Guidelines on Inclusive Groups in Classrooms

Group Composition:

- If you allow students to form their own groups, specify constraints that discourage homogeneous groups

- Ensure that people of a particular social category do not find themselves isolated in a group. For example, in a class that has four women and four groups, instead of placing one woman in each group, consider putting two women in two groups.

- Use small groups (~ 3-4 people), where any one student is less likely to be marginalized.

Group Relations:
Provide students with guidance on being inclusive:

- It is important for groups to know something about the members besides demographics. Provide students with an opportunity to offer personal information about who they are to other group members.
- Shared responsibility and individual accountability: everyone should have a particular task to do and a specific way to contribute. Students belonging to minorities are at risk of being marginalized or being passive observers when they have no clear roles.
- Encourage students to actively listen to everyone's contributions so that everyone feels included.
- Rules of engagement: provide guidance on how to relate well to students with different communication patterns: talk dominance, and how to handle conflict
- Assign leadership roles: because of the differences in confidence and communication patterns, women are less likely to self-appoint in leadership roles. You may consider assigning and explicitly tell students how to act if they are not the leader

References
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