CULTIVATING COMMUNITY
A Training Manual to Engage with Diversity in Community Food Systems
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INTRODUCTION

Today's community food systems, including school and community gardens, horticultural therapy programs, and urban agriculture education NGOs, are richly complex. Working within these systems, staff and students will help individuals from a range of backgrounds combine their strengths to achieve the common goal of food production. This manual includes group activities, role-playing exercises, and prompts for discussions that will increase community instructors’ confidence and improve their teaching skills. We will briefly explore diversity concepts, discuss cultural differences, and practice community education engagement strategies, all within the context of food systems.

Completion of all seven modules in the manual will take approximately four hours; additional time is required for a site visit to the given project location, if desired. The versatile modules may be used together or separately, depending on the group’s training needs. Each module includes a list of required materials, duration time, preparation instructions, a brief background of the module concept, and any accompanying handouts.

We intentionally begin this curriculum with a discussion of difference within communities and not an actual visit to the community in which the instructors will be working. Experience has taught us that students who have discussed diversity in the context of community food systems in the classroom are more likely to practice these “getting to know you skills” when they initially visit the community in the field. This sets the stage for successful relationship building.

This curriculum will enable community instructors to develop communication and relationship-building skills to achieve success in a range of food-production environments.

This manual is not a comprehensive diversity and cultural competence training, but rather an introduction to these two concepts within the context of food security and education. It was originally designed to equip agriculture students with some basic skills to facilitate their work in community outreach projects. For a more comprehensive training in working with diverse populations, please consult the University of Florida’s “Strengthening Programs to Reach Diverse Audiences” (Guion et al., 2003).
GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Every community has some degree of diversity. Appreciating the differences that exist in your project group and community audience is the first step in becoming effective leaders and instructors.

WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED

These activities help participants become acquainted while exploring the diversity within their project groups. As the first module in the training, participants can sometimes be timid and reluctant to discuss diversity. To encourage participation in the group, pair up participants and have them answer the questions together before presenting their responses to the larger group.

To encourage participation in a reluctant group, pair up participants and have them answer questions together then present those responses to the group.

This first module of the training manual will serve as an ice(berg)-breaker and will prepare the participants for the information to come.

TOTAL TIME

30 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

• Flip chart or whiteboard, markers, printed handouts 1.1 and 1.2 (Handout 1.2, for everyone in the group, can be found using the URL given)
• Handout 1.2 should be read by all participants before the module
• Sketch Figure 1 on whiteboard or flip-chart paper
ACTIVITY ONE

BRAINSTORMING

Becoming acquainted with the individual characteristics and culture of group members and community audience is an important foundation for any project. Each person in this room has unique attributes, beliefs, and experiences that give him or her strengths. Learning to identify and appreciate these differences is important. We often overlook these differences when we discuss diversity, oversimplifying the concept as something strictly surface or physical.


• Quickly divide class into two groups (or more if necessary) and ask participants to create a list of characteristics that make people different from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize from one another. These characteristics fall into two categories: things you can visualize.

• Draw the horizontal line as pictured in Figure 1 (page 6), leaving the rest of the iceberg to be added later. Select a volunteer to write the answers on the board/Figure 1, explaining to only the volunteer that all the visible traits (e.g., gender, hair and skin color, size, etc.) should be written above the horizontal line and the traits that are not quite so visible (religion, beliefs, cultural identity, etc.) below the line.

• Distribute handout 1.1 (page 9) to be used as a supplement to the brainstormed lists; discuss with the class where these categories belong on Figure 1.

• The volunteer then completes Figure 1 with the remaining drawing of the iceberg.

REFLECTION

All of the characteristics above the line are physical attributes. Everything below the line, or the surface, is what we cannot see. A person’s invisible attributes are equally important components of individual identity and culture. Notice that the iceberg is much larger below the water line than it appears from the surface. A person’s individuality, his or her passions, beliefs, and life experiences are attributes that are not necessarily visible. To work together within the community, it is necessary to build relationships first. Only then can we understand common values and strengths and the diverse people contributing to the project.

Take time today and during this project to examine your own icebergs.
**FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS**

1. *Is the “tip of the iceberg” an adequate demonstration of yourselves as individuals, or do the traits and characteristics beneath the surface truly assist in defining you as an individual?*

2. *How does it affect you when your interactions with others are based solely on their perception of your outward appearance?*

3. *Think about how you describe people. Which of the two categories of characteristics do you use most? Why?*

**FIGURE 1**

Hard work can be a part of the learning experience.
ACTIVITY TWO

Based on what you know now, how would you define “diversity”?

- Allow participants to volunteer their answers
- Write key words on the board
- Read the definition of “diversity”

“Diversity is a mosaic of people who bring a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs as assets to the groups and organizations with which they interact.” (Guion et al., 2003)

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. What role will diversity play in your interactions as instructors and community workers? With the community? Within your project team?
   
   Expected answers: may influence teaching style or approach; allow for instructor to provide rich, contextual examples; allow team members to understand differences in leadership styles.

2. Can you think of a time when people you’ve worked with have operated differently from you? Can you share that experience and what you’ve learned from it?

   Expected answers: examples may come from previous group work in academic courses, leadership experiences, or other employment experiences.

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

Effective group leaders and instructors use diversity as an asset. They recognize the different skills and perspectives of their audience and utilize them. Each member of your project group will bring their own ideas, teaching styles, and interpersonal skills to the process. Recognize and appreciate the differences within this room, and then seek to do the same in the assigned community with which you work.
REFERENCES


GROUP IDENTIFICATION CATEGORIES

- Age
- Body size
- Class or socio-economic status
- History of abuse
- Education
- Food security/insecurity
- Gender
- Immigration status
- Language or accent

- Behavioral challenges
- Physical disability of impairment
- Race and or ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Spiritual beliefs or religion
- Neighborhood, state, or country of origin
- Family structure (e.g., adopted, single parent home, blended family)
- Health
- Literacy
DISSECTING THE MELTING POT

This module presents statistics on diversity in the United States, particularly as it relates to the disproportionate rates of poverty and food insecurity amongst minority populations. Because of the amount of data in this module, the best presentation is via projector screen and PowerPoint or poster board/flip chart paper (prepared ahead of time).

WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED

The statistics and demographics presented in this module, although pertinent to the project, can sometimes cause the audience to disengage. If you observe that the group is losing interest, stop the exercise, break into pairs to reflect on how this information relates to their community work. Maintaining engagement in the larger discussion of how poverty and food security effect their assigned community is more valuable than getting through every number and percentage in this module.

TOTAL TIME

40 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

- Flip chart, whiteboard, or PowerPoint presentation; markers; Handout 2.1 cut into index cards size; printed Handouts 2.2 Diversity Bingo (one for each participant)
- Prepare PowerPoint slides using the slides provided for you at the end of the module. (If you do not have access to a projector, write the information from each slide on flip-chart paper, large enough for the entire group to see)
ACTIVITY ONE

Introduce participants to the changing demographics of the United States by taking them through a slide show including statistics (found on pages 15-16) either via a projector or by reading the flip-chart paper you have prepared. Present slides 1-6. The sixth slide features the discussion questions found below.

SLIDESHOW

Read the discussion questions below and allow participants to work with partners to answer questions.

• How do you and/or your home community (where you live now or your place of origin) fit into the changing demographics that have been presented?
• Do you see yourselves better represented among this change?
• Or do you see that the group you belong to is homogenous?

Allow participants from each partnership to present their answers to the larger group. Once everyone has answered and the discussion slows, return to slide seven, “Poverty in America” and present the remaining five slides of the slide show.

SLIDESHOW

Read the next set of discussion questions aloud and allow partners to discuss them together before sharing with the larger group.

• How could individuals working in extension or food-security-focused non-profits best prepare themselves to work with their target populations?
  Expected answers: learn about the project stakeholders, identify customary cultural greetings, etc.
• What challenges might you encounter when teaching agriculture principles to diverse and under-served populations?
  Expected answers: communication, pre-concieved ideas about non-profits or universities, etc.
• How could this community benefit from learning these principles?
  Expected answers: improved food security, community development, establishing mentoring relationships with youth, etc.

Turn off the slide projector. The next activity should be more of an intimate discussion than Activity 1, which involved more lecture.
Activity Two

Distribute index cards and have each participant read his or her card. Information for each card can be found in Handout 2.1. Index cards are numbered so that definitions are read in numerical order.

We often use broad labels to refer to groups of people with the same ethnic origins, however these “categories” lump large populations together, irrespective of different cultural practices and norms. Each of you has been given an index card to read aloud to the group. Please read your card when it is your turn. Let’s start with number 1.

Participant with card 1 will read it aloud, and then card 2, and so on until you reach 6. After the cards have been read, ask a volunteer to share his or her thoughts. If there are no responses, you can use the following prompts:

1. What do you think about these terms that we use to describe various ethnic groups?
   Expected answers: the complexities of what makes an individual extend beyond categories based on skin color and country of origin.

2. Has anyone ever described you in a way that made you feel misunderstood or oversimplified?
   Expected answers: refer to iceberg activity reflection.

Have participants with cards 7-10 read theirs aloud. Then ask the participants to reflect on the information using the following prompts:

3. Within a given ethnic group of people, what makes individuals different?
   Expected answers: draw from the “iceberg” activity for ideas.

4. As instructors during the project, what are you going to do to get to know the individuals in your assigned community?
   Expected answers: exchange ideas, ask questions, engage community members in the learning process.
ACTIVITY THREE

Distribute Handout 2.2 (page 19.) Read instructions.

Each participant has a Diversity Bingo (Guion et al., 2003) card. Your goal is to collect signatures from people who fit the descriptions in the boxes, one per box. When you have a complete vertical, diagonal, or horizontal line (five signatures) shout “BINGO!”

Allow students to complete about 2 rounds of BINGO before bringing them back together as a group for a few discussion questions and a brief reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read the following aloud to the group:

1. How did it feel when you found individuals with similar backgrounds? Why do you think you felt that particular way?
   Expected answers: connected, understood, validated.

2. What did you observe during this exercise? Did this exercise help you to better understand anything?
   Expected answers: small groups can have great diversity, individuals are often different than they appear, each member has a unique history and perspective.

Once the group has finished answering, bring participants together for a final reflection on the activity.

REFLECTION

Read aloud:

BINGO is an acronym which stands for:

B – Be aware. Broaden your general knowledge of ethnic groups and cultures.

I – Include others. Have a variety of people involved in your programs from all groups and activities.


G – Give respect. Treat people fairly, honestly, and with positive regard.

O – Openly communicate. Share information, expectations, and unwritten rules with everyone.

Remember this simple acronym as you begin to work with your group and each time you work with any community.

TIME
15 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

• Flip chart or whiteboard, markers, Handout 2.1 cut into index cards size, printed Handouts 2.2 Diversity Bingo (one for each participant)

Note: May not work well in small groups
REFERENCES


Dissecting the Melting Pot: Diversity in America

The Changing Demographics of the United States

Immigration
- Documented immigration rates > 1.1 million annually
- Leading source countries (of birth) for legal immigrants
  - Mexico 14.6%
  - China 6.0%
  - Philippines 5.3%
  - India 5.1%
  - DR 4.4%
  - Cuba 3.4%

Diversity is Increasing
- 2010 U.S. Census included 15 separate questions on race with room for explanation
- From 2000-2010 the White non-Hispanic populations decreased from 75.1% to 72.4%
- Black (12.6%), Hispanic (16.3%), American Indian (12.6%), Asian and Pacific Islander (0.2%) all increased

Diversity is Increasing
- Projections show that in 2050
  - 52.5% White
  - 22.5% Hispanic
  - 15.7% Black
  - 10.3% Asian
  - 1.1% American Indian

Poverty in America
- 2010 Census reported poverty rates
  - Black 27%
  - Hispanic 26%
  - Asian 12%
  - Non-Hispanic white 10%

In 2010, the poverty rate for children under 18 increased from 20.7% to 22%

Food insecurity is the uncertain access to enough food for all household members to sustain active and healthy lives

14.5% of households in U.S. are food insecure; that’s 1 in 7
- 20% of children in North Carolina (or insert your state’s statistic here) are food insecure
- Food security disproportionally affects minorities

Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture
- Combat food insecurity
- Distribute healthful food to urban populations
- Venue for teaching the following
  - Nutrition
  - Food production
  - Employable skills
  - Community development

Discussion Questions
- How do you and/or your home community (where you live now or your place of origin) fit into the changing demographics that have been presented?
- Do you see yourselves better represented among this change?
- Or do you see that the group you belong to is homogenous?

How could someone working in extension or food security-focused non-profits best prepare him or herself to work with their organization’s target populations?
- When you think about teaching agriculture principles to diverse and under-served populations, what are some of the challenges that come to mind? How about benefits?

Compare the statistics found below with the most recently available census data. The sources have been provided for you on slide 13.
Slide 13

References for Slide Show


The following race categories were featured in the 2010 U.S. Census: “White” refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as “White” or reported entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Arab, Moroccan, or Caucasian.

“Black or African American” refers to a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as “Black, African American or Negro” or reported entries such as African American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.

“American Indian or Alaska Native” refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. This category includes people who indicated their race(s) as “American Indian or Alaska Native” or reported their enrolled or principal tribe, such as Navajo, Blackfeet, Inupiat, Yup’ik, or Central American Indian groups or South American Indian groups.

“Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as “Native Hawaiian,” “Guamanian or Chamorro,” “Samoa,” and “Other Pacific Islander” or provided other detailed Pacific Islander responses.

“Hispanic or Latino” refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.
“Some Other Race” includes all other responses not included in the White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander race categories described above. Respondents reporting entries such as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic or Latino group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Spanish) in response to the race question are included in this category.

The term diversity is used frequently in a variety of contexts in the United States, often synonymously with race.

The fields of biology, genetics, and anthropology have taught us much about race as a category for classifying individuals into distinct groups. Advancements in those three fields have shown that the category of race is arbitrary for the most part. For example, human genome research suggests that there is no biological basis for racial categories (Graves 2002), and it is widely reported by geneticists that all humans are 99.9 percent genetically alike.

Therefore, in the scientific world, race is a social construct that is not sufficient to classify groups of people. While race is still commonly used in our society, it will not be used in this training.

Ethnicity is a term that is rapidly being used to replace race. Unlike race, ethnicity classifies individuals into groups based on cultural characteristics. Culture encompasses the values, beliefs, practices, norms, and languages of a group that have been learned, shared, and transmitted inter-generationally; it influences a person’s feelings, thinking, and behavior (Hogan-Garcia 2003). This training focuses on ethnicity as a basis of diversity.
# Diversity Bingo Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1: More than 22 years old</th>
<th>Column 2: Has Native American heritage</th>
<th>Column 3: Did not graduate from college</th>
<th>Column 4: Born outside of the U.S.</th>
<th>Column 5: Has African heritage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Left-handed</td>
<td>Is or has been a single parent</td>
<td>Raised by a single parent</td>
<td>Has a physical disability</td>
<td>Raised in a wealthy household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has Asian heritage</td>
<td>Has Hispanic/Latino heritage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knows someone personally who is or has been homeless</td>
<td>Raised by his or her grandparents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is vegetarian</td>
<td>Lived outside of the U.S. for more than one year</td>
<td>Received public assistance</td>
<td>Is the first college graduate in the family</td>
<td>Lives in a rural community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised in the inner city</td>
<td>Speaks more than one language fluently</td>
<td>Has lived in public housing</td>
<td>Has bi-racial heritage</td>
<td>Has dated or married interracially</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEET YOUR COMMUNITY

This module guides the instructor in introducing the participants to their project community, both the people and the location.

WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED

At the conclusion of this project, exit interviews repeatedly show that student credit the site visit for decreasing nervousness and improving preparation. By meeting the community and seeing their project site beforehand, they were better able to prepare lessons and design projects that were site-appropriate and community relevant. For example, one year students observed a community garden was lacking compost bins and funding but had a large pile of garden waste. The students created a three-week lesson plan on compost and an easy and inexpensive soil amendment and included the construction of actual bins for the community.

TOTAL TIME

Varies

MATERIALS/PREP

• Invite a representative from the community in which you will work (guest speaker) to talk about his or her particular program and community demographics
• Make sure to tell your guest speaker his or her allotted speaking time
• If your particular project has been conducted before, ask past participants to speak to the group
• Have participants prepare a question in advance for the guest speaker(s).
• Distribute handout 3.1 Site Visit Reflection and have participants bring it to their assigned community site
ACTIVITY ONE

Introduce your guest speaker to the group of project participants. An introduction should include the following information:

- Speaker’s name and role at organization
- Name and mission of organization

Allow your speaker to speak for an allotted amount time on the following possible topics:

- The justification for and development of community engagement projects
- The key players in the project
  - Relationship between various community engagement project participants e.g. university course, course instructor, course participants, governmental bodies, NGO employees, community members
- The community demographics, e.g.,
  - Ethnicity
  - Socioeconomic status of community members
  - Family structure (e.g. single parent households)
  - Issues plaguing this community (e.g. food insecurity, poverty)
  - Languages spoken
  - Challenges and strengths of community

Once your speaker has completed his or her presentation, moderate a question-and-answer session between speaker and project participants. After 10 minutes, invite the participants to join you in thanking the speaker.
ACTIVITY TWO

It is helpful for the project participants to visit the site before beginning their work. This allows the participants to become familiar with the location, meet key players on site, and inventory resources available to them as they prepare for their community engagement work. You will have to determine what works best for the project and participants.

Guidelines for site visit:

- Have participants complete Handout 3.1 (page 24-25) as you tour the community location.
- Tour the facility/location, ideally with a staff member of your community partner organization, making sure participants know where they will be working and what resources will be available.
- Talk to participants about who is in charge at the location, emergency procedures, and how to handle behavioral issues.
- Introduce participants to community members and additional community partner staff, if possible.
- Field participants’ questions and direct them to the best person to provide answers.
- At the completion of the tour thank the facility for allowing you to visit and remind participants to use their now-completed Handout 3.1 as a resource during planning.

Enthusiastic instructors can make a big difference to a group of kids!
REFERENCES


Welcome to your community!
This is your first opportunity see where you will be working and to think about how location will affect your ability to accomplish your goals. When you begin working in the community, you will quickly discover that that sounds, surrounding activities, weather, and location can all help or hinder your ability to communicate with your community. Complete the questionnaire below and use the information gained during this visit to inform how you will design and accomplish your activities.

1. Describe the location, e.g. school, classroom, garden, field, community center, etc.

2. Are you working inside or outside? Will weather or temperature be a factor?

3. What noises do you notice at the location? Do you anticipate nearby distractions? Competing noise? If so, how will you combat these challenges as you attempt speak and work with community members?

4. What materials do you anticipate needing for your project? Are they available at the location? Will you have to bring them yourself? How will you obtain and bring them?

5. If you are going to work outside, are there places to set up? To sit? Will you need to create boundaries for your time working with the community, e.g., if you are teaching, will you need to create a “classroom” environment?

   ◦ How will you do this?
6. What are the challenges you anticipate with working in this community, e.g., language barriers, behavior, age differences, cultural differences?

○ How will you work within these challenges?

○ What are the benefits and strengths of the community?

7. What excites you most about your assigned community?
URBAN FOOD SECURITY PROJECTS

Community-based food security projects can present service workers with a myriad of challenges as well as positive experiences. This module introduces the participants to some of the possible hurdles they may encounter.

WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED

The Guthman article is densely comprehensive piece on community food security projects. Consequently, the discussion portion of this module can last from 30 minutes to several hours. If your time is limited, it is helpful to keep students focused on the larger goal of the discussion, preparation for the many challenges faced during these types of service projects. The included questions help give structure to the conversation, but should not be substituted for student driven discussions and reflections. As we conducted these trainings, we observed that initially students had strong reactions to this article, often negative. At the conclusion of the project, we found that these same students cited the article and the surrounding discussions as a “reality check” because community work was far more difficult than they had anticipated.

TOTAL TIME

35 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- Handouts 4.1 (URL given in activity) distributed prior to module
  - Article for discussion, to be read by participants prior to module
- Handout 4.2 distributed at time of module
  - Will be used during the discussion
ACTIVITY ONE

Provide the participants with some background on the author of the assigned reading, Dr. Julie Guthman.

Participants will discuss material found in Dr. Julie Guthman’s “Bringing good food to others: investigating the subjects of alternative food practice.” Dr. Guthman is a faculty member in the community studies program at UC Santa Cruz, in California. She teaches courses focusing on global political economy and the politics of food and agriculture. Dr. Guthman conducts research on the way food is produced, distributed, and consumed, and all of her students are required to participate in community projects in food security and/or urban agriculture.

This particular article explains Dr. Guthman’s findings from research conducted on her own students during their participation in community projects in food security.

Dr. Guthman is one of many scholars studying food justice today. Other authors, as well as newer readings from Dr. Guthman, can be substituted as resources.

Handout 4.1:
(Access to copyrighted material differs by institution)
http://cgi.sagepub.com/content/15/4/431.full.pdf+html

1. Divide the participants into discussion groups or pairs (depending on the size of your group) so that they can work together.

2. Assign each group (or pair) their discussion question(s) from Handout 4.2 (pages 29-30) and provide them with 10-15 minutes to discuss and prepare answers to present to the entire group.

3. Starting with Discussion Question 1, call on each group to present answers to the larger group.
   - Use the whiteboard or flip-chart paper to write the question and then allow the students to take notes on their accompanying handouts.
   - Allow other participants to offer their thoughts. You can use a prompt such as:
     - “Did anyone else have something to add to this? Perhaps a different response to the question?”
     - “Do any members of the group wish to share their thoughts?”

4. Before concluding this activity, confirm that everyone in the group has shared their thoughts on the article and or the upcoming project.

5. Once you feel that you have covered all the necessary points for discussion, the module is complete.
REFERENCES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In this article Guthman states that there is “a lack of attention to questions of privilege,” and this has given rise to critiques of the contemporary U.S. alternative food movement.
   
   i. What does the author mean by this? What is “privilege” in this context?
   
   ii. How does this word relate to most current alternative food practices?

2. On page 433, Guthman states that these projects “appear to lack resonance in communities in which they are located.”
   
   i. To what projects and communities is she referring?
   
   ii. What explanations does she give for this?
   
   iii. Do you think this is or could be true? Explain.

3. On page 435, the quote “…black nationalist groups have worked to distance themselves from racist-imposed idioms of dirt, filth, and backwardness associated with the ‘slave diet’…” means what for community garden and urban agriculture projects?
   
   i. Why would it be important for a project participant to be aware of this statement?
   
   ii. Could this sentiment, or related ones, affect how you work with community members in your project?

4. On page 438, Guthman includes quotes from her students who are passionate about educating people about food. Read some of these quotes aloud.
   
   i. Can you relate to these quotes?
   
   ii. What do you think of the author’s tone when addressing these statements?

5. Read aloud the two paragraphs on page 439 under the heading Findings.
   
   i. What are your initial responses?
   
   ii. Do you or would you find this sentiment discouraging?
   
   iii. Today, what do you think is the benefit of teaching farming and gardening to under-served urban populations?
6. Some of the recorded responses to the urban gardening programs discussed in Guthman’s paper include the following:
   - Resentment on the part of African American individuals to be expected to get their hands dirty and work for free.
   - Reports that the children involved in the community gardens do not like to garden.

   i. How would you handle such responses?

7. In response to the question of why a community member did not shop from the neighborhood fruit and vegetable truck, the woman answered, “Because they don’t sell no food! All they got is birdseed….Who are they to tell me how to eat? I don’t want that stuff. It’s not food. I need to be able to feed my family…You know, what normal grocery stores have.”

   i. In your own words, articulate what you believe to be the feelings of the woman.

   ii. Other community members communicate that what they really want is a Safeway in their neighborhood.

   iii. What is a food desert?

   iv. Do you think of having a grocery store as a form of privilege?

8. How does your project relate to the issue of food deserts?

9. After reading this article, what is your overall response to the information presented in the article and the author’s tone?

10. What themes in this article can be related to your own work?
INCLUSIVE INSTRUCTION

When an instructor’s audience is diverse, all of the group members’ perspectives must be addressed in lesson preparations. This module includes some simple tips and activities that will help the participants engage with their audience rather than talk at them. At the conclusion of the module, the participants will have at least three approaches to making their lessons engaging as well as three different strategies for presenting information to a group.

WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED

One of the recurring themes of these projects was student tendency to initially deliver lessons that were lecture-based and lacking in community participation. By the end, students reported wishing they had spent more time getting to know their audience because it was the development of community-student relationships that helped the students understand their audience and create engaging learning experiences. Consequently, we devoted more time during the training to emphasizing these points. This led to more students who prioritising making connections with the community which in turn led to community engagement in the learning process.

TOTAL TIME

40 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- Learning-style quiz should be completed by all participants before the module
  - Quiz can be found at [www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html](http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html)
  - Participants should print their results and bring them to the classroom session
- Small discussion groups. Divide participants according to overall class size. Groups should be no larger than five members
TIME
10 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- Results from Learning Style Quiz
  - Quiz can be found at www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html
  - Should have been completed by all participants before activity

Italicized text indicates material that should be read or explained to the group (in your own words). **Bold** text indicates directions for the instructor.

Helping identify and meet needs through projects provides an excellent way to build relationships with community members.

---

**ACTIVITY ONE**

Everyone in this group has experienced lessons that were interesting and engaging or boring and ineffective. You will have 5-10 minutes to discuss with your group the common characteristics of engaging instruction vs. boring instruction. For example, if you can think of a class that you especially enjoyed, what was it about that class that made it engaging? What about a less interesting class?

- Divide participants into discussion groups.
- Have one member of the group record answers to be reported to the larger group.
- On the whiteboard create two columns: “Boring” and “Engaging.”
- Call on each group to share their thoughts about each type of learning experience and record a key word from each answer on the board.
- Have the group compare the words in each column and together determine the most popular elements of a “Boring learning experience” vs. an “Engaging learning experience.”

Answers will vary somewhat from group to group, but for the most part the participants will create a list that looks like the one below:

**Boring Lesson:**
- Instruction lacks enthusiasm
- Too much lecture
- Information not applicable to audience
- Instructor does not vary approach for delivering information
- Lack of audience participation via feedback or active learning

**Engaging Lesson:**
- Instructor is enthusiastic about topic
- The learning process is varied with activities that demonstrate concept
- Information is made applicable to the audience by requiring them to participate
- Instructor works with the audience instead of only talking at them

- Ask students to retrieve their learning style quiz results (can be found using URL and should be completed before module.)
- If the students are comfortable sharing their results, use the whiteboard to tally up the different types of learners in the group. Student response systems such as “clickers,” if available, are a great way to facilitate this exercise within larger groups.
  - Allow the students to provide anecdotal evidence of how they learn best, or strategies they found effective for teaching them a concept.
    - If no students volunteer, provide an example of learning (e.g., in driver’s education class, students watch videos about driving, listen to a teacher lecture, and then practice driving.) These are three different types of teaching that cater to three different types of learners.
Discuss what kinds of learning activities are best for different types of learners and which ones, if used excessively, can marginalize those who learn differently.

It's important for the participants to understand that their lessons will have to contain three different approaches to learning. A good rule of thumb can be found below:

» See
» Hear
» Do
» Learn

Each audience is a diverse audience. Some differences will be obvious, such as cultural or socioeconomic differences, and others are more subtle, such as learning styles or perspectives. By varying your teaching approaches and promoting audience participation, your audience will assist in the learning process and your lesson will include everyone as it takes shape.

At the end of Activity 1 the participants should have identified about three to five elements necessary for making their lessons engaging and three to five strategies for presenting information in different ways.
**Activity Two**

As you probably learned from Activity 1, engaging one’s audience in the learning process is an effective way to demonstrate concepts and make the lesson interesting for all learners. Although the teacher is one expert on the subject matter, without a partnership between teacher and audience, the learning process is unsuccessful and frequently boring for both parties. The community members also have critical ideas and content to contribute, which should be utilized. This creates a co-instructional environment for all involved. But how do you make your lessons interesting for your audience if you’ve just met them?

- Allow participants to volunteer answers to the larger group
- Record suggestions on whiteboard
  - Suggestions might include the following:
    - Talk with participants
    - Create icebreakers
    - Design a lesson that requires the audience members to talk about themselves
    - Spend time outside of the project learning about the community

Once you know your audience, you have a better idea of how to make your lessons both applicable and engaging to them.

- Ask the participants. But beyond making your lesson interesting, why should you engage the audience? What does the audience contribute to the learning experience?
- Allow volunteers to answer to the larger group.
  - Suggested answers are the following:
    - People are experts on their own lives and know how to apply an idea to their individual lifestyle and the lives of their friends and families.
    - People know how to adapt principles to their culture and lifestyle.
    - Even when an audience knows little about a subject, they are experts on their own experience.

Getting to know your audience on a personal level allows you to draw parallels between the concepts you are teaching and learners’ life experiences. Having them use their own words to express the ideas that you are teaching allows them to make the information relevant to themselves and to internalize it.
ACTIVITY THREE

We’ve discussed the importance of knowing your audience and engaging them in the learning process, but now it’s time for you to try it for yourself!

• Divide participants into two groups.
  ○ Groups should be no larger than five people. If they exceed this number, create more groups with smaller numbers of participants.

• For the next 10 minutes each group should design an icebreaker related to their community project, e.g., community gardens, food, agriculture, etc.

• After 10 minutes have each group lead everyone else in the icebreaker.

• After each group has presented, give time for feedback about the effectiveness of each icebreaker.

• Close activity by answering discussion question below:
  ○ If the classroom group was the community in which you will work, what did you learn about your audience during the icebreaker that will shape your teaching and lesson planning?
REFERENCES


In this module the participants will learn basic elements of designing a lesson, then develop and teach their own to the group. If possible, participants should work with others who will be team members in their community project group, as much of what they do in this module will be used during their project.

**WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED**

For many of the participants, this was their first time teaching a group of people and they were lacking confidence and skill. However, they reported that this short introduction to being the teacher helped decreased their nervousness on their first day in the community. Although having topics available for the participants to teach was helpful, often times the groups had already selected a subject for their community-based teaching and used this as an opportunity to practice teaching an abbreviated version of their future lessons.

This module is the first time that the groups work together to develop their community project. Unlike the other activities in this training, this is when the groups begin to collaborate as a team working towards a common goal. One year one of the groups struggled to work together on this small activity. To their credit, they used this time as an opportunity to work out some group dynamic issues and consequently became the most efficient and coherent group of all the groups we have worked with over the years. In addition to exposing the participants to lesson preparation and public speaking, this is also a time when the groups can learn to work together.

**TOTAL TIME**

60 minutes

**MATERIALS/PREP**

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
  - Before the class, write the definition of a skill and a concept on the whiteboard or flip-chart paper. (Definitions are in Activity 1)
- Handout 6.1
- Before the module, select topics relevant to your community project, including both skills and concepts. In Activity 2, the participants will design a lesson to teach one of these topics to the group.
Activity One

During your project you will be teaching skills and/or concepts to your assigned community.

- Read the definition of a “skill” and a “concept” to the group
  - Skill: the learned power of doing something competently
  - Concept: an abstract or generic idea arising from particular instances, like a rule
- Ask the participants to volunteer examples of each of these and record them on the board. Examples of each are below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill:</th>
<th>Concept:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>Composting builds soil structure and fertility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeding</td>
<td>Diversity in the garden creates resilience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transplanting</td>
<td>Photosynthesis fixes atmospheric carbon into plant carbon,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>which eventually becomes soil organic matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pruning</td>
<td>Growing your own food can be empowering, educational, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>enriching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvesting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Once you feel that the group has a solid understanding of these two definitions, present them with the steps for teaching skills and concepts.

Whether you are teaching skills, concepts, or both, your lesson plans should consist of five simple steps. Turn to Handout 6.1 (page 43) to see the 5 Basic Steps of Teaching Skills and Concepts.

- Read each step to the participants. Allow them to volunteer what they think each step entails before filling in the blanks for them.
- Below the steps you will find an example of these 5 steps using “composting” as the concept and skill.

Steps Involved in Teaching a Concept or Skill

1. Preparation: Design and Practice Your Lesson Plan
   - Emphasize the importance of preparation.
   - Being properly prepared will help novice teachers when they encounter some of the following challenges:
     - Nervousness from talking in front of a group
     - Distractions
     - Disinterest in the lesson
     - Unpredictable distractions and disruptions
   - Trying to “wing it” will most likely end in disaster
Activity One (Cont’d)

2. **Explanation:** The Clear Statement and Description of the Concept or Skill
   - Rather than trying to cover too much information in a lesson, start the lesson by telling the group what the skill or concept is and provide an audience-appropriate explanation. This step will transition directly into Step 3.

3. **Demonstration:** Showing the Community the Skill or Giving an Example that Illustrates the Concept
   - An engaging exercise or real-life example is helpful here.
   - Try to provide your community with ways to apply the concept or use the skill in their own lives. If it’s not relevant, it’s difficult for the audience to care about it.

4. **Practice:** Providing the Community a Chance to Practice their New Skill or Witness the Concept in Action
   - This part of the lesson should be “active learning.”
   - The community should be participating in an activity that demonstrates the point of the lesson.

5. **Application:** Practicing the New Skill or Explaining the Concept in their Own Words
   - This is the last opportunity in the lesson for you to help the community internalize what they are learning.
   - Ask the community how it applies to their life.
   - How could they use this skill or apply this concept to themselves?

(An example lesson can be found on the next page.)
LESSON EXAMPLE: COMPOSTING

1. **Preparation**
   - Define composting, record the concept, and make sure you understand the skill. Practice activities involved in composting if you’re unfamiliar with it.
   - Gather materials needed for the lesson.
   - Practice teaching the lesson a few times and be sure it fits in your allotted teaching time.

2. **Explanation**
   - Explain to the community that you will be talking about composting today.
     i. Ask the community if anyone knows what composting is and have them explain it in their own words or simply ask them what words come to mind when they hear the word “compost.”
     ii. Define composting, how it is done (skill) and explain why it is good for the garden, soil, planet, etc.

3. **Demonstration**
   - Illustrate your explanation by demonstrating how food and other organic wastes decompose. You can use pictures, video, an actual compost heap, or drawings.
   - As you demonstrate composting, find ways to relate it to the community. For example, if you’re teaching at a school, you could talk about cafeteria waste disposal.

4. **Practice**
   - Have the community prepare a compost pile from scratch, build a compost bin, explore the bugs and waste in finished compost, or brainstorm ways to use composting personally or in their community.

5. **Application**
   - Ask the community how composting applies to them. How will they use what they learned during this lesson in the future? Allow them to give you honest feedback about the concept of composting and the skill of knowing how to compost.
ACTIVITY TWO

NOW IT’S YOUR TURN!

• Have the participants work in their actual community project teams.
• Provide them with a project-relevant topic to teach the rest of the group. Topics we have found to work well include those that are familiar to all (tying your shoes, frying an egg), and those that are related to agricultural content (worm digestion, photosynthesis, nitrogen fixation, weed identification), for which they may need supplemental materials.
• Provide 20 minutes to design a 5-minute lesson plan that incorporates the steps learned in Activity 1.
• Have all of the groups present their lesson to the larger group.
• Pick one of the groups and have the class give feedback about the lesson
  ◦ Did they go over the time?
  ◦ Did the lesson have a clear message?
  ◦ Did the group engage their audience?
  ◦ What worked?
  ◦ What should they have done differently?
• Close this activity by answering any questions the participants might have about designing lessons.
REFERENCES


6

DESERING A LESSON

Handout 6.1

STEPS FOR TEACHING A CONCEPT OR SKILL

1. **Preparation:** Design and Practice Your Lesson Plan

2. **Explanation:** The Clear Statement and Description of the Concept or Skill

3. **Demonstration:** Showing the Community the Skill or Giving an Example that Illustrates the Concept

4. **Practice:** Providing the Community a Chance to Practice their New Skill or Witness the Concept in Action

5. **Application:** Practicing the New Skill or Explaining the Concept in their Own Words
CHALLENGING CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS
(AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM)

This module is a role-playing activity. Participants will act out challenging classroom behaviors in a group setting. Participants will take turns practicing strategies to manage the behaviors.

WHAT THE AUTHORS LEARNED

Module 7 was consistently the most popular and most fun activity of the training. At this point the groups are well acquainted with one another and typically feel comfortable with some role-playing. This module can seem a little silly at the time, but it is an effective way to expose participants to some of the challenges they will face when teaching and working with a group of learners. At the conclusion of the project, students reported that when a difficult situation arose in the community, Module 7 had equipped them with skills for mitigating disruption. Having actually practiced these skills during the role-playing exercise, made it easier to employ them.

TOTAL TIME

60 minutes

MATERIALS/PREP

• Handout 7.1
• Have the groups use whatever lesson they developed in Module 6, or create a list of easy topics for the participants to teach to the group during the role-play, e.g., how to tie your shoes or how to give directions
  • The topic is not important, but will serve as the lesson the participants will be teaching their “class” when the challenging behaviors occur
CHALLENGING CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS

**TIME**
60 minutes

**MATERIALS/PREP**
- Handout 7.1
- Have the groups use whatever lesson they developed in Module 6, or create a list of easy topics for the participants to teach to the group during the role-play, e.g., how to tie your shoes or how to give directions
  - The topic is not important, but will serve as the lesson the participants will be teaching their “class” when the challenging behaviors occur

*Italicized* text indicates material that should be read or explained to the group (in your own words). *Bold* text indicates directions for the instructor.

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**ACTIVITY ONE**

- Divide participants into their teams for the community work.
- Distribute Handout 7.1 (page 47) and read through the challenging behaviors and suggested strategic responses.
- Pick one of the groups and have them leave the room. This group will be role-playing as the teachers.
  - While outside of the room they will review the strategic responses on Handout 7.1 for handling behaviors.
  - They should also review their five-minute lesson they prepared in Module 6 because that is what they will be teaching during this role-playing activity.
- The participants remaining in the room will select the behaviors that they will “act out” as students until effectively managed by the teachers in the other group.
- The teachers return and begin to present their lesson to the group.
- The students act out the disruptive and challenging behaviors.
- The teachers employ the strategic responses to handle behaviors.
- Give each group a chance to be teachers and students until all of the strategies and behaviors have been acted out.
- Close activity with discussion questions found below.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. *What did you learn about the importance of classroom management through this exercise?*
2. *How confident are you in your ability to effectively manage a classroom?*
3. *How would you describe your behavioral management style?*
4. *What was the most challenging part of this task?*
5. *How might dealing with these challenging behaviors be different in your service-learning community setting?*

---

Sometimes challenging behaviors present themselves when teaching a group, making a good toolbox of appropriate responses useful.
REFERENCES

### Eight Challenging Classroom Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenging Behavior</th>
<th>Strategic Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Talking While You Are Teaching                        | • Don’t single out the students who are talking.  
• Move towards them.  
• Call on them to share their opinions about the lesson.  
• If necessary, talk to them privately after class. |
| 2. Angry Behavior Directed Towards You                   | • Try not to react in front of the class.  
• Acknowledge the comment and take it to a class level, asking if others feel the same way.  
• Rephrase the comment and ask the class their opinion. For instance, “So you think the homework assignment is stupid, how do others feel about this?”  
• Recognize that there may be a larger issue going on for the student, such as family problems or academic pressure.  
• Talk to the student in a calm way after class to determine what is going on. |
| 3. Lack of Participation                                 | • Be sensitive about not embarrassing the shy student as you try to encourage participation.  
• Give the student a leadership role such as being responsible to report small group work to the larger class.  
• Praise the student for comments made in class.  
• Make all participants responsible for presenting at least one aspect of a group assignment. |
| 4. Dominating Class Time With Extensive Participation     | • Acknowledge the student’s comment and quickly move away from it. One possible response is, “That’s an interesting idea, what do others think?”  
• Set limits and move on when needed. One possible response is, “I hear your comment, now we need to move on.”  
• Elicit participation from other students. One possible response is, “I’d like to hear from those of you who haven’t shared your opinions yet today.”  
• If necessary, talk with the student privately to set limits and determine what is going on. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>STRATEGIC RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Inattentiveness</td>
<td>• Break down assignments into smaller tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have the student complete a daily progress report that spells out his or her</td>
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<td></td>
<td>accomplishments.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Have the student sit at the front of the room to avoid additional distractions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>that can arise without your proximity.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Refer the student for evaluation if you expect an attention problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do not lose your patience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do not publicly embarrass the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Complaining in Class</td>
<td>• Do not get defensive.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hear the student's point.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If appropriate, show your understanding about the difficulty presented.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Depending upon the complaint, ask others if they feel the same way or move on to</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>your lesson plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tell the student that the two of you can talk privately. One possible response</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is, “I hear what you’re saying. We need to continue with the lesson, so let’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>talk during the break.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Not Taking Responsibility for Classwork</td>
<td>• Keep to your agenda and set appropriate limits.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Set clear parameters for grading, such as stating that late papers will not be</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accepted.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Talk about the importance of class participation and attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build participation and attendance into your grading system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Challenging You in Class</td>
<td>• Do not get defensive in front of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognize that it is fine not to know everything. If you do not have the answer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to a question, one possible response is, “That’s an interesting question, how</td>
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<td></td>
<td>would others respond to that?” or “I’m not certain about the answer to that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>question but I will look it up and get back to you.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do not acknowledge the behavior and move on.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>