

Faculty Seminar on Inclusive Pedagogy
Outcomes Assessment, Fall 2020
Bernard L. Schwartz Communication Institute

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About the Seminar

[The Inclusive Pedagogy Seminar](#) provides faculty with resources and strategies to identify and more confidently respond to their personal and disciplinary goals around inclusive teaching. Goals range widely, but include, for example, diversifying teaching materials, designing more equitable grading practices, creating conditions for meaningful discussion of challenging aspects of course content (especially related to equity, diversity, and identity), and explicitly working toward anti-racism. In an intimate, collaborative learning environment, Seminar participants engage deeply with new tools and frameworks for rethinking and revising aspects of their teaching, and actively workshop teaching materials with support from Seminar leaders and colleagues. In the words of one Seminar participant, “The Seminar has reinforced my conviction that the instructor has the power to ensure all students can learn.”

The Seminar is comprised of two parts. In January or August (i.e. the weeks leading up to a semester), faculty meet intensively over two four-hour days to focus on revising an upcoming course. In the subsequent semester, faculty meet for three two-hour lunches to continue revision while also participating in reflection and peer review. Each participant concludes the Seminar by producing a Portfolio comprised of revised instructional materials; reflections on progress and remaining challenges; and concrete plans for next steps.

The Seminar covers the following material, with additional areas of focused tailored to each cohort’s needs:

- Establishing an Inclusive Culture
- Creating Diverse Representation
- Facilitating Difficult Dialogues
- Using Active Learning for Inclusive Pedagogy
- Designing Assignments and Providing Feedback to Support Inclusion

Context. Nation-wide and across disciplines, there’s an increasing interest among higher education institutions in developing student-centered approaches to teaching and learning that reflect diversity, further social justice work, and respond equitably to the needs of all learners. Faculty are creating classroom cultures that encourage participation, civil discourse, and debate; they are diversifying representation on their syllabi and in their instructional materials; they are arguing for the value of diversity to the project of knowledge-building. Much of this work relies on foundations of active learning: when faculty teach to support diversity, provide strategies for evidence-based argumentation about difficult topics, and challenge students to interrogate their received worlds, their students are speaking and writing to learn, working in groups and pairs, reporting out, debating, presenting, and providing and receiving peer feedback.

History. Seeking to engage in this work, the diversity committee of the Marxe School of Public and International Affairs approached the Institute in 2016 for pedagogical support. After a period of research and development, the Institute facilitated an inaugural Seminar in 2017 with a cohort of Marxe faculty. Together, they reflected on their practice; developed and workshopped instructional materials, syllabi, and in-class activities; and supported one another through classroom implementation. The Institute has since facilitated the Seminar each year, rotating through each of the College’s three Schools. Occasionally, all cohorts are brought together for an interdisciplinary share-out and reflection (the next such gathering will take place on December 18, 2020).

Next Steps.

- In order to scale the Seminar’s reach and diversify Seminar facilitation, the Institute is about to begin training past faculty participants to be future Seminar facilitators.

- The Institute also plans to explore the possibility of collaborating with others on campus to create a Diversity and Inclusion Innovation Award for faculty participants (per Strategic Plan goal 5.4.6) as well as a Showcase of Faculty Outcomes (per Strategic Plan goal 5.1.3).

Profile of Participants

- 4 cohorts of faculty have convened (from the Marx School of Public and International Affairs (MSPIA) in 2017 and 2018; from the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences (WSAS) in 2019; from the Zicklin School of Business (ZSB) in 2020)
- 41 faculty members have participated (18 from MSPIA; 11 from WSAS; 12 from ZSB)
- 39 of these were full-time faculty, 2 part-time
- Participants are compensated for participation

Anonymous Quantitative Data

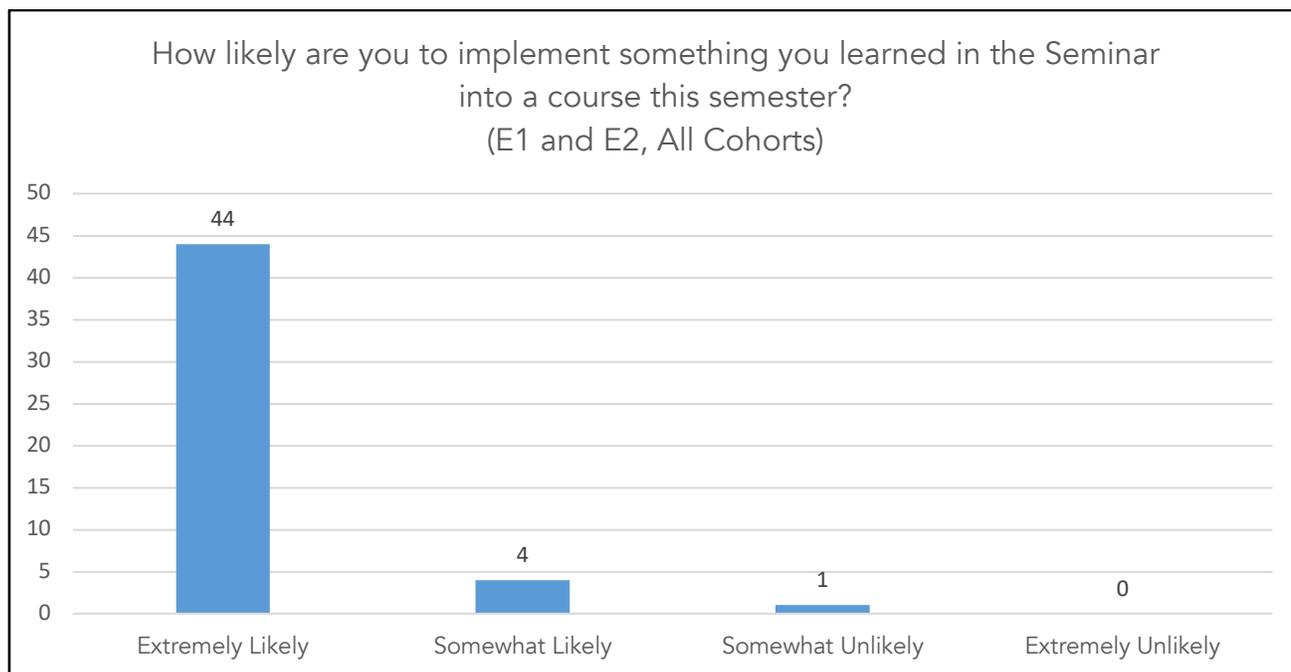
Methodology

All participants receive an anonymous evaluation seeking information about their engagement with the Seminar, first upon completion of the Seminar Intensive (E1), and then again upon completion of the Seminar at Large (E2).

In addition to open ended qualitative questions (see the next section), each evaluation consists of two types of quantitative questions: those intended to support future instructional design, and those intended to measure impact. Only the latter are analyzed here.

Data and Analysis

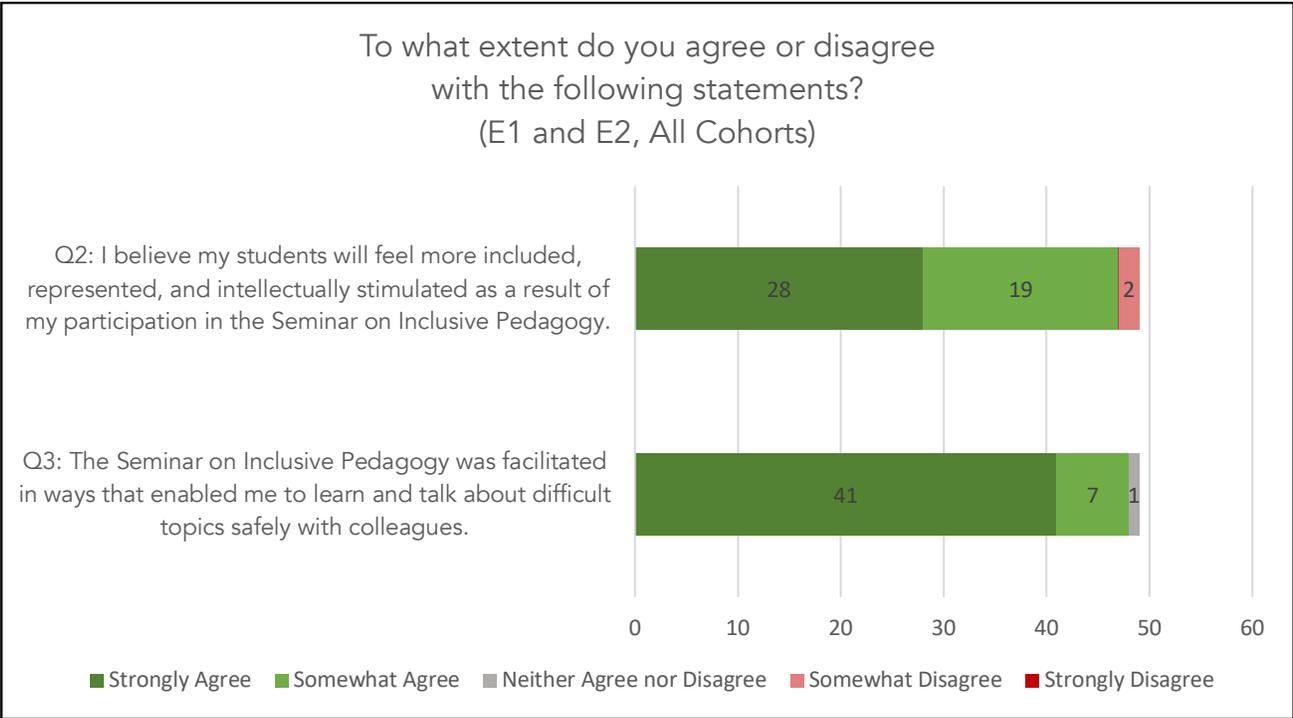
Q1: Implementation. As the table below shows, the Seminar has had clear and immediate outcomes for inclusive pedagogy at the College.



Portfolios will be analyzed in greater detail later in this report, but their completion, too, serves as further quantitative evidence that teaching strategies, instructional design, syllabi, class activities, and more are impacted by participation in the Seminar.

Q2: Anticipated Student Outcomes. This question (see table below) was intentionally designed to set a high bar for agreement. It not only asks respondents to reflect confidently on their own level of preparedness, it also describes a gold-standard outcome in students. Given this high bar, the outcomes are extraordinary. Participants overwhelmingly left the Seminar feeling that their students would benefit from what they had learned and done in the Seminar.

Q3: Facilitation. This question (see table below) was designed to learn about participants’ experience as learners in a challenging learning environment. The overwhelmingly positive response, importantly, likely correlates to increased capacity in faculty to replicate these learning environments in their classrooms. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that Seminar facilitators are transparent when modeling transferable facilitation practices.



Note on cohort-in-progress. The one faculty member who reported that it was “somewhat unlikely” they’d implement something they learned from the Seminar into their teaching this semester, and the two who reported that they “somewhat disagreed” that they believed their students will feel more included, represented, and intellectually stimulated as a result of their participation in the Seminar are all from the currently-in-progress Cohort 4. These responses represent a very small percentage of the whole; nevertheless, it’s worth reflecting on and learning from these outliers, and we offer the following observations: 1) While there are always opportunities for greater attention to inclusive practices, it is nevertheless true that direct application of some of the Seminar’s content is more challenging for some disciplines or courses; 2) While much ground is covered in the Seminar’s two-day Intensive, the Seminar’s second part (three two-hour sessions) is by design more responsive to discipline- and cohort-specific needs. Therefore, at the Seminar’s conclusion, E2 might reflect greater confidence among faculty in applicability and transfer.

Survey Response Rates. Response rates show healthy engagement and have yielded significant data. Nevertheless, it's worth noting the few known and hypothesized obstacles to complete response rates. The timing of our engagement survey distributions always coincides with the semester's start or end – often the busiest times of the academic calendar. We hypothesize that this impacts response rates. Additionally, response rates don't always correlate to observed and stated engagement and investment. We hypothesize that in some cases, faculty don't respond because they have already provided so much feedback in other modes (in person, by email, via their Portfolios, etc.).

		Response Rate
Cohort 1 (MSPIA)	E1	63.6%
	E2	40%
Cohort 2 (MSPIA)	E1	57.1%
	E2	71.4%
Cohort 3 (WSAS)	E1	100%
	E2	90.9%
Cohort 4 (ZSB)	E1	66.6%
	E2	TBD January 2021

Anonymous Qualitative Data

Responses to each of the three open-ended questions revealed clear trends, which we delineate and provide examples of below.

“What did you learn in the Seminar that will be most useful for your teaching?”

In response to this question, we see four key trends:

- **Strategies for facilitating challenging conversations:** Central to the idea of the university is the creation of learning environments that challenge students' prior thinking and expand access to new ideas. These learning environments can, and sometimes should, produce tension and discomfort, and so it is natural for faculty to approach this feature of college teaching with anxiety. This is especially true given the relative lack of general pedagogical training in higher education, and the intractable complexities of the issues at hand. Notable, then, is that faculty reported leaving the Seminar with more confidence and practical tools for this work.
- **Reinforced value of active learning:** For many faculty, the overlap between active learning and inclusive pedagogy was a radical and comforting synergy.
- **Practical, strategy-focused approach:** Many of our faculty have taken diversity-related trainings, and so our goal was to focus on praxis-oriented approaches to social justice pedagogies. This approach was noted by several faculty.
- **Increased self-awareness:** Several faculty noted that the Seminar enabled them to be more conscious of their own implicit biases, or encouraged them to reflect on the role of their identity in their teaching practice.

Strategies for facilitating challenging conversation:

“I learned a lot about setting the tone for the classroom and communicating with the students to set the class up for inclusive dialogue and room to disagree and ask questions. I also appreciated the shift in perspective to value those moments in the classroom as opportunities to think critically about assumptions, rather than uncomfortable moments to try to avoid.”

Reinforced value of active learning:

“I felt like there was an emphasis on empowering and collaborating with students. I engage students in class, but I would like to draw more out from them – have them be more proactive learners.”

“Collaboratively involving students in some decisions can lead to more engaged students. I plan to do more of this in the future.”

Practical, strategy-focused approach:

“Just being made aware of the multitude of ways that my courses can be inclusive or not was helpful.”

“Discussing practices that we all could use were tangibly helpful.”

“I do not have any formal training in pedagogy and I found the majority of what we did very, very useful. I have tons of good ideas for my classes – to be more inclusive, but more broadly to be just a better teacher.”

Increased self-awareness:

“To be aware of my own blind spots in regards to inclusion and constantly reflect on how the course is going.”

“One of the most important things I learned was to pay closer attention to the language I use in designing assignments. One of the biggest areas of diversity I’ve encountered at Baruch is mixed preparation and linguistic difference. I’ll not only pay closer attention to the language I use but also unpack that language and provide more directed instruction in key areas.”

“Is there anything you’d recommend we revise or do differently?”

In response to this question (and aside from many responses that say to not change anything), we see one key trend:

- **More examples and samples:** Several faculty have asked to see more concrete examples: instructional materials, sample assignments, revised syllabi, etc. We are currently developing resources of this kind.

More examples and samples:

“Give us samples of faculty implementation.”

“Probably giving us some more concrete examples from a prior Baruch class implementing strategies that were discussed and what were the outcomes.”

“Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about your experience of the Seminar?”

In response to this question, we see two key trends:

- **Community building:** Committing to pedagogies that center social justice demands a sustaining community. For many faculty, finding that community was a central outcome.
- **Productive and well-facilitated:** The Seminar is a significant time commitment, and so it is worth observing that a large number of faculty expressed gratitude for the focus, organization, and facilitation.

Community building:

“I actually really enjoyed the environment – we don’t get together much to talk about teaching and how we think about it. There was much less pressure to ‘perform smart’ (like one does in a research seminar), so it was a really nice atmosphere.”

“This is actually a great experience because I could hear how my more experienced colleagues deal with diversity issues and thorny topics in the classroom. I don’t feel alone now trying to diversify my teaching, syllabi, and course offerings.”

“I loved the conversations, both in small groups and in the larger group about teaching, past and future—this was talking shop, in the best way.”

“I feel very honored to be a part of this group and pleased to feel supported through a network of colleagues.”

Productive and well-facilitated:

“I’ve been to many workshops on diversity in college settings, but none that focused on pedagogy. It was amazing, eye-opening, and extremely HELPFUL.”

“The session was incredibly facilitated and planned superbly. It exceeded my expectations and was certainly worth the investment in time and effort.”

“I found the Seminar enlightening and consistently engaging. It was well-structured, with each activity given ample time, and it was designed so that participants learned simultaneously from Meechal’s experience and expertise and from one another.”

Inclusive Pedagogy Portfolios: Sample Changes and Reflections

At the conclusion of the Seminar, every participant submits a portfolio that includes workshopped and revised teaching materials, as well as reflections on their process and next steps. See the Appendix for the Portfolio Prompt.

A fuller analysis of Portfolio outcomes is underway. In the interim, please find below a sampling of productive, representative changes to instructional design.

Diversifying representation

“I took several steps in order to make my pedagogical strategies more inclusive this semester, many of them informed by our discussions in the Inclusive Pedagogy seminar. On my syllabus, I attempted to include as wide a range of different voices as I could, including African American, Asian American, Latinx, conservative, queer, and transgender authors; and I made a point of assigning several essays written by students at Baruch. Putting the latter on the syllabus was one means of supporting my larger goal of getting my students to view themselves as thinkers whose experience can be an important source of knowledge and authority, and as participants in a broader public debate.”

Teaching challenging content and facilitating difficult dialogues

“Teaching Columbus’ relation to translation and New World exchanges in the 15th century has been a difficult topic in the past. This semester, instead of traveling the traditional textbook and reading route, I asked students to read a recent article on Columbus published on the Washington Post (“Columbus: Swashbuckling hero, bootstrapping immigrant or genocidal monster?”). I asked them to summarize its main ideas and provide a timeline that reflected the different historical uses and interested manipulations of the figure of Columbus in different historical contexts since the 15th century. The clear purpose of the reading and brief writing exercise was to determine how the historical character had been interpreted differently over time. Once students realized that what we know about him was heavily mediated, we proceeded to analyze how translation impacted the colonial enterprise. Hispanic students were heavily invested in the discussion and in order to bring other opinions to the conversation I paired them up with students from other geographical backgrounds. As a final class exercise and homework, they had to produce a reflective two-page paper combining the summary they had already written, what they had learned in the class, emphasizing the role of Columbus, the Spanish empire and translation in the colonial enterprise.”

“The unit that I brought to the January Seminar was the ‘housing history’ assignment – a low-stakes writing assignment in which each student provides information about the place(s) that s/he has lived, and then maps those locations. After discussion with the group, I ended up asking students to distill their presentations into one slide, in order to capture the most important elements of their housing histories. I did the same myself, and noted that the theme of my housing history was privilege and social/financial capital. With each of my housing situations, I explicitly described how my family secured that housing (jumping a waiting list due to family connections, faculty housing, family assistance with downpayment, etc.). I went first, and I used my presentation to frame a discussion of privilege and the connections

between social and financial capital, which we end up discussing throughout the class. I thought it worked really well, although it was certainly challenging for me to expose so much about my personal history.”

“In another of our sessions, I talked about an upcoming class focusing on reparations – I had assigned a famous piece by Ta-Nehisi Coates and then a rebuttal by another prominent black intellectual. I wasn’t sure how to focus the class. After our discussion [...] I designed an exercise in which students wrote in advance a dialogue between the two men. In class, students began by pairing up and discussing each other’s entries, and then presented their discussion and we talked about it as a class. This was a good way of engaging with this very challenging material.”

Reducing prejudice and building intergroup cohesion

“I’ve included the brief plan of one of the experiential activities in the portfolio – a negotiation simulation between the three major parties most often involved in the creation of cultural districts. The activity was designed to provide opportunities for group work as well as more one-on-one conversations/work. Each student was asked to take on a professional role, but to also shift modes from working within a group, to working one-on-one, to representing the group’s interests at large. In an odd way, one of the goals was to ensure that at some point, every student would be in an ‘uncomfortable’ role – but one in which they were supported (by me and fellow students) and one in which it was completely safe to fail. I followed the simulation with a substantial debrief, that focused not only on the specifics of the professional roles involved in cultural districts, but on the idea of working across different perspectives and experiences. This led to an exploration of something I refer to as ‘professional empathy’ – or the ability to understand your colleague’s perspective to be better suited to build cooperative and collaborative connections built on respect. The exercise worked quite well – not only did the students come away with a deeper understanding of the subject matter, they all were laughing and engaging with each other through the process and seemed to come together on a new level after this class meeting.”

Facilitating inclusive class participation

“I worked hard to get as many students involved in class discussions as possible. During some sessions, I used index cards, randomly shuffled with their names written on them as a way of determining who to call on. This strategy allowed me to elicit responses from quiet students without appearing to single them out; it also created an atmosphere in which students were encouraged to talk even when they didn’t have their ideas fully figured out—to think aloud and to feel comfortable making mistakes. During certain sessions, I attempted more elaborate strategies for inviting wider participation. The most successful was the close-reading exercise, during which I put a passage from the novel on the overhead projector, asked everyone to stand up, and told them they could sit down after they had made a comment about the passage. Not only did this ensure that everyone spoke; it also led to a much more sustained and probing analysis of a single passage than they had produced before. And because I opted to remain almost entirely silent, they arrived at this reading of the text entirely on their own.”

“This year, to create a more inclusive classroom culture and facilitate difficult dialogues, I introduced a series of low-stakes writing assignments by using the “journals” application in Blackboard. The students were told that these prompts would not be graded but would be included in their participation grade [...] Almost all of the prompts were meant to give the students the chance to share relevant personal experiences and reactions to course readings and our field trip. As the semester progressed, sometimes I would cut and paste the responses into one large anonymized document which I would share with the class. I found that women who were quiet in class wrote excellent responses, so I started highlighting their responses in class and then asking casually if this was so-and-so’s response (I only did this for content-focused questions, never for personal reflection ones). This began to give women a voice in the classroom. I also think this approach began to get women in the habit of speaking in class so by the end

of class, a much higher than usual percentage of women in the classroom were contributing to the conversation.”

Supporting the needs and backgrounds of all learners

“Before joining Baruch, I never had students who were convicted of felonies, went to prison, did their time, and then turned their lives around by pursuing a higher education degree. This semester I had two. When I became aware of this fact, I realized that a few of the in-class exercises might make them feel uncomfortable (i.e. questions about ‘what judge would you choose if you were a lawyer defending a criminal based on the standard deviations of the judge’s past sentences?’) I would never have become aware of these things if it wasn’t for this seminar. These are subtle issues that I was overlooking, but that are so important to make all students feel comfortable and at ease in the classroom.”

“I learned a lot from other participants on how to address certain issues and problems for which I was a bit hesitant before joining this seminar. For example, I took great recommendations on how to stop a student from always dominating class or group discussions: I had a student during this semester who would answer every question I asked her group partner (she would either answer for her or cut her midsentence to finish the answer). In the past, I always found it hard to address such a situation, and would sometimes let it pass, but this semester I was able to address the problem head on—I thanked the student for answering the question and sharing her thoughts but said that I was also interested in knowing what the other student had to say, and wanted to hear her answer as well. This small act made the other student feel validated and more included in the discussion, and the vocal student stopped doing that in class.”

Appendix A

Inclusive Pedagogy Seminar: Portfolio Prompt Bernard L. Schwartz Communication Institute

Developing your Inclusive Pedagogy Portfolio

To facilitate reflection on your inclusive pedagogy development and application this semester, and to help me understand how our work in the Seminar has influenced your teaching (including evolving plans for future implementation), you'll assemble a portfolio of teaching materials with a brief written reflection to bring to our final lunch session on May 17. For this session, please bring a copy (and share with me via email or a second hard copy) of all of the following:

- **Teaching materials.** Include in your portfolio teaching artifacts that demonstrate changes (big or small) you've made this semester in response to any of the areas we covered, including but not limited to:
 - Establishing an Inclusive Culture
 - Creating Diverse Representation
 - Facilitating Difficult Dialogues
 - Designing Assignments and Providing Feedback for Inclusion

Wherever possible, include both the old version and the revised or updated version of documents. Each of you will have different materials that indicate change, so include whichever items make sense for you. Examples of items to include are:

- Syllabi (e.g. greater diversity in readings; statements of inclusion; policies)
- Classroom culture setting activities (e.g. code for engagement; peer-to-peer engagement opportunities; contact hypothesis opportunities)
- Discussion prompts or activities (e.g. to facilitate difficult dialogue; to include quiet, minority, multilingual, women, LGBTQIA, and conservative students)
- Assignments, both high and low-stakes (e.g. prompt revision for context, purpose, form; clarification of expectations, either by adding or removing information; template provision)
- Feedback strategies (e.g. creating conditions to reward learning; serving as cultural or rhetorical informant; employing strategies for responding to multilingual students)
- Lesson plans in any form

Note: When thinking about what to include, it might be helpful to look back at the University of Michigan's Self-Assessment Checklist.

- **Reflection on changes made.** Write a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the changes you made in your course this semester related to inclusive pedagogy. Why these changes? What were the outcomes for students? What were the outcomes for you?
- **Reflection on next steps.** Write a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the next steps you want to take in your evolving strategy for inclusive pedagogy. Why these steps? What questions remain, and what new questions have emerged?

Please know that unless I hear from you otherwise, when reporting out on the Seminar, I might occasionally anonymize and quote from your written reflections.