

Pedagogy for the People: The Impact of TA-centered Equity and Inclusion Training on Student Learning Outcomes

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In the Fall of 2016, I joined the coordinators of Introductory Biology 151/152 at the University of Wisconsin –Madison as an Educational Specialist. My primary focus was the implementation of TA-centered equity and inclusion training for the purpose of better equipping TAs to respond to students' need for an inclusive learning environment (i.e., in-depth understanding of racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic differences) and adopt empathic pedagogical practices (e.g., facilitating in-class activities designed to engage multiple learning modalities, using gender-inclusive language, etc). In this mini workshop, we will explore the TAs' concerns (e.g., How should TAs address the post-election fears of minoritized students?); I will detail the components of these trainings, (e.g., brave space/courageous conversations, Theatre of the Oppressed methodology); and we will discuss the impacts of TA trainings on the TAs themselves, as well as on the students enrolled in the course. Implications for future practice in biology education will also be shared.

Keywords: teaching assistants, TA, pedagogy, equity and inclusion training

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