Gender and Sexuality Inclusion in the Classroom
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Concepts: Gender and Sex

- **Sex**
  - A binary, based on biological differences, divides people into two categories: Male and Female
- **Gender**
  - An internal sense of identity related to gender roles: woman, man, androgynous, etc.

Concepts, continued

- **Sexual Orientation**
  - A pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions (or lack thereof), exhibited by an individual

Gender & Sexuality Inclusion Tips

- **Allow people to self identify**
  - Start by introducing your gender pronouns, “If you go by a name or pronoun you’d like me to use, please let me know”
- **Use words that encompass all genders rather than only two**
  - Incorporate people of all genders and sexual orientations (“Students”, “Everybody,” “People of all genders”)
- **Choose language that does not assume a specific relationship identity**
  - Use “Partner,” “Significant other” instead of boyfriend/girlfriend
  - Use “Parent,” “Family” instead of mom/dad
- **Interrupt stereotypes**
  - Promote positive perceptions about the representations of gender, sexuality, and equity
- **Reach out and refer to the GSRC**
  - Utilize our knowledge of university systems and ongoing support work
  - Connect students with our “Home Away from Home” environment
- **Mistake Recovery**
  - Own, acknowledge, move forward

Supportive Options

- **Gender Inclusive restrooms**
  - Provides expanded options for campus community
  - Individuals may use restrooms according to their comfort level
- **Preferred/Proper Name Option**
  - Allows students, faculty and staff to utilize the name they would like to be called: directory, class rosters, blackboard, OneCard

Putting this into practice

**Pedagogical Strategies**

- Inclusive Curriculum
- Classroom Management
### Pedagogical Strategies

- While it may not feel like it, you do have control over a few things.
- You can control how your students see you, how you address students, and the tone your classroom and/or lab will take on.
- You do this through your pedagogy.

### Inclusive Strategies
- Ask students how they wish to be addressed
- Model inclusive policies/language
- Stress key policy statements not just on the first day of classes
- Don’t forget mistake recovery
- Be prepared

### Inclusive Curriculum

- Your curriculum is everything from the reading material, visuals, and course content to assignments and projects.
- You may not have control over these… but, if you can, inclusion is always best.
- Remember, a lack of inclusion may not be something that you mean, but it sends a strong message

### Classroom Management

- Much of the learning environments is mediated by policy. If a student does not feel safe and included, learning is less likely to occur.
- NIU has a non-discrimination and Title IX policies that hold that all students will be treated fairly.
- It is critical that you uphold policy in these learning spaces

### Inclusive Strategies
- Call out behavior that is problematic, hurtful, and/or discriminatory
- Remind students that NIU is a space for all to learn and engage
- If you miss something, admit it.
- Cultivate your back pocket plan: have something that will address an issue and allow you to have more time to think about what needs to occur.

### Relevant Policies

Illinois, DeKalb and NIU share a commitment to inclusion:

- DeKalb Municipal Code, "Human Relations Commission"
- NIU’s Non-Discrimination Statement
- Illinois Human Rights Act
  Each specifically names sexuality, gender identity in its scope
- Faculty Toolkit