DIVERSITY POINTERS
FOR PROFESSORS

We know that the first day of class can be just as awkward for professors as it can be for students. So, here are a few considerations, suggested by Student Diversity Advocates, to make the experience better for everyone:

1. Check your assumptions about students’ social identities (gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.)

2. Don’t ask a student to be the “spokesperson” for all people with whom they share a particular social identity.

3. Don’t be afraid to ask for help in navigating diversity issues. (e.g. We don’t expect you to know everything about transgender students or students with disabilities. The Office of Institutional Diversity and other campus offices will be happy to share resources with you!)

4. Be open to student perspectives that have been traditionally marginalized, undervalued or viewed as oppositional to the status quo.

5. Strive to find a balance between staying “on topic” and allowing time to address unexpected classroom dynamics that surface.

6. Think about how your own social identity informs your point of view.

7. Consider taking Safe Zone training to become an ally to LGBTQQAAI members of our campus community. http://safeszone.cofc.edu/index.php

8. Please take SNAP requests seriously and support students in securing appropriate accommodations for their disabilities.

9. Promote Campus-wide lectures, events and programs that highlight diverse experiences.

10. Invite the Diversity Advocates to your class (see reverse)!

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY
“As the College of Charleston seeks new avenues to create a tolerant and accepting atmosphere for students of divergent backgrounds, religions, and sexual orientations, the efforts of Kristi Brian and the Office of Institutional Diversity spring to mind instantly. By providing foundational knowledge about diversity Kristi empowers our students with a greater understanding of the world they inhabit. My survey courses which focus on the history of Sexuality and Gender, are the perfect opportunity for Kristi to visit my classes and share her complementary knowledge. In a world filled with hate and bullying, every effort to abolish ignorance and prejudice is one step closer to forging a positive campus, full of respect and kindness.”

Sandy Slater, Ph.D.
Faculty, Department of History

“Many of my students like to believe that they are beyond stereotyping, or that racism, sexism, etc. are things of past generations. The diversity exercises with Kristi helped bring some of their biases to light, making conversations about diversity and inclusivity much more relevant. I found it very helpful!”

Carrie Blair Messal, Ph.D.
Faculty, Department of Management and Entrepreneurship

“If you are holding school-wide faculty meetings, please consider inviting OID’s newly formed Diversity Advocates to participate. Diversity Advocates are CoC students who have been trained, among other things, to speak with faculty about diversity issues in the classroom and beyond. They presented two very effective role plays at new faculty orientation and then facilitated a frank discussion with new faculty about the issues minority students encounter in our classrooms and how they might anticipate issues and/or deal with them as they arise. The role plays were very well done and it proved to be a very non-threatening way to talk about important but potentially highly charged issues. Department chairs might also consider inviting the Diversity Advocates to a department meeting.”

Lynne E. Ford, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum & Academic Administration
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