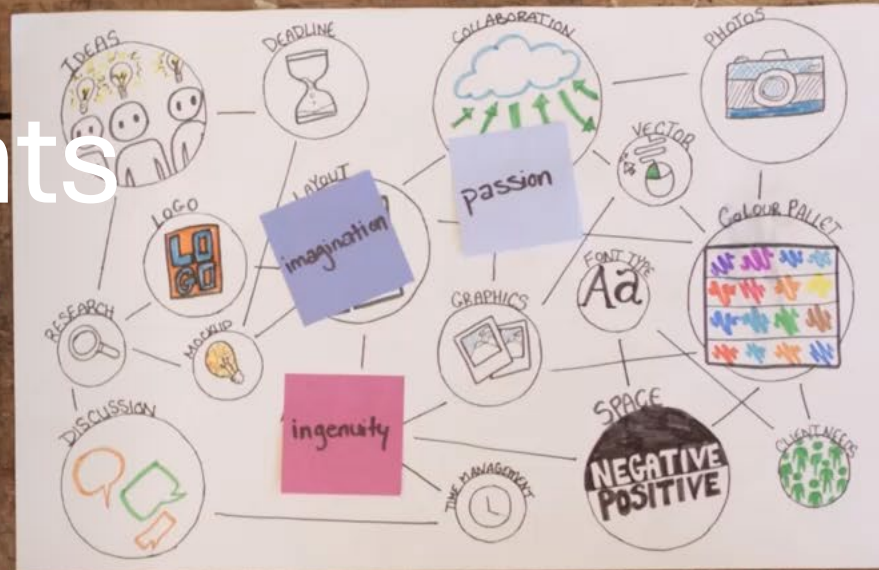


Creating Inclusive Learning Environments



Jacqueline Ward-Gaines MD

Understanding Disclosure

Definition

Disclosure involves revealing information that is essential or relevant, often related to transparency or accountability.

Contexts of Use

It is commonly used in legal, financial, and personal settings to ensure all parties are informed and honest.

Importance

Proper disclosure fosters trust, prevents misunderstandings, and promotes ethical interactions across various domains.



Objectives

Establish Safety

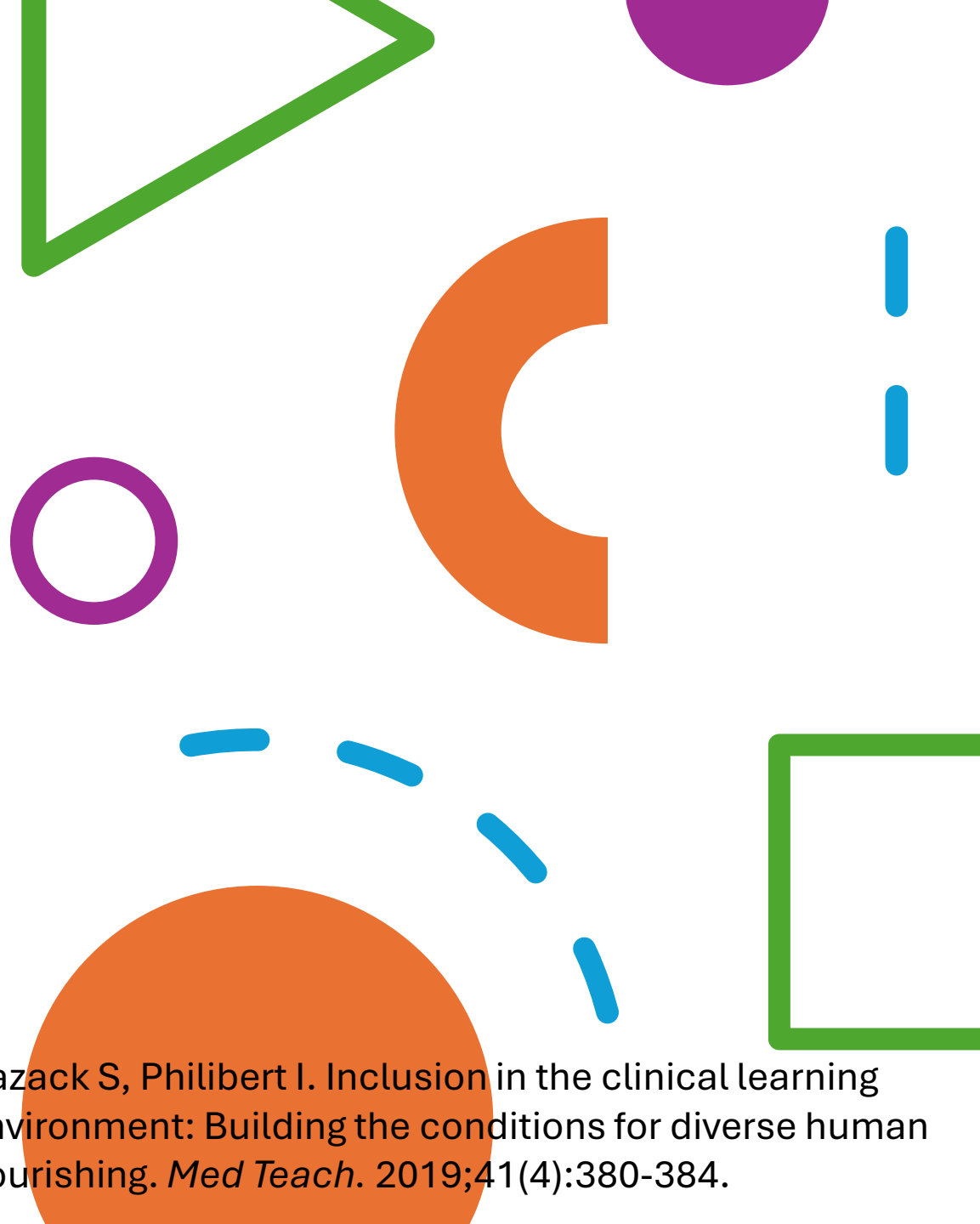
What is an
Inclusive
Learning
Environment

How to
operationalize
Inclusivity

Inclusivity
Teaching Pearls

Inclusive Learning Environment

A **deliberately designed clinical learning system**—policies, processes, and day-to-day teaching culture—that enables **equitable participation and success**, anchored in **psychological safety and belonging**, and actively prevents and addresses **mistreatment, discrimination, and hidden-curriculum harms**.



Razack S, Philibert I. Inclusion in the clinical learning environment: Building the conditions for diverse human flourishing. *Med Teach*. 2019;41(4):380-384.

Humans Flourishing

- Improves **learner satisfaction and engagement**
- Improve learner professionalism outcomes
- Improves **psychological safety**
- **Innovation**
- **Patient outcomes** quality of care and reduce inequities
- Improve gaps between workforce diversity and patient populations



[PollEv.com/jacquelinewardgaines775](https://www.polleverywhere.com/free_text_polls/niwRhGHQjARSSJzyHK62F)

https://www.polleverywhere.com/free_text_polls/niwRhGHQjARSSJzyHK62F

Inclusion

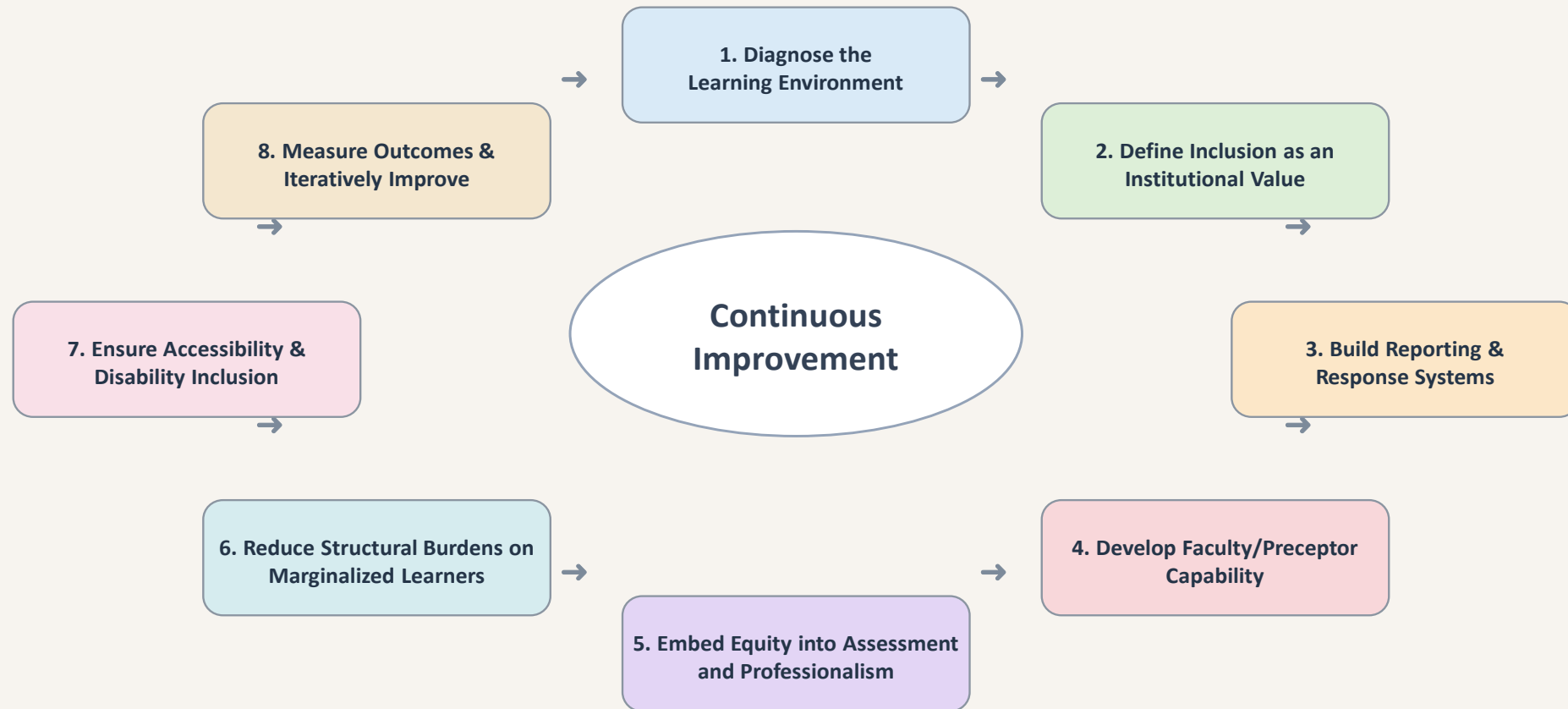


Policies exist ≠ inclusion exists



Operational Strategy

Inclusive Learning Environment: Continuous Improvement Cycle



Diagnosing the Learning Environment

Conduct a thorough assessment of the current learning environment to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement regarding inclusion and equity

Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
ACGME Survey	Surveys
House Staff Survey	Qualitative Data
University and Hospital Surveys	Engagement Forums
Exit Surveys	Focus Groups
Program Review	Town Halls/Listening Circles

Institutionalizing Inclusion

Establish inclusion as a core institutional value and define clear operational practices to ensure it is embedded throughout the organization



Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
Mission Statements	Departmental and Program Statements/Policies/Processes
Institutional Commitment	
Policy Infrastructure	

Reporting and Response Systems

Develop robust reporting and response mechanisms to address mistreatment, discrimination, and microaggressions.

Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
Reporting System	Reporting system
Escalation Framework	Augmenting System

Faculty & Preceptor Development

Enhance faculty and preceptor capabilities by fostering psychological safety, providing effective microaggression response training, and promoting respectful teaching practices.

Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
FAC	Conference
HEAL Training	Encourage Participation in other training

Equity in Assessment and Professionalism

Integrate equity considerations into assessment frameworks and professionalism standards to ensure fair and inclusive evaluation of all learners.



Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
Track learner outcomes across programs	Track learner outcomes across programs
Data Transparency	Individualized Learning Plans
Bias Mitigation	Faculty bias awareness and mitigation

Reducing Structural Burdens on Marginalized Learners

Implement protections against minority tax and promote equitable recognition to alleviate structural burdens faced by marginalized learners.

Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
Inclusive Curriculum	Lectures inclusive
	Equitable Participation
	Reduce Minority Tax

Accessibility and Disability Inclusion

Guarantee accessibility and disability inclusion by providing necessary accommodations, combating ableism, and fostering a sense of belonging for all learners

Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
Sponsored ADA compatible	Physical Accessibility
Program Accessibility	Safety

Measuring Outcomes and Continuous Improvement

Measure outcomes longitudinally and use the findings to iteratively refine and enhance inclusion and equity initiatives within the learning environment.

Central Focus	Departmental/Program Approach
Targeted Improvement	Incentives
Innovation	Local adaptive solutions

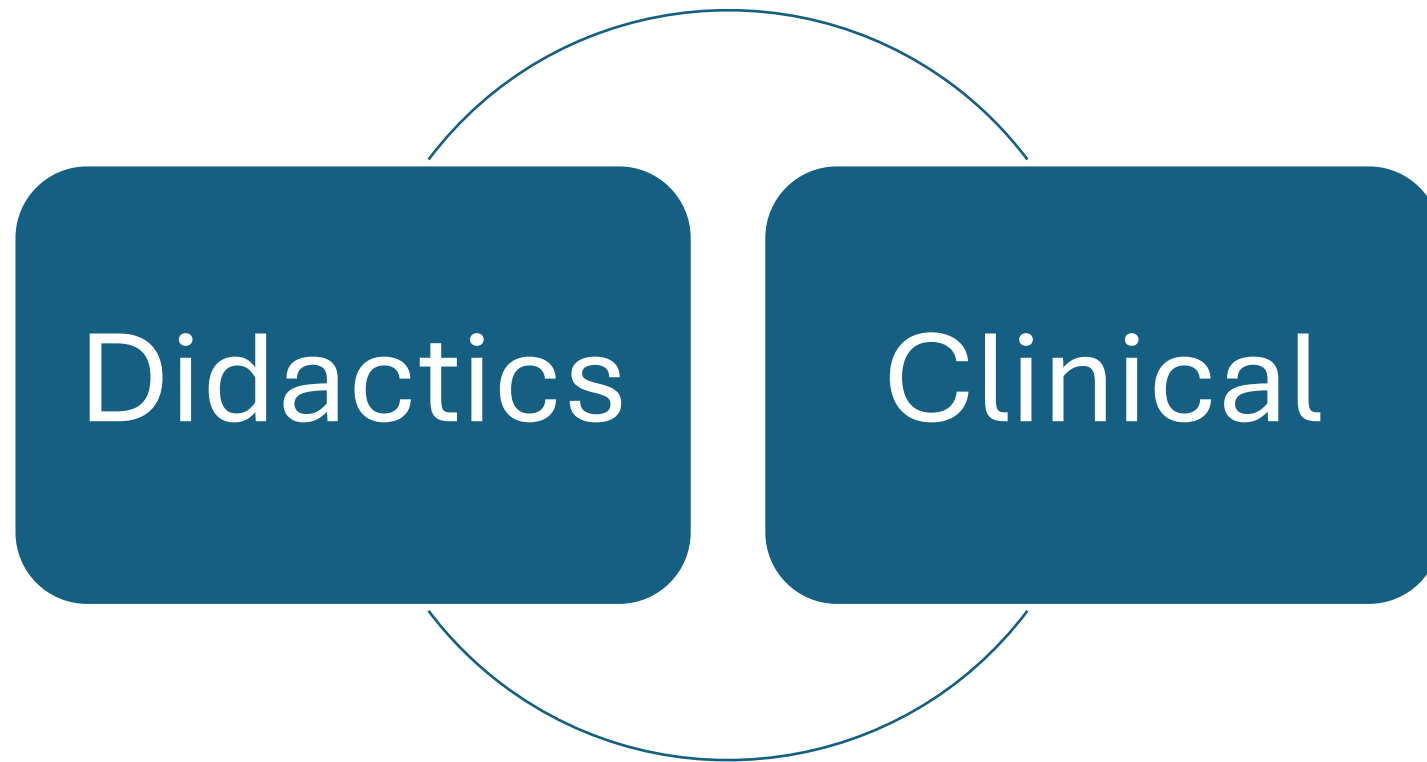




I can identify at least one system/process change that would improve inclusion in my setting.



Day To Day Teaching Culture



Designing inclusive learning experiences

Optimizing inclusive learning in high-stakes clinical environments

The Modern Learner Landscape

Beyond Paper & Pen

Digital-first engagement

Multiple Modalities

Hybrid learning formats
Interactive tools

Virtual + In-Person

Zoom & non-Zoom
Flexible participation



Preparing for Inclusive Didactics



Central Focus

- Know your learners
- Set expectations
- Introductions
- Psychological safety

Delivery Approach

- Active participation
- Adjust pace
- Inclusive engagement
- Encourage interaction

Optimizing the Inclusive Experience

How It's Delivered

Engagement strategies
Pacing matters

Environment

Location impacts focus
Temperature matters

Access & Interaction

Accessible content
Promote group work



Scenario:

During morning rounds, Sam, an intern, asks a clarifying question about a patient's anticoagulation plan. The senior resident responds:

- “We’re moving too fast for questions today—just read about it later.”
- For the remainder of the rotation, Sam stops asking questions and participates less. The final evaluation notes that Sam “needs to be more engaged.”

Clinical Inclusive Learning Environment



Context

High-pressure, one-on-one settings
Limited physical and psychological space
Power dynamics are amplified

Key Challenges

Perceived bullying or being challenged
Limited direct communication
Increased learner vulnerability

Preparing the Clinical Space

Introduce

Introduce the environment and team

Clarify

Clarify roles and expectations early

Normalize

Normalize questions and uncertainty

Delivering Clinical Teaching

Teaching Approach

- Ensure participation from all learners
- Assign patients intentionally
- Monitor confidence levels
- Adapt feedback to learner preferences
- Reinforce with follow-up

Environment Awareness

- Be aware of who else is present
- Monitor group dynamics
- Recognize bias within teams
- Adjust for accessibility needs



Clinical Teaching Pearls

- Psychological safety drives learning
- Small spaces amplify behaviors
- Intentional teaching > incidental teaching
- Feedback should be adaptive and individualized



One thing you will takeaway

Choose to try one inclusion
practice within the next 7
days



Resources

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