

## Including Diversity and Inclusion Statements on Course Syllabi



The Program in Biology continues to advocate for and foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment in our classrooms. In order to continue to evolve and increase transparency of the importance of diversity and inclusion, we ask that you **consider including a diversity and inclusion statement in your course syllabus.**

### **WHAT** is a diversity and inclusion statement?

Diversity and inclusion statements provide information to students on the importance of respecting multiple perspectives inside the classroom. This may include the importance of respecting and valuing others' backgrounds, identities, and experiences. As noted by the [Sheridan Center](#), diversity and inclusion statements

are a way to demonstrate to students that all contributions add value to the course experience. This increases inclusivity in the classroom, which is particularly important in the retention of students who identify from historically underrepresented groups.

### **WHY** should I include a diversity and inclusion statement in my syllabus?

Including a diversity and inclusion statement on the course syllabus establishes a positive learning environment and provides students with clear expectations regarding respecting others at the start of the course.

### **HOW** many Biology courses include a diversity and inclusion statement on the course syllabus?

We reviewed course syllabi on Courses @ Brown within the Division in Biology for the 2020-2021 academic year. Syllabi were reviewed for diversity statements and/or statements made about diversity in the course descriptions. Results indicate **approximately one third of Biology course syllabi included a diversity and inclusion statement.**

### **HOW** can I write a diversity and inclusion statement?

Consider the following: (1) What types of bias may be present in your course - including biases in your field and your own personal biases? Address these biases in the statement. (2) Be explicit in the inclusivity of all identities, perspectives, and experiences. (3) Use language that models a positive learning environment including respect and validation of all perspectives. (4) Provide campus resources for student support. (5) Be clear about expectations in the classroom, including attitudes and behaviors that are important to uphold.

### **WHERE** are there examples of diversity and inclusion statements?

[This shared document](#) includes examples of diversity and inclusion statements from courses in the Program in Biology and Neuroscience. As you write statements for your own course(s), please add to this document.

### **WHO** can I ask for help in writing diversity and inclusion statements?

#### **Toni-Marie Achilli, PhD**

Assistant Dean for Biology Undergraduate Education  
Contact: [Toni-Marie\\_Achilli@Brown.edu](mailto:Toni-Marie_Achilli@Brown.edu) or [Calendly](#)

#### **Kristina Monteiro, PhD**

Director, Academic Assessment & Evaluation for Biology  
Contact: [Kristina\\_Monteiro@Brown.edu](mailto:Kristina_Monteiro@Brown.edu) or [Calendly](#)