

Diversity, Inclusion and Community-Building Checklist

Note: I am *not* implying here that if you do some or many or all of the things on this checklist, that your department will automatically become more equitable. I do not have any evidence that these things work — they are ideas for you to think about and tinker with. Ultimately, being in open communication with your students is the best, but you will need to build trust first, so starting with a few things from the checklist may help you with that. Once you have built some trust between department members, you can ask them what their needs are, and the checklist can help you brainstorm for that.

I hope you find this helpful! Please let me know of other things to be added to the list.

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Activity	Inventory Give freq. if your org. does this	Costs: Difficulty \$ time Rate as LOW, MED, HIGH	Action Items Check one or two priorities
Connect together your underrepresented minorities; your women and gender minorities; your first-gen students; etc. Sometimes they think they are the only one like them, but they are not!			
Start an AWM chapter; connect with your local SACNAS chapter; send your students to the Field of Dreams conference or to any on-campus group that aligns with their identity, where they might find allies, support.			
Encourage and support student initiatives and student groups: with your time, money, contacts, voice, etc. Be there when they need you.			
Start an Emerging Scholars Program.			
Read about diversity and inclusion, and privilege. Find out what you don't know about, and learn about it!			
Find out what are privately and publicly held or shared beliefs by you, your colleagues, your students, about math ability.			
Start a discussion group or book club on these issues so you are not the only one who is aware of these issues.			
Host trainings for your department on: implicit bias; barriers particular student populations face; being an active bystander; conflict resolution; stereotype threat, etc. Invite faculty, grad students, undergrads as you see fit. Or start by inviting potential allies only, if this might get contentious.			
Collect, analyse data for representation, persistence, satisfaction, achievement gaps, choice gaps, paths students take, etc.			
Have an anonymous suggestion box. Don't see that box simply as a way for people to vent off frustration — take seriously those suggestions.			
Train your teaching faculty, graduate TAs and undergrad TAs/tutors. On issues of teaching and learning, but also on access, diversity, support.			
Maintain a list of support groups and resources on campus but also locally. Share it in your syllabus, on your website, with colleagues, etc.			
Use teaching techniques that better support student learning (active learning, inquiry-based learning, project learning, teamwork, etc).			
Connect with hiring and graduate admissions committees, ask what their practices are, suggest some best practices (including for recruitment).			
Apply for a grant to support underrepresented students.			
Make your office and department look and feel more inviting to all!			
Create a space for undergraduates, like a “math students room.”			
Connect with other departments or faculty, see what they are doing. Connect with people at other institutions too.			
Figure out how campus culture affects your department's culture.			

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Activity	Inventory Give freq. if your org. does this	Costs: Difficulty \$ time Rate as LOW, MED, HIGH	Action Items Check one or two priorities
Host an info session on applying to graduate school.			
Host an info session on jobs outside of academia.			
Host an info session on your math/applied math/stats/etc major(s).			
Host an info session on math and “mathy” courses.			
Host an info session on REUs and summer opportunities.			
Host an info session on the senior thesis or on giving a math talk.			
Host an info session on study skills and related resources.			
Create a handout from an info session, put it online, email it to students.			
Create an FAQ about anything! (Eg. on recommendation letters.)			
Look at your website and info materials from a student point of view (or ask students). Then improve those tools.			
Encourage students to create an FAQ for themselves. This also allows you to see what advice they give each other, and intervene if necessary.			
Start a monthly math newsletter (with info, puns, cool links...)			
Tell all students who did well in a course (or just tell all students) about the next math courses they could take, about the math minor and major.			
Showcase alumni, especially ones with non-traditional paths or careers.			
How does advising work in your department? Does it work well for all students? How can you better support faculty in their advising role?			
Find out what are some things that privileged students know about and others don't – and make that easily available to everyone!			
Talk to students: one on one, in small focus groups, ask colleagues for students they know might be open to talk about barriers they face, etc.			
Hold a “gripe” or feedback session where students get to tell you how they feel about the program, <i>and you listen</i> .			
Interview graduating seniors to get their take on your major, your courses.			
Interview students who leave the major – we don't usually hear from them.			
Go to student events (find out beforehand if you are welcome).			
Take students to a math-relevant (or not) movie/play/museum exhibit/etc.			
Host a study break/social/welcome event/pizza night. Find students to help out with the planning.			
Host a seminar by and/or for undergrads.			
Host a “recreational math” event or any other fun and relaxing event.			
Host a weekly (or more often) “problem set night”.			
Host “advising dinners” on the math major, or on how math courses are helpful for other majors; reach out to students, don't wait for them to come to you with questions.			
Create a departmental committee on issues of diversity, make sure being on this committee counts as departmental service for your faculty.			
Find a way to recognize the work that people in your department are doing on this issue.			

This was inspired by a checklist produced by the BIG Math Network for their purposes.