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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN CLASSROOM PROJECTS

Abstract:

As more college classrooms become diverse, and the issue of inclusivity becomes more prevalent in higher learning, faculty find themselves in a central role of creating and moderating environments that encourage and support diversity of opinions and ideas. This paper describes a year-long project undertaken at a technical college in communication (public speaking and small groups) classes to engage students in a term-length community service project aimed at building bridges with non-profit community organizations. The primary goal of the project was twofold: first, to connect students with diverse community organizations serving individual with very different backgrounds and experiences from the students. Second, was to assign diverse students to work together on a project while applying class material about teamwork, communication, leadership, roles, decision-making and problem solving to their own experiences. Preliminary findings suggest the project was successful in achieving both goals. The framework for the project will be shared so that any instructor who is looking for an opportunity to add more diversity and inclusivity into their classrooms will be able to model a similar group project of their own.

Keywords:

Diversity, Inclusivity, Classroom, Groups, Projects