

## Foster Respect for Diverse Student Identities

According to the Center for American Progress, “Research shows that the overall academic and social effects of increased racial diversity on campus are likely to be positive, ranging from higher levels of academic achievement to the improvement of near- and long-term intergroup relations” (Kerby, 2012, reason 7).

Diverse campuses give college students the opportunity to learn from peers with different perspectives shaped by a variety of life experiences. Diverse courses present students with opportunities to engage with people of different backgrounds, helping them develop an appreciation for people different from themselves. For many students, college is an opportunity to challenge stereotypes that may have been developed by being raised around people of similar socioeconomic, racial, or cultural characteristics.

To foster respect for diverse student identities in your courses, consider taking the following steps:

### **Establish and model clear expectations for the type of language students are expected to use in your course environment**

- Model the standards you expect to observe between students.
- Explain the type of language you expect students to use.
- Remind students to avoid statements that appear to judge or offend others such as, “that’s dumb,” “you’re crazy,” or “you must be stupid if you believe that.”
- Ask students to refer to others by name, not by labels or physical characteristics. For example, avoid such phrases as, “those people” or “that girl with the...”
- Remind students to use the preferred pronouns and names of their peers and to ask for clarification if needed.
- Intervene when you observe students who are not following your expectations for respectful language.

For additional information on setting classroom norms with students, please see *2G Online PG\_HotMoments*.

### **Reference**

Kerby, S. (2012, October 10). *10 reasons why we need diversity on college campuses*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2012/10/09/41004/10-reasons-why-we-need-diversity-on-college-campuses/>