



Bringing a Global Perspective to Diversity and Inclusion

Resources and Suggestions

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Tips for engaging issues regarding diversity and inequality from a global perspective, especially a critical one, in courses you are teaching or would like to teach.

Suggestions for teaching:

Effective ways of engaging issues regarding diversity and inequality from a (critical) global perspective vary enormously according to factors such as the subject matter of the course, the specific mix of students in the course, and personal teaching styles. I therefore focus here on moves that have helped me in the hope that using, reworking, and/or critiquing them will help you.

(1) General considerations

- (a) Recognize differences between international and global approaches; consider merits of latter; choose between them
- (b) Use approach throughout course – not just a section or occasional class to supplement U.S. or western focus
- (c) Relate diversity and inclusion to structural inequalities; relate race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality to class dynamics
- (d) Help students identify, examine their assumptions (e.g. national and imperial imaginaries)
- (e) Teach the debates ----- about diversity, inequalities, globalization, and relations among them

(2) Particular techniques – if using a global perspective

- (a) Focus on *specific "objects" or issues* that
 - directly relevant to students' lives or interests
 - can only be understood by reference to transnational, global, or globalizing processes
 - ideally link countries students from and/or students' varied class trajectories

- create space for international students and/or students from poorer backgrounds to bring their knowledge and perspectives to the discussion
- e.g.
 - many *commodities* students buy
 - *novels, films, plays* that address these processes (in present or past) or can be seen in new ways by exploring them
 - *places* where these processes intersect
 - *controversial issues* that may seem local but enmeshed in transnational processes – e.g. struggles over access to food, housing, water

(b) Use examples that help students learn how to *zoom out and back in again* ----- at a given moment and over time – e.g. between

- top they're wearing
- commodity chain for clothes sold in U.S. today
- changes in chain since the 1970s (e.g. who assembles clothes, where, under what conditions)
- broader shift to neoliberal capitalism
- reactions to these changes, including growing challenges, often organized transnationally

(c) Use examples that encourage attention to *multiple perspectives* – associated with

- varied *positions along political spectrum*
- varied *parts of the world* ----- e.g. via writings, visual works by scholars, activists outside U.S./global north
- varied *positions in interrelated hierarchies of class, race, gender, sexuality*
 - not just via self---authored writings and visual works (which subordinated people often unable to produce or distribute easily)
 - also via sources such as ethnographic texts and videos that at least let us hear from them in mediated form

(B) Background readings ----- just a few suggestions among a host of possibilities

(1) Contemporary globalization and the neoliberal project

- " Sparke, Matthew (2013) *Introducing Globalization: Ties, Tensions, and Uneven Integration*. Malden, MA: Wiley---Blackwell. [The best introduction I know; sample Ch. 1 and last five pages of Ch. 10.]
- " Steger, Manfred B. (2017) *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [The best *short*, easily accessible introduction I know.]

(2) Diversity and inclusion: constructive critiques of dominant approaches

- " Ahmed, Sara (2014) *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Duke University Press. [Especially Ch. 2, The Language of Diversity.]
- " Benn Michaels, Walter (2011) Let Them Eat Diversity. Interview. *Jacobin Magazine*, January 1, 2011. [A class---based critique without enough attention to intersectionality.]
- " Davis, Angela Y. (2012) *The Meaning of Freedom: And Other Difficult Dialogues*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights. [Speeches promoting collective struggle for the social transformation of intersecting structural inequalities]