

Hey, Guardians of the Case Method! Got Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on Your Mind?



Meredith Woodwark, Wilfrid Laurier University
Gina Grandy, University of Regina

You know, I'm graduating next month and that's the first case I've done in the program about a woman business owner like my mom. It really made me see her perspective better, and now I'm thinking about how the issues we've talked about today relate to my own career path. I've never done a case I personally related to like that before.

Fourth year woman undergraduate business student, March 2020

This comment arose after a class led by one of the authors, following the test teaching of a new case about a woman entrepreneur. Like us, you may be surprised and perhaps saddened to hear that in 2020 a woman undergraduate student, about to graduate, had only just encountered a case where she saw herself in the decision maker's shoes. Even in a partially case-based program, a conservative estimate would put the approximate number of cases she had been exposed to at 25. Did the other women who made up half of the class also feel that they hadn't yet seen someone like them reflected in a case? If so, how did that impact them? And how many other students were soon graduating without ever having studied a case with a protagonist to whom they could relate? If this student's experience is any indication, all the players in the case publishing process – whom we collectively refer to here as the guardians of the case method – need to work together to do better for the diverse students in our programs.

The purpose of this article is to initiate a discussion about how everyone involved in publishing cases can contribute to making them more 'DEI-friendly'.¹ Our primary focus is upon case instructors and writers, but ultimately, we aim to support, inspire and challenge all the stakeholders in the case publishing process to understand how they can help make our case literature more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. As educators, we owe it to all students to expose them to cases throughout their programs that affirm their voices and reinforce that their perspectives matter. Such cases can also allow students to discuss the social justice issues they see in society within the safety of a case class discussion. While we see this as a growing responsibility of the guardians of the case method, we also believe it presents an important opportunity for student learning and engagement through the use of cases.

The case method has stood up well over the past century in that many of its core assumptions remain consistent with the goals and intentions of today's management educators. But society and student populations have changed tremendously over the past century. Awareness is quickly growing within the case community that some of

Copyright © 2022 by the *Case Research Journal* and by Meredith Woodwark and Gina Grandy.

the implicit messages our case literature sends are unintended, inaccurate, and in need of modernization, particularly around issues of DEI (Sharen & McGowan, 2019). The following definitions of diversity, equity and inclusion frame our approach to this topic.

Diversity is about representation, and thus ensuring that people from a range of backgrounds are participating in all levels of work and are visible as role models. In the context of the classroom, it means considering the representation from equity-deserving groups in your class and in your course content (e.g., guest speakers, case studies).

Equity recognizes that different people and/or groups will require different kinds of support in order to access the same opportunities. In the context of the classroom, it recognizes that not every student starts from the same place and some students may need different supports in order to achieve the same outcomes (e.g., types or styles of assessments).

Inclusion goes beyond diversity (or representation) and recognizes that barriers to participation need to be removed. In inclusive cultures and classrooms, individuals feel a sense of belonging (they are part of a group and their perspective is valued) *and* uniqueness (expressing their opinion or making a contribution does not mean they have to suppress or give up their individuality in order to be part of the group).

The benefits of a more diverse case literature are many, including greater student engagement, positive role-modeling for students, breaking down stereotypes, supporting equity for all and tolerance of others, and better preparing students for the realities of organizational life (Wadhvani, 2021). As our student populations become more diverse, mostly our cases have not (Ammerman, Trumbore, Ajayi-Ore, 2019; Gerdeman, 2019; Grandy & Ingols, 2016; Sharen & McGowan, 2019).

We do know there is work happening within the case community to better reflect the diversity of society through our cases. Some are working on addressing the systematic issues through various initiatives such as special case calls and collections, updating our syllabi, and having important DEI discussions with our students. Others are reading DEI research and looking for opportunities to write cases about the issues they are learning. Some of us are reflecting on our own experiences, and those of people we know, to consider possible new cases.

At the same time, a lot of us are still unclear about what we can do in our respective roles as case writers, instructors, reviewers, editors and publishers, students, administrators, or potential protagonists to help move the case literature towards greater inclusiveness. So how do we get there? In what follows, we outline suggestions for case instructors, case writers, reviewers of cases, editors and publishers, school administrators, as well as students. As part of this, we include an extensive list of guides and resources for case instructors and case writers, in the appendices.

INSTRUCTORS

There are cases already published that feature protagonists who represent equity-deserving groups. These may not be on the best-selling lists, and they may not be ones you normally use, but there are more and more available that are waiting to be used. The *Case Research Journal*, for example, has published two special issues, one on women leaders in 2016 and one on women entrepreneurs in 2020 (See **Table 1**). Many of the cases in those special issues and in other issues of the journal are not framed as solely

(or at all) gender-analysis cases; many simply feature a woman protagonist facing a business decision, for example in finance (e.g., Hamilton & Mathwick, 2020; Kandinskaia & Huyghebaert, 2021) or about entrepreneurial growth (e.g., Klassen, 2021; O'Brien, Barrulas Yefremian, & Arvayza, 2021). Other outlets have done the same. *The CASE Journal* published a special issue in 2019 on Black leaders in business, Harvard Business Publishing has produced collections of cases focused on diverse protagonists, and Cape Breton University has published a series of cases on Aboriginal Business (see **Table 1**).

Table 1. List of Diverse Protagonist Collections

***Case Research Journal* Women Protagonist Special Issues:**

Women's Leadership, Volume 36, Issue 4, 2016

<https://www.nacra.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CRJ-Case-Catalog-Vol-12-36.pdf>

Women Entrepreneurs, Volume 40, Issue 2, 2020

<https://www.nacra.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Abstracts-Only-40-2.pdf>

The CASE Journal

Special Issue on Underrepresented Perspectives: Black Leaders in Business (2019) Volume 15, Issue 5.

***Harvard Business Publishing* Diverse Protagonist collections:**

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/catalog/collections/cases-and-readings-on-black-leadership/>

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/catalog/collections/cases-on-black-ceos-and-business-owners/>

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/female-protagonists/>

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/protagonists-of-color/>

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/catalog/collections/course-materials-to-discuss-gender-issues>

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/catalog/collections/course-materials-to-discuss-racism-and-privilege>

***Cape Breton University's* Case Series on Aboriginal Business**

<https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/teaching-resources/>

Advancing DEI in case teaching is not the purview of only those who are trained in areas related to DEI. There are subtle ways to advance a commitment to DEI. This commitment can start at a higher level for instructors, with their course syllabus and including a statement about designing the course with considerations to the principles of DEI. In Appendix I we provide a suggested script that instructors can use in their course syllabi to advance DEI in their courses and case discussions even when the course (or case) isn't designed for that purpose or even if the instructor feels it is outside their disciplinary purview. Even an acknowledgement of this kind can help students become more aware of the assumptions we may make in our analysis and of the ways in which identity can convey privilege. Appendix I also provides case instructors with a DEI Toolkit to aid in selecting course materials, designing course outlines, and engaging in case discussions where there is an opportunity for DEI conversations.

Along with authors and editors, instructors have a lot of influence over the diversity of cases students are exposed to through their case selections. A good place for instructors to start is to analyze or ‘code’ their existing syllabi to establish a DEI baseline. Depending on the results, one can set goals to improve in certain areas by selecting cases that fill gaps. To the extent they are already comfortable, instructors can also consider adding a DEI discussion to cases where they don’t normally raise those issues; where they are not yet comfortable, they can consider the knowledge and experience they might acquire to become so. To be successful with DEI discussions, instructors need to foster safe, open, and respectful spaces for students to engage (see Ammerman, Kinias, & Hsieh, 2019). At the end of each course, actively elicit feedback from students about case choices and consider any suggestions they may have for improvement. Instructors need to be prepared to deal with both positive and negative reactions to more diverse cases.

CASE WRITERS

There are opportunities for case writers at the very start of the case development process, in the process of identifying organizations and sourcing protagonists. At the most basic level, in sourcing case sites, writers need to be open to, and seek out working with, different kinds of organizations besides the typical for-profit company. Cases from contexts like not-for-profit, small business, and government are underrepresented but could be great sources for DEI cases. One way to expand your access as a case writer is to team up with other case writers, or even to write cases with students who can help with access to interesting organizations and protagonists. If you are looking to write a DEI case, be prepared for the possibility that you may need to take more time than usual to build your relationship with the protagonist before settling on a case topic. We suggest caution so as to avoid making a protagonist feel like a token representative of any group, and stress that the protagonist has final approval over the published case content. At the same, we encourage you to be open and transparent in initial conversations and make it part of your ask – e.g., “We really need more cases that feature Indigenous leaders, and I would like that to be part of the framing for this case. Are you comfortable with that?” You can assure them that the focus of the case will be on X and / or Y and not that they are Indigenous, and that they would have approval over case content to ensure their comfort and that they are represented accurately and appropriately.

The second area where a case narrative can support the principles of DEI is in crafting of the case characters. Building a compelling character to which students can identify has always been critical to effective storytelling in teaching cases. One approach to move the DEI dial is in the building of the case protagonist. Feldberg, Mayo and the HBS Case Research & Writing Group (2021) note that the role of the case protagonist varies by case. They also contend that cases broadly fall into three main categories: *Protagonist-agnostic* (background and identity of the protagonist is not central to the decision); *protagonist-relevant* (background and identity of the protagonist are relevant but not central to the learning objectives of the case); and *protagonist-foreground* (background and identity of the protagonist are central to the learning objectives of the case). There is an opportunity in writing all three types of cases to adopt principles which move us forward in a commitment to DEI.

We also suggest we need to go further and need to reconsider the ‘normal’ case template for what information is deemed relevant when we write cases, particularly in relation to describing the protagonist’s identity. Cases that are written with DEI

principles in mind often disclose more information about the protagonist's identity than is typically included in a non-DEI case. This means that in a non-DEI case much of the time readers are left to make assumptions about aspects of the protagonist's identity that cannot be gleaned from the case. Hence, aspects of protagonists' identities - like age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical abilities, socio-economic status, religion, et cetera - are either unknown or assumed, which may risk inadvertently reinforcing stereotypes. This may in part reflect privacy concerns by the protagonist, and of course protagonists must consent to disclose all information in any case. There are subtle and not so subtle ways to add this richness to case characters. (See Appendix II for DEI Guidance for Case Writing, specifically when writing about case protagonists).

We believe that the limited amount of personal information in most cases also reflects the underlying assumption of the case writer (and case instructor) that such information is not relevant to the case analysis and decision. Organizations, however, are not blind to these aspects of personal identity. This is especially true for some members of equity-deserving groups who have no choice but to be seen (e.g., visible minorities, those with certain disabilities). People's experiences in organizations are shaped in part by how others respond to the diverse parts of their identity. Therefore, we should expect that at least some decisions, and the reactions to them by other case characters, will indeed be influenced by the protagonist's identity, and that more robust information about who they are is needed to fully assess the situation in which a decision is being made. This is also an opportunity to bring the characters in your case to life and more fully spark students' interest in the case narrative and engagement in the case analysis. To the extent that we can, we need to start providing, in all our cases, richer descriptions of protagonists so we can have class discussions about how DEI issues influence organizations and decision-making, even when they may not be among the primary learning objectives.

As well, we contend that this also applies to more fully developing characters of 'white men' protagonists. We need to remember that they too are not always as unreservedly privileged or homogenous as we may assume - e.g., disability, sexuality, religion, et cetera. Students need to understand that DEI issues remain relevant to understanding a situation even when they are not the explicit case focus. For example, often the protagonist must gain approval for, or 'sell,' their recommendation to superiors; if the way they are viewed by superiors is affected by their identity, identity becomes highly relevant. Through this we begin to normalize that the organizations in which these students will work are diverse. We also can't forget that we need to 'see it to be it'... if students don't see themselves in the organizations we present to them in the classroom, what implicit messages are we sending to them about how welcome their voices will be in the organizations they enter upon graduation?

When writing cases, aim to portray protagonists as fully developed characters with complete identities beyond their work roles. With permission, consider including information about who they are as individuals, that which may or may not be directly linked to the case but could prompt a class discussion. Our case writing may inadvertently reinforce stereotypes, so have someone review your work with that in mind.

When writing the instructor's manual, consider including a brief section about DEI in relation to your case even if it is not explicitly a DEI issues case - see Appendix III for DEI Guidance for Instructor Manuals / Teaching Notes. One of the authors published a piece which included a script specifically for writing instructor manuals for

cases which feature a woman protagonist (Grandy & Ingols, 2016). There are resources already out there that can be leveraged by case writers.

OTHER CASE STAKEHOLDERS

For peer-reviewed cases, reviewers play an important role in developing each case. Like authors, reviewers need to be open to a fulsome description of protagonists without deeming information irrelevant too quickly. Reviewers also need to be open to new practices in cases such as including protagonist photos or video. For authors who are writing DEI cases, reviewers can support these efforts by providing reviews that aim to encourage and improve. For cases that do not consider a DEI lens but include a protagonist of an underrepresented group, reviewers can suggest to authors ways in which that perspective can be considered nevertheless.

Editors and publishers are doing a lot already with initiatives like special topic case calls, special case collections, awards for diverse cases, and marketing of diverse cases. Some journals and publishers may already be providing editors, assistant editors, and even reviewers with DEI-related training (such as to help avoid stereotyping). Outlets could clarify to authors and reviewers alike the expectations for cases with respect to DEI, and how cases will be evaluated through that lens. Journals should consider including standard reviewer assessment items to assess the degree to which each case meets the outlet's expectations. **Table 2** outlines several questions that can be included on reviewer templates.

Table 2. Reviewer Template DEI Questions

Is the protagonist in this case a member of an equity-deserving group or of multiple such groups (e.g., woman; racialized minority; Indigenous person; person with disability; member of gender and sexually diverse community)?

Is there sufficient information about the protagonist for students to identify with the case decision and situation? As a member of (an) equity-deserving group(s)? What, if anything, could be added to the case to better surface the identity of the protagonist in an appropriate way?

Does the case / IM portray the protagonist in a stereotypical way? Has the author been careful to not portray the protagonist in a stereotypical way?

Another way to grow DEI cases comes from an outlet's legacy cases that continue to be well-used but that do not consider a DEI perspective. The journal could invite an update to the instructor's manual to include a suggestion about how the case could be considered from a DEI perspective.

Let's not forget that students also have a big role to play in moving the case literature forward. Leverage the expertise and experience in your diverse classroom. Ravitch (2020) talks about developing a flux pedagogy framework during the COVID-19 pandemic. She described flux pedagogy as both a mindset and a set of practices which require an adaptive and compassionate leadership approach to teaching. It requires a shift to viewing our classrooms as complex adaptive systems of care. Growth for instructors happens when we "seek out and reckon with perspectives that challenge us" (Ravitch, 2020, np) and involves developing and enacting teaching agility. We

advocate for such an approach in the classroom as it relates to teaching cases and advancing DEI. Students can provide feedback on cases and make requests about what they would like to see included or changed. Students can write cases with instructors and help make connections with interesting potential protagonists or become case protagonists themselves. When working with new cases that are being tested, students can provide insights that the case authors may have overlooked. Students can communicate their expectations, at all levels in their schools, about the importance of increasing case diversity. Students in any classroom can also speak up about cases through a DEI lens even if it is not the focus of the case. To engage in this way, we contend it requires instructors to adopt a flux mindset and to be open to facing their own implicit biases that may shape curriculum and pedagogical choices (Ravitch, 2020).

Finally, school administrators and accreditation agencies can help move the case literature forward too. They can communicate the importance of DEI issues in curricula and provide training about developing DEI-friendly courses and syllabi. They can clarify expectations for instructors and students about DEI in the classroom.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Making our case literature more DEI-friendly is an exciting opportunity and an important endeavor in which all case stakeholders can contribute. Writing richer, more accessible, and more diverse cases has value in and of itself, beyond adding a DEI focus to our case classrooms. There is a growing number of resources available to assist us with this work and we have made a quick reference list of current resources about DEI in classrooms (see Appendix IV).

After a century in use, the case method continues to be a powerful and effective way to learn vicariously from other people's experiences. To keep the method relevant for the next century, we all need to do our part to embed DEI principles in our writing, our analyses, and our classrooms so the stories we share continue to resonate with diverse learners. Ideally, we can aim for a goal that by the end of each student's experience with the case method, he/she/they will have not only related to case protagonists and focal issues, but also been exposed to new protagonists' perspectives that they could not have related to before, and to an issue completely unfamiliar to them. By considering DEI more actively in our involvement with the case method we can serve as stewards of a flourishing case literature.

REFERENCES

- Ammerman, C., Kinias, Z., & Hsieh, N. (2019). Tackling Diversity in Case Discussions. Advice for Creating a Culture of Dialogue and Equity in Business Classrooms. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, November 25, 2019. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/tackling-diversity-in-case-discussions> .
- Ammerman, C., Trumbore, A.M. & Ajayi-Ore, L. (2019). The case for female protagonists. Bridging the gender gap in business education. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, June 24, 2019. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/the-case-for-female-protagonists> .
- O'Brien, N.F., Barrulas Yefremian, C., & Arvayza, J.U. (2021). Talk to Amber About Growth. *Case Research Journal* 41(1), 29-48.

- Bearclaw, J. & Medd, K. (2014 / 2015). To Trust, or Not to Trust. *Case Studies in Aboriginal Business*. Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies, Shannon School of Business, Cape Breton University. <https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/teaching-resources/>
- Boroff, K. & Boroff, A. (2021). Policy Violations on Gender Transition? *Case Research Journal*, 41(2), 47-56.
- Beward, K. & Sharen, C.M. (2016). An Uncomfortable Encounter: Perceptions of Sexual Harassment. *Case Research Journal*, 36(3), 1-9.
- Bruce, N.I., Cutright, K.M., Richardson Gosline, R., Thomas, J.S., & Barnett White, T. (2020). How business schools can help corporate American fight racism. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, February 17, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbr.org/2020/11/how-business-schools-can-help-corporate-america-fight-racism> .
- Creary, S. (2020). A framework for leading classroom conversations about race. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, June 14, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/a-framework-for-leading-classroom-conversations-about-race> .
- Desai, M. (2021). You too can – and must – lead class discussions on social justice issues. Lessons learned from writing and teaching a case about the Tulsa massacre. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, May 31, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/you-too-can-and-must-lead-class-discussions-on-social-justice-issues> .
- Feldberg, A., Mayo, A., & the HBS Case Research & Writing Group. (2021). Writing about Protagonists: Key Questions for Case Writers. *Harvard Business School Publishing*, May 26, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/business-case-writers-think-carefully-about-how-you-portray-protagonists>
- Gerdeman, D. (2019). How Gender Stereotypes Kill a Woman's Self-Confidence. *Harvard Business School Working Knowledge*, February 25, 2019. Accessed Online: [https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/how-gender-stereotypes-less-than-br-greater-than-kill-a-woman-s-less-than-br-greater-than-self-confidence?cid=spmailing-33415888-WK%20Newsletter%206-9-2021%20\(1\)-June%2009,%202021](https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/how-gender-stereotypes-less-than-br-greater-than-kill-a-woman-s-less-than-br-greater-than-self-confidence?cid=spmailing-33415888-WK%20Newsletter%206-9-2021%20(1)-June%2009,%202021)
- Grandy, G. and Ingols, C. (2016). Writing Cases About Women Protagonists: Calling for Gender Awareness in Traditional Case Portraits. *Case Research Journal* 36(4), 107-121.
- Hamilton, J. & Mathwick, C. (2020). Green Zebra: Grow Fast or Grow Slow? Case B. *Case Research Journal* 40(1), 33-54.
- Kandinskaia, O. & Huyghebaert, N. (2021). Sizable: Crowdfunding Campaign!...Again. *Case Research Journal* 41(2), 1-22.
- Klassen, B. (2021). Cracking the Code at Coconut Calendar. *Case Research Journal* 40(2), 51-69.
- Krishna, A. & Orhun, Y. (2021). How business schools can help close the gender gap. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, January 21, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbr.org/2020/12/how-business-schools-can-help-close-the-gender-gap> .

Lawrence, Z. & Sinkey, A. (2021). Start the Semester Inclusively. 7 Ways to Set All Students up for Success on Day One. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, January 17, 2021. Accessed Online: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/7-inclusive-ways-to-set-all-students-up-for-success-on-day-one?cid=email%7Cmarketo%7C2021-04-27-the-faculty-lounge%7C1301525%7Cfaculty-lounge-newsletter%7Cnewsletter-subscribers%7Cvarious%7Capr2021&acctID=8312155&mkt_tok=ODU1LUFUWi0yOTQAAAF8sfffEH2VgEfsPt8ZQnrC7gCeifnPay9TR7c8r9Npdm1IDTYq8tlbPLU1c2gk1jrPeS-is43p7ah2KTOzVCIE4Fm6o3ic6GKL0vGeJUM

Miller, J. C. & Stanko, M.A. (2020). Discussing race in case teaching. What two professors learned writing and teaching a case about the Aunt Jemima brand. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, October 30, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/discussing-race-in-case-teaching>.

O'Neill, R., Morgan Roberts, L., Blake-Beard, S., & Blockson, L. (2016). Leading change through unprecedented times: Nancy Sims and the Robert A. Toigo Foundation, *Case Research Journal*, 36(4), 1-15.

Prieto, L.C. & Phipps, S.T.A. (2021). Why business schools need to address black history. It's time to decolonize the business curriculum. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, February 17, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/why-business-schools-need-to-address-black-history>.

Ravitch, S. (2020). Why teaching through crisis requires a radical new mindset. Introducing flux pedagogy. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, August 11, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/why-teaching-through-crisis-requires-a-radical-new-mindset>.

Sedlovskaya, A. (2020) How to Lead Uncomfortable Class Discussion. Sample Prompts for Effectively Navigating Touch Yet Necessary Classroom Conversations. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, October 2, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/how-to-lead-uncomfortable-class-discussions>.

Sharen, C.M. (2016). The Balancing Act: Making Tough Decisions, *Case Research Journal*, 36(4), 1-7.

Sharen, C. M., & McGowan, R. A. (2019). Invisible or clichéd: How are women represented in business cases? *Journal of Management Education*, 43(2), 129 – 173. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562918812154>

Wadhvani, R. D. (2021). What happens when students can personally relate to case protagonists. *Harvard Business Publishing*, March 11, 2021. Accessed Online: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/what-happens-when-students-can-personally-relate-to-case-protagonists?cid=email%7Cmarketo%7C2021-06-04-the-faculty-lounge%7C1301525%7Cfaculty-lounge-newsletter%7Cnewsletter-subscribers%7Cvarious%7Cjun2021&acctID=8312155&mkt_tok=ODU1LUFUWi0yOTQAAAF9dakhn67rTCitwzyMzeo5zX19pW-Kfdprhmu-Z8oB2oXhbMoIRN9UmeKicwhEKkbFy2mP4Aoag_kQq1GHtp8MAZPORRfO4TlnYkcEck8

Young, T. & Potter, B. (2013/2016). Westbank First Nation CP's. *Case Studies in Aboriginal Business*. Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies, Shannon School of Business, Cape Breton University. <https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/teaching-resources/>

Appendix I.

FOR CASE INSTRUCTORS. DEI CASE TEACHING TOOLKIT.

Have you included a diversity, equity and inclusion statement of commitment in your course outline?

Sample Syllabus Statement of Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

This course has been designed with consideration to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). It is recognized and celebrated that our classrooms, universities and broader society reflect a rich bricolage of people and perspectives. This means for this course that in selecting course materials such as case studies and guest speakers, consideration has been given, to the extent possible, to including representatives from equity-deserving groups such as: women, members of racialized groups, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of gender and sexual diversity communities. It also means that in this course we engage in respectful and thoughtful discussion as we listen to, understand and value identities and perspectives that are different from – or are in opposition to – ours. Where it wasn't possible to include representation of an equity-deserving group, we will challenge ourselves to consider how for example, our case analysis might change if the protagonist were a member of another group.

Have you considered the principles of DEI when selecting case studies for your course?

- Do any of the protagonists featured in the case studies you selected represent women, racial minorities, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, national / cultural diversity, and / or gender and sexual diversity identities? (e.g., “if every case protagonist is a white male, then what are you unintentionally telling your students about who belongs in a business environment and whose businesses are worth studying?”, Lawrence and Sinkey, 2021, np).
- If yes,
 - What percentage?
 - How diverse is that representation (e.g., have representatives of racial minorities been included, but no other equity-deserving groups)?
- Have you considered the composition of your typical classroom / university student body / demographics of the country when selecting case studies to account for students’ need and desire to see themselves in the organizations they learn about and the people they learn from? Will students identify with the protagonists in the cases you have selected?

Have you taken time to reflect on your own assumptions about DEI?

- Do you represent an equity-deserving group? Does that matter as an educator – why or why not? How might that influence how you approach this topic and discussion?
- What are your assumptions about how students will approach a particular type of analysis / assessment? Will they all approach this the same way, or do you expect certain students will approach this differently? Why, and where do these assumptions come from?
- How might those underlying assumptions affect how you navigate the classroom conversations (e.g., what gets said vs. what doesn’t get said; who gets asked vs. who remains silent)?

- Have you noticed who speaks up more often in classroom discussions than others? Have you considered why that might happen and how you might structure class discussions differently to encourage broader participation (or re-think what you consider participation or valuable contributions)?
- What biases toward particular students have you unconsciously built into your syllabus (e.g., in-class activities that do not consider the needs of students with visual impairments; phrases and framing that may be unfamiliar to students from non-Western backgrounds)?

Have you prepared the class for these challenging topics?

- Have you established a shared set of norms with students at the beginning of the course to create psychological safety for students, especially important for challenging conversations? (See Sedlovskaya, 2020, as a resource in this area).
- Have you created a classroom that is inclusive? E.g., do you know students' preferred pronouns?

Have you given any thought to how you will navigate a conversation about DEI intentionally or if it emerges unexpectedly? (See Ammerman, Kinias, & Hsieh, 2019; Lawrence & Sinkey, 2021; Sedlovskaya, 2020, as useful resources)

- Acknowledge discomfort and that the topic / discussion may be uncomfortable, and reinforce respectful dialogue. Emotions may run high and give students permission to respectfully express if they are insulted by parts of the conversation.
- Frame discussions as exploratory conversations, rather than requiring students (or you) to have all of the answers as they start these conversations.
- We all come to these conversations with different backgrounds, life experiences, etc. We need to create a space where voices are heard and to be careful not to close down conversations when talking about what can be a difficult / controversial / sensitive topic for members of the class.
- Avoid calling upon students who appear to represent underrepresented groups and expecting them to speak on behalf of these groups.
- Ensure that particular individuals or groups do not dominate the conversation.

Sources. Compiled by authors, and in part drawn from the noted references Ammerman, Kinias, & Hsieh, 2019; Lawrence & Sinkey, 2021; Sedlovskaya, 2020. See the full references for these sources in the Reference List.

Appendix II.

DEI Guidance for Writing Cases

Creating a compelling protagonist

- Have you discussed with the protagonist that you want to include details about their identity (or identities) such as race, ethnicity, gender, etc.?
- How much of the protagonist's identity is appropriate to discuss if this is not central to the case decision?
- If it doesn't come up directly or indirectly in the case interviews, should such details of identity be included in the case, and in what ways?
- What assumptions might students make if DEI-related aspects of the protagonist's identity are not disclosed explicitly in the case narrative? Will the students make assumptions?
- Are you able, and is it appropriate, to include hints about the protagonist's background (e.g., attended a historically all women's university?).
- Would a photo or video of the protagonist permit you to build the case character and hint at DEI, instead of a description in the narrative?
- Case writing protocol is to use full names the first time a case character is introduced and thereafter only last names. Does this practice mean we are muting gender considerations and downplaying that the case features a woman protagonist, or does using last names mean we move past gender assumptions embedded over time in names (e.g., Chris – woman, man, non-binary?).
- Have you asked the case characters their preferred pronouns or have you assumed (e.g., he, she, they)?

Pay close attention to how you write about case characters

- Have another person review your writing with a critical eye to DEI considerations. They do not have to be a case writer but someone who has more experience and expertise in DEI, and be specific with them that you want, need, and appreciate their lens on your writing. This will help you avoid perpetuating stereotypes or projecting internal or unconscious biases onto the case characters.
- Be careful using clichés when describing case characters and of the language you use to describe their actions (e.g., women entrepreneurs need a man financing partner – business or otherwise – to get their business' off the ground; women leaders consult extensively before making a decision or struggle with making difficult decisions, thereby perpetuating stereotypes that women leaders are indecisive). See also Sharen and McGowan (2019) on these considerations for women and men case characters.
- When you write about men protagonists do you (and how do you) write about their family commitments versus women protagonists?
- Use direct quotes from protagonists, rather than interpreting their identity as the case writer and imposing it onto the character. At the same time remember that a protagonist's own experience might reinforce stereotypes or gender roles, so consider the impact of that on students' analysis and if that should be raised and discussed in the instructor's manual.
- Consider testing your writing by "flipping the script" (Felberg, Mayo and the HBS Case Research & Writing Group, 2021) – e.g., would you use the same term to describe: a man versus a woman in a similar role; people from different racial or ethnic backgrounds; or someone who identifies as LGBTQ2S in comparison to a person who identifies as a woman?

Source. Created by the authors, as well as from the work of Sharen and McGowan (2019) and Felberg, Mayo and the HBS Case Research & Writing Group (2021). See the Reference List for the full reference of these noted two sources.

Appendix III.

DEI Guidance for Writing Instructor Manuals / Teaching Notes

Depending upon the extent to which the identity of the protagonist is central to the learning of the case, the discussion of DEI considerations can appear in the Learning Objectives, Theoretical Linkages, Research Methods, Teaching Approach and / or Discussion Questions / Suggested Analysis.

Remember that cases are used around the world, so instructors may need additional information in the IM to fully understand the potential implications and responses to protagonists in the specific case context described.

- If a key learning outcome of the case is linked to a particular aspect of DEI (e.g., to critically evaluate how gender bias affects the perception of women's effectiveness as leaders), then include a Learning Objective which speaks specifically to that. Details on relevant theory should appear in the Theoretical Linkages and a Discussion Question / Suggested Analysis should address this directly.
- In the Research Methods or Teaching Approach sections outline, for instructors who will use your case, your view of the role of the case protagonist in the case. Include whether and why you consider the protagonist's identity to be central to the case and how much of the discussion should focus on that.
- In the Research Methods section, explain why you made the decisions you did in writing the case and in representing the protagonist. E.g., why you did or did not include a photo or video.
- In the Research Methods or Teaching Approach, explain if you included "hints" in the case to the protagonist's identity. Do so explicitly and clearly so that instructors from other backgrounds and cultures understand what you intend to convey and how it is relevant to the case analysis and discussion.
- In the Teaching Approach or Suggested Analysis, outline any specific stereotypes that instructors should be cautious of when using the case.
- In the Teaching Approach or Suggested Analysis, specify any clichés or biased language that instructors should be careful of or may wish to discuss in class.
- For cases where DEI is not central to the learning objectives, in the Teaching Approach section you can include a suggested wrap-up discussion for the class that brings to the forefront the identity of the case protagonist. A statement for instructors could be included, one which reads "Instructors are encouraged to wrap up the case discussion by highlighting that the protagonist represents a member of an equity-deserving group (e.g., racialized community) and while not central to the focus to the decision of topic, this case was selected with this in mind because there are too few cases published that feature [racialized minorities]."

There are a number of published IMs where DEI considerations, as it relates to the protagonist's identity are addressed. Some address it subtly while others frame it as a significant part of the analysis. Some examples are offered here as resources for IM writers.

- For Gender – (See appendix in that article for sample IM script):
Grandy, G. and Ingols, C. (2016) Writing Cases About Women Protagonists: Addressing Gender Blindness in Traditional Case Portraits. *Case Research*

Journal 36(4), 107-121.

- For Intersectionality:
O'Neill, R., Morgan Roberts, L., Blake-Beard, S., and Blockson, L. (2016). Leading change through unprecedented times: Nancy Sims and the Robert A. Toigo Foundation, *Case Research Journal*, 36(4), 1-15.

Sharen, C.M. (2016). The Balancing Act: Making Tough Decisions, *Case Research Journal*, 36(4), 1-7.
- For Disability:
Beward, K. & Sharen, C.M. (2016). An Uncomfortable Encounter: Perceptions of Sexual Harassment. *Case Research Journal*, 36(3), 1-9.
- For Sexual and Gender Diversity:
Boroff, K. & Boroff, A. (2021). Policy Violations on Gender Transition? *Case Research Journal*, 41(2), 1-10.
- For Indigeneity:
Young, T. & Potter, B. (2013/2016).* Westbank First Nation CP's. *Case Studies in Aboriginal Business*. Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies, Shannon School of Business, Cape Breton University.
<https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/teaching-resources/>

Bearclaw, J. & Medd, K. (2014 / 2015).* To Trust, or Not to Trust. *Case Studies in Aboriginal Business*. Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies, Shannon School of Business, Cape Breton University.
<https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/teaching-resources/>

*The cases were published as sole authored and the instructor's manuals as co-authorship. The multiple publication dates reference the case publication date first and the instructor's manual second.

Appendix IV.

DEI Teaching / Reading List

- Ammerman, C., Kinias, Z., & Hsieh, N. (2019). Tackling Diversity in Case Discussions. Advice for Creating a Culture of Dialogue and Equity in Business Classrooms. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, November 25, 2019. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/tackling-diversity-in-case-discussions> .
- Ammerman, C., Trumbore, A.M. & Ajayi-Ore, L. (2019) The case for female protagonists. Bridging the gender gap in business education. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, June 24, 2019. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/the-case-for-female-protagonists> .
- Bruce, N.I., Cutright, K.M., Richardson Gosline, R., Thomas, J.S., & Barnett White, T. (2020). How business schools can help corporate American fight racism. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, February 17, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbr.org/2020/11/how-business-schools-can-help-corporate-america-fight-racism> .
- Creary, S. (2020). A framework for leading classroom conversations about race. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, June 14, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/a-framework-for-leading-classroom-conversations-about-race> .
- Desai, M. (2021). You too can – and must – lead class discussions on social justice issues. Lessons learned from writing and teaching a case about the Tulsa massacre. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, May 31, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/you-too-can-and-must-lead-class-discussions-on-social-justice-issues> .
- Krishna, A. & Orhun, Y. (2021). How business schools can help close the gender gap. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, January 21, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbr.org/2020/12/how-business-schools-can-help-close-the-gender-gap> .
- Lawrence, Z. & Sinkey, A. (2021). Start the Semester Inclusively. 7 Ways to Set All Students up for Success on Day One. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, January 17, 2021. Accessed Online: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/7-inclusive-ways-to-set-all-students-up-for-success-on-day-one?cid=email%7Cmarketo%7C2021-04-27-the-faculty-lounge%7C1301525%7Cfaculty-lounge-newsletter%7Cnewsletter-subscribers%7Cvarious%7Capr2021&acctID=8312155&mkt_tok=ODU1LUFUWi0yOTQAAAF8sfffEH2VgEfsPt8ZQnrC7gCeifnPay9TR7c8r9Npdm1IDTYq8tlbPLu1c2gk1jrPeS-is43p7ah2KTOzVCIE4Fm6o3ic6GKL0vGeJUM
- Miller, J. C. & Stanko, M.A. (2020) Discussing race in case teaching. What two professors learned writing and teaching a case about the Aunt Jemima brand. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, October 30, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/discussing-race-in-case-teaching>.
- Prieto, L.C. & Phipps, S.T.A. (2021). Why business schools need to address black history. It's time to decolonize the business curriculum. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, February 17, 2021. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/why-business-schools-need-to-address-black-history>.

Sedlovskaya, A. (2020) How to Lead Uncomfortable Class Discussion. Sample Prompts for Effectively Navigating Touch Yet Necessary Classroom Conversations. *Harvard Business Publishing Education*, October 2, 2020. Accessed Online: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/how-to-lead-uncomfortable-class-discussions>.

NOTES

¹ In Canada the phrase Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is more commonly used, while in the United States Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is used. We do recognize that EDI / DEI does not fully account for consideration of Indigenization and in Canada Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Indigenization (EDII) is sometimes used to more fully account for Indigenization and Canada's commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.