

# Equity Toolkit: Inclusive Teaching and Learning

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CREATING AND MAINTAINING A CULTURALLY  
RELEVANT CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

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**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Higher Education

<http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/equitytoolkit>



# FIRST DAY OF CLASS OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

The goals of this observation protocol are the following:

1. To practice conducting race-conscious observations of student engagement
2. To practice listening for subtle (sometimes hidden) verbal and nonverbal messages that are given to students
3. To practice panning

**Step 1:** Arrive at your colleague’s first day of class at least 15 minutes early so that you may start the observation before the class begins.

**Step 2:** Using the classroom grid on page 2, keep track of student engagement as follows;

In the top row, write a tick mark to indicate the student has spoken during class\* →

In this row, write a tick mark indicate the student interacted with the teacher 1-on-1 →

In this row, indicate your best perceived guess at how each student’s race/ethnicity and gender

Race/Ethn: AA Gender: F	Race/Ethn: Lat. Gender: M	Race/Ethn: W Gender: F

*part of the observation; for example, if a teacher asks a*

\* Note that you may need to be flexible with this part of the observation; for example, if a teacher asks a question to the class and several students respond, you may need to indicate whether it was primarily males, females or both who spoke out. If the students are put into groups, you may need to spend two minutes focusing on one group and then placing your focus on the next, and so on.

**Step 3:** Use scratch paper to write down as much as you can as much as you can about the language that is being used during interactions. The language may be verbal or nonverbal. For example, you may make note that the teacher shows excitement when one student asks a question, but appears to be tense when another students asks.

**Step 4:** Answer the reflections questions on the last page.



**REFLECTION QUESTIONS:**

1. Who tended to speak the most/least during the observation? Were there any students who did not speak at all? Were there racialized patterns to who spoke the most/least?
2. What did the instructor say to indicate their role in the class? For example, did they indicate that they were the sole source of knowledge, or did they indicate they would act as a partner with students?
3. What did the instructor say to indicate the role students play?
4. What did the instructor say when talking about class policies? How did they explain, for example, what would happen if homework was turned in late or a student missed class?
5. What did the instructor say to indicate whether they expected their students would or would not be successful?
6. Did the instructor give any personal or relatable information about themselves to the students?
7. How did the instructor get to know the students in their class? For example, did the instructor ask students to share something about themselves other than their name?
8. Did the instructor invite students to be themselves while taking the course and affirm their experiences? If so were there racialized differences between which experiences were affirmed more than others?