

Scaling inclusive teaching: A national STEM teaching initiative centering identity, power and privilege

Wednesday, April 24th at 11am
1310 Newmark

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There has long been an undeniable need for more inclusive learning environments in higher education, particularly in STEM courses. Due in part to alienating classroom climates and marginalizing instruction, historically excluded and minoritized students leave STEM majors – and hence careers in STEM – at significantly higher rates than majority students. Practicing inclusive STEM instruction requires an understanding of the challenges learners face and developing strategies that actively support all students' success. Inclusive instructors also must be aware of their own identities and impacts to enhance their connection, awareness, and sensitivity to student experiences. The Inclusive STEM Teaching Project has developed and implemented a free, open, online course that centers identity, power, positionality and privilege prior to focusing on evidence-based teaching and learning strategies. Our course seeks to shift educator mindsets and abilities, through embodied case studies, optional local learning communities led by trained facilitators, and facilitated, virtual, affinity-based discussion groups. The course has run six times through fall 2024 with 11281 registrants, awarded completion certificates to 2565 learners who are largely instructors and maintained a completion rate of 60% for any learner who opened a single page, ten times the average for free online courses. Coupled with the online, asynchronous interactive course are local learning communities led by project-trained facilitators. We developed content for and trained 494 facilitators at 154 institutions representing R1, comprehensive 2 year and community colleges who have run 108 local learning communities with 827 participants. I will report on research outcomes and provide the audience with short bits of the course and learning community experiences.