

English Department Faculty Lunches on Inclusive Teaching

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Faculty Communities for Inclusive Teaching, 2016



Project Overview

The English Department's Diversity Committee hosted two lunches for faculty (tenure-track and Lecturer IIIs and IVs) in Winter 2016.

We had three goals:

- Facilitate collaborative, collegial spaces in which to talk about our teaching,
- Increase literacies around issues central to inclusive teaching, and
- Build the number of committed diversity allies in our department.

Participants in Winter 2016

More than 20% of English faculty in residence attended at least one of the two lunches hosted in Winter 2016.

Goal: Participants in Fall 2016 and Winter 2017

More than 50% of English faculty in residence attend at least one of the four lunches in Fall 2016 or Winter 2017.

Key Insights / New Questions

- How is active and engaged learning different from inclusive teaching? The English department generally is very good at the former; where are we, and how might we improve, at the latter?
- What are pedagogical benefits of discomfort in the classroom? What happens when we interrogate “safe spaces,” including its history and its current connotations. Can we promise safety in our classrooms, if we want to do that?
- When we think about inclusive teaching, what forms of inclusion immediately or frequently come to mind, and where or when can we challenge ourselves to think more broadly?
- What privileges do we bring into the classroom, and what is the relationship between those privileges and inclusive teaching?
- How do we approach “hot moments” in the classroom? What is our responsibility? What is the responsibility of our students?
- In addition to within our class discussions, where and how else can we promote inclusive teaching in our courses?

Resources

- Several handouts from CRLT on inclusive teaching, including its definitions and domains,
- Readings on privilege to pre-read before our first lunch,
- Articles and handouts related to hot moments in the classroom, collective reflections, and questions for dialogue as “carry away” materials for our second lunch,
- Catered lunches for both sessions,
- Gift cards (\$20 from a local bookstore) for each participant.

Next Steps

- Two lunches in Fall 2016, funded by the Chair of the English Department's Discretionary Fund, both on Inclusive Teaching, focusing particularly on first-generation students and low-income students at Michigan,
- Two lunches in Winter 2017, funded perhaps by a CRLT grant, on Inclusive Teaching and potentially focusing particularly on access, accessibility, and accommodations, and
- Resources from the lunches available on the English department website.