

Introduction to the Course/Syllabus Curriculum Checklist

Midwives and aspiring midwives of color* and others who are underrepresented have been advocating for equity in midwifery education long before the creation of this [checklist](#) & the accompanying [web-based resource](#). With that in mind, this resource aims to amplify the voices and perspectives of these important and all too often ignored members of our community and serve as a living repository for the transformative ideas and tools necessary to bring about equity and social justice in midwifery education and training.

Department/Program or School-wide Suggestions:

- Encourage faculty to use this [checklist](#) to help them revise their courses/syllabi & apply the checklist to the entire curriculum as well
- Consider the possibility of paying a stipend to have diverse advisors help review curriculum
- Use the [Equity Agenda Guideline for Midwifery Education & Training Programs](#) to guide the actions of your institution's/program's change team efforts
- Encourage each instructor to create their own syllabus statement equity and social justice
- Develop a religious holiday policy & acknowledge if the schedule is based on Christian holidays
- Consider course evaluation question(s) specifically asking about inequity and racism
- Ensure adequate orientation to mission & equity/antiracism/social justice commitments/statements for new faculty & staff and ongoing trainings for faculty, staff & admin
- Ensure that the library has a copy of *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* (Adams & Bell, 2016) available to loan, Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Suggested Activity for Individuals: Make a Commitment to yourself. What will you do to help infuse equity and social justice into your curriculum/classroom in the next 1 month, 3 months, 9 months and 12 months? Be specific and realistic. Choose at least one thing to do for each time period. Ideas:

I will:

- ❖ Make specific adjustments to my syllabus (list them)
- ❖ Create your own syllabus statement regarding equity and social justice
- ❖ Use one or more curriculum checklist(s) to evaluate my syllabus
- ❖ Sign up for continuing education/training workshop
- ❖ Read an article/book or explore a relevant webpage/site in depth
- ❖ Meet with a colleague to share ideas & learn together
- ❖ Follow someone on social media who can help me learn more
- ❖ Sign up for racial equity tools or other similar resource and read within a week of it arriving
- ❖ Watch relevant webinars or videos
- ❖ Join a local community group such as the Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites
- ❖ Learn more about a local or national organization working on social justice

Resources:

- Extensive Web Resource for Midwifery Educators: <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/>
 - See the "[Social Justice](#)" section of this page:
 - Curriculum Tools: <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/curriculum>
 - Books, articles and more: <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/facultystafftraining>
 - [Climate & the Hidden Curriculum](#)
 - Critical Consciousness: <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/criticalconsciousness>
 - Power & Privilege: <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/power-privilege>
 - Webinars <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/webinars>
<http://nacpm.org/equity-race-and-access-to-midwifery-webinar-serie>

DRAFT Course/Syllabus/Curriculum Revision Checklist

EQUITY

IN MIDWIFERY EDUCATION

Topic/Potential Areas for Improvement	✓	Description/Things to Consider	Notes to self	Resources
Noticing Who is Given Expert Status	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider who has been set up as the “experts” on the topics taught Consider who has written required reading materials. Are they all white? Mostly white? Acknowledge if no other options Diversity of guest speakers to balance perspectives, ideally paid for their time 		
Focusing on Strength & Resilience, Not just Disparities/Inequities	— — — — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone and language regularly emphasize the strength & resilience of communities and individuals especially when examining inequities Convey the concept of inequities rather than disparities Consider tone and focus when discussing sensitive topics ie. GDM Risk in indigenous populations displaced from traditional foods vs genetics Strengths-based interventions Consider activities that increase motivation and hope by fostering a growth mindset 		https://www.equitymidwifery.org/healingresourcesfocusingonstrengths
Reconsider Content and Highlight Diverse Resources	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge historical realities that impact experience ie. Legacy of enslaved persons being forced to feed white babies their milk Consider Including the “Lived Experience” of pregnant/PP families Consider adding “Recommended Reading” if unsure about requiring it 		https://www.equitymidwifery.org/curriculum
Enabling Students to see themselves in the course/curriculum content & establish a sense of belonging and connection	— — — — — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values Affirmations exercise Consider allowing students to pick projects or assignment topics Are any communities invisible in your course/curriculum content? Evaluate how your course/curriculum contributes to students’ sense of belonging especially for first generation and non-majority students Options for group work ie. Having students work out a problem as a group, having students “teach” each other a concept, taking quizzes in groups, exchanging ideas in pairs or triads How do you help students develop a connection to the material? 		Verschelden, C. (2017). <i>Bandwidth recovery: Helping students reclaim cognitive resources lost to poverty, racism, and social marginalization</i> . Stylus Publishing, LLC.
Emphasizing Community Connections	— —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight national, regional & local organizations run by and working with/for diverse populations ie. Sister Song, NLIRH, NAABB, NBMA, etc Assignments encourage connection such as interviews, research, etc 		

Considering implications for vulnerable/resilient populations or those on the margins	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess whether your course/curriculum content considers implications/impacts for vulnerable/resilient populations (of pregnant/PP families) or those on the margins such as racial/ethnic/religious minorities, refugees, immigrants, those living in medically underserved rural or urban areas or persons who are hungry, homeless, mentally ill, incarcerated, low income, LGBTQI2S, disabled, etc. 		
Assessing Terminology/ Language	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person first language including regarding obesity, diabetes and Down Syndrome Avoid co-opting language ie. “pow wow” Gender-inclusive language (Syllabus, power points, worksheets, etc.) 		
Reconsidering the Content of Questions Posed & Case Study Examples	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid stereotyping Consider who is given visibility in your case examples Consider impacts on some of the most vulnerable (and yet resilient) pregnant/birthing/postpartum persons 		https://www.equitymidwifery.org/climate-inclusion
Assessing methods of Evaluation	— — — — — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anonymous mid-quarter feedback option Course/curriculum evaluations that specifically ask about whether students perceive racism or other differentisms and if content seems relevant to diverse communities they hope to serve, etc. Examine your course’s/curriculum’s methods of evaluating student learning and competency and consider the limitations of multiple choice only Consider creating a structure that encourages revisions, redos, second tries, frequent specific feedback, consistent support Consider standards-based grading (no penalty for early on failures, just need to master the content by the end of the term) Consider some deadline flexibility vs 100% strict and inflexible 		https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/c25c02_231139f27615417ebe69e7a772c9c6ce.pdf
Allowing for Diversity of Expression & Reactions	— —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the type and diversity of reflections you invite from students ie. journaling, etc Consider allowing students to request alternate readings and related assignments if assigned reading triggers undue stress for them as a result of their cultural background Consider if any topics in your course/curriculum might warrant a “trigger warning” or acknowledgement of need to turn off camera, leave, say stop 		

Adopting Inclusive Excellence in Assessment	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand options for response format beyond writing, ie, student choice: power point, short essay, voice recordings, videotaped role play, webpage, etc • Offer synchronous classes/Live Sessions if distance education • Assessment Early and often, but not necessarily with a penalty attached and adding study guides as needed due to help counter the underperforming educational system that results from institutional racism 		https://www.google.com/amp/s/mobile.nytimes.com/2015/09/13/magazine/a-prescription-for-more-black-doctors.amp.html
Mapping Student Demographics	— —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that everywhere that states/Provinces are referenced, that the US/Canadian Territories also acknowledged as existing • Consider including articles relevant to the demographics and/or interests of the students you will be teaching ie. postpartum support related to race/ethnicity, country (or parents') of origin, religious minorities, LGBTQI2S, Deaf persons, incarcerated persons, etc 		
Addressing all Learning Styles & enabling students to recover lost bandwidth	— — — — — — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider including a Learning styles assessment • Include audio-visual resources • Offer synchronous class options (if relevant) • Reference relevant poetry, art, song • Small group work • Gamification • Activities that require movement • Consider employing strategies that enable students to build self-efficacy ie. seeing a peer succeed at a task, using verbal persuasion and affirmations, reducing stress and anxiety, using collaborative, conceptual, and creative pedagogies 		
Reviewing content for cultural appropriation	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine course/curriculum content for cultural appropriation ie. smudging, etc 		
Crafting a Syllabus Statement	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider crafting a syllabus statement or revising your teaching philosophy to set the tone for your classroom environment and demonstrate that you value and respect difference • Highlight what you want your students to know about your expectations regarding creating and maintaining a classroom space where differences are respected and valued • Consider directing students to campus resources for further support ie. academic, psychosocial, peer, quality advising, mentorship, safe spaces, etc. 		https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/statements

Integrating Important Concepts	— —	<p>Does your course/curriculum include or take into account at least one of the following? Consider how these concepts might be incorporated in this course & larger curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health equity ● Social justice ● Unconscious/Implicit Bias ● Disparities/Inequities/Resilience ● Historical trauma/Cultural healing ● Health literacy ● Reproductive/Birth justice ● Social Determinants of Health (including racism as a risk factor vs race) ● Structural competency ● Structural Violence ● Structural Humility ● Power and Privilege ● Critical Consciousness ● Life Course Perspective ● Weathering Theory ● Why people have a hard time talking about race/racism ● Implicit Bias ● Racial Anxiety ● Stereotype and Identity Threat ● Ally/Accomplice ● Microaggressions and microinvalidations ● Framework for quality apologies ● Multicultural sources of wealth/ ● Strengths-based approach ● Cultural Competency vs. cultural humility ● Overcoming Stereotype Threat/Wise Feedback ● Intersectionality ● Growth mindset ● Positive racial climate 		<p>https://www.equitymidwifery.org/facultystafftraining</p> <p>https://www.equitymidwifery.org/power-privilege</p> <p>https://www.equitymidwifery.org/criticalconsciousness</p>
Committing to Lifelong Learning	— — —	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider what commitments you want to make this term to expanding your fund of knowledge regarding social justice, antiracism, equity in education, etc. ● Consider how you can equip yourself to feel better prepared to address and confront racism and other differentisms when they rear their ugly head ● Make a plan for revisiting the important concepts listed above and regularly reconsidering how they might be incorporated in each course/curriculum 		<p>https://www.equitymidwifery.org/wheretostart</p> <p>https://www.equitymidwifery.org/aboutwhy</p> <p>https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/speak-up</p>

*See additional Curriculum Checklists at <https://www.equitymidwifery.org/curriculum>