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ABSTRACT

This packet of materials is designed to aid teachers in redesigning their courses to accommodate diverse students. The worksheets help organize information on what aspects of diversity are present in each class, what course elements can and cannot be adapted to them, and how these adaptations might be implemented. The worksheets, along with the supplementary materials (both bibliographic and advisory), have been found useful in optimizing teachers' effective use of the suggestions offered here and in fostering teachers' own creativity in course design. (Author)

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ADAPTING STANDARDIZED CONTENT TO DIVERSE STUDENTS

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ADAPTING STANDARDIZED CONTENT TO DIVERSE STUDENTS

A FEW EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO DIVERSIFY REQUIRED COURSE ELEMENTS

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TEXTBOOKS

1. Build up to textbook material by introducing simpler levels of the same material first (e.g., if you must teach poetry, offer some simple poems first before moving on to those you're required to teach).
2. Have agree/disagree sessions where students explain whether their past experiences bear out (or disprove) the material in the text.
3. Have individuals or groups present parts of the text as a way to personalize the material and to let students take control of it. Those who teach increase their learning.
4. Make charts, pictures, diagrams, graphs or manipulatives to accompany or clarify textbook material.
5. Offer supplementary textbooks that a.) explain the material in a different way; 2.) offer another viewpoint on it.

(Note on #2 & #5: diverse adults will appreciate an atmosphere where there are MORE than two sides to every story.)

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ASSIGNMENTS

1. How can \_\_\_\_\_ be changed?  
topics  
length  
purpose/approach (argument, narrative, dialogue, dramatization, work of art)  
research approach (library/field, number or type of sources)  
stance (objective/subjective)
2. Can "oral" and "written" be interchanged?
3. Can students work in teams?
4. Can written material, videotaped (or filmed) material and hands-on experiences be interchanged?

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WORKSHEET # 1

IN MY \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS,  
MY STUDENTS VARY WIDELY  
ACCORDING TO:

(Please circle all that apply.)

- age
- ethnicity
- economic background
- learning styles
- literacy skills
- fluency in English
- profession
- college major
- attitudes toward course content
- interest in class material
- ability to apply course content
- ability to find course relevant
- critical thinking skills
- familiarity with course info
- skill level needed for course
- other:

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WORKSHEET # 2

IN MY \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS, I AM  
REQUIRED TO USE/TEACH/COMPLETE  
THESE ELEMENTS:

(Please circle all that apply.)

- textbook
- workbook
- format  
(lecture,  
lab/workshop)
- term papers
- short assignments
- drills/exercises
- speeches/oral presentations
- objectives (proficiencies  
required to be mastered)
- midterm
- final exam
- other materials
- other:

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Please fill in the course elements  
that you circled on Worksheet #2.

COURSE ELEMENT	WHAT MAKES THIS REQUIRED ELEMENT INAPPROPRIATE FOR SOME STUDENTS?	HOW CAN THIS REQUIRED ELEMENT BE ALTERED, ADAPTED OR ADJUSTED?
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DIVERSIFYING INSTRUCTION: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Galbraith, M. (Ed.). (1990).  
Adult learning methods.  
 Malabar, Florida: Krieger.

Hiemstra, R. & Sisco, B. (1990).  
Individualizing instruction.  
 San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

IDEAL CONDITIONS

- praxis (formative evaluation)
- learners share control
- good learning climate
- assessed needs
- experiential learning
- relevant content
- learning styles considered
- physical needs considered

- groups of 25 or fewer
- good learning climate (physical & psychological)
- students get to know each other
- learners have input in plans
- not in violation of school policies (esp. grading policy)

EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES

- case studies (diverse examples)
- nominal group technique
- panel discussions (diverse groups represented)
- computerized instruction learning contracts simulations (diverse "actors" can portray diverse real-life situations)

- careful needs assessment
- learning contracts
- variety of supplements
- interactive reading logs
- study groups
- teaching teams
- debates
- self-directed learning
- formative evaluation

(NOTE. This book also includes both theory and suggestions for "responding to the needs of mentally emotionally and physically special audiences.")