Inclusive Language & Pedagogy Resource Guide

General Principles and Practices for Inclusive Language

- Language is a social invention that is always evolving. Use the resources below to keep up to date. It means a lot to our students when we do.
- Language can fall into at least 3 buckets: helpful, unhelpful, and offensive. Strive to use terms in the helpful category.
- When engaging with these topics, you will make mistakes. When a mistake is made, model the appropriate response for students: acknowledge the mistake, apologize, and move on. Ask about the right language when you don't know.
- Humanize nouns. For example say "Black people" rather than "Blacks," or "Jewish people" rather than "Jews."
- Use universal terms and phrases. Not only does this mean avoiding gendered language (e.g. policeman) or those with racist pasts (e.g. being "grandfathered in"), but it also means avoiding insider terminology/acronyms that some groups may not understand.
- When students use unhelpful or offensive language in class, find constructive ways to address it without making a student feel shamed. For example, you might refer to it as a "word moment" and work through why certain language might be problematic and what should be used instead. If you are unsure of terms, take time after class to consult colleagues or resources below, and come back to it in the following class.
- Emphasize calling people in, rather than calling people out. Invite students to learn inclusive language and practices along with you. Point to positive examples from students, course materials, faculty, and staff, and invite students to use them as models.
- While language is important, it is not the only area for helping students to feel welcome and supported. It is one part of a broader inclusive pedagogy and set of institutional practices to promote equity and belonging.

Inclusive Language / Terminology

Several resources below are updated regularly to help keep you up to date with evolving language.

- [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#) (updated regularly)
- [LGBTQ+ Vocabulary: Glossary of Terms](#) (updated regularly)
- [The Gender Unicorn](#)
- [Identity-First vs. Person-First Language is an Important Distinction](#)
  Disability resources referenced in this article include:
  - [Disability Language Style Guide](#) - National Center on Disability and Journalism

      ○ [Identity-First Language](#) - Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)

Words that Don't Belong to Everyone and Words to Avoid

- [Words that don't Belong to Everyone](#) (Ta-Nehisi Coates video)
- [Phrases to Avoid](#)
- [Ableist Words to Avoid](#)
- [Teaching & the N-word: Questions to Consider](#) (Koritha Mitchell)
- [The N-Word Again?!?!: Racial Trauma In The UW-Madison Classroom](#) (podcast)
- [The N-Word in the Classroom: Just Say NO](#) (podcast)
- [I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much](#) (Ted Talk on why we should not turn disabled people into "inspiration porn")

Inclusive Pedagogy

Using inclusive language is one part of a broader strategy for inclusive pedagogy. One of the most comprehensive guides available is Georgetown's Inclusive Pedagogy Toolkit, which organizes material into content, pedagogy, assessment, climate, and power (citations are provided throughout).

- [Inclusive Pedagogy Toolkit](#) (Georgetown's Center for New Designs in Learning & Scholarship)
- [10 Ways We Can Make Leadership Accessible for Sick Folks in Activism](#) (this is focused on activism, but can apply to pedagogy as well)

For Further Help at OWU

Faculty and staff seeking more support in adopting inclusive language and pedagogy have many people ready to help! Among your many colleagues, please feel free to reach out to people in any of the offices below:

- [Office of Multicultural Student Affairs](#) (OMSA)
- [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council](#)
- Director of Faculty Development (Academic Affairs)
- [Office of the University Chaplain](#)
- [International and Off-Campus Programs](#) (IOCP)
- [Accessibility Services Office](#) (ASO)

This resource guide was developed by Dawn Chisebe (Interim Chief Diversity Officer), Paul Dean (Interim Director of Faculty Development), Chad Johns (University Chaplain), and Jason Timpson (Director of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs).

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