

ADDRESSING DIVERSITY AND DISABILITY

Diversity issues often stem from a misunderstanding of cultures or backgrounds. Communication is key to classroom interactions and development of an effective learning environment. At times, our own personal past and our students past affect the learning process. Cultural filters are barriers to communication that develop from the environment in which a person was raised.

The best way to counter prejudice in the classroom is to foster a sense of unity and equality. Teachers have to help students create positive attitudes toward others that come from different cultures and different backgrounds. Sometimes these prejudices come from ignorance of other cultures. If a student understands more about who someone is and why they believe what they do, a student can become accepting or at least more tolerant of who the other person is and where they are coming from with their beliefs. To address diversity in the classroom, I will encourage discussion and sharing of ideas. In this manner, students will be exposed to the multitude of backgrounds and potential that each individual student carries with them throughout the learning process.

To address students with disabilities in the classroom, lesson plans have to be created in such a way that learning is accessible to all students. All students do not need to approach the same learning goal in the same way. Some students learn by touch, others by more auditory lessons. In creating lessons for my students, I will make sure that the knowledge and materials are accessible from many different learning styles. Additionally, students can have different learning needs and may need access to certain accommodations. I will do what is in my power as a teacher to provide any educational instruction accommodations or environmental accommodations needed.

I will provide individuals with disabilities access to programs, services, and environments similar to those provided to other students. Each individual student, in my mind, is unique in their learning needs, but should be treated as a student like any other. Diversity in a classroom should be celebrated and student's disabilities should be addressed in such a way that students feel more comfortable in their learning environment.