

Creating Equity-Centered Learning Environments

Resource for Group Facilitators & Service Providers

CONTEXT

UVic has strong values and a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are free from intentional or unintentional bias. Specifically, we acknowledge the Elders in residence at UVic who continue to share their teachings, wisdoms, and knowledge with us. We wish to express our sincere and immense thanks to all the people who have shared their insights about white supremacy, colonialism, ableism, and other forms of oppression that limit participation and success in learning environments.

We also acknowledge that this is a living document and will continue to evolve as we continue to expand our language and awareness of these topics. Our hope is that we can help and learn from each other. Please reach out if you have any questions or suggestions on how we can improve.

The next section provides some concrete strategies to get you started. We know that even with the best checklist, promoting a learning culture that values, supports and engages all participants, especially those from equity deserving groups, requires intentionality, openness, and humility. Deep listening, being open to feedback, expressing gratitude to participants, being critical of your own biases, sitting with discomfort, and inviting accountability are just some of the strategies that can help create this culture. As an experienced facilitator/trainer, you may be aware of other equity building facilitation strategies. Please feel free to share your knowledge with us to enhance our practice.

PRACTICES AND RESOURCES

Acknowledge Indigenous Peoples and Territories

Begin with a territory acknowledgement. We see this as a vital step towards decolonization. UVic has worked with local Indigenous communities to create the following phrasing that you could use as a starting point:

We acknowledge and respect the
the Songheewon First Nation territory on which we are situated.

Resource: [University of Victoria Territory Acknowledgement](#)

Self-locate

Introduce and situate yourself – this is a personal act, dependent on your comfort with how much you want to share. A good place to begin are your pronouns and relationships to Indigenous land and language. You might also include sharing things like:

Who are you? Not just your job but what brought you to do the work you do?

What are you passionate about? What are your hopes for the future?

Who are your family and ancestors (e.g., “my mother’s side of the family comes from a village north Barcelona. My grandparents were resourceful farmers and my ancestors spoke Catalan”).

Whose land are you on? Try checking [Native Land Digital](#) if you’re unsure.



