

*Many effective teaching practices help all students learn. Implicit in the suggestions below: Know what works to facilitate learning in your discipline; be explicit about it and share it with all students; scaffold assignments to maximize chances of success. Interventions don't matter without effective teaching.*

**Be aware of unconscious biases that we all may have.** Understand that these biases may affect the way we behave towards, and evaluate, students. Although we are not consciously aware of having these attitudes, it doesn't mean that we cannot control our behavior or think of ways to reduce the influence of these unconscious tendencies. Awareness is the first step.

**Clarify standards and give feedback in a way that simultaneously inspires trust and motivates.** Stress that you used high standards in evaluating the work AND that you believe student can meet those standards. Clarifying your expectations can prevent ambiguity and increase students' perception of fairness. Defining criteria can also reduce the influence of biases when you are stressed, overtired, or under "cognitive load," and keep your grading consistent.

**Be attentive to the cues you send in your (teaching) environment.** Cues include official statements and language but also have implications for the classroom, including social organization, music, images, etc. Positive cues might include: Speaking about diversity as a positive value, including diverse examples and perspectives, using diversity as a resource, and being aware of issues students might encounter. One caveat: consider whether examples portray stereotypical or prejudicial assumptions about social groups.

**Establish trust through demanding but supportive relationships.** Faculty-student/mentoring relationships may work when they are calm, work-focused, straightforward, demanding but supportive. Eventually these sorts of relationships can lessen anxiety (even when one is a minority in a situation) and can motivate students, both of which lead to better performance.

**Foster hopeful narratives about belonging in the setting.** Expose students to a narrative that explains their frustrations while projecting positive engagement and success in the setting. Rather than denying/ignoring struggles, demonstrate that similar people who came before them experienced uncertainty and worried about belonging but after that, achieved success and a sense of belonging.

**Allow students to affirm their most valued sense of self.**

Writing/reflection about one's most important values seems to bring one's sense of competence and worth back into view and make early performance and other threatening cues less important; could interrupt a negative recursive process.

**Facilitate the existence of a "critical mass" of various types of identity groups.**

How much is enough for "critical mass" is yet undetermined (and might be beyond your capacity to control) but critical mass of a group improves its members' trust, comfort and performance in a setting.

**Help students understand stereotype threat.** Help them understand their academic strengths and weaknesses. Make a visit to office hours mandatory. Share your own struggles on the path that led to your success.

**Discuss relevant issues with colleagues.** You're not alone on this; most faculty members would also like to help their students learn more effectively, and may be able to provide you with support, resources, and the benefit of their experiences.

\* Research-based Strategies for Reducing Stereotype Threat suggested in Claude Steele's *Whistling Vivaldi*