

SUPPORTING INTERCULTURAL CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT SERVICES (MSS) STRATEGIES

I. KNOWING - be informed and build trust



A. Get to Know Your Students

- Use **diagnostic** tools at the beginning of the term to assess prior knowledge
- Conduct a **needs analysis** by asking questions about personal, cultural, and educational background, and personal and professional goals, at the start of term

How?

- Online survey (D2L or MS Forms survey tools)
- Paper forms or index cards (less formal)
- Students email you or share a video online (D2L discussion or [Flip](#))
- [First Day Graffiti](#) - live survey about past experiences/ questions/ concerns on flipcharts around the room or in a [Menti](#) presentation

- Use knowledge from the needs analysis to **personalize the learning experience**
- Understand **where your students are from** and how their cultures perceive certain body language and other communication cues (eye contact, physical distance, silence, et.)
- Implement ongoing strategies to **continue getting to know students** all term

How?

- Use classroom assessment techniques (CATs) to learn more and check in with students' experiences of the course (contact CETL)
- Mingle through smaller groups to connect equally with shy students

B. Get to Know Yourself

- **Look in the mirror:** Spend some time increasing your cultural self-awareness and intercultural competence

How?

- Create a personal positionality (social location) statement
- Learn about unconscious bias and microaggressions
- Talk to your MSS for more information and resources

II. CONNECTING - create safety and buy-in



A. Building Community

- Create **shared expectations** for conduct and interactions

How?

- Develop a set of **Group Agreements** - a tool for fostering participation, inclusivity, and habits of consent and accountability in the classroom (contact CETL for support)
- Offer **discussion strategies** for turn-taking, interrupting, and disagreeing

- Conduct **Icebreakers** to foster connection and lower barriers

- *Personal Interview* (interview a classmate, and share with others)
- *More than One Story* (discussion cards available through CETL or online at <https://www.morethanonestory.org/en/>)
- *What do we have in common?* (Make it fun and competitive - use time limits, prizes for most commonalities, etc.)

How?

- Employ **group work** for learning, review, and community building

How?

- Use [Kahoot](#), Menti, and other active tools with a **sense of fun!**
- [Troika Consulting-Adaptation for Class Community Building](#) - an excellent tool for students to engage in collaborative problem solving

- Foster **intercultural awareness and competency** in students
 - Include activities that highlight commonalities and share differences
 - *Cultural Artifacts* (Ss select an object from their lives that reflects an aspect of their cultural identity – they write about it, explain its meaning and why they selected it; Ss then present their cultural artifacts to each other (in small or whole-class groups).
- **Model openness** by welcoming comments and questions, and inviting different viewpoints and experiences; thank students for sharing

How?



III. VARYING - give everyone opportunities to thrive

A. Diverse Class Interactions

- Mix up groups early in the term for **intercultural contact**
- **Vary student interactions:** pair, small, and large group work
 - *Think-Pair-Share* or *1-2-4-ALL* (alone, in pairs/groups of four, whole class)
 - *Jigsaw* activities (individuals work on parts and share with group, or groups work on parts and share with class)
 - Assign roles for group work (Leader, Notetaker, Timekeeper, ...)

How?

B. Language Support

- **Provide sensitive language support**
 - **Avoid correcting** grammar in front of the class; instead, repeat in the correct way
 - Model **giving time** for thoughtful responses
 - Provide vocabulary lists/activities with key words, pronounce them
 - Talk to your MSS for more information and resources

How?

C. Encourage Varied Participation

- **Allow time** for written responses before pairing or grouping
- Have students **prepare questions before** class for participation marks
- Assign work done in **various formats:** written, visual, oral

IV. CLARIFYING - ensure linguistic and cultural understanding



A. Clear Expectations

- Provide information in **various modes:** written, visual, oral
 - Use PowerPoint slides with clear instructions to accompany oral explanations
 - Make use of relevant graphics and clear formatting
 - Talk to your MSS about **Instructional Materials Analysis** support
- Speak clearly and concisely, and more slowly than in regular conversation
- Be **patient** about repeating information in different ways
- Reassure students that **questions are welcome and create spaces for clarification**
 - Provide multiple methods to get support – during/after class, office hours, phone or email, anonymously (e.g. D2L survey "suggestion box")
 - Send proactive emails to check in with quieter students

How?

How?