

The Research Basis for Inclusive Teaching

How do we know inclusive teaching is effective teaching?

At CRLT, we use “inclusive teaching” as an umbrella term to name a complex network of pedagogical issues and strategies. Drawing from a large body of research, much of it foundational scholarship on teaching and learning, we can feel confident that learning outcomes are improved when teachers (1) attend to student differences and (2) take deliberate steps to ensure that all students, across differences in academic and social background as well as physical and cognitive abilities, feel welcome, valued, challenged, and supported in succeeding in the field of study.

The evidence basis for inclusive teaching in this sense includes research on:

- the relation between classroom climate and student learning (as reviewed by Ambrose et al in chapter cited below)
- stereotype threat as a barrier to academic success ([Aronson](#); Steele; [more here](#))
- social belonging as key to student learning and persistence (e.g., [Walton & Cohen](#))
- contributors to student persistence and retention in STEM fields (CRLT [Occasional Paper #25](#))
- best practices for utilizing student groups and teams (as reviewed in CRLT [Occasional Paper #29](#) -- focused on STEM fields but relevant in all disciplines)
- the benefits of cooperative learning (as reviewed in the Johnson meta-analysis cited below)
- the negative consequences of identity-based [microaggressions](#) for learning
- [mindsets](#) about intelligence and their relation to student persistence (Yeager and Dweck; [Paunescu](#))
- student development, including development of reflective judgment and intercultural maturity (King)
- best practices for [difficult dialogues](#) in higher ed ([more here](#))
- Universal Design principles ([National Center on Universal Design for Learning](#))
- the importance for learning of [instructor transparency](#) about course learning objectives and assessment criteria ([more here](#); see also Eddy and Hogan)

Almost all of this research directly speaks to the fact that what we call inclusive teaching practices are helpful for all students' learning but especially beneficial to students who are members of groups underrepresented in their fields or traditionally underserved by institutions of higher education.

For an online version of this document with live links to much of this research, go to: tiny.cc/inclusiveteaching

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Selected scholarship pertaining to inclusive teaching

Ambrose, S., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M.C., & Norman, M.K. (2010). *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Chapter 6: "Why do Student Development and Course Climate Matter for Student Learning?"

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Steele, Claude. (2011). *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. Reprint ed. New York: Norton.

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