

# Faculty Learning Community Action Plan

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### Choose an action

#### **What goal is your first priority?**

My first priority will be to address Dimension #3 however, Dimension #2 will not be far behind.

#### **What is the action you want to pursue to accomplish this goal?**

I plan to adjust my current assignment for a culturally relevant twist. This assignment asks all students to convert their favorite recipe from US standards to metric units. Briefly, I will reword this assignment pulling in an opportunity for students to work in a traditional food item from their background and provide both the US standard and metric units used for preparation. From there the students will be asked to share their recipe with fellow students either by discussion (with reasons for the food and its tradition) and/or samples. This will also tie into Dimension #4; community focused.

#### **Why do you believe that this action will help you accomplish your goal? (Here, you can reference a reading, provide a link, or simply describe how this action is based in research on equity practices.)**

There have been many studies into incorporating culturally relevant connections into the classroom. Underrepresented students often struggle with connections in the classroom both between classmates, teachers, historical figures and overall learning approaches; all stemming from a social polarized science world. In the context of undergraduate biology, these challenges are magnified by persistent gaps in performance and degree attainment among members of historically underrepresented groups (Trapani and Hale, 2019) Gloria Ladson-Billings early on discussed the theoretical grounding of culturally relevant teaching in her 1995 work "But That's Just Good Teaching", a 3-year case study into teaching African American students. The discussion of such pedagogy in action continues to be best implemented by individual intentional approaches within the science classroom. Here my action plan goals are just another step I am taking in helping all my students succeed and feel empowered in the world of science!

#### **References**

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995) But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Theory Into Practice*. 34(3):159. doi:10.1080/00405849509543675

Thompson, S., Hebert, S., Berk, S., Brunelli, R., Creech, C., Drake, A., . . . Ballen, C. (2020). A Call for Data-Driven Networks to Address Equity in the Context of Undergraduate Biology. *CBE Life Sciences Education*, 19(4), Mr2.

Trapani, J., & Hale, K. (2019). Higher education in science and engineering: Science and engineering indicators 2020 (NSB-2019-7). Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation.

### To-Dos, Dates, and Challenges

**What are the concrete steps and dates for your action? NOTE: you have 10 lines for this exercise, so keep that in mind as you list out your steps and dates.**

#### ACTION STEPS

- \*Pull the current assignment from archives
- \*Establish a rubric lesson plan (much like my new math integrated evolution unit)
- \*Reword/Revamp the directives of this assignment
- \*Upload it to D2L for student access
- \*Implement the lesson plan\*Student assessment
- \*Reflect on the results of the plan
- \*Make note of changes and do so accordingly for future use

#### Potential Challenges or Unanswered Questions

##### LIMITATIONS

- \*Will students find suitable recipes for use?
- \*Check on student potluck style allowances within the institute
- \*Done outside of the lab (due to edible items) though this may become a positive
- \*How with the students perceive the connection approach?
- \*Will student assessment be a combination of measurement conversions and reflection?

#### Resources to help you

I will consult the student multicultural club on campus for ideas within the connection to recipes. Their insight may also help in the development of the assignment itself. I will also collaborate with other faculty and our lab manager for her thoughts on the implementation and assessment of this activity.

## Evaluating Effectiveness

**What resources are available to you to quantitatively measure the effectiveness of your action plan for students?**

I have past course data where this activity was implemented without the cultural connection. This will stand as a baseline control before intentionally integrating the cultural connection. Student unit conversions will be directly quantitatively assessed based on scores in that section. Qualitative assessment will be added to the new curriculum possibly using a student reflection piece.

**What additional ways will you determine the effectiveness of your action plan for students?**

I will also assess this activity through classroom engagement. I will take ethnographic notes before, during and after the completion of the lesson plan. These notes will include details on student enthusiasm, participation, types of presentation options chosen by students and any informal community building seen within student groups.

**What about you? Is this plan something you can sustain? How will you determine if you need to make adjustments to help you avoid things like burnout or work overload? What efficiencies can be built in? What would be your sign that you need to stop this action?**

This action plan is a small sustainable approach to cultural relevance and community within the classroom. Once I adjust and establish the curriculum and its rubric, I will have a strong base to follow. Student use and implementation will allow me to make any added adjustments for future elaboration and use. In fact, I will likely use this (and my new evolutionary lesson plan) as guidelines for new integrated activities within many of my courses. When addressing the other goals (noted as lower priority) I will continue to implement WISE feedback as my time permits and humanize my online course small steps at a time, adding one video at a time without the expectation of a new weekly video. The fact that I already have many recorded lectures helps this endeavor so that I do not feel as if I need to overhaul an entire course at once.

## Prioritize Your Goals

My goals coming out of (or rather the continuation of) this Faculty Learning Community are as follows:

**Medium Priority**

- Address Dimension #2

I plan to be relational by continuing to create a welcoming environment in my classes, especially the online classes by adding more personal video clips and encouraging students to do the same. In addition I am always looking for new and better ways to provide feedback to students. Using the WISE feedback strategy will be added to my repertoire of written comments to better affirm my students' ability for success.

### **Lower Priority**

- Address Dimension #3

I plan to be culturally relevant and affirming in my classroom environment. The use of the WISE feedback strategy will continue to support this dimension as it does for dimension #2. From this perspective it gives me an opportunity to encourage students to incorporate their own experiences into their coursework.

### **High Priority**

- Address Dimension #3

I plan to adjust my current assignment for a culturally relevant twist. This assignment asks all students to convert their favorite recipe from US standards to metric units. Briefly, I will reword this assignment pulling in an opportunity for students to work in a traditional food item from their background and provide both the US standard and metric units used for preparation. From there the students will be asked to share their recipe with fellow students either by discussion (with reasons for the food and its tradition) and/or samples. This will also tie in to Dimension #4; community focused.