

# A Guide for Peer Review of Inclusive Teaching

## KU Center for Teaching Excellence

Draft: October 2021

### I. Overview

This document is a guide for peer-to-peer review and dialogue about pedagogical strategies for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion. The guide is aligned with the [Benchmarks for Teaching Effectiveness](#) framework, providing a deeper focus on elements that are central to inclusive and anti-racist pedagogies. **The peer review activity offers a way for instructors to reflect on teaching practices they are using to foster inclusion and equity and combat systemic racism, with support and input from peers.** Participants may also choose to produce a document summarizing their review of their partner's class that could be used in evaluation processes.

Participants may be organized into pairs or Peer Review Triads; pair or triad members will exchange and review course materials and participate in a conversation informed by those materials. The conversation is critical because it helps the peer understand how an instructor has approached a class, and allows the instructor to articulate the thinking behind assignments, content selection, policies, communication, and other aspects of a course. The peer review may also include observation of one or more class periods.

### II. Inclusive Elements in the Benchmarks Framework

The course-focused dimensions of the Benchmarks Framework provide a structure for reflecting on inclusive and anti-racist dimensions of teaching. This peer review guide is organized around those dimensions. For each one, we identify elements or subcategories of strategies that are most central to inclusive and anti-racist pedagogies. These include:

#### A. Course Goals, Content and Materials

1. Inclusive course goals
2. Curating inclusive content
3. Accessibility of materials

#### B. Teaching Practices

1. Active and collaborative learning
2. Structure for out of class time appropriate for level
3. Transparency

4. Inclusive assessment practices

#### C. Class Climate

1. Relationships and rapport
2. Stressful situations
3. Teaching the whole student

#### D. Student Learning

#### E. Reflection and Iterative Growth

### III. Preparation

Each participant should prepare a set of course materials to inform the conversation. To make the most of the conversation time, participants could choose to exchange and review each other's materials before the conversation. Important items to include are:

1. The **Syllabus**
2. **Example Course Documents** that illustrate how you are approaching inclusive and antiracist teaching, such as:
  - A lesson plan or example learning activity
  - A sample assignment and criteria for evaluating it
  - Examples of student work and feedback provided to students
  - Sample materials or content
3. A short **Narrative** [If exchanging and reviewing materials before the conversation], with background information about the course to help contextualize the review (e.g., who takes it and why, reasons behind course design decisions, reflection on student achievement/feedback if available)

#### IV. Review and Discussion Guide

The rest of this document is designed to scaffold both your review of course materials and your conversation. The guide is organized around five broad dimensions of the Benchmarks Framework. Each section highlights elements of that dimension that are most central to inclusive and anti-racist approaches, suggests course materials that might illustrate them, and suggests prompts for reflection and peer conversation about them.

- **Before the conversation**, the guide can help you review the materials your colleagues shared with you (focus on the dimensions that correspond with their course changes); jot initial feedback or questions in the Notes/Comments section.
- **During the conversation**, use the conversation prompts (and your materials review notes) to help you learn more about your peer's teaching activities and the impact they are having on students. Use the Notes/Comments section to record additional suggestions or reflections.

Your (Reviewer's) Name:

Name of Colleague being reviewed:

Course Code/Name:

<p><b>A. Goals, content and materials.</b>                  Inclusive course goals, content and materials are relevant to all students, reflect diverse perspectives, and enable all learners to access course materials and learning opportunities</p> <p><b>Materials that might be reviewed or referenced:</b> Syllabus, course management systems (i.e., Blackboard, Canvas), list of readings or other course content</p> <p><b>What to look for:</b> Approaches to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making course goals inclusive</li> <li>2. Curating inclusive content</li> <li>3. Designing materials for accessibility</li> </ol>	<p><b>Notes/Comments:</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Conversation Prompts:</b></p> <p><b>Global prompt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have you made adjustments to course goals, content or materials to enhance inclusiveness or accessibility? Describe those changes and outcomes so far.</li> </ul> <p><b>More specific prompts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do you make course goals relevant to all learners? Do goals match the needs of students in the class? How do you know?</li> <li>▪ What perspectives are represented in your course materials? Are there other ways you are representing diverse identities and backgrounds in your materials?</li> <li>▪ Are there opportunities for students to critically reflect on diverse perspectives? To share their own unique perspectives?</li> <li>▪ Are there ways you have addressed how students access content and materials, with the goal of making them more accessible?</li> <li>▪ How have you considered technology access or the cost of course materials?</li> </ul>
---	-------------------------------	--

<p><b>B. Teaching Practices.</b>                  Inclusive teaching practices support learning in all students, emphasizing active and collaborative learning; provide structure for students' out-of-class learning that is appropriate for student level; provide transparency in expectations and criteria; and use varied assessments and assignments that give students multiple ways to demonstrate their learning.</p> <p><b>Materials that might be reviewed or referenced:</b>                  sample assignments, learning activities, course management systems (i.e., Blackboard, Canvas)</p> <p><b>What to look for:</b> Practices that center on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active and collaborative learning</li> <li>2. Scaffolding out-of-class learning</li> <li>3. Transparency</li> <li>4. Inclusive assessments /assignments</li> </ol>	<p><b>Notes/Comments:</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Conversation Prompts:</b></p> <p><b>Global prompt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have you made adjustments to your learning activities, assignments or assessments to better support equitable learning, inclusion, or belonging? Describe implementation and outcomes so far.</li> </ul> <p><b>More specific prompts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do you spend your contact time with students? Share some examples. How do students respond to the contact time?</li> <li>▪ What sorts of activities and assignments do students do to prepare for class time? What motivates students to complete them, and how do you handle feedback?</li> <li>▪ What major assignments and assessments allow students to demonstrate their learning of major course goals?</li> <li>▪ What strategies do you use to help students understand course or assignment expectations and criteria?</li> <li>▪ Are there major activities or assignments they spend time on that are designed with a specific inclusion, belonging, or justice focus? Why are those activities important?</li> </ul>
--	-------------------------------	--

<p><b>C. Class Climate.</b> The instructor supports both student-student and student-teacher dialogue, and fosters motivation, self-efficacy and ownership of learning. Scaffolds and sets guidelines for impromptu or planned conversations about systemic differences. Supports students as whole individuals through inclusive language and behavior and connecting them to resources to foster success.</p> <p><b>Materials that might be reviewed or referenced:</b> Syllabus (focus on tone and policies), student reflection assignments or surveys (if used)</p> <p><b>What to look for:</b> Approaches to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building relationships/community</li> <li>2. Managing conversations about systemic difference</li> <li>3. Teaching the whole student</li> </ol>	<p><b>Notes/Comments:</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Conversation Prompts:</b></p> <p><b>Global prompt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do you encourage motivation, inclusion and a sense of belonging among your students? How do you feel those strategies are working?</li> </ul> <p><b>More specific prompts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What strategies do you use to communicate with students?</li> <li>▪ How do students interact with each other? Are there things you are doing to build a sense of community?</li> <li>▪ How do you scaffold and/or set guidelines for impromptu or planned conversations about systemic differences?</li> <li>▪ How do you connect struggling students to resources that will foster their success in your class and more broadly?</li> <li>▪ How have student perspectives informed the way you teach this course?</li> </ul>
---	-------------------------------	--

<p><b>D. Achievement of Learning Outcomes.</b> Inclusive approaches involve using formal and informal assessment to gauge whether students are achieving desired outcomes and whether outcomes are equitable across students from different groups, and taking steps to address inequities in student performance.</p> <p><b>Materials that might be reviewed or refenced:</b> Example assignments/ assessments, grading criteria/rubrics, sample student work on low stakes and high stakes assessments</p> <p><b>What to look for:</b> How the instructor attends to student learning and other desired outcomes and whether achievement is equitable.</p>	<p><b>Notes/Comments:</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Conversation Prompts:</b></p> <p><b>Global prompt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How well are students achieving the desired course outcomes and is that equitable? How do you know?</li> </ul> <p><b>More specific prompts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does student work in the course meet your expectations and course learning goals? How do you know?</li> <li>▪ Which assignments are most central to the course and best illustrate student learning (particularly in relation to the goals you have already articulated)?</li> <li>▪ Does the student work on these assignments meet your (or other stakeholders’) expectations and course learning goals? How do you know?</li> <li>▪ Do you know if there are any inequities in student performance? If so, have you taken any steps to address them?</li> </ul>
--	-------------------------------	--

<p><b>E. Reflection and Iterative Growth.</b> Adopting or considering new or refined approaches to improve DEI as a result of peer observation, student performance, or feedback. Reflection on factors such as racial trauma and likely impacts, the instructor’s positionality (current and historical), issues of bias in the discipline or larger institution. Exploring how changes in approach are related to outcomes.</p> <p><b>Materials that might be reviewed or refenced:</b> Summaries or examples of student performance or responses; student work from different semesters (if available)</p> <p><b>What to look for:</b> How the instructor has developed their practices and strategies for inclusive teaching over time.</p>	<p><b>Notes/Comments:</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Conversation Prompts:</b></p> <p><b>Global prompt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have you made (other) changes in this course from previous semesters to better center diversity, to make the experience more inclusive or the student outcomes equitable? What prompted those changes? How have they worked out and how do you know?</li> </ul> <p><b>More specific prompts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have you invited students to provide feedback on the course during the semester? What changes (if any) have you made in response to that feedback?</li> <li>▪ Have your approaches been informed by reflection on factors such as your identity, positionality, implicit bias, or disciplinary norms? If so, how?</li> <li>▪ Have changes in your teaching approaches yielded the outcomes you wanted (e.g., better and more equitable student learning, belonging or other outcomes)? How do you know?</li> <li>▪ What is your greatest ongoing challenge in teaching this course?</li> </ul>
---	-------------------------------	---