You are the Individual and We are All the Society: Personalizing Core 130

Heather M. Niemeier, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology

Project Goals

- Update syllabus language to be inclusive, welcoming, and to further encourage participation
- Modify first weeks of class to focus on creating a more inclusive classroom climate
- Foster increased application of content to personal experiences related to social identities
- Update racial and ethnic inequality content to include more examples from additional racial groups in the U.S.
- Update intersectional content with attention to marginalized identities previously underrepresented in course content

Syllabus Updates

- Add pronouns to instructor line
- Change "Student Hours" to "Student Drop-in Hours" and explain their purpose in supporting students
- Add statement personalizing the course that stresses the applied nature of the content to all our lives (i.e., "This class is about us…")
- Modify existing civil discourse statement to discuss our process for setting guidelines for difficult discussions, acknowledge the discomfort that may arise, and encourage personal application and sharing

Transforming the First Two Weeks

- Incorporate first day getting to know each other "bingo" activity emphasizing diversity of experiences/knowledge in the class
- Modify Canvas "Getting to Know You" activity
- Delay syllabus overview until day 2; add Canvas syllabus "quiz" to encourage reading of syllabus in advance
- Incorporate a social identities activity in the first two weeks

Application Assignments

- Create a series of assignments that encourage students to apply the content learned in class to their own lives and the lives of those around them.
- Students will complete an application assignment for 6 of the following 8 social identity topics: age, race, class, gender identity, sexual identity, religion/spirituality, ability status, and intersectionality
- Assignment will include choice of response prompts allowing for flexibility in personal information shared

Updates to Racial/Ethnic Inequality Content

- Investigation of the disparate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on communities of color, including Native American communities
- Exploration of hate crime data over time with an emphasis on recent increases targeting Asian Americans and Jewish Americans
- Examination of representation in federal government by race and gender
- Inclusion of multiple racial/ethnic groups in job discrimination and mortgage discrimination presentation

Updates to Intersectional Content

- Exploration of disparate impact of Covid-19 pandemic by intersectional identities
- Inclusion of ability status in job discrimination presentation
- Examination of laws targeting transgender youth

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
WHITEWATER