Practical Tips for Inclusive Classrooms

Lectures, Presentations and Labs
• Provide information about the immediate environment
• Make sure students can get up or leave if they need to
• Be clear about your own access needs
• Clearly communicate objectives
• Speak slowly and repeat important information
• Face the class when you speak
• Minimize background noise
• Build in breaks

Questions and Discussions
• Communicate expectations clearly
• Repeat the key point to the class
• Remind students to speak slowly, clearly
• Allow time for students to think before responding
• Create spaces for anonymous contributions
• Allow diverse forms of participation

One to One Communication
• Ensure office space is arranged for physical access
• Speak normally, clearly and directly to the person
• Exercise patience
• Be attentive and listen carefully
• Ask for clarification if needed
• Ask permission before giving assistance

Multimedia Materials
• Make large-print or digital handouts available
• Post everything online before class (or after)
• Invite students to post/share notes online
• Describe any images, tables or graphs
• Only use videos that are properly captioned
• Use high contrast colours on slides and handouts

Respectful Language
• When possible, listen
• When in doubt, ask!
• Never use “the R word”
• Disability is not a bad word
• Avoid words like “stupid, crazy, insane, spaz, dumb”
• Avoid euphemisms (i.e. special needs, differently abled)
• Use person first language vs. disability/identity first language

This resource was prepared by Erika Katzman, PhD ekatzma2@uwo.ca