

Diversity, Inclusion, and Cultural Awareness

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Abstract

This chapter informs faculty on the purpose and use of diversity initiatives on UNC Charlotte's campus. As North Carolina's urban research university, UNCC is accessible and affordable and attracts students from all social backgrounds. We promote a learning environment that contributes to the understanding of inclusion and equity in society. UNCC is committed to diversity and is purposeful in the recruitment, retention, and support of minority faculty, students, and staff. Faculty are strongly encouraged to acknowledge the cultural, social, and economic diversity and disparities present in our multicultural classrooms. We address the unique challenges and issues that minority students face and provide faculty with pedagogical approaches and campus resources to address those challenges to foster student success.

Introduction

In this chapter we inform faculty on the purpose and use of diversity initiatives on the UNCC campus. UNCC is accessible and affordable and attracts a range of students including transfer, first-generation, international, low-income students, returning adult learners, and recent high school graduates. UNCC is committed to diversity and is purposeful in the recruitment, retention, and support of minority faculty, students, and staff. The goal of this chapter is to support [UNCC Diversity](#) by providing practical tools and resources for instructors who aim to promote inclusion and cultural awareness in their classrooms.

UNC Charlotte is among the most [diverse campuses](#) in the UNC system with over 27,000 students enrolled in 2014. In 2012-2013, 30.7% of UNCC students were from racial or ethnic minority groups representing 45 states and 103 countries. (Take a look at the [University Profile](#) for updated demographical information.) In 2004, the University adopted a goal specifically related to diversity, “to enhance opportunities for learning in a culturally rich environment” and soon after the [UNCC Diversity Plan for Campus Diversity, Access, and Inclusion](#) was implemented. To support diversity initiatives, instructors can play an active role in helping students learn to value diversity and enhance their cultural awareness.

While recruitment efforts have enhanced diversity at many college campuses, recent institutional and media reports (a sample of reports are provided at the end of this chapter) highlight the persistent gaps in feelings of inclusion and college completion rates among underrepresented groups in terms of class, race and other social characteristics. Instructors can actively foster a civil classroom environment that promotes feelings of inclusion and cultural

awareness to encourage success for all students across myriad dimensions of social differences.

It is a core value at UNCC to manage and value cultural diversity in the classroom. Faculty are strongly encouraged to acknowledge the cultural, social, and economic diversity and disparities present in our multicultural classrooms with the goal to increase understanding and appreciation of the needs, concerns, and strengths of all students. The [Office of Undergraduate Admissions](#) features some of the programs and services offered at UNCC to foster a “fundamental understanding of diversity, unique learning styles, cultural difference and human relationships”.

Strategies to Implement Diversity

Faculty are encouraged to use teaching strategies and make curriculum modifications that will better incorporate diversity initiatives. Faculty should reflect upon their current curriculum and be continually challenged to improve their diversity efforts. UNCC will maintain an environment that is inviting to all students by increasing understanding of the needs, concerns, and strengths of students from different backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances.

Here are some general objectives faculty can incorporate to enhance student learning in the classroom:

- Develop a strong sense of community. This can help foster an academic identity and create a space within academia for some of these students who often feel as if they don't fit in. A pedagogy that includes a team-based approach and active learning is a great way to do this.

- Create opportunities to educate students about cultural diversity
- Call attention to the special needs, concerns, strengths, and accomplishments of marginalized individuals and groups
- Promote inclusiveness by encouraging university students, staff, and faculty to interact and have dialogue with each other
- Address social inequalities that persist in spite of diversity initiatives
- Arm students with strategies to decrease prejudicial thinking and combat discrimination
- Refer to the [UNCC Plan for Campus Diversity, Access, and Inclusion](#) regularly when creating syllabus and curricula

Creating Sensitive Practices and Becoming an Ally

In this section, we address ways faculty can create sensitive practices in the classroom or become allies for students from culturally diverse backgrounds. We begin with a definition and discuss the relevance of certain student groupings here at UNCC. We then follow up with strategies you can use in the classroom. Finally, we provide reference links, both internal and external to UNCC, for more information. Please note the order or comparative length of each section below does not represent any type of ranking, status, or priority. Each student grouping has unique considerations that we have done our best to address in a reader-friendly and succinct manner. We also acknowledge that all student groupings may not be represented in this list.

Adult Students

Adult students are students over the age of 24 who are returning to school after the traditional age of 18-24. These students typically have other responsibilities such as family, career, and/or military service. Adult students return to school for a variety of reasons such as pursuing certification, an advanced degree, or lifelong learning. In 2014, UNCC enrolled about 8,107 adult students. UNC Charlotte recognizes and appreciates the diverse experiences adult students bring to the campus and to the classroom. We suggest these strategies for helping Adult Students succeed:

- Recommend adult students to [The Office of Adult Students and Evening Services](#) (OASES). OASES offers a multitude of services to assist with their transition and success at UNCC is committed to supporting and enhancing the educational experiences of the adult student. OASES provides adult students with resources such as an Adult Mentoring Program for Students (AMPS) which pairs experienced adult student volunteers with new adult students to provide a support system.
- Do not make assumptions about adult students' computer literacy, knowledge base, life experiences, attitude, or outside obligations.
- Do not ask adult students to speak on behalf of older or returning students. Remember that their individual experience is unique and it is unfair to ask them to represent a whole generation of people on a particular topic.

Additional Resources:

[OASES Webpage](#)

[OASES Facebook page](#)

[UNCC Counseling Center for Adult Students](#)

[49er Finish YouTube Promotional Video](#)

[Research on Adult Learners: Supporting the Needs of a Student Population that is No](#)

[Longer Nontraditional](#), Association of American Colleges and Universities

[8 Important Characteristics of Adult Learners](#), eLearning Industry

Commuters, Evening and Online Students

In Fall of 2014 about 22,000 UNCC students lived off-campus, and thus, commuted via car, bus, train, or foot to campus. We suggest these strategies for helping these students succeed:

- Recommend commuter, evening and online students to [The Office of Adult Students and Evening Services \(OASES\)](#). OASES assists in recruiting and retaining a diverse student population. They advise students and offer services for prospective and enrolled adult, evening and weekend students. OASES works closely with external organizations to promote the mission of OASES and develop scholarships for students who need evening services.
- Offer office hours during the evening or weekend hours. These office hours can be by appointment, via phone, or virtual.
- Allow students to turn in assignments electronically, rather than in class.

Additional Resources:

[OASES Webpage](#)

[OASES Facebook page](#)

Disabled Students

A disability is any physical, mental, or cognitive impairment that limit students' activities. This includes, but is not limited to medical, physical, cognitive, psychological, visual, hearing, traumatic brain injury and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. We suggest these strategies for helping students with disabilities succeed:

- Refer student to [The Office of Disability Services](#) (DS). The DS is responsible for ensuring access to academic programs and campus facilities, as well as, meeting the required learning accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Notify all students of their rights and responsibilities concerning disability services in the [syllabus](#).
- Get all videos Closed Captioned before the semester starts.
- Return Letters of Accommodation to DS within 48 hours of receipt by student.
- Be proactive in helping students locate low distraction locations on campus. For example, you can reserve a space in your department for one or two students to take an exam.
- Prepare any accommodations in advance.
- Do not single out students when making accommodations (such as seating).
- Do not get annoyed or frustrated when making accommodations. Remember you are not accommodating the student to have an advantage over other students; you are enabling the student to have the same opportunity as their peers to learn.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Disability Services](#)

[Faculty Responsibilities](#)

[UNCC BEST](#)

[UNCC Counseling Center for Students with Disabilities](#)

First Generation Students

First generation students are diverse with regard to race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. What they all have in common are parents that did not attend or complete a four year college program. Because of this they often lack the type of socialization that other students are able to bring into the classroom with regard to higher education at an institutional level. Kathleen Ross, the founding president of Heritage University, a university with a 75% first generation enrollment rate, points out that “students learn many of the practices and skills that lead to academic success subliminally, through socialization, rather than being directly told or taught.”

For first generation students, this socialization is absent from the home, and as a result, some of the necessary skills and support for academic success are underdeveloped. Research has shown that continuing generation students are better able to negotiate college difficulties, having parents that can guide them through the college experience by sharing information and advice about college norms and expectations, some of which are implicit.

The notion of an academic identity is also often underdeveloped, especially for students who may not have had familial encouragement or support for college entry. This may be especially true for students whose parents were not able to complete a secondary educational program. Others may be the children of immigrants that may also lack a primary education. In

some cases families may have actively discouraged or even opposed the choice for college entry.

As a result, many first generation students are often overwhelmed and have more difficulty navigating the academic landscape. Many are unable to see the big picture and focus on certain details of academic success, most notably individual grades. A barely passing or failed grade can send this student into a spiral of despair which can threaten academic success. Many come to college with a pre-conceived notion that they ultimately do not belong or while in college develop a sense of not quite fitting in. This can be exacerbated by feelings of guilt and shame over transitioning from an established and expected familial role to that of a college student. Instances of poor academic performance can reinforce these ideas and contribute to a lack of confidence for class participation and for approaching an instructor.

Despite the diversity of first generation students, a significant number come from families that earn low wages, live in under-served communities, and belong to minority groups, most notably African-American and Hispanic. The lack of financial stability is another stumbling block for academic success as the majority of these students have either part-time or full-time jobs. Many may also have a heavier load of familial responsibilities. An estimated 30 percent of college students are low-income first generation students. Alarming, 89% will not earn their BA within 6 years after high school and their dropout rate is four times higher than their non-first generation peers.

Despite all of these challenges, many first generation students bring with them a strong desire for a degree and commit themselves to academic excellence. What they need in addition to desire and commitment are classroom experiences which help initiate them into the culture

of higher education and knowledge of resources which can assist them with navigating an unfamiliar landscape. We suggest these strategies for helping first generation students succeed:

- Refer student to the [University Center for Academic Excellence](#) (UCAE). The UCAE provides tutoring and other academic student support services.
- Share campus resources with the class and include the [BEST \(Building Educational Strengths and Talents\) program](#) which is available through the University Center for Academic Excellence. BEST helps meet the needs of first generation students as well as students with documented disabilities and those receiving financial aid coupled with work study.
- During the first days of class ask students to reflect on what a college education and identity mean to them. Ask them to share their stories and highlight social differences as a way of helping them understand how their own backgrounds often inform their perception of the college experience. First generation students may speak up but if they don't, instructors can include their voices by showing a video of first generation students sharing their stories.
- Listen to first generation stories from students and other college instructors to gain more perspective.
- Explicitly let students know that you are available for them during your office hours. Many first generation students are unaware that instructor's office hours are for student engagement.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC BEST](#)

[Faculty Tips for First-Gen Students](#) Inside Higher Education

[Strategy Videos for Student Success](#) Heritage University

[I'm First Guide to College](#) Center for Student Opportunity

[First Generation College Students Benefit from Discussion Class Differences](#) Stanford News

[First generation student stories](#) Center for Student Opportunity

[Active Role in Class helps Black and First Generation Students, Study Says](#) New York Times, September 2014

[First Generation College Students: First Year Challenges](#) Darling and Smith

Gender

The gender ratio at UNCC is 51% men to 49% women. Social expectations associated with gender in American society lead to gross disparities in opportunities, potential, and well-being. Gender stereotypes reproduce gender bias and discrimination puts women at a disadvantage and men at an unearned advantage. Cultural theorists and critics have contributed to this political dimension of gender debates by studying the role of cultural practices and forms in considering – or disrupting – gender hierarchies and norms. Consistent with the mission and objective(s) of *Top 40 Academy*, instead of discussing women as a separate group for example, it is rather important to focus on the divergent experiences of men and women within each minority group, including gender to inform curriculum and pedagogy. We suggest these strategies for addressing gender in the classroom:

- Include all students in class discussion. Do not let a few students, especially all male students, dominate the conversation.

- Promote respect and use inclusive language. Do not refer to female students as “girls” or refer to the entire classroom as “guys”.
- Recognize and try to combat any gender bias you have when it comes to learning and education, such as male students understand chemistry better or female students are good at organization.
- Use a [gender lens](#) when deciding on curriculum, textbooks, teaching and learning, and assessments.
 - Consider how gender stereotypes are reinforced or undermined in course materials.
 - Consider how course materials reflect or distort the place men and women have in society.
- Advocate for gender equality. Be vocal and purposeful about how you are incorporating gender-sensitive practices in the classroom.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Multicultural Resource Center for Sex and Gender](#)

[Teaching Strategies for a Gender Equitable Classroom](#), Sellnow, 1993

[Gender Equality in the Classroom \(Things to Think About\)](#), Rayaprol 2010

[Teacher Training Modules that Address Gender Issues and Promote Gender Equality](#)

UNESCO Ha Noi Office and the UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2011

Immigrant and International Students

Immigrant students are those that have permanently relocated to the United States from another country, while 2nd generation immigrants are those whose parents moved to the

United States from another country. International students are non-immigrant students who are visiting our campus from another country. UNC Charlotte welcomes a [growing number](#) of non-immigrant international students to campus each year. In Fall 2014, for example, there were nearly 1500 students from 78 different countries enrolled at UNCC.

A recent report from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2012) revealed that about 23% of undergraduate students in the United States were either immigrants (10%) or 2nd generation immigrants (13%) during the 2007-08 academic year. While this group of students generally places a strong emphasis on education and hard work (Pew, 2013), they often face obstacles to college success. For example, 1st and 2nd generation immigrants are more likely than other students to be low income, more likely to be 1st generation college students, and are less likely to have grown up in a home where English is the primary language spoken (NCES, 2012). Such obstacles are associated with higher rates of remedial course taking and lower rates of full-time enrollment among 1st and 2nd generation immigrants in college. Of course, these challenges are further compounded for college-age students in the US that lack legal status (see Gonzales, 2009 for a report on undocumented students).

While students have many resources available to them through the [International Student / Scholar Office](#) (ISSO), faculty can help international students succeed. As ISSO puts it, faculty may be “caught off-guard by the various learning styles and sets of expectations” international students bring to the classroom and they may not be aware of the pressure these students feel. Each fall, ISSO hosts an “[Immigration 101](#)” workshop for faculty and staff and they have a

presentation from the workshop available online. We suggest these strategies for helping immigrant and international students succeed:

- Refer students to the [ISSO](#) office.
- Attend the Immigration 101 workshop and/or download its [resource materials](#).
- Allow students to record lectures
- Speak clearly, at a moderate pace and emphasize key points
- Use visuals as much as you can
- Use Closed Captioning with all videos
- Write down critical vocabulary, provide notes, or an outline of your lecture

Additional Resources:

[UNCC International Student and Scholar Office \(ISSO\)](#)

[UNCC Counseling Center for International Students](#)

[UNC Chapel Hill Writing Center for tips on teaching immigrant/ESL students](#)

[New Americans in Postsecondary Education: A Profile of Immigrant and Second-](#)

[Generation American Undergraduates](#) National Center for Educational Statistics, 2012

[Second-Generation Americans: A Portrait of the Adult Children of Immigrants](#). Pew

Research. 2013

[Young Lives on Hold: The College Dreams of Undocumented Students](#). Roberto

Gonzales, 2009

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Students

Under the prevailing Western system of compulsory heterosexuality, a distinction is drawn between legitimate and illegitimate (lesbian, gay, bisexual) sexual practices, and

heterosexuality is established as the social norm and, thus, the only socially legitimized expression of sexual orientation is to be heterosexual. Those who do not fit the dichotomous (male/female) classification of gender, and those who do not identify as heterosexual [face challenges](#).

UNCC promotes our [Safe Zone Program](#). The goal of the Safe Zone Program is to create, develop, and train faculty and staff members who can serve as “allies.” As noted in its “Statement of Purpose,” an “Ally” is “an informed campus partner who has committed time and energy through organized training to learn more about individuals that may identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning or may be unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This goal will be accomplished through Safe Zone Ally Development Trainings offered by the Assistant Director for Sexual/Gender Diversity. We suggest these strategies for helping LGBTQ students:

- Refer LGBTQ students to the [Safe Zone Program](#) if they approach you for assistance or you perceive they may be facing challenges.
- Become a [Faculty Ally](#)
- Do not ask LGBTQ students to speak on behalf of their group. Remember that their individual experience is unique and it is unfair to ask them to represent an entire group of people on a particular topic.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Safe Zone](#)

[Counseling Center for LGBTQ students](#)

[Spectrum Student Organization \(formerly PRIDE\)](#)

[LGBT Community Center of Charlotte](#)

[Visit Gay Charlotte](#)

[Carolina Transgender Society](#)

[Charlotte Gender Alliance](#)

[Time Out Youth](#)

[GLBT National Help Center](#)

Military/Veteran Students

With nearly 3 million veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan alone, we can expect many students to enter our classes with prior military experience. [In Spring 2013, over 3% of enrolled UNC Charlotte students were using Veterans Affairs \(VA\) benefits to attend school.](#) While veterans have often developed valuable skills during their military service that can enhance academic success, they may face post-deployment challenges that negatively affect academic performance, ranging from financial and family matters to medical and mental health issues. We suggest these strategies for helping military-affiliated students:

- Encourage eligible students to use the resources of the [Veteran Student Services Office](#) at UNCC, which supports the successful transition and retention of veteran students on campus.
- Some tips for working with students who are combat veterans and for providing classroom support can be found in [“From Combat to Classroom”](#) (navpa.org).

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Veteran Student Services Office](#)

[UNCC Counseling Center for Military –Affiliated students](#)

[UNCC Serves](#)

[UNCC Serves 2014 Resource Guide](#)

[From Combat to Classroom, NAVPA](#)

Racial and Ethnic Minorities

The term race refers to groups of people who have differences and similarities in biological traits deemed by society to be socially significant, meaning that people treat other people differently because of them. Ethnicity refers to shared cultural practices, perspectives, and distinctions that set apart one group of people from another. That is, ethnicity is shared cultural heritage. The most common characteristics distinguishing various ethnic groups are ancestry, a sense of history, language, religion, and forms of dress. Ethnic differences are not inherited; they are learned, acquired.

In the spirit of the mission and objective(s) of *40 Top Academy*, it is important to stress that our campuses today consist of different ethnic groups mirroring the communities they serve. Ideally, campuses strive for pluralism, where students, faculty, and staff of all ethnicities and races remain distinct but aspire to social equality. As an example, UNC Charlotte campus is exceptionally diverse in the University of North Carolina System, with people representing groups from all over the globe, but still lacking in true pluralism. The same can be said of ethnic diversity of the other campuses with their various ethnic groups, some having tens and hundreds of members.

Evolving from academic abstract to practical pedagogy, in order to understand the teaching and learning impact of race and ethnicity, the phenomenon needs to be situated economically, ideologically, historically and geographically. It takes different forms at different historical

conjunctures and is justified in different ways according to prevailing circumstances. It defines and informs curriculum. Some strategies for helping historically underrepresented students include:

- Include all students in class discussion. Do not let a few students, especially all white students, dominate the conversation; but, do not ask racial and ethnic minority students to speak on behalf of their group. Remember that their individual experience is unique and it is unfair to ask them to represent an entire group of people on a particular topic.
- Recognize and try to combat any racial bias you have when it comes to learning and education. Do not make assumptions as to what students' value based on their race.
- Use a racial lens in deciding on curriculum, textbooks, teaching and learning, and assessments.
 - Analyze how the class materials discuss race, heritage, and ethnicity. Or, consider what images of “others” are presented in the materials. How are these “others” portrayed?
 - Do not use unfair stereotypes in classroom materials and examples
 - Analyze the course material for how it deals with cultural conflicts, particularly between majority and minority groups.
- Advocate for racial/ethnic equality. Be vocal and purposeful about how you are incorporating racial/ethnic sensitive practices in the classroom.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Counseling Center for Students of Color](#)

[UNCC Multicultural Center for History and Heritage](#)

[Race Equality Toolkit](#), Universities Scotland

Religious Background

Instructors need to be aware of the religious diversity of their students. Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism are the largest groups represented on the UNCC campus. This is especially important for instructors in the humanities and social sciences who include ethnographies, histories, material culture, etc. in their curricula. Please note the following approaches to handling issues related to religion:

- Instructors may assume that students bring prior knowledge of Christian histories and stories to the classroom and therefore may not provide the necessary background information for non-Christian students to fully understand material.
- Instructors may also be unaware of communicating Euro-centric perspectives and understandings of course material. As western worldviews are partly derived from Christian worldviews, instructors may inadvertently exclude other religious viewpoints if relevant to the class material.
- In addition, instructors may be able to assess a student's religious background and include instructional material that can create a more inclusive experience.
- Lastly, many religious students also bring traditional values to the classroom. Instructors may assume that all people make sharp distinctions between what is sacred and secular and, therefore, may inadvertently (or intentionally) belittle traditional beliefs and values. Instructors have no need of personally criticizing those beliefs with the exception of those that may be offensive and damaging to others in the class.

- Instructors should not allow faith perspectives to compromise historical and scientific facts. Students should be made aware of the differences between scientific, historical, and religious truths. Instead of dismissing religious beliefs as silly, instructors can respectfully tell students that those beliefs may make sense from a faith perspective but are not relevant for the task at hand in the class.
- Finally, **per UNCC policy, instructors are asked to accommodate a maximum of two student absences due to religious observances.** Information about this policy should be included in the [class syllabus](#).

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Religious and Spiritual Life](#)

[UNCC Multicultural Center for Religion and Spirituality](#)

Rural and Urban Students

Discussions about diversity on college campuses often exclude identification of the differences between rural and urban students. Indeed, the differences in many cases are subtle or maybe lumped into the category of socio-economic status. This is misleading and does not appropriately treat the differences in life experiences among urban and rural students. UNCC is an urban campus in an urban county and naturally the default lens of life experiences is an urban one. However this belies the fact that a significant number of UNCC students come from surrounding counties, many of which are designated as rural. For instance nearby Cleveland, Lincoln, Polk, and Rutherford counties are designated as rural with a considerable amount of farming as a source of livelihood. [In fact out of NC's 100 counties, only 15 are designated as](#)

[urban](#). Many other students coming from other states and countries are also coming from rural environments.

A comparison of urban and rural settings reveals these general features of rural areas: 1) smaller minority populations, 2) lower incomes, 3) fewer college graduates 4) a greater sense of community and safety 5) a slower pace of life and 6) more value placed on traditional beliefs, gender identities and other social roles. These features should be considered when thinking about how this student demographic may feel a lesser sense of inclusion at an urban institution. Strategies for fostering a sense of inclusion can include:

- When appropriate representing the rural experience through assigned readings and instructional examples
- Acknowledging the possible lack of familiarity and comfort with diversity and responding through the construction of safe bridges to new social realities
- Discouraging students from using epithets such as redneck or country yahoo, or other epithets which are often not recognized as discriminatory.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Admissions: Diversity Links](#)

Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic status (SES) refers to a person's position in a hierarchical system. It is based on variables such as occupation, education level, wealth and access to resources. It is a combination of variables that make up a student's class position (i.e., upper, middle, working, working poor, or poor). UNCC prides itself on being an affordable and accessible to the general

public. In 2013 the university had a 63% acceptance rate, a SAT range of 980-1160, about \$32,000 in total annual costs for students, and 75% of students on financial aid.

UNCC has students from all SES backgrounds. Generally speaking, lower class students lack confidence due to real or perceived weaknesses in preparation. They tend to feel unwelcome and are acutely aware of their class status. Middle class students, least aware of their class status, are fairly prepared for learning. Upper class students are the most prepared and skilled when it comes to learning. They are confident and often display expressions of entitlement or advantage. They are aware of their class status and may attempt to hide it due to embarrassment about their advantages.

It is important to realize, that as an instructor, your students will come from all types of socio-economic backgrounds and not assume they share the same understandings, embrace the same perspectives, are similarly prepared, and are unconscious about their class position. Here are some strategies taken from [Warren's Class in the Classroom](#) to create an inclusive classroom environment:

- Be explicit about classroom norms and your expectations
- Include readings and examples from a variety of class perspectives
- Vary the kinds of assignments and activities for different learning styles
- Protect students who make unsophisticated comments
- Use student experiences in class discussion and ask about personal reactions to course materials
- Model acceptance of various class backgrounds

Additional Resources:

[Class in the Classroom](#), Warren, Harvard University

[Teaching a Diverse Student Body: Practical Strategies for Enhancing Our Students'](#)

[Learning](#), Teaching Resource Center

[Education and Socioeconomic Status](#) American Psychological Association

[Socio-economic Status: Teaching with Differences in Mind](#) Tunkelo, 2012

Transfer Students

A transfer student is anyone who has attended a college or university prior to their enrollment at UNCC. Students who are completing college courses while in high school, are considered a freshman and not a transfer student. UNCC has a large transfer population, mostly coming from Central Piedmont Community College, but also from some of the many NC colleges and universities. In 2014, UNCC enrolled over 2,700 transfer students. University College has [Information and Initiatives for Transfer Students](#). The website includes important information for our new students starting their college education experience at UNC Charlotte. New faculty teaching General Education courses of the University College will also find very important support exploring the same text. We suggest these strategies for helping transfer student succeed:

- Offer study guides or review sessions for course materials and exams.
- Consider allowing students to turn in drafts of writing assignments for feedback before the final project/writing is due.
- Remind all students, but especially transfer students, to seek [academic advising](#) each semester.

Additional Resources:

[UNCC Transfer Student Homepage](#)

[UNCC University College](#) (Information for faculty, freshman and transfer students)

[UNCC Helpful Links for Transfer students](#) (includes links advising, counseling, extracurricular resources)

Sample of institutional and media reports addressing diversity effects on student college experience:

[Who Gets to Graduate?](#) NY Times, May 2014

[Completing College: Assessing Graduation Rates at Four-Year Institutions](#), Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, November 2011

[Why Does Diversity Matter at College Anyway?](#) U.S. News, August 2009

[Graduation Rate Watch](#) American Institutes for Research, April 2008