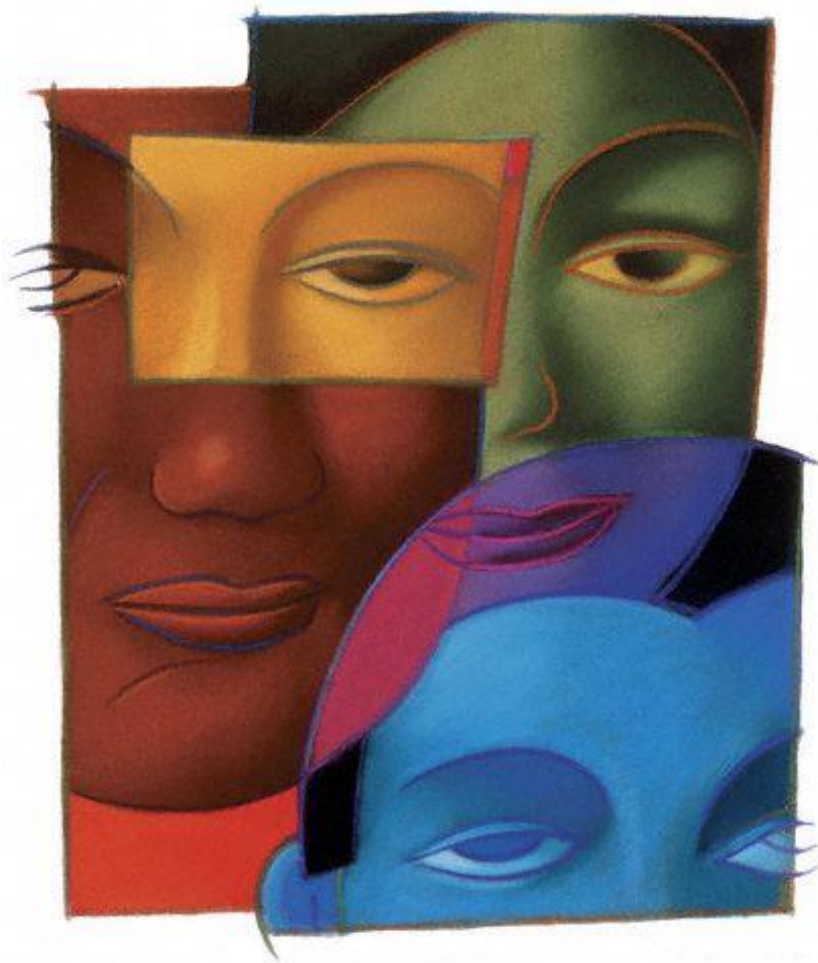


Creating Inclusive Classrooms (Page 1 of 30)



***Content Warning:** This module contains depictions of racist comments and harmful stereotyping in presented scenarios.*

Responding to Exclusionary Scenarios (Page 2 of 30)

Consider this scenario:

During the first meeting of a math class, a GSI announces that the course will be graded on a curve. As the students move into small groups to work through a problem, the GSI hears two students complaining to each other that there are so many Asian students in the course it will “raise the curve.” The GSI and several other students overhear the comment.

How should the GSI respond?

A. Ignore the comment, since it was not addressed to the GSI and it occurred apart from the portions of the class session where the GSI addressed all the students together.

B. Ask the students who voiced the complaint to come to office hours to talk about what they said.

C. In addition to speaking directly to the students who voiced the complaint, take a few moments during the next class meeting to address the comment, and explain to everyone the purpose of the grading curve and how it works.

Comments like this represent one of many forms of exclusion GSIs may face in the course of their teaching. We will return to the options presented here later in the module.

Preview of Module 2 (Page 3 of 30)

Experiences of discrimination limit learning and restrict students' equal access to education. As an instructor at UC Berkeley, part of your job is to create a classroom or lab or studio environment in which students can thrive.

Topics

In this module, **Creating Inclusive Classrooms**, you will examine

- the demographics of UC Berkeley students;
- strategies and resources for promoting an inclusive academic environment; and
- relevant policies and laws.

Learning Objectives

We hope that after exploring these topics, you will be able to:

- explain to a colleague why GSIs should strive for an inclusive academic environment;
- identify instances of discrimination, stereotyping, and harassment in the learning environment;
- develop informed and appropriate responses to discrimination, stereotyping, and harassment in the learning environment;
- develop pedagogical and professional-development practices that promote inclusion and support equity for all students;
- refer to federal legislation and campus policies on nondiscrimination based on protected categories; and
- identify campus resources that can help you and your students learn more about ways to build and benefit from an inclusive learning environment.

Student Diversity at UC Berkeley (Page 4 of 30)

As is the case in U.S. higher education generally, Berkeley students have a myriad of different backgrounds and experiences. Dimensions of diversity can include:

- race and/or ethnicity
- nationality
- home language
- socio-economic background
- previous educational experience
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- military service
- parenthood
- disability
- religion
- age
- immigration status
- prior incarceration
- cultural practices, beliefs, and orientations

The statistics and survey responses on the following pages highlight the diversity - and in some cases, underrepresentation - in UC Berkeley's undergraduate and graduate student populations. The identity of any individual draws uniquely on multiple intersections among these factors. As you browse through the data, think about how the diversity they reflect might shape students' experiences of the learning environment.

Student Demographics at UC Berkeley - Continued (Page 5 of 30)

CATEGORY	Undergraduate Count	Undergraduate Percentage	Graduate Count	Graduate Percentage
Total Enrolled [1]	33,078	72.4	12,621	27.6
GENDER IDENTITY				
Woman [1]	17,997	54.4	5,979	47.4
Man [1]	14,096	42.6	6,307	50
Nonbinary [1]	501	1.5	110	<1
Transgender Man/Trans Man [1]	71	<1	17	<1
Transgender Woman/Trans Woman [1]	23	<1	16	<1
Different Identity [1]	59	<1	93	<1
Not Reported	331	1	99	<1

CATEGORY	Undergraduate Count	Undergraduate Percentage	Graduate Count	Graduate Percentage
RACE/ETHNICITY				
African American [1]	1,324	4	651	5.2
Hispanic/Latinx [1]	6,840	20.7	1,190	9.4
American Indian [1]	156	<1	68	<1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander [1]	60	<1	40	<1
Asian [1]	13,212	39.9	2,710	21.5
White [1]	6,485	19.6	3,370	26.7
Domestic Unknown [1]	1,201	3.6	580	4.6
International [1]	3,800	11.5	4,012	31.8
OTHER				
California Resident [1]	25,723	77.8	4,819	38.2
First-Generation College Student [1]	10,149	31	not available	not available

CATEGORY	Undergraduate Count	Undergraduate Percentage	Graduate Count	Graduate Percentage
Pell Grant Recipient [1]	9,303	28	n/a	n/a
Transfer Student [2]	6968	21	n/a	n/a
Student Parent [7]	300	1	not available	not available
Age 25 or Older [2]	1881	6	n/a	n/a
Disabled Student [3]	4364	13.2	902	7
Student Athlete [4]	841	3	17	<1
Student Veteran or Active Duty Military Service Member [5]	109	<1	208	1.6

In addition to describing the demographics of UC Berkeley students, these statistics allow us to draw some contrasts between the graduate student population and the undergraduate population. Among graduate students there are significantly lower percentages of California residents, female students, and Latinx students; and there are significantly higher percentages of international students, male students, White students, and student parents. Black, Latinx, Native American, and Pacific Islander students are underrepresented in both the undergraduate and graduate student populations.

Sources

[1] Data on gender identity, race/ethnicity, international student status, first-generation status, Pell Grant recipients, and California resident status are from the [UC Information](#)

[Center's 2023 Fall Enrollment data](#)[Links to an external site.](#). Percentages are rounded. Racial and ethnic categories are captured for domestic (U.S.) students only.

[2] Office of Planning and Analysis, UC Berkeley Quick Facts: Fall 2023 Enrollment and [CalAnswers](#).

[3] Disabled Students' Program, July 19, 2024. The percentages are calculated based on counts provided by the program and enrollment figures for undergraduate and graduate students. These figures do not include students with disabilities who have not sought services from the Disabled Students' Program.

[4] Athletic Study Center, 2022. Percentage calculated from counts provided by the Athletic Study Center using undergraduate student counts for fall 2022.

[5] Office of the Registrar, 2024. The figures include veterans or active duty members of the Armed Forces or Coast Guard for the 2023-2024 academic year who self-identified and provided proof of their military affiliation.

[6] Graduate Division, [UC Berkeley Graduate Profile 2022-2023](#).

[7] UC Berkeley Student-Parent Center estimate, 2020

Additional Facts about UC Berkeley Student Demographics (Page 6 of 30)

The Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA) regularly conducts the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES). Here is a sampling of responses taken from the two most recent surveys to supplement the demographic statistics presented above.

- About 77% of UC Berkeley undergraduates responding to the survey were born in the United States.
- About 63% of the respondents consider English their native language. Another 21% learned English before the age of 6, 10% between the ages of 6 and 10, 4% between 11 and 15, and 2% after turning 16.[1]
- 33% of respondents indicated that their mother was born in the U.S. and 33% that their father was born in the U.S.
- 19% of the respondents described their social class as low income or poor; 18% as working class; 35% as middle class; 25% as upper-middle class; and 3% as wealthy.

Sources

Office of Planning and Analysis, [UC Undergraduate Experience Survey \(UCUES\), 2022](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[1] Office of Planning and Analysis, [UC Undergraduate Experience Survey \(UCUES\), 2020](#)[Links to an external site.](#). The question about languages was not asked in the 2022 survey.

The UC Berkeley My Experience Survey (Page 7 of 30)

While UC Berkeley's diverse student body suggests that people of many backgrounds have access to the excellent education that Cal provides, there is also evidence that many Cal students experience exclusion on campus. In the spring semester of 2019, UC Berkeley participated in the My Experience Survey as an update to the 2013 Campus Climate Survey. The My Experience Survey was sent out to Berkeley faculty, staff, and students; 12,000 responded, including around 8,000 students, over 800 Senate faculty members, and over 2,700 staff. These are some of the key findings:

- 25% of respondents experienced exclusionary behavior and felt uncomfortable on campus. This figure is higher, in some cases by twice as much, for people from underrepresented groups.
- 56% of the undergraduates who answered the survey stated that exclusionary behavior came primarily from other undergraduate students.
- 21% of undergraduates said this behavior occurred in a class or lab or clinical setting.
- 48% of undergraduate students said that they thought faculty pre-judged their abilities based on perceived identity background. For Black students, the figure was more than two in three.

In the 2013 survey,

- 61% of students thought that incorporating issues of diversity and cross-cultural competence more effectively into the curriculum would positively affect the climate at UC Berkeley.
- 68% of students thought that increasing opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue among students would also have a positive impact. [1]

[1] These questions were not included in the 2019 My Experience Survey.

Sources

[UC Berkeley My Experience Survey Report, 2019 \(pdf\).](#)

[UC Berkeley Campus Climate Project Final Report, Links to an external site.2014 \(pdf\)Links to an external site.](#)

Challenges of Building an Inclusive Classroom Environment (Page 8 of 30)

As we learned in Module 1, GSIs are responsible for managing the sections they lead. As part of their instructional role, GSIs monitor student contributions to class activities, encourage student participation, and address problems when they arise.

Keep in mind that 21% of undergraduates said that the exclusionary behavior they witnessed or experienced occurred in a class or lab or clinical setting. While GSIs were rarely identified as the source of exclusionary behavior, the GSI role comes with a responsibility to respond to incidents that are discriminatory or intimidating in class.

The following pages introduce several types of exclusionary incidents that could happen during class activities:

- The perpetuation of stereotypes and the activation of stereotype threat
- The use of discriminatory language
- Discriminatory behavior and the creation of a hostile environment

Source

[UC Berkeley My Experience Survey Report, 2019 \(pdf\)](#).

Barriers to Inclusion: Stereotypes and Stereotype Threat (Page 9 of 30)

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics or capacities of individuals based on a perceived or actual group membership. In the classroom context, these beliefs can take the form of judgments about a student's capacity to perform academically given their class, race, gender, age or other markers of group identity.

Two examples of stereotypes are the view that men are better at math than women, and that student athletes are less committed to their academic work.

Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat involves “being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group” [1] or “being judged by [a] negative stereotype” [2]. Research has found that if someone is part of a group that is associated with poor performance on a certain kind of task, invoking the negative stereotype before they perform the task negatively affects their performance as compared to a control condition in which the stereotype threat is not activated. Simply hearing an implied stereotype about a group to which one belongs can alter academic performance.

Stereotypes can be negative or positive. The claim that “Asians excel at math” presented in the opening scenario of this module is a positive stereotype. However, positive stereotypes can also be problematic, in that they place undue pressure or expectations on members of a particular group. This has been shown to hamper academic performance as well. Consider the effects of the “Asians excel at math” stereotype upon a student who identifies as Asian, who struggles with math and does not expect to perform well. [3] Not measuring up to the stereotype may threaten this student's performance in this case. Similarly, a statement such as “Women are more polite than men in class discussions” may seem complimentary, but, in fact, it sets up unequal expectations for behavior in class.

Sources

[1] Steele, Claude M. and Joshua Aronson. 1995. “Stereotype Threat and the Intellectual Test Performance of African Americans.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69 (5): 797–811.

[2] Spencer, Jeven J., Claude M. Steele, and Diane M. Quinn. 1999. "Stereotype Threat and Women's Math Performance." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 35 (1): 4–28.

[3] Cheryan, Sapna and Galen V. Bodenhausen. 2000. "When Positive Stereotypes Threaten Intellectual Performance: The Psychological Hazards of 'Model Minority' Status." *Psychological Science* 11 (5): 399–402.

Addressing a Stereotype (Page 10 of 30)

So what would be the GSI's best response to the opening scenario of this module?

During the first meeting of a math class, a GSI announces that the course will be graded on a curve. As the students move into small groups to work through a problem, the GSI hears two students complaining to each other that because there are so many Asian students in the course it will "raise the curve." The GSI and several other students hear the comment.

Which option below would you recommend?

A. Ignore the comment, since it occurred apart from the portions of the class session where the GSI addressed all the students together.

B. Ask the students with the concern to come to office hours to talk about what they said.

C. In addition to speaking to the students who voiced the complaint, take a few moments during the next class meeting to address the comment, and explain to everyone the purpose of the grading curve and how it works.

The first option is not acceptable for a number of reasons. The comment conveys that Asian students have an advantage and that their very presence makes the course unfair for students of other backgrounds. These messages are divisive and exclusionary. Even though the comment was not directed toward the GSI or the class in general, it was heard by several members of the class. If the GSI does not address the statement, students who identify as Asian or Asian-American may experience negative effects of a harmful stereotype. Further, if the GSI lets the stereotype go, other students may feel that such talk is acceptable in the class. This may make class members who have frequently been subjected to stereotypes feel alienated, and alienation will harm the learning environment.

The second option is a partially good choice. But as with the first option, it does not address the stereotype with all of the students in the course, indirectly condoning discriminatory language and likely harming individual students and the classroom learning environment. To fully support any students who may have been affected by the comment, and to set the expectation of respectful speech, you should also address the comment with all the students.

The third option is best because it responds to the speakers' misconception directly but also addresses stereotypes and assumptions in the public forum of the classroom in which they were spoken. When speaking to the students who voiced the stereotype, explain that while they may have meant no harm, their comments can negatively impact other students and are not acceptable in your class. Discuss the issue of stereotypes with the entire class so that

everyone is clear that discriminatory speech will not be tolerated in your classroom. It's important to note that even seemingly positive stereotypes (Asian students do well in math) can have detrimental effects by virtue of putting undue pressure on the target of the positive stereotype to perform very well academically.

Check Your Understanding (Page 11 of 30)

Consider the following scenario:

A GSI divides students into groups of five for a semester-long research project. During this process, the GSI notices that a few students who are assigned to a group with a member of the Cal men's basketball team roll their eyes. After class, these same students approach the GSI to voice concerns that the athlete's demanding practice and travel schedule might affect his contributions to the group's work and their project grade. One student even wonders aloud about athletes' college preparation and expresses resentment over what he sees as preferential treatment the University affords its athletes.

How might the GSI best handle this situation?



Redistribute the groups so that the athletes in the class work together.



Schedule a meeting with the student-athlete to find out how serious he is about his coursework.



Remind the students that it is important not to make assumptions about other students' commitment to their academic work and help them establish shared expectations, a schedule, and division of labor for the group work.

Scenario Revisited (Page 12 of 30)

The previous scenario involves a kind of discrimination that student-athletes have frequently faced on campus. A campus task force found that student-athletes often feel “stereotyped by faculty,” “not taken seriously as students before [they] even have a chance in a class,” and “often needing to hide their identity as a student-athlete.” In some cases, a racial or ethnic bias is also involved. [1]

In this scenario, it is important that the GSI shows support for the student-athlete by questioning the students who have made a discriminatory assumption. The GSI should also challenge the students to respectfully collaborate, negotiate a group schedule, and use collaboration tools as appropriate.

University Guidelines for Resolving Scheduling Conflicts

It does sometimes happen that scheduling conflicts arise between students’ extracurricular activities and their academic requirements. This applies to student-athletes, but also to musicians and others. The University has a set of guidelines for addressing such scheduling conflicts.

Students with extracurricular commitments must inform the faculty member (or a GSI designated by the faculty member), in writing, by the end of the second week of the semester, of any scheduling conflicts between their extracurricular activities and academic requirements for the course (such as class attendance, exams, project due dates, and participation in lab sections or field trips). Students are also required to present a written proposal for how they will fulfill the course requirements for which there is a scheduling conflict. The policy suggests several ways students can meet academic requirements while they are away. The policy also calls on instructors to accommodate students’ extracurricular activities unless instructors “clearly articulate the specific pedagogical reasons that prevent accepting a proposed accommodation.” [2]

GSIs should consult with the instructor of record (the faculty member in charge of the course) about these requests because it is the instructor of record who is ultimately responsible for making such decisions. However, in some cases, the faculty member may

delegate decisions to a GSI, so it is important for GSIs to understand and act in accordance with the policy.

Sources

[1] [Chancellor's Task Force on Academics & Athletics: Final Report and Recommendations, 2014 \(pdf\)](#), 21.

[2] [Academic Senate Guidelines Concerning Conflicts with Academic Requirements, 2014 \(pdf\)](#).

Discriminatory Language (Page 13 of 30)

Sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory views are sometimes overt; however, they often manifest in subtle cues or attempts at humor.

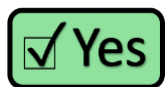
Consider this scenario:

On a bCourses discussion board, one of your students expresses dislike for a story you assigned, and derisively refers to it as “really gay.”

Is this language problematic?



No, because the student is not referring to a person and you can't be sure they intended to demean anyone.



Yes, because the student is using the word “gay” in a negative, pejorative way.

Expressions like this one, which may seem to be humorous or innocent, are also sometimes used to convey conscious slights or outright hostility. The use of such expressions burdens members of the referenced groups by forcing them to assess whether they are being slighted. Research associates this kind of burden with reduced performance and adverse health outcomes. [1]

Source

[1] Woodford, Michael R., Michael L. Howell, Perry Silverschanz, and Lotus Yu. 2012. [“That’s So Gay!’: Examining the Covariates of Hearing This Expression among Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual College Students.”](#) [Links to an external site.](#) *Journal of American College Health* 60 (6): 429–34.

Discriminatory Language: Intention vs. Impact

(Page 14 of 30)

To understand whether and how a comment – whether shared in a class meeting or in an asynchronous activity such as the bCourses discussion board – may be offensive, it is important to distinguish between the speaker's *intention* and the *impact* of the speaker's words on others. In the previous scenario, even if the student who posted the comment did not intend to be hostile to anyone, it is likely that others found the pejorative use of the term "gay" offensive (i.e., the comment assumes that "gay" means something negative and so denigrates people who identify as gay). The comment can therefore have a negative impact on the learning environment.

GSI's in their teaching role should be prepared to address student comments that discriminate against others to keep the learning environment inclusive to all students. With this in mind, which action on the GSI's part would best handle the situation?



Ignore the comment, since it wasn't intentionally hostile.



Contact the Office of Student Conduct.



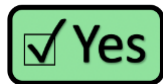
Set up a meeting to speak with the student, and mention that although they may have not intended it, using "gay" as a pejorative term can be offensive and harmful. Ask the student to revise their bCourses comment by rephrasing their idea without marginalizing anyone.

Tokenism (Page 15 of 30)

Consider this scenario:

In a class meeting, a GSI asks the one Black student in their course section to “explain for the class why the slogan ‘All Lives Matter’ is offensive to Black people.”

Is the GSI’s request discriminatory?



Yes, it is.



No, it is not.

Why is this the case?

This scenario is an instance of **tokenism**. Tokenism forces an individual to serve as a representative for a group to which they belong. Tokenism in this case also mistakenly assumes that anyone sharing a perceived group identity holds the same perspective on a topic.

Do not call on any student to be a representative of a particular group (racial, ethnic, generational, social, religious, gender, etc.). If a student volunteers, proceed with caution. Above all, respect students as individuals, while honoring the richness of their backgrounds.

Discriminatory Behavior and Hostile Environment (Page 16 of 30)

Discriminatory behavior can affect a person's education, unreasonably interfere with a person's work or academic performance, or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

Discrimination and harassment on the basis of a person's actual or perceived Protected Category are also prohibited by the [University of California Anti-Discrimination PolicyLinks to an external site.](#) More information about the policies and laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment will be shared later on in this module.

Discriminatory behavior can include discriminatory language such as microaggressions and stereotypes, harassment (physical, verbal, graphic, or written), and more blatantly exclusionary actions. This can play out during a class session or during learning activities outside of class.

When sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent, discriminatory behavior can create a hostile learning environment, in which the student who is directly targeted by the discriminatory behavior is not the only person affected. Others witnessing it are also affected.

While GSIs at the University are not expected to be experts at determining a "hostile environment" in the technical sense, they should nevertheless cultivate an awareness of behaviors that can contribute to a hostile learning environment. The topic of "hostile environment" will be discussed further in Module 5.

On the positive side, there are many ways GSIs can promote an inclusive classroom climate. We will suggest several in the following pages. The strategies that promote inclusion are not supplemental or "extra" elements of teaching; rather, they are foundational to good pedagogy and are useful to any field.

Strategies for Promoting an Inclusive Academic Environment (Page 17 of 30)

In order to create an inclusive classroom, the GSI must use techniques that get all students actively involved and ensure that all students feel respected.

The next several pages will present strategies to help you meet this goal by enabling you to:

- Build relationships with your students and get their input throughout the semester.
- Consciously strive to treat students equitably.
- Become more aware of your biases.
- Diversify teaching methods to include various learning modalities.
- Rethink and diversify your definition of classroom participation.
- Help students understand your expectations for their participation.
- Discuss issues of inclusion with your teaching colleagues.



Help Students Understand Expectations for Class Interactions (Page 18 of 30)

In Module 1, “Practicing Professional Standards and Ethics as a GSI,” we recommended that you create community agreements, either in advance or with your students, to communicate expectations around students’ interactions in the learning environment. We gave the following example of a set of community agreements:

In this course section, it is essential to promote fairness and equal participation so that everyone has the chance to learn and so that we can all learn from one another. Practices that promote this type of learning environment include:

- Refraining from exclusionary speech and actions
- Being open to views different from our own
- Listening to everyone’s ideas whether we agree or not
- Trying to learn from other people’s perspectives, even if we do not agree with them
- Monitoring ourselves so we don’t hold the floor for too long and dominate discussion
- Coming to section well prepared to participate in learning activities
- Discussing as a group any discriminatory language or stereotypes that come up in class
- Having once spoken, allowing for others to speak before speaking again
- Working collaboratively and learning from one another

It is expected that all students will use these practices.

We also introduced another approach: working with the students in the first week of the term to create a set of shared agreements for class discussion. In courses that directly address potentially challenging issues such as race, ethnicity, gender, or politics, it becomes all the more significant for class members to take part in establishing guidelines that promote inclusion and community.

The GSI Teaching & Resource Center online [Teaching Guide for GSIs](#) presents some excellent methods for [establishing community agreements](#).

Using Community Agreements (Page 19 of 30)

Consider this scenario:

You lead a discussion section in which a few of the men in the class routinely dominate the discussion. Several other students raise their hands, following the agreements for participation agreed upon by the class. Yet these particular men ignore the agreements, monopolizing the discussion section without pausing for the students who are signaling their intent to speak to be called on.

What can you do to make this situation better?



Prohibit the dominant students from talking.



Ask the dominating students to leave the classroom.



Review the class community agreements for discussion and why they are in place.

Become Aware of Your Biases (Page 20 of 30)

We all have unconscious biases. Your unconscious biases can affect your interactions with students. Biases and assumptions can be deeply ingrained, and they often go unnoticed by the individual holding them. There are several things you can do to become aware of some biases that you hold.

Questions for Self-Assessment

You can examine classroom dynamics for biases or preferential treatment by asking yourself the following questions.

Belief questions:

- Do I hold different expectations for what a student can learn or accomplish based on factors such as race, ethnicity, age, language use, gender, previous academic experience, etc.?
- What beliefs do I hold about certain groups of students, based on their backgrounds (for example athletes, sorority/fraternity members, ROTC, particular majors, religions, etc.), that might bias my thinking about them as students?

Note: While conscious biases can be accessed through reflection, unconscious biases evade introspection. If you would like to learn more about biases that you hold without realizing it, you can choose to take an Implicit Association Test at [Project ImplicitLinks to an external site.](#)

Behavioral questions:

- Which students do I call by name? Which do I not?
- What proportion of students of a particular race, ethnicity, nationality, or gender do I call on to answer questions?
- Do students of one gender participate more frequently than others? Do students from a particular race, ethnicity, age group, or nationality participate more frequently than others?
- Do interruptions occur when students are talking? If so, who is interrupting and who is being interrupted?
- Do I respond in the same way to all students? For example, am I positive and encouraging to all, or do I react in a specific manner to students of a particular race, ethnicity, nationality, or gender?

- Do I establish eye contact with certain students more than others?
- Do I avoid calling on students who are non-native English speakers? Or students who have dis/abilities? If so, why? What assumptions am I making?
- Do I tend to face or address one side of the classroom more than the other?
- Do I use different gestures, facial expressions, or postures when speaking with students of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, or genders?
- Do I assess differently the work of students whose political or religious beliefs vary from mine? Do I use the same degree of open-mindedness and rigor as I use with the work of students whose beliefs are consonant with my own?

You might print a copy of these questions for your reference to help you remain mindful of creating an inclusive remote learning environment throughout the semester.

[PDF Version for Printing](#)

Ongoing Awareness: Keep a Reflective Teaching Journal



Keeping a teaching journal can assist you in recording and contemplating particular behaviors and interactions in the learning environment. In the journal, ask yourself the questions on the previous page after you finish teaching — while the class period is fresh in your mind — to get a sense of how well you have succeeded in creating an inclusive classroom.

Arrange to be Observed or Video Recorded in the Classroom

Another way to identify teaching practices that do or do not foster an inclusive academic environment is to be observed or video recorded while teaching. You can arrange for a teaching consultant from the GSI Teaching & Resource Center to video record one of your class sessions. Alternatively, you can request that a GSI Center teaching consultant or a faculty member or peer observe your teaching in the classroom less formally (without video recording). Consider providing the observer with the same list of questions and asking them to assess these areas of your teaching. Consultation, classroom observations, and video recording are free services to UC Berkeley GSIs. For more information see [Consultations for Graduate Students](#) on the GSI Teaching & Resource Center website.

Get to Know Your Students and Get Their Input

(Page 21 of 30)

One way to mitigate against unconscious bias is to get to know your students and establish an ongoing feedback loop with them. There are several ways to open communication with individual students and solicit their input. At the beginning of the semester, use a brief survey form to ask your students about their experience with the course's subject matter, their goals in the course, and any obstacles that could make it difficult for them to achieve those goals. You might also ask all your students to meet with you briefly in office hours to discuss these questions. Sample pre-course survey forms can be found in the [Pre-Semester Preparation](#) section of the online [Teaching Guide for GSIs](#).

At various points in the semester (for example, a few weeks in, or after the first midterm), give an anonymous survey to ask students what aspects of the class are helping them learn and what might need to be changed to better support their learning. For example, consider asking for specific comments on classroom dynamics and students' sense of inclusion and belonging. In addition, solicit assessments of the opportunities that you have provided for student participation. Then, share the aggregated responses (without using any information that could disclose a student's identity) during a subsequent class meeting so that students can see how their feedback varies. Students often gain perspective when they see, for example, that others in the class don't share their opinion of group work. Tell students what you will change based on their feedback and follow through.

You can also ask students to write a brief reflection in the last few minutes of a session about the interpersonal dynamics of your section and whether they feel that the class is adhering to the established community agreements and communicating respectfully. This may be especially helpful if an exclusionary incident occurs in class, or if you receive student input indicating an experience of exclusion.

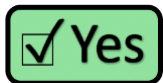
Sample forms for midterm assessment of teaching can be found in the online [Teaching Guide for GSIs](#).

Equitable Teaching Practices (Page 22 of 30)

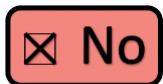
Consider this scenario:

In a history class, the GSI has a difficult time understanding a multilingual speaker. At the beginning of the semester, the GSI made a serious effort to focus and tease out what the student was saying, but after several attempts and a few miscommunications, the GSI began feeling embarrassed. The GSI stopped calling on the student but made it a point to encourage him to come to office hours.

Was the GSI's approach appropriate?



Yes.



No.

Recommendations for Equitable Teaching

- Make yourself and your course materials available to all your students. Check in with students to make sure they can access all of the course resources and let them know how they can contact you.
- Whenever possible, give students choice in the types of assignments they can complete. Students come to your class with a variety of learning needs and strengths.
- Develop grading rubrics* with standards that you will apply to the evaluation of every student's work.
- Practice "anonymous grading" by de-identifying students' work before evaluating it. For example, have students use their student I.D. numbers instead of their names on work to be evaluated. If you use the bCourses Speed Grader function, you can select the option "hide student names in the Speed Grader." Other online grading systems may have similar functionality.
- Familiarize yourself with the device lending options available through [Berkeley Technology Services](#) so that you can share this knowledge with students who need a laptop, tablet, or other technology.

* [Examples of grading rubrics](#) can be found in the GSI Teaching & Resource Center's online [Teaching Guide for GSIs](#).

Diversify Teaching Methods to Include Different Learning Modalities (Page 23 of 30)

Bear in mind that all of your students will not necessarily learn best through the same kinds of activities. Research shows that students benefit from exposure to a wide range of teaching methods that engage different modalities of learning (for example visual, auditory, or kinesthetic experiences). While individual students often do hold particular learning preferences, inviting them to process their learning in a variety of ways promotes deeper learning by recruiting multiple areas of the brain. It also reinforces their knowledge in different contexts.

Some activities to increase variety in learning modalities include:

- incorporating visual materials;
- providing mini-lectures;
- assigning short in-class writing activities;
- encouraging students to move around the classroom or use the board;
- asking students to manipulate objects;
- staging debates or role-plays; and
- breaking the class into small groups.

Small-group discussions and projects, in particular, can engage students who are not comfortable speaking in a larger group.

Guidance on ways to implement these and other teaching strategies can be found in the [Teaching Discussion Sections](#) (a chapter of the GSI Teaching & Resource Center's online [Teaching Guide for GSIs](#)), and in the [Teaching Effectiveness Award essays](#) featured on the GSI Teaching & Resource Center's website.

Rethink Participation (Page 24 of 30)

In addition to diversifying teaching methods to enhance learning, instructors should also avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to class participation. If participation is defined solely in terms of how often a student speaks up in class, students who have had less experience with verbal presentation and those with various marginalized identities may struggle more to earn participation credit.

Given this, how do you define class participation? Do you take into account the fact that some students may feel more confident participating in small-group discussions while others are more comfortable speaking to the entire class? Does your definition of class participation privilege some students over others? Have you considered different types of activities that could constitute class participation?

Here is how one GSI encouraged diverse forms of class participation to create a more inclusive environment:

“My discussion section syllabus states: Different people have different ways they best participate, all of which are valid: active listening, thoughtful preparation, sharing a well-formulated idea after a long pause, helping a classmate understand a concept, coming to office hours, bringing news articles to class.” [1]

In most cases the instructor of record is responsible for assigning grades; therefore, it is important to have a discussion with them about how they would like you to define and grade student participation. Make suggestions if you feel that their definition of participation should be broadened in any way.

Source

[1] [Encouraging and Affirming Diverse Forms of Class Participation](#) by Paul Dosh, former GSI. His essay won a GSI Teaching Effectiveness Award.

Give Input to Your Instructor of Record and Fellow GSIs (Page 25 of 30)

If students let you know that they experienced something in the course as exclusionary or discriminatory, bring their concern to the attention of your fellow GSIs and the instructor of record. In addition, if you or your students believe that relevant perspectives are missing from the course, tell the instructional team.

If you have the opportunity to give input on course policies, readings, assignments, or essay and exam questions, suggest language, policies, readings, questions, and examples that reflect a variety of perspectives and do not discriminate against any group.

Relevant Policies and Laws (Page 26 of 30)

Now that you are familiar with creating an inclusive learning environment, we will briefly introduce policies and laws that were written to respond to and combat historical discrimination based on physical dis/ability, gender, sexual orientation, and racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, generational, or national affiliations.

- Title VI: Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2009, Title II (ADA)
- Academic Adjustments for Pregnancy (California AB 2350)
- University of California Nondiscrimination Statement
- UC Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct

We will look at these laws and policies in the next few pages.

Federal and State Nondiscrimination Laws (Page 27 of 30)

Title VI: Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI, 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

As President John F. Kennedy stated in 1963,

Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races [colors, and national origins] contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in racial [color or national origin] discrimination.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2009, Title II (ADA)

The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of dis/ability by state and local governments and by private entities that serve the public (see [Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services](#)[Links to an external site.](#)). Module 3 explains in detail GSIs' responsibilities with respect to dis/ability, including academic accommodations.

Academic Adjustments for Pregnancy (California AB 2350)

Under California law, pregnancy is explicitly understood as a potential area of discrimination against women:

It is the policy of the State of California, pursuant to Section 66251, that all persons, regardless of their sex, should enjoy freedom from discrimination of any kind, including, but not limited to, pregnancy discrimination as described in Title IX of the Education

Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1681, et seq.), in the postsecondary educational institutions of the state. [1]

The federal Title IX legislation referred to will be addressed in detail of Module 5 of this course.

In some cases, a student's pregnancy may necessitate an [academic accommodation](#). (Again, the topic of academic accommodations will be covered in Module 3.) Students in this situation may apply to the [Disabled Students' Program](#) for a Letter of Accommodation for a temporary disability.

Source

[1] AB 2350, as amended, [Bonilla. Equity in Higher Education Act: Prevention of Pregnancy Discrimination](#)[Links to an external site.](#).

University Policies (Page 28 of 30)

University of California Anti-Discrimination Policy

The [UC Anti-Discrimination Policy Links to an external site.](#) prohibits harassment and discrimination based on an individual's actual or perceived Protected Category, as well as retaliation. The Policy defines Protected Category as "an identity protected by federal or state law," including the following:

- Race
- Religion
- Color
- Citizenship,
- National or ethnic origin
- Ancestry
- Sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation or related medical conditions)
- Gender, gender identity, gender expression, gender transition
- Sexual orientation
- Physical or mental disability (including having a history of a disability or being regarded as being disabled)
- Medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics)
- Predisposing genetic information (including family medical history)
- Marital status
- Age (at least 40 years of age)
- Veteran or military status

The University also prohibits sexual harassment.

The University prohibits discrimination on the basis of any of the Protected Category as defined by the [UC Anti-Discrimination Policy Links to an external site.](#) in any University education program or activity, including in admission. The University prohibits discrimination against any person employed; seeking employment; or applying for or engaged in a paid or unpaid internship or training program leading to employment with the University of California. In addition, the University prohibits harassment of an employee, applicant, paid or unpaid intern, volunteer, person participating in a program leading to employment, or person providing services pursuant to a contract. The University undertakes affirmative action, consistent with its obligations as a federal contractor.

For employees, this policy applies to all employment practices, including recruitment, selection, promotion, transfer, merit increase, salary, training and development, demotion, and separation. The University will not discriminate against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed, or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. For students, this policy applies to admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities.

The UC Anti-Discrimination Policy defines harassment as “Unwelcome conduct based on an individual’s actual or perceived Protected Category that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with, denies, or adversely limits an individual’s participation in or benefit from the education, employment, or other programs or activities of the University, and creates an environment that a reasonable person would find to be intimidating or offensive.”

The Policy defines discrimination as “An Unfavorable Action taken because of an individual’s actual or perceived Protected Category.”

Unfavorable action: An “unfavorable action” is adverse or unequal treatment under University authority that unreasonably denies, unreasonably limits, or materially interferes with an individual’s ability to participate in programs, activities, or employment of the University, and/or receive services, benefits, or aid of the University, unless required or authorized by law. An Unfavorable Action is taken because of an individual’s Protected Category. An Unfavorable Action will not exist where the action or inaction would have been taken regardless of the individual’s Protected Category.

Failure to Accommodate: The Policy defines the “failure to accommodate” as the failure of the University to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals when required by law.

The [Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination \(OPHD\)](#) is UC Berkeley’s official unit for reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment on the basis of protected categories. If you are impacted by discrimination or harassment on the basis of a Protected Category, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, you have the option to report it to the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) in any of the following ways:

- Webform: <https://uctitleix.i-sight.com/portal/Berkeley> [Links to an external site.](#)
- Email: ask_ophd@berkeley.edu
- Phone: 510-643-7985

People who supervise, manage, teach, and instruct (including GSIs) are [Responsible Employees](#) and **must** promptly notify OPHD if they learn, in the course of employment, that any individual affiliated with the University may have experienced Prohibited Conduct, as defined by the UC Anti-Discrimination Policy.

Source

[1] Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination, [Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)[Links to an external site.](#) and [Nondiscrimination Policy Statement](#)

Module 2 Campus Resources (Page 29 of 30)

University Resources

The information below is included in the [Annotated Campus Resource List](#).

[GSI Teaching & Resource Center](#)

301 Sproul Hall
510-642-4456 or gsi@berkeley.edu

The GSI Teaching & Resource Center, an academic unit in the Graduate Division, provides pedagogical support for GSIs. Programs include teaching conferences, workshops, course improvement grants, teaching awards, confidential consultations, the GSI Professional Standards and Ethics in Teaching Online Course, the Certificate Program in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, and the Language Proficiency Program for GSIs who do not speak English as a native language.

Programs and services for GSIs:

[Consultations with GSI Center Staff](#)

[Certificate Program in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education](#)

Resources of particular interest:

[Online Teaching Guide for GSIs](#)

The following sections of the Teaching Guide are referenced in this module:

[Grading Rubrics](#)

[Improving Your Teaching: Conducting a Midterm Evaluation](#)

[Creating Community Agreements](#)

[Working with Student Writing](#)

[Encouraging and Affirming Diverse Forms of Class Participation](#)

Teaching Effectiveness Award essay by Paul Dosh, former GSI

This is one of more than 200 one-page essays by outstanding GSIs identifying and responding

to a problem they encountered in a class, laboratory, or section they taught. [These essays](#) are available on the GSI Teaching & Resource Center website.

[UC Berkeley Office of Planning & Analysis](#)

The Office of Planning & Analysis collects data about the Berkeley campus from many sources and makes it available for institutional research and decision-making.

[Key Campus Statistics](#)

Links to Berkeley Fall Enrollment Data, Berkeley Undergraduate Profile, Berkeley Graduate Profile, and other data sets.

[UC Berkeley Campus Climate Project Final Report, 2014 \(pdf\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[UC Berkeley My Experience Survey Report, 2019 \(pdf\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[UC Undergraduate Experience Survey \(UCUES\), 2022](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[UC Undergraduate Experience Survey \(UCUES\), 2020](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[Multicultural Education Program](#)

The Multicultural Education Program is an initiative of the Division of Equity & Inclusion that provides teaching and learning resources to help create a positive campus climate for diversity.

[Classroom Tools](#)

This page links to selected tools to assist with creating inclusive classroom environments and engaging with diversity topics.

[Gender Equity Resource Center \(GenEq\)](#)

202 Cesar Chavez Student Center
510-642-4786 or geneq@berkeley.edu

GenEq is a campus community center providing programs, services, and resource information about gender, sexual orientation, sex and gender identity, sexual and relationship violence, and bias-related incidents. It is a program of UC Berkeley's Division of Equity and Inclusion.

[Resources for Classrooms and Groups: Creating Inclusive Classrooms for Trans* and Gender Expansive Students](#)

Links to a tip sheet giving guidelines for setting an inclusive tone, adapting to students' name and pronoun usage, and respecting their confidentiality.

[Center for Student Conduct](#)

203 Sproul Hall
510-643-9069 or studentconduct@berkeley.edu

The Center for Student Conduct supports the mission of the University by administering the Campus Code of Student Conduct, which lists sexual, racial, and other forms of harassment as grounds for discipline.

[Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination \(OPHD\)](#)

Office address: 2111 Bancroft Way, Suite 300 Berkeley, CA 94720-1120

Phone: 510-643-7985

Email: ask_ophd@berkeley.edu

Website: ophd.berkeley.edu

The Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) is responsible for ensuring the University provides an environment for faculty, staff, and students that is free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of protected categories including race, color, national origin, gender, age, and sexual orientation/identity. OPHD monitors and evaluates campus efforts to meet requirements under University policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment, and applicable federal and state regulations.

OPHD has the responsibility to implement procedures for providing prompt and effective responses to complaints of hostile work/academic environment, sexual or racial harassment, or other discrimination concerns. Further, the office has oversight responsibility to initiate, coordinate, or conduct investigations into claims of violations of campus policy in all areas of discrimination against protected categories. The scope of this responsibility is campuswide, covering faculty, staff, and students. The Office for the Prevention of Harassment and

Discrimination provides education about issues of discrimination, equity, and the effects of discrimination and unequal treatment on the campus climate. Their services are available to faculty, staff, and students.

[Title IX and Title VI Officer](#)

Consultation, advising, and/or reporting: ask_ophd@berkeley.edu or 510-643-7985

This Officer provides policy information and guidance when responding to incidents of possible sexual or racial harassment, and other forms of discrimination. In addition, they direct and coordinate campus education and training efforts for faculty, staff, and students, specifically in sexual/racial harassment prevention, and generally, on issues of equity and campus climate concerns. Further, this Officer provides in-person education and training for academic departments and administrative units.

[UC Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)

[University Nondiscrimination Policy Statement](#)

[Berkeley People and Culture: Reports of Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation](#)

510-643-8996 or idcr@berkeley.edu

The People and Culture office has a process to assist UC Berkeley employees who believe they have been subjected to discrimination on a protected basis.

[Berkeley International Office](#)

International House, 2299 Piedmont Ave., 2nd floor
510-642-2818

The Berkeley International Office provides programming, consultation, immigration, and advocacy services for international students and scholars.

[International Community at Cal](#)

Student Technology Services

Student Technology Services (STS) offers a number of resources/services that are extremely helpful to GSIs and their students such as:

- Student Technology Equity Program: free long-term loans of laptops, headphones, and other hardware devices (GSIs receive priority in these devices due to their instructional role)
- Cost of Attendance Adjustment: loan (sometimes grant) of \$3000 to purchase a computer every 3 years through the financial aid office
- Student Helpdesk: free drop-in tech support (wi-fi issues, broken laptop, etc.) located in Doe Library, Eshleman Hall, and Fannie Lou Hamer Resource Center, and via email (sts-help@berkeley.edu) and phone (510-642-HELP)
- Free Software: Visit software.berkeley.edu and click “What am I eligible for?” to find over a dozen free software programs including Adobe Creative Cloud, Matlab, Microsoft 365, etc.)

The information above is included in the [Annotated Campus Resource List](#).

Module 2 Wrap-Up and Quiz (Page 30 of 30)

As you have learned in this module, GSIs play an important role in creating an equitable and inclusive learning environment. By communicating the value of diversity and the need for nondiscrimination in the academic setting, you can help foster an atmosphere of trust and inclusion that supports learning for all of your students.

Review

You should now be able to:

- explain to a colleague why GSIs should strive for an inclusive academic environment;
- identify instances of discrimination, stereotyping, and harassment in the learning environment;
- develop informed and measured responses to discrimination, stereotyping, and harassment in the learning environment;
- develop pedagogical and professional-development practices that promote inclusion and support equity for all students;
- refer to federal legislation and campus policies on nondiscrimination based on protected categories; and
- identify campus resources that can help you and your students learn more about ways to build and benefit from an inclusive learning environment.

If you wish, we invite you to respond to a variety of questions this module raises or see what others say about the module content. In the bCourses window or tab, use the Discussions tool in the left navigation menu; from there select the Module 2 discussion. Alternatively, you may use this link to the [bCourses Module 2 Discussion page](#). This discussion is optional. Please note: Your posts will not be anonymous.

After you finish reviewing, please move on to the Module 2 quiz, linked below.

Module 2 Quiz

The quiz for Module 2 will help you master the material by connecting the concepts introduced in the module and applying them to new scenarios. In addition to demonstrating

your command of the course content, we hope this activity helps prepare you to clarify issues at play and discern the best plan of action in the situations you may face as a GSI.

You must score an 8 or higher out of 10 on this quiz. If your score is under 8, you are allowed to retake the quiz up to four times (that is, you have 5 attempts total). If you exhaust your five attempts and still have not passed, please contact the GSI Teaching & Resource Center (gsi@berkeley.edu) for assistance. Please click the link below to open the Module 2 quiz.

[Go to Module 2 Quiz](#)