

IB 546 - Inclusive Excellence in STEM

Spring 2025, 1 credit, CRN 51918 (S/U Grading)

Time 3:00 pm on Wednesday

Place 2004 NHB

COURSE DESCRIPTION and STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Read and discuss material about best practices for promoting inclusion in STEM
- Read and discuss material about culturally-responsive mentoring and inclusive excellence.
- Identify actions we can each implement as individuals, as well as steps institutions can take, to decrease bias and promote equity and inclusion.

Each week, we will assign a reading, which will be selected by the student leader with input from the instructors. We will come together once a week to discuss the readings or assignment as a group. Participants are expected to lead the discussion at least once during the semester, which includes a list of discussion questions based on the assigned readings.

INSTRUCTORS:

Carla Cáceres: cecacere@illinois.edu

Becky Fuller: rcfuller@illinois.edu

James O'Dwyer: jodwyer@illinois.edu

Weekly Schedule: The first week of class we will introduce ourselves and the objectives of the course. We will review all the diversity related websites at UIUC and compare those to a few others. Students will complete an anonymous survey on their interest in the course.

The second week, the faculty will lead a paper discussion to model the expectations for all other weeks. Students will sign up for a date and a topic. Student leaders will work with one of the three faculty members to prepare for the following week.

Course Expectations: We understand that our members represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. The School of Integrative Biology is committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner.

- Keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature.
- Stories stay, lessons leave
- Use “I” statements
- Take Space, Make Space
- Accept that things may remain unresolved
- Embrace discomfort, but take a moment if you need it
- If you feel yourself getting angry or defensive, ask yourself why.
- You will make mistakes and apologize if you do (it is not about your intent it is about your impact)
- Take ownership of your words and actions. This is a good way to act with more intention and consideration of others in the classroom.
- Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the community.

Course Attendance, Grading, and Philosophy

- You are required to attend all class meetings; occasional medical and instructor pre-approved absences are accepted.
- You are expected to arrive having read all assigned material in advance. It is OK to come with questions (e.g., about details, interpretation, etc.), but you should be ready to actively participate in all course discussions (see next bullet).
- Grades are based purely on participation. As a result, active participation in all discussions is a requirement. Participation includes willingness to summarize the article, to articulate what you liked and didn’t like, to identify strengths and weaknesses of the work, and to contribute questions and ideas for discussion. In particular, include perspectives on how the reading informs your own thinking and might influence your own work.
- Students who miss three or more classes, without instructor approval, or who continually arrive without having done the reading will receive a grade of “U”.

Contesting Grades

- Students who believe that their grade awarded is demonstrably improper by reason of capricious or arbitrary grading should confer with the Associate Director of Academic Affairs in the School of Integrative Biology. Students who are unable through such discussion to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution may file a written appeal with the Capricious Grading Committee of the School of Integrative Biology. Prompt attention to these concerns is important. The appeal must be filed within six working weeks after the start of the next semester.
- For further information, refer to §3-107 of the Student Code:
- <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article3/part1/3-107/>

Disability Accommodations

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TTY), or e-mail a message to disability@illinois.edu.

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the campus Student Code: <https://studentcode.illinois.edu>. As a reminder, the Campus Integrity Statement states: “The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign expects its faculty, staff, students and guests to conduct themselves in accordance with the community values of civility, respect, and honesty; to maintain the highest level of integrity and exercise critical judgment in all dealings, decisions and encounters; and to maintain and strengthen the public’s trust and confidence in our institution.” You will receive three written warnings if your language and comments are divisive or offensive. After these warnings you will receive a 0 on the participation grade for the session in which your comments are deemed inappropriate for the third time (warning). A fourth written warning will result in your dismissal from the course. What does it mean to be divisive or offensive? The list includes but is not limited to: personal attacks, false statements with no basis in fact, demeaning someone's experience, belittling language, broad generalizations and stereotyping, amongst others. If you cannot find a credible source to support something you are trying to state as a scientific finding, it is likely in this category.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining a learning environment that promotes excellence. We expect that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. We adhere to the academic misconduct guidelines outlined by the Student Code of Conduct and will report any suspected academic misconduct using the FAIR system. Please see http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part4_1-402.html for additional details. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact one of the instructors.