

INCORPORATING DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) TOPICS INTO INTRODUCTORY MARKETING COURSES

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study: *In today's diverse marketplace, embedding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in marketing education is essential. Current curricula often lack DEI, a gap this research addresses.*

Method/Design and Sample: *Using transformational learning theory, we propose a DEI-integrated introductory marketing course based on interviews with DEI-focused marketing professionals.*

Results: *Key findings include: 1) Business education needs a broader, more inclusive marketing perspective; 2) Integrating DEI into traditional marketing enhances systems thinking.*

Value to Marketing Educators: *This study offers a comprehensive toolkit with assignments, readings, cases, and reflection exercises, equipping educators to effectively incorporate DEI while emphasizing transformative learning's role in inclusive marketing education.*

Keywords: diversity, equity, inclusion, DEI, inclusive marketing, transformational learning, introduction to marketing, principles of marketing

INTRODUCTION

Marketing professionals have come to recognize the value of inclusive marketing, a human-centered approach that emphasizes the importance of diversity in all forms (Rivera et al., 2020). This approach has been shown to enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and improve a firm's triple-bottom line. For example, research has found that 64% of consumers are more likely to trust brands that represent diversity, and brands with the highest diversity scores show an 83% higher consumer preference (American Marketing Association, 2022). At the same time, a lack of genuine understanding and proper strategizing around diversity and inclusion can be costly. For instance, Dolce & Gabbana's Asia campaign led to accusations of bias and racism, resulting in the company losing 98% of its sales revenue in less than a year (Stevenson, 2020). Similarly, Pepsi was accused of tokenism for its Kendall Jenner ad, leading the company to quickly pull its approximately \$5 million ad and issue a public apology (Victor, 2017). Given these high stakes, it is crucial that marketing students develop awareness of the issues impacting consumers and acquire the skills to respond to them effectively.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a multifaceted concept encompassing a wide range of differences, including, but not limited to, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socioeconomic status, physical and cognitive abilities, and more. Each component brings its unique considerations and implications to the world of marketing. While there has been substantial research in marketing exploring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) related issues in the marketplace (see Table 1 for the different components of DEI, along with marketing research that addresses each component), including racial inequality in access to healthcare (Crockett & Grier, 2021) and food (Jang & Kim, 2018), discrimination based on age (Harris et al., 2005), gender (Middelton & Turnbull, 2021), or disabilities (Sani & Gbadomosi, 2022), and inclusiveness through cultural competency (Demangeot et al., 2013) or respectful engagement (Bone et al., 2014), DEI topics' integration into the marketing curriculum remains minimal. Pedagogical research in marketing has offered suggestions for experiential activities (e.g., Clarke et al., 2009), semester-long projects (e.g., Grier, 2020), seminars (e.g., Rivera et al., 2020), significant course modifications (e.g., Carter 2009), and dedicated courses (e.g., Jones, 2003) to explore issues related to DEI in marketing. However, there is still a need to integrate these topics throughout mainstream marketing courses. One of

the central debates in marketing pedagogy mirrors this concern: whether ethics should be taught as standalone courses or be seamlessly integrated across the curriculum (Loe & Ferrell, 2001). Just as ethics represent the moral principles guiding business practices, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) form an integral component of these ethical considerations, addressing the moral imperative to ensure fairness, respect, and representation in all marketing endeavors. Therefore, the question of how to teach DEI in marketing parallels this broader ethical debate. The strategic move towards integrating ethics in individual marketing courses, as required by the AACSB (2020), emerged not just as a matter of compliance but has been supported as the preferred and most effective pedagogical method (Feldman & Thompson, 1990). This integration reflects the observations of Hoas and Wilcox (1995), following which, many marketing textbooks have updated their material to include ethical considerations throughout, while also dedicating specific chapters to marketing ethics and social responsibility.

Table 1. Key Dimensions of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Component	Description	Key Dimensions	Examples of Marketing Implications
Diversity	Recognition of the myriad of individual differences and unique experiences	Racial and Ethnic	Wolburg, 2007
		Gender	Middleton and Turnbull, 2021
		Sexual Orientation	Chimchanachockchai et al, 2022
		Socioeconomic Status	Jacob et al, 2022
		Disability	Sani and Gbadamosi, 2022
		Age	Westberg et al., 2021
		Religion and Beliefs	Lindridge, 2005
		Cultural and Language	Hyun and Farihurst 2018
Equity	Ensuring fairness and justice in procedures, processes, and distribution of resources both within organizations and in marketing practices	Access to Opportunities and Resources	Jang and Kim, 2018
		Fair Treatment	Rosenbaum et al., 2012
		Health Equity	Crockett and Grier, 2021
Inclusion	Creating an environment where individuals feel valued and included	Respectful Engagement	Bone et al., 2014
		Sense of Belonging	Chaney et al, 2018
		Cultural Competency	Demangeot et al., 2013
		Equal Voice and Representation	Mitchell et al., 2023

Given this context, relegating DEI topics to elective courses or limiting them to specific segments of a program risks portraying these critical issues as separate from mainstream marketing education, inadvertently sidelining them. For marketing education to stay relevant in the fast-evolving industry, it needs to weave DEI issues throughout mainstream marketing courses, including introductory courses. This provides students with a foundational understanding of how these issues are integral to every phase of marketing strategy and execution, deepening their awareness and critical thinking. This allows an environment where transformational learning can take place, moving beyond a set of facts about diverse consumers and equipping students with the practical knowledge necessary to become successful marketing professionals in a diverse marketplace. Moreover, since introductory marketing courses are required for all business students, this approach offers greater reach than elective courses (Garcia, 2020).

This paper responds to this need with a transformational learning approach, identifying DEI topics related to the core marketing principles usually taught in introductory marketing courses. Based on interviews with industry professionals, we offer a toolbox for marketing professors, including key DEI topics to present in each standard introductory marketing chapter, along with learning activities to enhance student understanding and application of these topics.

The specific research questions guiding this study are:

- How can DEI topics be integrated into the standard topics covered in an introductory marketing course?
- What are the key DEI topics industry professionals believe should be included in the curriculum of an introductory marketing course?
- What resources and learning activities can enhance the understanding and application of DEI topics in marketing education?

In the following sections, we first review examples of relevant past pedagogical efforts and offer an overview of transformational learning theory. We then describe our methodological approach, followed by a discussion of our findings. Thereafter, we present an outline for a DEI-Integrated Introductory Marketing course, followed by concluding remarks and recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the growing recognition of the importance and benefits (e.g., developing applicable skills to future careers; Everett et al., 2022) of a DEI-engaged marketing education, research reveals it is rare for inclusive marketing to be explicitly taught in the marketing curriculum (Kipnis et al., 2021; Ferreira et al., 2022). Incorporating these topics into marketing curricula can be challenging for instructors for several reasons. One challenge is the lack of available resources and materials (Burton, 2005). Indeed, a quick review of popular marketing textbooks reveals most of them either incorporate DEI as a mini case in only a few chapters or fail to incorporate them into the chapters altogether (See Appendix A for a list of Textbooks reviewed). Similarly, case studies in popular publications such as *Harvard Business Publishing* reveal about 1% of cases include a black protagonist, and about 11% include a female protagonist or executive (Smith et al., 2021).

Furthermore, given the insufficiency of resources, educators, particularly those who do not belong to and/or identify with an underrepresented group, may find it difficult to address these issues confidently in their courses (Garcia, 2020). A final challenge may be fear of resistance or pushback from students or other stakeholders (Prieto, 2018). Students may not see the relevance, or they may object to the importance of these issues. Furthermore, there may be concerns about appearing political, facing backlash and mishandling difficult conversations in general.

Despite these challenges, several approaches to integrating DEI into marketing education have been developed. One approach has been to address DEI-related topics by creating upper-level courses that focus primarily on inclusive marketing. For example, Stern's (2008) 15-week Honors seminar, "Diverse Consumers: Race, Ethnicity, Religion, Social Class, and Gender," aims at improving student understanding of differences in cultural subgroups in terms of attitudes, consumption habits, and media portrayals. While the course utilizes a variety of diversity-focused texts (e.g., Tharp, 2001) to achieve these learning goals, it also allows students to experience real-world consumption situations by going on "diversity walks" in subgroup neighbourhoods. Similarly, Burton (2005) offers suggestions and identifies resources for a Multicultural Marketing course whose primary aim is to improve student understanding of diverse groups. Others have focused on a particular DEI area through upper-level seminars. For example, Rivera et al. (2020) offer an undergraduate seminar on inclusive marketing that addresses diversity and inclusion in relation to disabilities. Their five-day seminar, designed and conducted by a former marketing manager with visual impairment, offers role-playing exercises and case studies to better understand people with disabilities as highly relevant stakeholders.

An alternative approach has been to include a module and/or experiential activity in an existing marketing course to address DEI issues. For instance, Carter (2009) introduced the 'Depth of Diversity Module,' which broadens students' views on ethnic consumer behavior. Similarly, Rosenbaum et al. (2012) developed the Multicultural Service Sensitivity exercise, prompting students to recognize and address discriminatory behaviors against marginalized or minority consumers in service settings. Baker and Delpechitre (2016) equipped students in an Advanced Professional Selling course with cultural intelligence training, incorporating two role-play scenarios focused on cross-cultural sales interactions. Grier (2020) designed a semester-long, problem-based experiential course project to improve student awareness of diversity and inclusion issues through a social justice perspective. In a marketing research class, Pierce and Longo (2020) utilized photovoice in a semester-long client-based project, which involved students taking photographs on their campus to document issues related to diversity and inclusion. Chang (2020)

used film to convey diversity-related information to students. Everett et al. (2022) created a module that used content and assessment to unpack students' own unconscious biases and improve their understanding of how this learning might influence their future careers as marketing professionals. The critical component of the module included a DEI-focused assessment by a real client. As per the project, students would pick a DEI-focused brief (e.g., a big brand campaign for celebrating black history month), conduct primary and secondary research, and offer recommendations.

Building upon these pedagogical examples, and in light of the challenges and concerns mentioned earlier, we propose an integrative approach to DEI topics in marketing that weaves critical topics and issues into a traditional introductory marketing course. In doing so, we aim to create an environment that fosters transformational learning, a process that involves critical reflection on one's assumptions, beliefs, and perspectives, and leads to changes in mindset (Mezirow, 1997). By promoting transformational learning in the context of DEI, we seek to encourage students to question and explore the assumptions and outcomes related to diversity, equity, and inclusion within each marketing topic.

Our approach contributes to past research in several significant ways. First, while past work has suggested methods to incorporate DEI considerations into marketing in upper-level marketing courses, our approach introduces inclusive marketing not just to all marketing students but to all business students enrolled in an introductory marketing course. Doing so provides a better opportunity to educate students on the notion that marketing and business practices are strengthened through strategic and authentic considerations of diversity, equity, and inclusion. It also offers them an alternative, more inclusive frame of reference to approach their following courses. Given concerns over whether business students develop the necessary cultural competencies that employers seek (Poole & Garrett-Walker, 2016; Yeoh, 2019), we believe it would be a missed opportunity to limit the coverage of DEI topics to only upper-level electives. This early exposure aligns with effective curriculum mapping strategies, where DEI learning outcomes are integrated from the outset of students' academic careers, fostering a continuous development of these critical skills throughout their college experience. Such an approach not only fortifies the educational framework with essential DEI competencies but also ensures that these principles are reinforced and built upon in subsequent courses, resulting in a more holistic and profound mastery by the time students complete their college education (Spencer et al., 2012). Moreover, by integrating DEI topics early in the academic journey, we propose the potential for these courses to contribute to the general education requirements. This could benefit Colleges of Business by engaging first and second-year students earlier, not only informing them about business careers but also exposing them to DEI learning outcomes, thus fostering the competencies sought by employers.

Second, our approach takes into consideration the critical barriers that may prevent educators from addressing DEI in the marketing curriculum. We offer a specific list of resources that can be utilized to seamlessly expand on their coverage of traditional content without compromising what they feel they must teach. Importantly, we develop these resources through interviews with industry practitioners. As a result, we address concerns over the lack of engagement between education, practice, and research on the advancement of inclusive marketing and answer the call for joint production of resources and knowledge (Kipnis et al., 2021).

A Case for Transformational Learning

In their recent call to marketing educators, Kemper et al. (2022) suggested addressing some of the most pressing societal issues, such as racism, discrimination, and social justice, to create substantial large-scale changes requires equally significant changes in mindset. To improve our condition, we must first understand the assumptions, beliefs, perspectives, and habits that created an environment of non-inclusive marketing in the first place. Providing conditions for students to recognize this dominant social paradigm (DSP) and question it through critical reflection and discourse creates more realistic opportunities for lasting change and transformation. This approach aligns with the principles of transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1997).

Transformational learning theory (TLT; Mezirow, 1997), which was originally introduced in 1978 in Mezirow's comprehensive national study of women returning to community colleges in the US, offers a set of processes to change our structures of assumptions, which in turn shape our perceptions and actions. The theory stresses the importance of recognizing that our learning (meaning-making) is limited by our existing frames of reference/meaning structures, leading us to resist anything that does not fit into these meaning structures. It urges us to recognize and reassess these structures of assumptions, and through

critical reflection, transform these unexamined assumptions and beliefs that may no longer be functional by critically reflecting on them, thereby making them more inclusive and discriminating (Mezirow, 1994). In this sense, it is considered a higher order of learning (Bateson, 1972; Sterling, 2011) compared to teaching students how to improve existing practices or develop new ones. As a result, TL also aligns better with students' expectations "...from their educational experience to change the way they look at the world and teach them the skills to do so (Brock, 2010)." In transformational learning, the goal is to enable students to see things differently, becoming more aware of and critically reflective of various points of view, thereby creating the potential for paradigm shifts and leading to worldviews that are more inclusive and open to change (Mezirow, 1997; Sterling, 2011; Cox, 2021).

Transformation is not guaranteed, but several facets can create the possibility of transformation (Cranton, 2002). In his original work, Mezirow (1978) outlines ten steps leading to a transformation of worldview. These are (a) a disorienting dilemma; (b) self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame; (c) recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change; (d) exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions; (e) a critical assessment of assumptions; (f) provisional trying of new roles; (g) planning of a course of action; (h) acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans; (i) building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and (j) a reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. Mezirow himself has stated that all steps are not required, and in future work, he has emphasized more heavily critical reflection, informed discourse, taking action on transformed perspective, and acquiring a disposition that is more critically reflective of one's own and others' assumptions as they key elements of the processes of TL (Mezirow, 2008). Later work also emphasized that this is not a linear process and nor does transformation need to be epochal and rather incremental (Mezirow, 1985; Mezirow, 2000; Mezirow, 2008) and even spiral-like (Cranton, 2002). Empirical work on TL has continued to establish critical reflection as the key element determinant of TL (Brock, 2010; Cox, 2021) and added disorienting dilemmas and trying on new roles as other important elements (Brock, 2010). In non-empirical work, Cranton (2002) recognizes the following facets (no longer seen as steps) as a rough guide for educators to promote transformation: 1) an activating event that exposes a discrepancy between one's existing assumptions and current experience, 2) recognition and articulation of underlying unconscious assumptions 3) critical self-reflection on assumptions 4) openness to alternative viewpoints 5) engaging in discourse to explore alternative perspectives 6) revision of assumptions and perspectives to make them more open and better justified and 7) acting on revisions, behaving, talking and thinking in a way that is congruent with transformed assumptions or perspectives.

TLT has been applied in various contexts within the marketing literature, illustrating its potential for fostering significant shifts in mindset and behavior. For instance, Gromark (2020) utilized TLT to transition a company from a market-oriented to a brand-oriented strategy. Similarly, Sermboonsang et al. (2019) applied TLT to develop a 'Smart Consumer Class' to curb impulse buying among students. Moreover, Everett et al. (2022) developed a module incorporating transformational learning, aiming to unpack students' unconscious biases and helping them understand how their learning might influence their future careers as marketing professionals.

Building on the principles of transformational learning, we propose a method to foster transformation in DEI-integrated marketing practices and education. We argue introducing students to alternative perspectives as early as an introductory marketing course is essential, as failing to do so reinforces the dominant social paradigm that has created an environment for non-inclusive marketing in the first place (Kemper et al., 2022). Once a frame of reference is established, changing it becomes more difficult in the future, as individuals tend to reject ideas that do not fit their existing paradigms (Mezirow, 1997).

In this context, our integrative approach focuses on teaching traditional marketing topics alongside relevant DEI elements. This strategy allows educators to teach the traditional tools necessary for marketing management success while also providing students with alternative perspectives early on, creating opportunities for them to critically examine and revise potentially problematic assumptions and points of view. Throughout the semester, emphasis is placed on promoting critical self-reflection, discourse, and the presentation of ideas using various methods such as cases, videos, and readings.

Through a series of interviews, we have gathered valuable insights from marketing practitioners to develop an outline that effectively incorporates DEI elements into marketing education while fostering transformational learning experiences for students. In the following section, we will detail the methodology we used to conduct these interviews and how the data gathered from them informed the development of

our proposed outline and sample assignments.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research method was used to explore the connection between various DEI topics and typical Principles of Marketing course subjects. Given the contemporary nature of the research questions in this study, a series of in-depth interviews were conducted with industry experts to better understand the phenomenon at hand (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The in-depth interviews were semi-structured with a brief interview guide consistent with the research questions of this study. The interview guide included the following four questions:

- (1) What does diversity mean to you?
- (2) How do you perceive the role of DEI in marketing today?
- (3) Do you think DEI topics should be covered in marketing courses? If yes, which ones?
- (4) Is there anything else you would like to mention regarding DEI in marketing that we did not cover?

Furthermore, we provided interviewees with a form (see Table 2), asking them to align the DEI topics they mentioned with specific Principles of Marketing course subjects and to share any pertinent examples, cases, or documents.

Table 2. DEI/Marketing subject Matching Form

Principles of Marketing Subjects	DEI Topics to Cover Under Each Marketing Subject	Examples of Learning Opportunities
Creating Customer Value / Marketing Strategy		
Understanding Customer Behaviour		
Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning		
New Product Development		
Product/Brand Management		
Services Marketing		
Pricing		
Marketing Channels		
Integrated Marketing Communications / Advertising		
Personal Selling and Sales Management		

To protect the privacy of our interviewees, we used respondent numbers during our research instead of their real names. The demographics of the interviewees, including their gender and race, were carefully considered to ensure a diverse range of responses. Among our respondents, ten identified as CIS male, ten as CIS female, and five of the twenty respondents identified as LGBTQ+. Additionally, the group represented various racial backgrounds, with eleven identifying as White, four as Black, three as LatinX, and three as Asian. Interviewees were chosen through a non-random method based on their experience in both marketing and DEI topics. All were either former marketing professionals currently holding DEI-related managerial positions or current marketing professionals serving on DEI-related internal committees within their organizations. All respondents had undergone higher education in business and had taken an introductory marketing course. See Tables 3A and 3B for a more comprehensive breakdown of respondents.

Using purposive sampling, the researchers utilized their professional networks to identify the respondents who qualified for the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This sampling method is chosen for three

main reasons. First, we wanted to target marketing professionals who hold a marketing or related degree and have taken a principles of marketing course as part of their college education. Second, we wanted to select marketing professionals who have a deep understanding of DEI topics through their professional experiences. Finally, we aimed to form a sample that is inclusive of willing participants with diverse backgrounds. To achieve this three-way intersection in the sample, a non-random sampling method was chosen.

Table 3A. Respondent Composition – Demographic Profiles

Participant Number	Highest Education	Age Group	Location	Identifies As
Participant #1	BBA, Marketing	41-50	VA	Black, CIS Gender Female
Participant #2	BBA, Marketing	31-40	VA	White, CIS Gender Female
Participant #3	BA, Communication Studies	50+	TX	White, CIS Gender Female
Participant #4	MBA	50+	TX	White, CIS Gender Female
Participant #5	Master of Psychology and BBA, International Business	20-29	VA	Asian, CIS Gender Female
Participant #6	BBA, Marketing	31-40	VA	Black Latina, CIS Gender Female
Participant #7	MBA	31-40	MD	White Latina, CIS Gender Female
Participant #8	BBA, Marketing	21-30	FL	White Latino, CIS Gender LGBTQ+ Male
Participant #9	MBA	41-50	CA	Black, CIS Gender LGBTQ+ Male
Participant #10	BS, SMAD	21-30	CO	White, CIS Gender Female
Participant #11	BBA, International Business and CIS	21-30	NY	Asian, CIS Gender LGTBQ+ Female
Participant #12	BBA, Marketing	21-30	NC	White, CIS Gender Female
Participant #13	BBA, Marketing	50+	VA	Black, CIS Gender Male
Participant #14	BBA, Marketing	31-40	NY	Asian, CIS Gender LGTBQ+ Male
Participant #15	MBA	31-40	GA	White, CIS Gender Male
Participant #16	BBA, Marketing	31-40	VA	White, CIS Gender Male
Participant #17	BBA, Marketing	31-40	OR	White, CIS Gender Male
Participant #18	BBA, Marketing	21-30	NY	White, CIS Gender LGTBQ+ Male
Participant #19	MBA	31-40	NY	White, CIS Gender Male
Participant #20	BBA, Marketing	31-40	NY	White, CIS Gender Male

Each respondent was contacted via email to schedule an online (Zoom) meeting for the semi-structured interviews. The data collection process continued until no new concepts emerged from the interview notes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The final number of twenty interviewees meets recommended minimum suggested by Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006).

During the Zoom interviews, responses were recorded by the researchers, and the forms were filled out by the interviewees. Each interview lasted approximately an hour. Two research team members coded the interview notes using the constant comparative method, as suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008). We drew on Watson et al.'s (2022) study on the integration of contemporary topics into an introductory marketing course for identifying the marketing subjects to be included in our study (refer to Table 2). The

interviewees were guided to contribute DEI-related information only for those marketing subjects where they had substantial experience. Among the ten proposed marketing subjects, the number of marketing subjects addressed by each interviewee ranged from one to seven. In total, 47 unique DEI topics were suggested by interviewees for ten marketing chapters. Two members of the research team recoded the suggested DEI topics into 24 higher-level topics. The initial assessment of the interrater reliability suggested agreement on 44 of the 47 (94%) unique DEI topics, suggesting a high level of consistency between the coders (McHugh, 2012).

Table 3B. Respondent Composition – Professional Profiles

Participant	Current Title	Industry	Industry Experience	Marketing Expertise
#1	President & CEO	Marketing & Sales Consulting	30+ years	Marketing Strategy & Sales
#2	SVP, Diversity & Inclusion	Digital Marketing & Advertising	15 years	Digital Marketing & Advertising
#3	SVP, Global Customer Service	Technology	30+ years	Customer service
#4	Head of Global Sales & Go-to-Market	Technology	28 years	Sales Management
#5	Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Strategist	Financial Services	7 years	Marketing Communications
#6	Head of Advertising	Digital Marketing	11 years	Digital Marketing & Advertising
#7	Sr. Consultant	Management Consulting	12 years	Customer service & recruiting
#8	Manager of Business Development	Sports Management	7 years	Professional sales
#9	Marketing & Outreach Manager	Architectural Services	15 years	Branding & Marketing communications
#10	Senior Web Marketing Manager	Telecommunications	7 years	Website strategy & branding
#11	Manager, UX Analytics	Technology	5 years	Product Development & Strategy
#12	Corporate Recruiter	Real Estate Development	5 years	Recruitment & Sales
#13	Business Development Consultant	Healthcare	25 years	Marketing Communications
#14	Group Account Supervisor	Healthcare Marketing	13 years	Account Management
#15	Sr. Business Development Manager	Consumer Goods	15 years	Channels Management
#16	Founder & CEO	Digital Marketing Agency	12 years	Digital Marketing & Advertising
#17	Executive Director	Non-Profit Youth Organization	11 years	Service Development
#18	Director of Client Services	Sustainable Development	7 years	Product Development & Sales
#19	Sr. Communications Director	Advertising Agency	16 years	Political Marketing Campaign Management
#20	Senior Agency Sales & Marketing Leader	Digital Marketing Agency	12 years	Digital Marketing & Advertising

The resources for each DEI topic were chosen through a careful review of multiple potential articles, videos, podcasts, and DEI-related marketing consulting and news articles suggested by interviewees. We
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prioritized resources that were relevant, easily accessible for students, and freely available. From the analysis, we created a DEI Integrated Introductory Marketing Course Outline, incorporating the two most frequently mentioned DEI topics under each chapter along with examples of learning opportunities (see Table 4).

Table 4. DEI-Integrated Introductory Marketing Course Outline

Transformational Learning		
Introductory Marketing Topics	Proposed DEI Topics	Teaching Resources
Creating Customer Value / Marketing Strategy	Introduction to Inclusive Marketing	Reading: Diversity wins: How inclusion matters (McKinsey & Company, 2020)
	Creating Value for Diverse Customers	Reading: Miami Marlins Heritage Celebration Nights (MLB, 2022)
Understanding Customer Behaviour	Diversity as a Function of Cultures/Subcultures	Podcast: Meeting today's multicultural consumers (Nielsen, 2018)
	Consumer Perceptions of Authentic DEI Efforts	Reading: Authentically Inclusive Marketing (Brodzik et al., 2021)
Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning	Intersectionality in Segmentation and Targeting	Reading: Beyond Gender: The Impact of Intersectionality in Advertising (Unstereotype Alliance, 2021)
	Bias in Forming Target Segments	Reading: Is Segmentation Just Discrimination with an Acceptable Name? (Crux Research, 2018)
New Product Development	Inclusivity in Product Development Research and Testing	Podcast: The Next Wave: MJ DePalma and Kelli Kemery (Microsoft) (Yext, 2021)
	Diversity of New Product Development Teams	Reading: Why Having a Diverse Team Will Make Your Products Better (Akinawonu, 2017)
Product/Brand Management	Aligning Brand Values with Diversity and Inclusion	Reading: How Brands Can Go from Performative Allyship to Actual Allies (White, 2020)
	DEI-Based Brand Advocacy Expectations	Reading: Why is Boycott Ulta Beauty Trending (Rao, 2022)
Services Marketing	Providing Equitable Service Opportunities	Reading: A \$300 Billion Opportunity: Serving the Emerging Black American Consumer (Chui et al., 2021)
	Training Service Employees on Cultural Fluency	Reading: 3-ways to Improve Your Cultural Fluency (Hyun & Conant, 2019)
Pricing	Equitable Pricing Practices	Reading: Access to Foods That Support Healthy Dietary Patterns (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2020)

	Accessible Pricing Methods	Reading: Rozsa introduces “Pay As You’re Able” ticketing for its upcoming season (Copperbeacon.org, 2023) Reading: Why Panera’s experiment with pay-what-you-want dining failed (Peters, 2018)
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Table 4 Continued. DEI-Integrated Introductory Marketing Course Outline

Transformational Learning		
Introductory Marketing Topics	Proposed DEI Topics	Teaching Resources
Marketing Channels	Aligning Supplier Diversity with Target Markets	Podcast: Dentsu’s Economic Empowerment Model is Promoting Diversity (McKenzie, 2022)
	Inclusiveness and Accessibility in Online Retailing	Reading: All Together Now – An Overview of Inclusive Design (Csincsak, 2020)
Integrated Marketing Communications / Advertising	Avoiding Tokenism and Bias in Advertising	Reading and Videos: Diversity in Advertising: The Stories and Examples to Take Us Forward (Perrier, 2021)
	Improving Diversity in Influencer Marketing	Reading: Instagram influencers are often white, and now the brands that pay them are getting pushback (Graham, 2019) Reading: DEI in Influencer Marketing (Geyser, 2022)
Personal Selling & Sales Management	Improving Salesperson Cultural Intelligence	Reading: Why Cultural Intelligence Speaks Volumes (Gershon, 2018)
	Forming A Diverse Salesforce	Reading: Diversity Drives Sales Success (Forrester Consulting, 2021)

RESULTS

When asked about the meaning of diversity, the respondents mentioned several factors, including demographics such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, education level, geography, and industry experience; social variables such as culture, moral and political upbringing, social status; as well as disabilities, including both physical and mental factors that make each of us unique. For instance, Respondent #7 suggested, “...diversity is what makes us all unique, our internal (race, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, ethnicity, etc.) and external dimensions (experiences, geographic location, education, family status, socioeconomic status, etc.) that make us up as individuals.” Respondent #14 added, “*To me, diversity means bringing together all different walks of life. And that just goes beyond skin color. It extends to social status, upbringing, culture, values, morals, religion, politics, coming from different industries.*” Finally, Respondent #17 suggested “*it means celebrating all of the differences and similarities that we have.*” One of the main points made by most interviewees was that our definitions of diversity and inclusion should not be limited to a single or few demographic, social, or disability factors, and acknowledging all forms of diversity fosters more inclusive and collaborative environments for everyone.

“Diversity means bringing together different people, ideas, concepts, backgrounds, experiences, biases, etc., and seeking to understand and appreciate those differences. While we often think of diversity in the context of race – and that is an important definition – restricting diversity to race is, in fact, LIMITING. We achieve our best business results when we can embrace all kinds of diversity and deliver the best results for our shareholders, customers, and team members” – Respondent #8

In response to the question regarding the importance of DEI in Marketing today, the Respondents brought up issues related to inclusion and belonging for various diverse groups. For example, Respondent

#1 suggested, “The world is changing, and every group needs to be at the table. We don't hear the group's narrative if we don't have diversity at the table.” Respondent #2 added, “In sales organizations, it becomes pretty apparent when diversity and inclusion is baked into the organizational culture... I think just having diversity for the sake of having diversity to check a box just doesn't feel authentic, and that is when you get in trouble.” Several of the respondents emphasized that the cross-sections of younger generations are even more sensitive to Marketing efforts that do not portray inclusivity and/or do not evoke feelings of belongingness.

- “Consumers, especially in the younger generations, are tired of seeing advertisements that aren't inclusive. Practically every industry has become oversaturated with the rise of social media, and consumers are becoming more brand-conscious. People want to connect with the values of a company they are supporting.” – Respondent #12
- “DEI is important in Marketing because consumers want to feel a sense of belonging and representation within the brands they love and support. I believe that there's an expectation that companies will embrace a DEI-friendly mindset, and failure to do so can have a detrimental effect on those companies from a brand, employee recruitment, and customer acquisition standpoint – especially with younger generations.” – Respondent #5

When asked about the DEI topics that should be covered in Marketing courses, most respondents mentioned that it is critical to cover basic DEI concepts like bias, unconscious bias, stereotypes, microaggressions, intersectionality, ally-ship, and accessibility in Marketing classes. In addition, two respondents brought up the importance of weaving DEI into the strategic Environmental/Social/Governance (ESG) plan of an organization. According to Hope (2022), an ESG strategic plan is a corporate reporting mechanism that emphasizes social responsibility, and it is utilized by socially concerned investors to screen potential investments. Respondent #1 suggested, “... both the social and governance aspects of an ESG report should include DEI-related metrics, and the future Marketing leaders need to understand how this focus on DEI in corporate reports creates growth, resiliency, and ultimately shareholder value.” Respondent #4 added DEI should not only be weaved into the ESG plans but also integrated into brand and value propositions.

Marketers should understand how to weave the overall ESG (environmental/social/governance) impact story, including DEI, into the company's brand and value propositions and certain storylines. While it's important to develop a standalone social impact story, it's often more powerful to simply bring that story to life as a part of larger Marketing activations (examples: who is speaking on stage on behalf of your company at Marketing events- are they diverse or all men? What are your talent acquisition teams talking about when trying to recruit and hire new employees – alongside compensation and benefits?)
– Respondent #4

In sum, the initial conversations during the interviews suggested that a Marketing course integrating DEI topics into its curriculum should:

- Cover all types of diversity topics (rather than focusing on one or few), including demographic ones such as race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religion, as well as disability-related ones such as physical and mental disabilities.
- Emphasize the importance of developing a sense of inclusivity and belonging in Marketing efforts, especially for various cross-sections of younger populations who prefer to share the values of the brands they support.
- Incorporate not only the important DEI concepts like unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, ally-ship, and accessibility into the Marketing curriculum but also illustrate how reporting progress in DEI-related metrics may increase growth in both brand and shareholder values.

Guided by these findings, the respondents were then asked to match various subjects covered in introductory Marketing courses (Watson et al., 2022) with specific DEI topics and to provide examples for each of the Marketing/DEI topic dyads (see Table 2). The examples were then presented in Table 4 as a teaching tool for Marketing instructors to cover the specific DEI topics under each of the marketing subjects.

Marketing Subject #1: Creating Customer Value / Marketing Strategy

This marketing subject includes the introductory chapters in a principles course covering fundamental concepts like creating value for customers, customer satisfaction and loyalty, Marketing mix, situation analysis, and developing a Marketing program. Twelve of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. All twelve of them mentioned the importance of diversity and the need

to consider all forms of diversity when creating value for the customers. In line with the introductory nature of this subject, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this topic is **Introduction to Inclusive Marketing**. According to Rivera et al. (2020), inclusive Marketing is a human-centered approach to Marketing that values diversity in all forms. Therefore, this DEI topic is well-matched with the suggestions of the interviewees. As mentioned by Respondent #1, "... marketers must look at what diversity and inclusion means to them before they can create value for customers." Moreover, Respondent #16 added, "Marketing is about creativity, and you cannot have creativity if you have a room full of people with the same ideas. So, I think that the most important part of diversity is inclusivity of different ideas and that you have different perspectives around the table." Therefore, it is important to start a DEI conversation in a Marketing course by first introducing the basic concepts to the students. Supporting this view, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #8) on the importance of diversity and inclusion for Marketing organizations published by McKinsey & Company (2020). This research report by McKinsey Consulting utilizes data from 15 countries and more than 1,000 large companies, and it shows that the companies that embrace diversity and inclusion outperform others by 20 to 30% in terms of profitability.

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **How to Create Value for Increasingly Diverse Segments of Customers**. Regarding this dyad, Respondent #2 suggested, "... the consumer demographics are changing rapidly with increasing diversity. Companies cannot just market to averages anymore. They need to improve their cultural competence of diverse populations to create value." Moreover, Respondent #9 claimed, "Authenticity in marketing efforts plays a huge role in creating value for diverse populations. For instance, some brands change their LinkedIn logos to represent the Pride flag but do not take intentional steps to support the LGBTQIA community. This shows inauthenticity and lack of understanding." Beyond the class discussions around DEI topics, sharing thoughts on the authenticity of Marketing efforts in an introductory chapter would also support the instructors' teaching materials to address gaining customers' trust to build customer loyalty and long-term relationships. To illustrate the importance of such notions as cultural competence and authenticity in creating value for customers, a reading assignment is proposed by Respondent #8 - Miami Marlins Heritage Celebration Nights (MLB, 2022). This article shows that the Miami Marlins Club organizes heritage celebration nights for various ethnic groups living in the Miami area, including Cuban, Dominican, Mexican, Japanese, and Greek nights. In doing so, Marlins Organization assures they do not simply use stereotypes from each culture but rather develop a series of authentic events that are built on cultural competency for each ethnic group (MLB, 2022). As illustrated by the example provided by Respondent #8, sports serve as a vital platform for raising awareness about DEI, fostering a sense of understanding among diverse communities through celebration of cultural uniqueness. Despite efforts to promote DEI, sports teams and fans have sometimes sparked negative backlashes, as seen in instances where The Los Angeles Dodgers showed indecisiveness over inviting a pro-LGBTQ+ non-profit organization to their Pride Night and one of their top athletes on the team opposed the group and requested the Dodgers to bring back their Christian Faith and Family Day (Roush, 2023). Similarly, players from both Major League Baseball and the National Hockey League refused to wear pride-themed jerseys to celebrate pride events (Arnold, 2023; Kennedy, 2023). Therefore, it is critical for future marketers to understand how to create value for diverse segments and create awareness around important DEI topics through their Marketing campaigns while respecting the personal values of their entire target market base.

Marketing Subject #2: Understanding Customer Behavior

This marketing subject includes chapters on consumer and organizational buying behaviors covering concepts such as the purchasing decision-making process, factors affecting the decision-making process, and buyer-seller relationships. Eleven of the twelve respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. A large majority of the eleven respondents mentioned the need for a better understanding of the cultures of various diverse populations as well as subcultures. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this topic is **Diversity as a Function of Cultures and Subcultures**. When asked about the impact of DEI on the consumer purchasing decision-making process, Respondent #11 suggested, "Understanding the diverse group's cultural expectations and preparing Marketing programs based on these expectations plays an important role in why they buy and support brands." Moreover, Respondent #10 mentioned, "...the marketer's ability to connect with the relevant community at a cultural level allows them to understand their 'why.'" Accordingly, the proposed learning opportunity

exercise for this topic is a podcast listening assignment (provided by Respondent #11) on the changing demographic makeup of the US population (Nielsen, 2018). This podcast would also support the instructors in discussing sociocultural influences on the consumer purchasing decision-making process. This podcast informs the listeners that the U.S. is expected to become a multicultural majority nation by 2044, requiring businesses to authentically engage with diverse consumers, but some are failing to do so (Nielsen, 2018).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Consumer Perceptions of Authentic DEI Efforts**. The notion of authenticity reappeared numerous times during the discussion of DEI topics related to consumer behavior. Regarding this dyad, Respondent #1 suggested “... *the brands need to present their narratives authentically, and they need to support the community both economically and socially if they want to develop favorable brand perceptions.*” Respondent #4 added “... *authentic Marketing efforts allow marketers to reach beyond the loyal consumer market and expand into marginalized groups.*” Respondent # 13 suggested, “... *our Marketing message needs to come across as authentic and genuine, right? I think if it doesn't, then that causes more harm than good.*” To emphasize the notion of authenticity in DEI-related Marketing efforts, a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #1) is proposed as a learning opportunity exercise. This article by Deloitte Consulting reports results from a survey of 11,500 global consumers and finds that younger consumers are more drawn to inclusive advertising, and in order to secure their future loyalty, brands must actively address social injustices in areas like hiring, supplier diversity, and product Marketing (Brodzik et al., 2021).

Marketing Subject #3: Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning

This marketing subject discusses concepts like consumer insights, the segmentation process, selecting target markets, and positioning brands. Sixteen of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. Several of the sixteen respondents mentioned a need for a better understanding of intersectionalities when forming customer segments. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this topic is the **Intersectionality of Target Segments**. When asked about the impact of DEI on consumer segmentation and targeting efforts, Respondent #1 suggested, “...*one message does not fit all in today's world of diversity. Not all black consumers are the same. We have African-American populations who were born here in the US, and their families lived here for generations, and we have black immigrant populations whose families arrived in the US more recently from Africa or the Caribbean. There are deep-rooted cultural differences between these groups.*” Moreover, Respondent #11 mentioned, for instance, “...*marketers would miss a big opportunity if they do not recognize the differences among various intersectionalities. A single lesbian black mom and a re-married light-skin black dad do not experience life in the same way.*” Therefore, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #11) on a four-country study that examines the presence and impact of intersectionality in advertising across the selected countries (Unstereotype Alliance, 2021). The findings suggest intersectional advertising can boost brand affinity, especially among underrepresented groups like women or Hispanics, fostering positive emotions such as feeling valued and recognized (Unstereotype Alliance, 2021).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Bias in Consumer Segmentation**. Several interviewees mentioned the concept of bias during the discussion of DEI topics related to segmentation and targeting. For example, Respondent #2 suggested, “... *we use brand personas after completing a segmentation study to depict the type of person who would be the target customer of our offering. Unfortunately, personas lead to generalizations which perpetuate stereotypes and bias.*” Furthermore, Respondent #8 added, “... *when I first tried to build our Pride programming, I focused efforts towards gay men (which I thought was the right way to approach it). After not much luck, I decided to talk with a few community leaders and realized that a targeted focus on lesbians (supported sports more than most gay men) and corporate entities (from checking boxes to genuine interest, they were most likely to actually spend money and support non-profits attending). I was biased...*” To emphasize the notion of bias in segmentation and targeting efforts, a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #2) is proposed as a learning opportunity exercise. This blog entry by Crux Research suggests segmentation can yield unintended outcomes, as it simplifies decision-making based on group characteristics while overlooking individual differences, yet it remains a valuable practice in Marketing, albeit one that requires careful consideration to avoid biases (Crux Research, 2018).

Marketing Subject #4: New Product Development

In New Product Development, students are introduced to concepts such as types of consumer and industrial products, new product development processes, new product adoption, and diffusion of innovation. Twelve of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. All twelve mentioned the importance of inclusivity and accessibility when designing and developing new products. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this subject is **Inclusivity and Accessibility in New Product Development**. As mentioned by Respondent #10, "... *this is a major point of emphasis in website development. By law, websites are required to be accessible for WCAG and ADA Compliance. Companies such as AccessiBe make it easy to implement on the website. We purchased this app for all of our subdomains as well (including our product dashboard) to make sure all of our users have the experience they need on the website.*" Moreover, Respondent #11 added, "A client who works at Amazon on the team that built/maintains Alexa said that one of her experiences as an Indian woman speaking English as her second language is that she works on Alexa and works on the capability of Alexa to understand all types of accents. When we build products, we need to make sure that we're thinking about customers/users who come from all sorts of backgrounds, or else people may not be able to use it." Based on these comments, this topic's proposed learning opportunity exercise is a podcast listening assignment (provided by Respondent #12) featuring DEI officers from Microsoft (Yext, 2021). In the podcast, the guest speakers share their thoughts on the evolution of inclusive Marketing and the future of designing for audiences with disabilities (Yext, 2021).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Diversity of New Product Development Teams**. In regards to this dyad, Respondent #1 suggested, "... *companies need to recruit more BIPOC for their new product development teams. People from different cultural backgrounds and worldviews bring a broad range of perspectives to the table that can seriously improve a company's creativity and innovation.*" Respondent #18 added that "diversity in sustainable development teams is a game-changer because it brings in fresh ideas and different perspectives to the meeting room." To illustrate the importance of diversity in new product development teams, a reading assignment is proposed by Respondent #9 (Akinawonu, 2017). This article posits diverse teams bring a range of perspectives that enhance product quality and user satisfaction, with companies boasting higher proportions of women and culturally diverse leadership teams being more prone to introducing innovative products.

Marketing Subject #5: Product/Brand Management

This marketing subject includes concepts such as product life cycle management, brand management, and packaging. Eleven of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. The respondents mainly focused on the notion of brand perceptions when discussing DEI issues around product/brand management. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this topic is **Aligning Brand Values with Diversity and Inclusion**. When asked about the impact of DEI on product/brand management efforts, Respondent #8 suggested, "Companies that lead the charge for change typically start from within. Managing the internal brand and ensuring employees align on the DEI front is key. Practice what you preach... Beyond the employees, companies have to reach out to community leaders representing various diverse groups. They need to align their brand values with the community leaders, no matter what the potential public debate that may emerge." Moreover, Respondent #7 added, "...Marketing organizations have to be more systematic in establishing and communicating their brand values... They need to establish and continuously measure KPIs related to DEI, document and promote goals, and provide regular updates." Therefore, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #9) on how brands can go from performative allyship to actual allies. (White, 2020). The article suggests genuine allyship goes beyond discussions on diversity-related issues and involves honest and prepared action. (White, 2020).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **DEI-Based Brand Advocacy Expectations**. The concept of brand advocacy was mentioned by several interviewees during the discussion of DEI topics related to product/brand management. For example, Respondent #2 suggested, "... [my company] researches consumer expectations of brand advocacy. If the firms want to turn loyal customers into brand advocates, they need to respond to consumers' expectations of sincerity and authenticity in their brand's DEI commitments." To emphasize the notion of DEI-based brand advocacy in brand management, a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #8) is proposed as a learning opportunity exercise. This article covers the story of conservative consumers boycotting Ulta Beauty (a cosmetics brand) after Ulta Beauty published a podcast episode featuring Dylan Mulvaney, a transgender

TikTok influencer. Not backing down to anti-trans protests, Ulta Beauty responded to the protesters as follows: "... The premise of 'The Beauty Of...' is to feature conversations that widen the lens surrounding traditional beauty standards. We believe beauty is for everyone. And while we recognize some conversations, we will challenge perspectives and opinions, we believe constructive dialogue is one important way to move beauty forward. The intersectionality of gender identity is nuanced, something David and Dylan acknowledge themselves within the episode. Regardless of how someone identifies, they deserve our respect." (Rao, 2022).

Marketing Subject #6: Services Marketing

Services Marketing covers marketing concepts such as differentiation from products, service quality management, service failure, and recovery. Seven of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. Five of them mentioned the importance of providing equitable service opportunities to diverse populations. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this subject is **Providing Equitable Service Opportunities**. As mentioned by Respondent #1, "... US Department of Education's CAREA Act programs legally require non-public schools to provide equitable services to all students and teachers from all backgrounds. Service companies should take that as an example and extend equitable service delivery to all other service industries. Many restaurants and retail stores still treat their customers differently when a person of color enters their establishment." In line with this comment, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #1) on the opportunity to serve the emerging Black American consumer that currently accounts for a \$300 billion market size in the US (Chui et al., 2021). The article suggests that companies need to change existing practices that have damaged their relationship with Black consumers. For instance, retailers must address and eliminate the issue of "shopping while Black." Black patrons frequently experience poor customer service or face suspicion solely based on their race. They encounter distinct security measures, such as being followed by security guards or finding Black beauty products locked up while similar White products remain accessible. (see Dwyer, 2020). In a 2018 Gallup poll, 59 percent of Black respondents reported experiencing unfair treatment in stores. Attracting Black consumers presents a \$300 billion opportunity for companies worldwide. To seize this opportunity, companies need to critically examine their internal practices, ensuring they have the appropriate personnel, policies, and technology to effectively understand and serve this often-overlooked market (Chui et al., 2021).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Training Service Employees on Cultural Fluency**. Regarding this dyad, Respondent #11 suggested "... every person, regardless of their background, deserves to be served with respect and fairness. Therefore, the service organizations have to provide the necessary training to their frontline employees for them to treat their customers from different cultural backgrounds with respect and hold them accountable for their misbehaviors." In addition, Respondent #3 discussed the importance of not only training and cultural fluency of frontline customer service representatives but also management making strategic decisions based on customer backgrounds and expectations. To illustrate the importance of cultural fluency training in services marketing, a reading assignment is proposed by Respondent #11 (Hyun & Conant, 2019). This article offers various ways to improve cultural fluency and mentions being culturally fluent is essential for leaders to build trust, and it's been shown to boost financial performance, creativity, and productivity. To get the best from their teams, leaders need to tap into the diverse talents of all employees, not just those who share similar backgrounds (Hyun & Conant, 2019).

Marketing Subject #7: Pricing

This marketing subject covers concepts like identifying pricing objectives and constraints, break-even analysis, and various pricing strategies. Twelve of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. The respondents mainly focused on the notions of equitable pricing practices and accessible pricing methods when discussing DEI issues around pricing. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this topic is **Equitable Pricing Practices**. When asked about the impact of DEI on pricing efforts, Respondent #11 provided the following example:

I am on the board of a non-profit Girls In Tech, NYC chapter. I recently organized a Hackathon where participants were given 48 hours to form teams and leverage their experience in tech to develop a technical solution to support formerly incarcerated people re-entering the workforce. I went back and forth with the director of the chapter because he wanted the Hackathon to be a \$25 entrance fee- while

we are a non-profit and could use the money, I reminded him that \$25 for many people could be a barrier to participating. If we only put on events with a price tag of \$25, \$50, or \$100+, we are not serving the larger NYC community, which I believe should be a priority for us. The event was free, and people of many different backgrounds participated and had a great time.

In conjunction with this example, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #11) on a similar example regarding access to healthy food products (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2020). The online article suggests enhancing access to grocery products that promote healthy dietary patterns is a strategy for addressing health disparities and improving population health. The affordability of these foods also impacts access, with low-income groups often depending on inexpensive, easily accessible foods that typically lack nutrients. A report indicated that 23.5 million people live in low-income areas located more than a mile from a large grocery store or supermarket. People without a vehicle, convenient public transportation, or nearby food venues offering healthy options face limited access to nutritious foods (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2020). Dollar General exemplifies addressing food deserts by opening numerous stores in areas where residents live far from grocery stores. They have also begun introducing more Dollar General Market stores that provide healthier food options. However, these initiatives are still inadequate to fully resolve the issue of food deserts (Totty, 2023).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Accessible Pricing Methods**. The concept of accessible pricing was mentioned by several interviewees during the discussion of DEI topics related to pricing. For example, Respondent #17 suggested *“Accessible pricing methods promote economic inclusion, ensuring that marginalized communities can still access necessary goods and services. For instance, the “pay as you are able”, similar to sliding scale, gives the power to the purchaser to express what they deem the price to be for a service or product.”* To emphasize the importance of accessible pricing methods in Marketing, two reading assignments (provided by Respondent #20) is proposed as a learning opportunity exercise. The first article by Copperbeacon.org suggests the Rozsa Center for the Performing Arts at Michigan Technological University introduced a "Pay as You're Able" ticketing model for its 2023-2024 season to make live performances more accessible. This initiative allows attendees to choose their ticket price based on what they can afford, promoting inclusivity and reducing financial barriers to the arts (Copperbeacon.org, 2023). The second article exemplifies a failed attempt by Panera Bread Company at adopting an accessible pricing method. The fastcompany.com article discloses Panera's "pay-what-you-want" initiative, Panera Cares, aimed to provide meals to those in need while encouraging more affluent customers to pay extra. However, the experiment largely failed due to operational losses and customer discomfort. The concept struggled to balance the expectations of regular Panera patrons with the needs of those the initiative intended to help (Peters, 2018). Therefore, it is critical to convey to Marketing students the importance of balancing the value expectations of varying customer segments when adopting accessible pricing methods.

Marketing Subject #8: Marketing Channels

This marketing subject includes such marketing concepts as direct, dual, retail, wholesale, internet, and omnichannel distribution strategies, as well as buyer-supplier conflict and relationship management in those distribution channels. Thirteen of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. Several of them mentioned the importance of aligning supplier diversity with target market segments. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this subject is **Aligning Supplier Diversity with Target Markets**. As mentioned by Respondent #9, *“... our female clients control or influence over 65% of real estate investment decisions, but even today, less than 5 percent of design and construction spend goes to women-owned businesses. This creates a big disconnect between buyers' expectations and what is actually being built.”* In line with this comment, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a podcast listening assignment (provided by Respondent #2) on how promoting diversity is an economic empowerment model for Dentsu, a leading Marketing agency (McKenzie, 2022). The podcast covers an interview with Dentsu's Mark Prince talks about his leadership in the Economic Empowerment practice, highlighting Dentsu's commitment to transforming supplier diversity and its significance for the broader network of Black vendors (McKenzie, 2022).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Inclusiveness and Accessibility in Online Retailing**. Regarding this dyad, Respondent #10 suggested, *“...we have clients that have mental or physical disorders or maybe non-English speakers. It is critical for us to understand their preferred*

communication methods and implement them on our websites. So, we integrate a language translation tool on our websites as well as various accessibility tools like voice recognition, assistive touch, and color contrast options.” To illustrate the importance of inclusiveness and accessibility in e-commerce, a reading assignment is proposed by Respondent #10 (Csincsak, 2020). This article focuses on website design for a more inclusive user experience and concludes instead of designing around barriers that may exist in a product, UX designers should focus on eliminating as many obstacles as possible. This approach leads to more inclusive, functional designs that enhance user engagement and meet accessibility standards. (Csincsak, 2020).

Marketing Subject #9: Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

This marketing subject includes concepts like the IMC process, advertising, digital Marketing, sales promotions, public relations, and direct marketing. Sixteen of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. The respondents mainly focused on the notions of tokenism and bias in advertising as well as improving diversity in influencer Marketing. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this topic is **Tokenism and Bias in Advertising**. When asked about the impact of DEI on IMC efforts, Respondent #1 provided the following example: “... as I mentioned previously, authenticity is the key to customer perceptions of how committed and sincere a company comes across in their communications. When it comes to communications about commitment to DEI, tokenism is the enemy of authenticity.” Moreover, Respondent #10, who is a web Marketing manager, provided the following example: “Upper management went to a conference and there was an event around DEI. My CMO at the time sent me a photo of himself (a white man) shaking the hand of another white man, with the caption, “I want to thank Max and his team for all of his efforts regarding DEI.” – I couldn’t post two white men being congratulated on DEI, so I pushed back. We ended up having some other photos to share of the event [on our website] and tweaked the content.” In conjunction with this example, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a group of video and reading assignments (provided by Respondent #10), including examples like Pepsi Co.’s campaign featuring Kendall Jenner that trivialized social injustice and Proctor & Gamble’s 2018 TV commercial that highlighted the importance of mothers teaching household skills to their sons as well as their daughters, which was an improvement over their 2015 commercial that praised women for doing most of the household chores (Perrier, 2021).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Improving Diversity in Influencer Marketing**. The concept of diversity was mentioned by several interviewees during the discussion of DEI topics related to influencer marketing on digital platforms. For example, Respondent #12 suggested, “... there is a lack of diversity among the influencers selected by big brands as brand ambassadors. The brand managers are missing an opportunity to build an authentic relationship with more diverse customers that perhaps wear larger sizes and come from non-white households.” In addition, Respondent #6 suggested, “It is important to take a look at who is and is not represented in whom you follow on social media, who you read, where you get inspiration.” To emphasize the notion of diversity in influencer marketing, two reading assignments (provided by Respondent #12) are proposed as a learning opportunity exercise. These two online articles look at influencer marketing from two sides of the DEI coin. While the CNBC article focuses on the lack of diversity among influencers (Graham, 2019), the other focuses on the discrimination faced by diverse influencers (Geysler, 2022).

Marketing Subject #10: Personal Selling and Sales Management

This marketing subject includes Marketing concepts like personal selling process and sales management process. Twelve of the twenty respondents suggested a specific DEI topic to match this marketing subject. Several of them mentioned the importance of improving the salesforce cultural intelligence and forming diverse salesforces. Therefore, the first proposed DEI topic to cover under this subject is **Improving Salesperson Cultural Intelligence**. As mentioned by Respondent #7, “... we all have biases unconsciously or otherwise. Therefore, it is critical for companies to train the individuals in their organization who directly interact with customers who may come from different backgrounds. These training sessions must include sensitivity and basic understanding towards various cultural norms, behaviors, and customs.” Moreover, Respondent #8 added, “... authenticity behind your sales approach leads to better support by the customers; therefore, salespeople need to use their cultural intelligence skills to foster community support, which should trump driving revenue.” In line with these comments, the proposed learning opportunity exercise for this topic is a reading assignment (provided by Respondent #7)

on why cultural intelligence speaks volumes in international sales (Gershon, 2018). This article posted on LinkedIn.com suggests salespeople recognize their cultural biases and understand that their business methods are only effective within their territory. In international sales, it is important to follow the lead of a foreign client or partner or risk burning bridges and returning home unsuccessful (Gershon, 2018).

The second proposed DEI topic to match this marketing subject is **Forming a Diverse Salesforce**. In regards to this dyad, Respondent #4 suggested, "...requests for proposals from many entities now require that suppliers provide data and boilerplate in response to specific questions around the diversity of our sales team... we saw success in engaging with customers who would not even speak to sellers unless they have a Women in Tech message." To illustrate the importance of diversity in salesforce formation, a reading assignment is proposed by Respondent #4 (Forrester Consulting, 2021). This industry research report highlights the connection between diversity and successful sales teams, emphasizing that as the U.S. population diversifies, it is essential for sales teams to do the same. According to 60% of respondents, diverse sales teams achieve better outcomes, including higher conversion rates, sales attainment, and customer satisfaction. (Forrester Consulting, 2021).

DISCUSSION

Educator's Guide

The results of our study demonstrate a clear need for DEI in Marketing education and underscore the value of introducing these topics early in a student's academic journey. They reveal a nuanced understanding of diversity and inclusion and how they can effectively shape Marketing practices. Moreover, they shed light on how to successfully incorporate DEI into various marketing subjects to ensure inclusive and accessible product development, diverse teams, and culturally intelligent Marketing practices. It is with these insights in mind that we have developed a guide for educators, detailed in this section and outlined in Table 4. This guide aims to support educators in integrating DEI into their introductory Marketing courses, promoting transformative learning and preparing students for a diverse and inclusive Marketing landscape. As noted in the literature review section, not every phase is necessary, and critical reflection, disorienting dilemmas and trying on new roles are more critical than the others (Brock, 2010; Cox, 2021). However, following Mezirow's (1978,1994) steps of TLT, we provide recommendations for each phase:

- Disorienting Dilemma: Introduce thought-provoking materials that present diverse perspectives (Brock, 2010). Use readings, case studies, and real-world examples that challenge the prevailing norms in Marketing. See Table 4 for specific resources.
- Self-examination & Critical Assessment of Assumptions: Encourage reflection papers and journaling to facilitate self-examination on how they think and feel and the consequences of those (Cranton, 2002). Appendices B and C provide sample reflection prompts.
- Recognizing Shared Transformation: Engage students in group discussions to share their insights and understand that transformation is a collective journey.
- Exploration/Provisional Trying of New Roles and Planning a Course of Action: Use current business issues and case studies for students to try new roles (Table 4). Invite students into reflective discourse (Mezirow, 2000), where the focus is on looking for strengths in others' arguments and walking in the shoes of others to understand the reasons behind belief and build deeper understanding (Belenky & Stanton, 2000). Brookfield (1990) recommends asking students to identify their stance on an issue and then debate its opposite.
- Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills: Incorporate DEI materials from Table 4 into standard topics.
- Building Competence & Confidence: Assign projects where students can showcase their new perspectives and skills in Marketing. Assignments in Appendix D cater to this stage.
- Reintegration with New Perspectives: Engage in wrap-up discussions to consolidate the newly acquired perspectives. In addition, ask students to reflect on the transformative journey of the course and how students can carry these learnings into their future roles in Marketing.

Additional Considerations:

DEI content should augment, not overshadow, other crucial topics. It is possible to address DEI and other topics simultaneously, particularly where these topics intersect. For instance, when discussing diversity in target markets, educators could also incorporate discussions about environmental impact and sustainable practices.

This guide is designed to support educators in creating an environment conducive to transformative

learning. The suggested DEI materials and activities allow students to actively engage with and critically reflect on these crucial topics. However, these recommendations are not prescriptive and should be adapted based on educators' unique course structures, student needs, and learning outcomes.

The Role of Educators in Transformational Learning

In light of concerns about potential faculty biases influencing the classroom environment, it's imperative to understand the role of educators in the context of transformational learning. Mezirow (1994) emphasized that as educators, the ethical commitment is to help learners think independently rather than converting them to an instructor's viewpoint, thus avoiding indoctrination. This distinction underlines the necessity for educators to first undergo a transformational learning experience themselves so as to genuinely and authentically introduce such transformative experiences to students.

A significant aspect of this process is the educator adopting the role of a “collaborative learner” (Mezirow, 2000). By modeling reflective practices on their own assumptions and biases, educators can positively influence how learners form meaning. This also emphasizes the importance of an educator's self-awareness and introspection in their teaching practice. Being critically aware and reflective of one's assumptions can foster an environment that is conducive to transformational learning.

Furthermore, the comparison between Mezirow (1978) and Freire (1970), as described by Corazza et al. (2022), highlights the need for a shift from the traditional “banking model” of education. This model treats students as passive recipients of knowledge, leading to a significant power imbalance between educator and learner. To address this, both roles (teacher and student) must be simultaneously played, evolving into a problem-posing model of education that promotes mutual growth through dialogue.

To establish such a classroom environment conducive to transformative learning, certain conditions are paramount:

- **Supportive Relationships and Environment:** Recognizing the significance of fostering a space where learners can develop confidence and self-efficacy is crucial (Mezirow, 2000). Such a setting allows for the critical reflection of one's assumptions and encourages actions based on these reflective insights.
- **Opportunities for Dialogue:** Encouraging open and voluntary discourse, with guidance on engaging in such discussions, can assist in the transformative learning process (Mezirow, 1994, 1997; Taylor & Laros, 2014).
- **Critical Reflection:** Providing learners the chance to critically reflect, either independently or through group activities, enables deeper understanding and transformation (Mezirow, 2000). Cranton (2002) suggests that modeling critical self-reflection by openly questioning our own perspectives may be one of the most important ways we can encourage transformation.
- **Action Based on Reflection:** After reflection, learners should have the opportunity to act on their insights. This action can be as simple as a decision but is crucial for the transformational learning process. Educators can further support this by helping students overcome any situational or knowledge constraints and providing emotional support (Schnepfleitner & Ferreira, 2021).

In conclusion, to minimize faculty bias, it is imperative for educators to actively engage in their own transformational learning journey. This personal transformation equips them to foster a classroom environment where students can critically examine, reflect, and act on their insights. Through collaborative learning, educators and students can mutually grow, understanding various perspectives and working together to promote lasting change.

CONCLUSIONS

Understanding the needs and expectations of diverse groups of consumers and providing them with authentic value has become vitally important for marketers of today and the future. However, improvements in both education and workplace initiatives remain isolated, limited, slow, inconsistent, and not fulfilling objectives (Kipnis, 2021). As Schumacher (1997) said regarding the increase of ecological issues despite the rise in ecological education, “If more education is going to save us, it needs to be an education of a different kind.” Similarly, we believe if more DEI education is going to improve our condition, it needs to be of a different kind –a transformational kind. To educate students who will be ready for a society with increasing levels of diversity, it is imperative that we view DEI not just as an add-on or an elective class that is offered close to graduation. We need to offer students a new perspective - a new lens to view Marketing and business that is more inclusive. It is with this goal that in this paper, we presented a case for

transformational learning in an introductory-level Marketing course.

In executing this transformational learning approach, we adhere to the traditional methodology of an introductory Marketing course while concurrently infusing relevant DEI topics (Watson, 2022). This strategy serves dual purposes. First, it may alleviate some of the pressure educators face in delivering departmentally required materials. Second, by introducing students to the traditional perspective, along with alternative perspectives, it encourages critical reflection and introduces systems thinking. Such systematic thinking, which involves an understanding of the broader impacts of Marketing, is critical in dealing with societal issues (Kemper et al., 2022). By allowing them to become critical of their own and others' assumptions, it also helps students function as more autonomous, socially responsible thinkers (Mezirow, 1997).

The specific topics and resources to be integrated into our proposed DEI-integrated course are outlined in Table 4. In developing these resources, this study recognizes that Marketing is a system of three interconnected fields: research, teaching, and practice (Kipnis et al., 2021). To create systematic change, integrated efforts in all fields will be most effective. Therefore, the resources presented in Table 4 are created through in-depth interviews with industry professionals.

In addition to the DEI resources, we have included sample assignments in the appendices to support the achievement of transformational learning. These assignments are more than just practical examples or guidelines for educators aiming to integrate DEI topics into their curriculum. They are designed to facilitate key steps of transformational learning. They encourage students to engage in critical self-reflection and discourse, challenge their assumptions and perspectives, and promote perspective transformation through real-world application. These assignments not only contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment but also foster reflective learning, a fundamental component of the transformational learning experience we champion. Moreover, we also included an assessment plan for assurance of learning in accordance with AACSB (2020) requirements (see Appendix E).

Class discussions regarding DEI topics within a Marketing context could be controversial and uncomfortable for some instructors to incorporate into their introductory Marketing curriculum (Melaku & Beeman, 2020). To this end, we also reviewed the literature on handling uncomfortable conversations in a classroom. While the current research on this topic is very limited, two published articles were found to be resourceful. First, Kraatz et al. (2022) describe teaching approaches for various grade levels to facilitate effective controversial conversations. These approaches include creating a safe and trusting space for ideas to be shared openly, setting early ground rules for a respectful exchange of ideas, exemplifying openness and tolerance during uncomfortable discussions, and demonstrating knowledgeability on the discussed topic. Second, Sedlovskaya (2020) offers before, during, and end-of-class suggestions to lead uncomfortable class discussions. These suggestions include establishing a shared set of norms at the beginning of the class, acknowledging different viewpoints during the discussion, synthesizing key insights throughout the discussion, and demonstrating appreciation for a respectful conversation at the end of the class. Lastly, Vogelsang and McGee (2015) offer a handbook for instructors from all disciplines to facilitate difficult conversations in the classroom.

Limitations and Future Research

Our study uses a qualitative research method, mainly due to our aim of answering questions about experience, meaning, and perspective (Hammarberg, 2016). While this provided in-depth insights, it limits the generalizability of our findings.

Regarding our sampling method, we employed purposive sampling to conduct expert interviews. Our recruitment strategy initially involved reaching out to professionals in our network, primarily those with known DEI knowledge. This method, however, might not capture the full spectrum of perspectives on DEI in Marketing, particularly from professionals with limited DEI exposure, educators, students, or others. This limitation underlines the need for further research that includes a wider range of stakeholders such as HR professionals, alumni, administrators, and students. In addition, we tried to keep our listed resources within reason for the purpose of conciseness and manageability within a semester. However, these resources are in no way exhaustive. We invite future educators to expand upon these in order to continue creating a rich repository that is inclusive of all aspects of DEI, including, but not limited to race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socioeconomic status, physical and cognitive abilities, and more.

We primarily focused on an introductory Marketing class to introduce DEI principles early in the Marketing education curriculum. However, this approach could be expanded to other Marketing courses,

such as consumer behavior, advertising, and professional sales, providing additional room for future research. Moreover, we acknowledge that our study's geographical focus is primarily limited to the United States. As highlighted in a recommended reading resource (Brodzik et al., 2021) provided by our interviewees, DEI-related Marketing and branding issues vary across international markets. Therefore, we suggest that future researchers consider exploring DEI topics from a broader global perspective.

Our current approach advocates for the integration of DEI principles through weekly repetition, which is supported by literature suggesting that repeated engagement with course materials enhances learning and retention (Blair, 2014; Cadotte & MacGuire, 2013). This pedagogical strategy is bolstered by active learning techniques, as demonstrated by Lee Saber (2020), where student-generated and peer-critiqued tasks have shown to optimize learning outcomes. However, our research stops short of empirically comparing this method against the alternative of addressing DEI in a singular, dedicated chapter.

Future studies should investigate these two strategies to determine which is more effective in cultivating DEI competencies among Marketing students. Such research could explore how the depth and consistency of DEI knowledge acquired through repetitive exposure compares to the impact of a concentrated approach. The insights from this research could significantly inform pedagogical practices, guiding educators on the most impactful methods for embedding DEI into Marketing education."

In our endeavor to facilitate transformational learning experiences for students, we, as faculty, are also transforming our own views and practices (Collay, 2017). Transformation creates discomfort (Cranton, 2002). We have pointed out several strategies to deal with uncomfortable situations in the classroom, but there is space for more comprehensive solutions in future work.

Crucially, integrating DEI into Marketing education not only enhances the immediate learning environment but also sets the stage for students' future professional success. Developing a nuanced understanding of DEI from the outset of their academic journey can position students to thrive in diverse workplace settings and meet the evolving demands of the Marketing profession. Future research should aim to empirically assess how the attainment of DEI learning outcomes contributes to student career success, potentially guiding the refinement of educational strategies and curricula to better prepare students for the challenges of the Marketing landscape.

Ultimately, transforming education involves exploring diverse perspectives. Our research marks a beginning in this direction, and we anticipate future studies will continue expanding this important discourse and practice, thereby creating a more inclusive introductory Marketing education experience.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: List of Principles of Marketing Textbooks Reviewed

Textbook Title	Edition	Authors	Publisher
Principles of Marketing	17th	Phillip Kotler and Gary Armstrong	Pearson
Marketing: An Introduction	15th	Gary Armstrong and Philip Kotler	Pearson
Basic Marketing	22nd	William D. Perreault Jr., Joseph P. Cannon, and E. Jerome McCarthy	McGraw-Hill
Essentials of Marketing	18th	William D. Perreault Jr. and Joseph P. Cannon	McGraw-Hill
Marketing	16th	Roger Kerin and Steven Hartley	McGraw-Hill
M: Marketing	8th	Dhruv Grewal and Michael Levy	McGraw-Hill
Marketing: Real People, Real Choices	10th	Michael R. Solomon, Greg W. Marshall, and Elnora W. Stuart	Pearson
Principles of Marketing	6th	John F. Tanner Jr. and Mary Anne Raymond	FlatWorld
MARKETING	13th	Charles W. Lamb, Joe F. Hair, Carl McDaniel	Cengage Learning
Marketing	20th	William M. Pride, O. C. Ferrell	Cengage Learning
Marketing	4th	George Deitz, John Mello and Shane Hunt	McGraw-Hill

Appendix B: Sample Reflection Paper Assignment

Title: Personal Reflection on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Marketing

Objective: Encourage students to engage in critical self-reflection and explore alternative viewpoints related to DEI in the context of Marketing.

Instructions:

1. Begin by reflecting on your own experiences and beliefs about diversity, equity, and inclusion within the field of Marketing. Consider any biases or assumptions you may hold and how they may impact your understanding of Marketing practices.
2. Choose one specific Marketing topic or case study that was discussed in the course, which involves DEI considerations. Describe the topic or case study and explain its relevance to DEI.
3. Analyze the Marketing topic or case study from different perspectives, including those of various cultural, social, or marginalized groups. How might these groups perceive or be affected by the Marketing practices or strategies discussed?
4. Critically reflect on the assumptions and beliefs you held before engaging with the chosen topic or case study. How have your perspectives changed or evolved after exploring alternative viewpoints? What new insights have you gained?
5. Identify potential ways to incorporate the new perspectives and insights into your future Marketing practices or decision-making. Discuss how adopting a more inclusive approach to Marketing can benefit both businesses and consumers.
6. Conclude with a reflection on the transformational learning process and the potential impact of this experience on your personal and professional growth.

Guidelines:

- The reflection paper should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words.
- Use proper citations for any sources or references used in your analysis.
- Ensure that your reflection is well-organized, with clear and concise language.
- Focus on demonstrating a deep understanding of DEI and the transformational learning process, as well as a willingness to engage with alternative perspectives.

Appendix C: Reflective Journal Assignment

For this assignment, students will maintain a weekly journal, reflecting on their learning journey in this course. Each journal entry should include:

- A brief summary of the week's topic(s) and key learning points.
- Personal reflections on how the week's topic(s) have challenged or affirmed their existing perspectives and assumptions about Marketing, DEI, and society at large.
- Ideas or strategies for how they can apply what they've learned to their personal or professional lives.

Examples of application focused questions:

1. **Introduction to Inclusive Marketing:** Write a reflection paper on the McKinsey & Company article, addressing your initial understanding of inclusive Marketing and any assumptions you may hold.
2. **Creating Value for Diverse Customers:** After the MLB case study, students should prepare a brief Marketing proposal for a hypothetical heritage celebration night for a group of their choice.
3. **Diversity as a Function of Cultures/Subcultures:** Students should write a reflection on their perceptions of multicultural consumers and how these perceptions could influence their Marketing strategies.
4. **Consumer Perceptions of Authentic DEI Efforts:** Prepare a case analysis on a company's DEI Marketing effort, critically evaluating its authenticity.
5. **Intersectionality in Segmentation and Targeting:** Create a Marketing proposal targeting an intersectional demographic, explaining your choices.
6. **Bias in Forming Target Segments:** Reflect on the reading and discuss potential biases in Marketing segmentation. How can marketers mitigate these biases?
7. **Inclusivity in Product Development Research and Testing:** Write a paper proposing how a

- hypothetical product can be developed inclusively, using Microsoft's approach as inspiration.
8. **Diversity of New Product Development Teams:** Reflect on the role of team diversity in product development and discuss how diverse teams might affect the final product.
 9. **Aligning Brand Values with Diversity and Inclusion:** Analyze a brand of your choice, discussing whether its values align with diversity and inclusion.
 10. **DEI-Based Brand Advocacy Expectations:** Case analysis on the Ulta Beauty incident. How could they have better met DEI advocacy expectations?
 11. **Providing Equitable Service Opportunities:** Propose a strategy for a service business to improve its equity in service opportunities.
 12. **Training Service Employees on Cultural Fluency:** Develop a brief training program outline for service employees to improve their cultural fluency.
 13. **Equitable Pricing Practices:** Reflect on equitable pricing practices and propose a hypothetical product's pricing strategy that considers equity.
 14. **Bias on Buying Power of Diverse Consumer Groups:** Reflect on the webinar and discuss how bias on buying power can affect Marketing practices.
 15. **Aligning Supplier Diversity with Target Markets:** Reflect on the podcast and propose a strategy for a company to improve its supplier diversity.
 16. **Inclusiveness and Accessibility in Online Retailing:** Design a plan for an online retailer to enhance its inclusivity and accessibility.
 17. **Avoiding Tokenism and Bias in Advertising:** Reflect on the readings and videos, then create a mock-up advertisement for a product that avoids tokenism and bias.
 18. **Improving Diversity in Influencer Marketing:** Critically evaluate a recent influencer Marketing campaign for its diversity, inclusivity, and equity.
 19. **Improving Salesperson Cultural Intelligence:** Develop a brief training program outline for salespeople to improve their cultural intelligence.
 20. **Forming A Diverse Salesforce:** Write a paper on the importance of salesforce diversity and propose a hiring strategy to foster diversity.

Appendix D: Other Assignment Options

A: Analyzing DEI in Current Marketing Practices

This assignment involves students analyzing a Marketing campaign of their choice, focusing specifically on its DEI approach. Each student will write a report addressing the following:

- A brief overview of the Marketing campaign.
- A critical analysis of how DEI is incorporated into the campaign.
- Personal reflections on what the campaign did well and how it could improve in terms of DEI.
- Suggestions for alternative strategies or approaches that could make the campaign more inclusive.

B: DEI Marketing Strategy for a Brand

Students are tasked with proposing a DEI Marketing strategy for a real or hypothetical product/service. The strategy should address the following aspects:

- A description of the product and its target market, incorporating intersectionality in segmentation and targeting.
- Inclusivity considerations for the product development process and brand management.
- Equitable pricing practices and a Marketing channel strategy aligned with the target market.
- An integrated Marketing communication plan that avoids tokenism and bias.
- A salesforce strategy that encourages diversity and a service strategy that ensures equity.

C: End-of-Semester Project: Inclusive Marketing Plan

The end-of-semester project requires students to develop an inclusive Marketing plan for a product or

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service. The plan should demonstrate an integrated understanding of inclusive Marketing principles as applied to a real-world context. Elements to be included are:

- A detailed description of the product/service and its necessity in the current market.
- Definition of the target audience using principles of intersectionality.
- Inclusivity in the product development process and brand management.
- Development of equitable pricing practices and a channel strategy that aligns with the target audience.
- Development of an integrated Marketing communication plan that avoids tokenism and bias.
- A salesforce strategy that encourages diversity and a service strategy that ensures equity.

Appendix E: Assurance of Learning Assessment Plan

The objective of this pre and post-test assessment plan is to evaluate business students' understanding and application of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) topics as they pertain to Principles of Marketing.

Assessment Methods:

1. Pre-Test:
 - Before starting the DEI topic assignments in the course, students will complete a pre-test to assess their baseline knowledge and awareness of DEI concepts in the context of Marketing.
 - The pre-test will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions covering key DEI topics listed in Table 4.
2. Post-Test:
 - At the end of the course, students will complete a post-test to assess their knowledge retention and understanding of DEI topics covered throughout the semester.
 - The post-test will include similar formats and questions as the pre-test, allowing for a comparison of students' pre- and post-course understanding of DEI concepts in Marketing.

Assessment Criteria:

1. Understanding of DEI concepts in Marketing.
2. Ability to apply DEI principles to Marketing strategies and decision-making.
3. Improvement in knowledge and comprehension of DEI topics from pre-test to post-test.

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