



Society for the Teaching of Psychology (APA Division 2)
OFFICE OF TEACHING RESOURCES IN PSYCHOLOGY (OTRP)
Department of General Academics, Texas A&M University at Galveston, P. O. Box 1675, Galveston, TX 77553

UNDERSTANDING AND EXPANDING MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE IN TEACHING: A FACULTY GUIDE

Linh Nguyen Littleford, Ball State University

Overview

In this guide, I address some of the most commonly asked questions about diversity and teaching and discuss why it is vital that psychology instructors be effective with culturally diverse students. I concentrate on the three components of instructional proficiency needed to achieve multicultural competence: knowledge about culturally diverse students' styles of learning and socio-cultural experiences; awareness of affective, cognitive, and behavioral reactions to culturally diverse students; and culturally inclusive teaching skills. I offer specific, practical skills relevant to cultural knowledge and self-awareness, together with a list of selected resources.

Outline of Contents

- Introduction
- Common Questions About Multicultural Competence in Teaching
- Gaining Knowledge About Socio-cultural Experiences
 - Race and Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Sexual Identity
 - Disability
 - Age
 - Religion
 - Migration Status and Language
 - Socioeconomic Status
- Enhancing Self-Awareness
 - Emotional Reactions
 - Cognitive Reactions
 - Behavioral Reactions
- Conclusion and Selected Resources
- References

Author contact information: Linh Nguyen Littleford, Department of Psychological Science, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306
(lnlittleford@bsu.edu)

Copyright 2005 by Linh Nguyen Littleford. All rights reserved. You may reproduce multiple copies of this material for your own personal use, including use in your classes and/or sharing with individual colleagues as long as the authors' names and institutions and the Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology heading or other identifying information appear on the copies document. No other permission is implied or granted to print, copy, reproduce, or distribute additional copies of this material. Anyone who wishes to produce copies for purposes other than those specified above must obtain the permission of the authors.

Portions of this resource have been published as an online book chapter, under the title "Multicultural Competence in Teaching: A Guide for Graduate and Teaching Assistants" on the Ball State University (BSU) graduate school website (<http://www.bsu.edu/gradschool/traditions>). This resource, posted with permission from the BSU graduate school, was adapted from the on-line book chapter to apply to psychology faculty members at universities across the U.S. The author thanks Mary E. Kite for insightful comments and valuable suggestions on an earlier version of this work.

Introduction

The number of people enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States is increasing dramatically. Educational Testing Service (ETS, 2000) projected that between 1995 and 2015, universities and colleges will see an additional 2.6 million students. These students will be more diverse with respect to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, disability, age, religion, migration status, acculturation, socioeconomic class, and native language. The greatest increase (80%) will be of minority and older students (31%). In addition, by 2015, racial/ethnic minority students will comprise the numerical majority in several states, including the District of Columbia, Hawaii, California, and New Mexico. Faculty members can help all students thrive in an increasingly multicultural country and in a global world by becoming culturally competent in their instruction.

This resource focuses specifically on how psychology instructors can be more inclusive when they teach and interact with culturally diverse students. Faculty should engage in culturally inclusive teaching practices even when they believe that they teach culturally homogeneous classrooms. This is because not all cultural statuses are apparent, as will be discussed later. Further, culturally inclusive instruction benefits all students [not just cultural minorities]. Instructors who follow these suggestions convey that differences in ideas, in worldviews, and differences in general are appreciated and supported in their classrooms. As a result of showing respect to the needs of culturally diverse students, faculty may find that they are indirectly educating all of their students about diversity. While I strongly suggest that instructors integrate multicultural contents into their courses, this resource does not focus on curriculum issues because many resources on this topic already exist. Instructors interested in directly incorporating diversity content into their curriculum may find useful the selected resources shown in the Appendix. In particular, the Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology (OTRP) has many excellent on-line resources that cover a range of diversity-related issues including incorporating genocide, ethnopolitical conflict, and human rights issues into the psychology curriculum; including gay, lesbian, and bisexual students on campus; and informational resources for teaching cross-cultural issues in psychology.

Common Questions About Multicultural Competence in Teaching

Before outlining specific recommendations for gaining multicultural competence in teaching, I will address some of the most commonly asked questions about this topic.

Question 1: Why is achieving multicultural competence in teaching important?

A culturally inclusive college classroom environment can be beneficial to all students and instructors. The diversity of cultures represented by college students enriches the learning environment for all students. Students not only learn from their instructors and from the course materials, they learn from each other. Critical thinking is one of the most valued skills instructors strive to develop in their students. Students will be more likely to critically examine multiple sources of knowledge and to evaluate their own worldviews when multiple perspectives are represented in a classroom. Moreover, both instructors and students who have positive intercultural contacts may increase their appreciation for diverse cultures. Finally, students who have had positive intercultural contacts are more physically healthy, are more open to diversity of ideas, exhibit less prejudice, and are better prepared to be productive, effective citizens of the global world (Littleford & Wright, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Wright & Littleford, 2002).

Question 2: Aren't "multicultural competence" and "diversity" really about giving advantages to some students over others? Isn't this differential treatment unfair?

Treating all students the same does not mean that all students are being treated equally or fairly. Being culturally competent in teaching does not require instructors to make excuses or create exceptions for students who have different learning needs. According to Noble and Mullins (1999) fairness means instructors need to ensure that all students learn and are not merely exposed to the same teaching methods. Thus, fair and culturally-competent instructors do not treat students as if they all have the same learning styles, the same strengths, and the same weaknesses because doing so impedes some students' learning. Instead, culturally-competent teachers vary their instructional methods to impart knowledge, not only to ensure that students with diverse learning styles will have the opportunity to learn, but also to encourage students to expand their less preferred learning styles (McClanaghan, 2000).

Question 3: Won't faculty be lowering their academic standards and reducing educational rigor if they alter instructional methods for culturally diverse students?

Rather than focusing on the final outcome (e.g., grades), instructors should attend to the process of learning (Noble & Mullins, 1999). For example, if the instructors' goal is to evaluate students' learning, they should create opportunities for students of diverse learning styles to demonstrate their abilities and acquired knowledge. Instructors should not assume that students are not learning, or are incapable of learning, just because their methods of demonstrating that knowledge are not consistent with the faculty member's assessment approaches. To increase opportunities for diverse students to express their knowledge and learning, instructors need to use multiple methods of assessment (e.g., written exams, oral exams, group projects, individual projects, content-focused, and application-focused).

Question 4: How are faculty expected to learn about all the cultural differences that exist? Also, aren't faculty members stereotyping students if they focus on students' cultural background?

First, although it is important to learn about as many cultural groups' experiences and values as possible, faculty should also remember that they cannot know all groups' histories. Second, it is important to keep in mind that within the same cultural group, there may be great individual differences, sometimes greater than the differences that exist between groups. Third, students may have multiple identities (e.g., a student who is older, female, lesbian, and European American). Thus, it is an over-simplification for faculty to see students through only one cultural lens. Fourth, although some students' minority statuses are apparent, others may not be readily observable. Instructors should assume that all cultures are represented in their classrooms and be professional and respectful of all cultures.

It can be difficult to balance between acknowledging the power of culture and recognizing individual differences. For example, Tweed and Lehman (2002) stated that some people from Western cultures may approach learning as an opportunity to develop skills to assert one's views of the truth, to question authority, to express one's views and to support one's opinions. However, some people from Eastern cultures may value learning that is more respectful, deferring to the expertise of instructors and not questioning information from knowledgeable sources because doing so would show disrespect. Gurung (2003) disagreed with Tweed and Lehman's emphasis on between rather than within cultural group differences. Gurung proposed that these two approaches to learning would be better conceptualized as due to individual differences rather than to cultural group differences. These disagreements are consistent with the challenge that instructors often face. On the one hand, instructors want to treat their students as individuals. However, instructors do not wish to underestimate the influence that students' cultural background and cultured-based experiences have on their learning. While there are no simple solutions to this dilemma, the recommendations throughout this resource provide some guidance.

To achieve multicultural competence, instructors need to be proficient in the following: First, faculty members need to increase their knowledge about culturally diverse students' socio-cultural experiences and the impact these experiences have on learning. Second, faculty members need to enhance their self-awareness. They should reflect on their own affective, cognitive, and behavioral reactions to culturally diverse students. Finally, faculty members need to be able to practice culturally inclusive teaching skills. Culturally inclusive teaching skills are behaviors that are informed by an instructor's cultural knowledge and self-awareness. As I discuss the cultural knowledge and self-awareness components, I will specifically outline relevant skills in which culturally competent instructors should engage.

Gaining Knowledge About Socio-cultural Experiences

To gain multicultural competence in teaching, faculty need to acquire knowledge about the socio-cultural experiences of different cultural groups that may influence students' learning. Faculty members need to remember that not all students have identical experiences purely because they may be members from the same cultural group. Faculty should obtain information about the specific student's cultural background and experiences so that they have some context to understand that student's approach to learning.

Most cultural minority students experience similar adjustments as those experienced by the cultural majority students, including adjusting to college schedule, financial stress, and loneliness. College age students need to adjust to being more independent, moving away from home, losing the friendships and connections from high school, and homesickness (Chism, Cano, & Pruitt, 1989). In addition, some cultural minority students may face other challenges that cultural dominant students may not. For example, there is ample research showing that if people are, or perceive that they are, one of the few members from their cultural groups, their performance may be negatively affected due to "stereotype threat" (Steele, 1997) or performance monitoring (Saenz, 1994). Steele explained that visible cultural minorities (e.g., African Americans and women) experiences stereotype threat when they become concerned that their own performance would fulfill the negative stereotypes that others have of their cultural group. This anxiety causes them to perform less well on cognitive tasks.

To reduce stereotype threat, instructors should provide students with non-judgmental feedback based on high expectations while acknowledging and supporting students' ability to meet these standards (Cohen, Steele, & Ross, 1999). In addition, faculty should treat students as individuals, not as representatives of their group. Instructors should try to ensure that students do not perceive that their individual performance (positive and negative) reflect on their groups.

Saenz (1994) showed that even individuals whose minority memberships are not visually apparent experience on-going difficulties performing cognitive tasks when they are aware of their token status. Thus, perceiving oneself to be the only student with a hidden disability or being the only ethnic minority, the only nontraditional student, the only student with a physical disability, and so forth, may impede one's learning. Consequently, these cultural minorities' academic performance may underestimate, perhaps grossly, their actual abilities. Many cultural minority students at traditional colleges and universities are expected to learn in an environment where they are the only one or one of the few members from their cultural group. Being aware of these types of experiences and how students cope can help instructors understand some of the challenges that students may face that could affect their academic performance and may influence whether they persist and graduate (Chism et al., 1989). A few of the experiences associated with cultural membership that some students may face on a regular basis are discussed next.

Race and Ethnicity

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2000a), of the more than 15 million students enrolled in Title IV institutions in the U.S. in 2000, 26.9% were racial/ethnic minorities (11.0% African American, 5.9% Asian/Pacific Islander American, 9.1% Hispanic/Latino American, 0.9% Native American students). Currently, many Hispanic/Latino and Asian students are first or second generation Americans, which means that they probably have experienced different cultural upbringings than students whose families have been in the U.S. for many generations. In addition, English may not be the first or only language that some cultural minorities speak. Ethnic minority students may face other challenges such as incongruity between their own cultural values and those of the university environment, lack of cultural support, feelings of isolation, stereotyping, and prejudice from students, staff, faculty, police, and local residents, particularly if students appear to be non-European Americans (Littleford & Wright, 1998).

Just as not all cultural minority students experience these challenges to the same degree, the ways in which they address them also vary. Some students may minimize their personal experiences with differential treatment to maintain perceived control and to protect their self-esteem (Taylor, Wright, Moghaddan, & Lalonde, 1990). They may attribute feedback in ambiguous situations to their visible cultural minority statuses (Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991). However, this strategy results in discounting both positive and negative feedback and denies students the opportunity to use constructive feedback for improvement. Other students may cope by psychologically disengaging their self-esteem from their academic performance (Steele, 1997). However, Steele argued that this protection of self-esteem may come at significant costs for students because the results are the devaluing of, disinterest in, and minimal effort toward academics.

Students who acknowledge that discriminations exist may adopt a self-protective, mistrustful, and hypervigilant stance (Newhill, 1990). However, accepting that others treat them differently because of cultural membership may have negative effects including lack of perceived control (Crocker et al., 1991), increased feelings of hopelessness and depression, and poorer physical health (Littleford & Wright, 1998).

Gender

According to NCES (2000a), of the students enrolled in colleges and universities in the U.S., 56.3% were females and 43.7% were males. While females are the numerical majority at most postsecondary institutions in the U.S., they generally face more challenges and receive more negative and differential treatments than do males. Summarizing their own previous work, Sadker and Sadker (1992), reported that instructors' behaviors foster inequitable participation in their classes. Instructors are more likely to call on European American male students than minority males or European American females to participate in class discussions. Males are eight times more likely than females to express their views without raising their hands or obtaining permission before speaking. However, instructors overlook rule violations more often when committed by male students than by female students. Consequently, female and ethnic minority students tend to take less active roles in these intellectual exchanges than do male students.

Instructors should increase their wait time after asking questions and should make a conscious effort to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate in class. Instructors should try to not always call on students who raise their hands first. Students whose native language is not English or students who may need to have a period of silence before interjecting their comments (to ensure that they do not interrupt others) will appreciate the longer wait time

(Chan, 2003). Instructors may want to have students first write their responses and then verbally provide the answers.

Sexual Identity

Smith and Gates (2001) reported that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) individuals make up between 4% and 5% of the U.S. population. In addition, virtually all counties (99.3%) in the U.S. have GLBT residents. For many reasons, some students may not want to disclose their sexual identity. However, having a cultural identity that is not visually apparent can place GLBT students at higher risk for isolation because culturally similar peers may not know about their shared cultural membership and thus be unaware of the potential for social support.

Most often, students' sexual identities are not visibly identifiable. Faculty should not assume that their students are of a certain sexual identity. For example, when discussing issues associated with attraction, dating, or romantic relationships, instructors should make sure that they include GLBT couples as part of the dialogue. In addition, instructors should be conscious of the impact that their implicit assumptions and their seemingly harmless questions about romantic relationships might have on their students. For example, asking students to talk about their girlfriends or boyfriends may force GLBT students to choose between disclosing and hiding their sexual identity.

Disability

During the 1995-1996 academic year, 6% of undergraduate students were reported to have some form of disability and 98% of public universities reported enrolling students with disabilities (NCES, 2000b). Learning disabilities, which include Attention Deficit Disorder and traumatic brain disorder, were the most commonly reported type of disability. Students with learning disabilities may have difficulties in listening, thinking, speaking, writing, reading, or processing information, and may experience difficulties in more than one area. However, because most of these students are just as intelligent as students without learning disabilities, most should be able to perform well academically if they are provided the appropriate opportunities to learn. Students who have been formally diagnosed may choose not to seek services from their institutions' disabilities office or to inform their instructors. Others may be unaware that they have a learning disability and struggle academically (Chism et al., 1989). It is vital to remember that not all disabilities are observable. Some students also experience significant emotional problems that interfere with their performance, including relationship problems, mood disorders, and anxiety disorders. These students may have difficulties sleeping, concentrating, and maintaining high levels of energy, which may negatively affect their ability to perform well in their coursework.

Although psychology professors may be more able than faculty members in other disciplines to recognize students' symptoms of learning disabilities or mental distress, they should not attempt to diagnose or treat students' problems. Instead, faculty should refer students to the appropriate offices on their campuses for such services. In addition, instructors should make sure that they state verbally in class, at the beginning of the semester, and include in their syllabi a version of the following statement: "If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are..." Many universities and colleges require such a statement to be part of the course syllabus, and provide the language that must be used. Faculty should check with their administration for details and

should encourage students to first meet with the appropriate campus office for students with disabilities to obtain documentation to receive appropriate accommodations.

Age

During the 1999-2000 academic year, about 43% of undergraduates at postsecondary institutions were 24 years of age or older, with the majority working while enrolled in school (82%, Berker & Horn, 2003). Some of the much older students may also experience age-related problems such as poorer eyesight or hearing problems. Older students may expect instructors to respect their experiences and thus to teach material that is consistent with their knowledge of the world. Older students may be more conscientious about their learning experience. They may be quite anxious about their abilities, whether they can keep up with the younger students in class (Chism et al., 1989). They also have a lot of life experiences from which to draw and contribute to the learning environment.

If instructors require group projects they should remember that some students may not live on campus and meeting group members in the evening can be difficult for these students. It may be helpful to assign students to groups to ensure cultural diversity in the group and to grade based on equal contribution of every member. In addition, instructors should consider appointing each student with a different learning component. Studies have shown that having each group member be responsible for a specific part of the assignment results in reduced biases and increased positive intercultural interactions (Aronson, 2002).

Religion

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2003), 13% of adult Americans identify themselves as Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, or members of other non-Christian religions. For some students, religious beliefs and practices are integral to their identity. There are students whose holidays and cultures may not be known, let alone celebrated, by members of the dominant group. Instructors are encouraged to attempt to reschedule assignments or examinations to allow students who wish to observe other cultural or religious holy days that conflict with their class schedules. Students should be encouraged to share these plans ahead of time. Faculty should check with their administration because this practice may be mandated at their institutions, particularly at public institutions.

Migration Status and Language

In 2000, 3.4% of the undergraduate students in the U.S. were nonresident aliens (NCES, 2000a). These students may have difficulties adjusting to being far from home and not having family and peer support within close proximity. International students may be further challenged by language proficiency, climate, food, and other cultural differences. For example, many international students may have spent many years learning to become proficient at reading and writing in English. However, while at the university, they will be expected to understand the quick pace of native English speakers' speech and to express themselves verbally. Further, there will be limited opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings in their native languages. This may cause a lot of frustration and may also undermine their confidence in their ability to perform academically.

Faculty should encourage students to speak to them privately about their level of understanding of the course material. Instructors should consider allowing students to use a tape recorder, a dictionary, or other materials that would help students better understand the material. Instructors also may consider giving all students some time in class to write their thoughts, comments, or questions. Faculty may either read the students' comments or ask students to

read their own written responses. Doing so allows students time to formulate and articulate their ideas and conveys to all students that their thoughts and contributions to the class are valued.

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Some students are first-generation college students. They may not be able to turn to their families for emotional or financial support. First-generation college students may not be able to draw support from family members because these relatives have never been in college. Financial stress may be an additional burden. Concerns about whether they are prepared or truly belong in college may be more burdensome than for students from families with more direct experiences with college. These may be quite detrimental to academic performance. For example, Croizet and Claire (1998) found that lower SES students who were concerned that their performance would confirm the expectations that others have about their cultural group performed less well on cognitive tasks.

Faculty should consider placing a copy of the textbook and other reading materials on reserve at the library. This will enable students who cannot afford to purchase all of their textbooks to have access to written course materials. In addition, instructors should be aware of their own and their students' often erroneous assumptions about individuals from lower SES.

Enhancing Self-Awareness

Although having knowledge about cultural minority students' experiences is important, faculty also need to be aware of their own emotional, cognitive, and behavioral reactions to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Emotional Reactions

Faculty should try to be in tune with and acknowledge the emotional reactions they experience when they interact with cultural minority students. Several studies have shown that some individuals who interact with the culturally different experience anxiety and discomfort (e.g., Littleford, Wright, & Sayoc-Parial, 2005; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). The anxiety stems from people's expectations of negative consequences such as feelings of embarrassment, exploitation by outgroup members, rejection, or negative evaluations. How uncomfortable or anxious people feel depends on previous intergroup contact, intergroup stereotypes, intergroup identity, intergroup conflict, and status difference (e.g., Stephan & Stephan, 1985; Stephan et al., 2002). If they have to interact, these individuals may be extremely nice or overtly negative in an effort to compensate for their emotional discomfort (Littleford et al., 2005; Stephan & Stephan, 1985).

Although most U.S. Americans do not openly express their prejudices, Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) suggested that being socialized in a society with a long history of racial bias may cause some individuals to experience negative feelings when they interact with people who are culturally different. However, Americans also have been raised to believe that all should be treated fairly and thus they should not discriminate (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). The conflict between negative feelings and egalitarian ideals, coupled with the tendency to seek confirmations of their egalitarian self concepts, may result in a lack of awareness of instances in which individuals do engage in unfair treatment of those who are culturally different. Faculty members need to be made aware that they may experience some level of anxiety when they interact with culturally diverse students. However, faculty should remember that these feelings do not necessarily indicate that they are prejudiced. Instructors are encouraged to look for opportunities to engage in interactions with culturally

diverse individuals since more intercultural interactions may lead to more comfortable and genuinely positive feelings.

Cognitive Reactions

Regardless of whether people personally endorse them, they are very aware of the stereotypes that are associated with different cultural groups (Devine & Elliot, 1995). In addition, when individuals interact with the culturally diverse, these stereotypes are automatically activated. When they are tired or lack cognitive energy to suppress these stereotypes, the activated stereotypes can sometimes influence the individuals' behaviors. Faculty are encouraged to examine the stereotypes that they have been taught about the culturally diverse and to explore the extent to which these internalized stereotypes might influence their interactions with culturally diverse students.

Another cognitive reaction that instructors need to be aware of is the tendency to commit the fundamental attribution error (Ross & Nisbett, 1991), whereby they erroneously blame students' personality, internal traits, or lack of motivation for poor performance while discounting the influence of external factors such as teaching style, difficult content, and negative socio-cultural experiences. This bias may become even stronger when faculty members are exposed to a few cultural minority students who excel. Ho, Sanbonmatsu, and Akimoto (2002) reported that people who were exposed to cultural minority individuals who performed well were more likely to believe that other minorities have or have had the same opportunities to succeed and thus should all be able to perform just as well as the "model minorities."

Behavioral Reactions

Faculty may at times treat culturally diverse students differently without being conscious of it. For example, Sadker and Sadker (1992) reported that most instructors were quite surprised when shown videotapes of themselves providing more attention and opportunities to students based on race and gender. Instructors need to examine their own behaviors, and more importantly, have others evaluate their behaviors when they interact with cultural minorities.

Instructors may unconsciously engage in the self-fulfilling prophecy when interacting with their students. In other words, faculty may have expectations regarding students' abilities that may or not be accurate. Although not always within their awareness, instructors' behaviors toward students are influenced by these assumptions. The instructors' behaviors then cause students to act in ways that are consistent with the instructors' original expectations. For example, instructors may expect international students to be quiet and passive learners. Because of this expectation, instructors may not engage international students in class discussions. Consequently, because they were not given the opportunity to participate, these international students do not speak in class.

Faculty should monitor for possible misinterpretations of nonverbal behaviors. For example, LaFrance and Mayo (1976) found that African Americans made more eye contact when speaking but not when listening, whereas European Americans engaged in the opposite pattern. In addition, some people may nod or use verbal utterances to indicate that they are listening while others may only maintain eye contact to convey their attentiveness (Feldman & Saletsky, 1986; Fugita, Wexley, & Hillery, 1974). In addition, to show respect, members from some cultural groups (e.g., European Americans) may maintain eye contact while members from other cultural groups (e.g., Asian Americans) may minimize eye contact. Smiling behavior and preferred physical distance between individuals also may vary (LaFrance, Henley, Hall, & Halberstadt, 1997). Faculty should remember that their understanding of the meanings associated with various nonverbal behaviors may not be shared by all students. In addition,

faculty members need to be cognizant that students will be reacting to the faculty's cultural background as well.

Although some level of self-awareness can be achieved by being more cognizant of what instructors and students do, faculty may gain deeper insights and meaningful self-awareness by participating in formal professional development events such as multicultural courses, workshops, and conferences. While professional conferences often provide multicultural workshops and presentations, many universities also offer such opportunities on their own campuses, through the Office of Teaching (or other equivalent offices) and through the university counseling centers. In addition, many university libraries have video recordings that focus on cultural diversity (e.g., "Welcoming Diversity", "Learning Together", "Degrees of Difference: Culture Matters on Campus"). Faculty members are encouraged to take at least one multicultural course and to attend workshops and conferences that focus on diversity in cultures and learning. However, faculty should remember that learning to become a culturally competent instructor is a life-long process and not something that can be achieved after only taking one course or reading one journal article.

Conclusion and Selected Resources

The task of achieving multicultural competence in teaching entails acquiring a good knowledge base of different groups' cultural values, beliefs, and experiences; a willingness to examine and acknowledge one's own cultural assumptions, stereotypes, and biased behaviors; and the ability to translate one's knowledge and self-awareness into specific teaching skills. While this mission may seem daunting, faculty should remember that success is achievable, and a variety of resources are readily available to foster growth in this vital competency. Success does not mean that all interactions are positive or that there are no misunderstandings. Successful instructors are those who are genuinely interested in and continue to work on being more culturally inclusive in their teaching, who are open to providing opportunities for students to learn, and who are willing to learn from situations that do not go well. More importantly, successful faculty give themselves credit for doing the best they can to ensure that they provide their students with learning experiences that are supportive and affirming of the students' diverse cultural backgrounds. Successful instructors do not dwell on the few interactions that did not go as well as they had wanted, but rather they focus on what they have done that has been rewarding and gratifying, take some credit for that, and find ways to ensure that they continue to maintain these successes in the future. When faced with difficulties and misunderstandings or when appropriate behaviors are not easily identifiable, faculty should remember that temporary tough spots do not mean that they are not being successful or that they should not continue to try. Rather, these obstacles will help faculty be more informed and prepared for similar situations in the future.

I hope that this guide has given faculty a starting point for their journey to becoming culturally competent instructors. Although suggestions have been made throughout this document, particularly relating to cultural knowledge and self-awareness, the following summary of recommendations and list of resources might be helpful for instructors who wish to integrate diversity more fully into their professional activities.

1. View cultural diversity as a resource and respect diverse socio-cultural experiences.
2. Teach from a culturally respectful and appreciative stance rather than a mere tolerance of differences stance. Just because students do not learn the same way as an instructor does not mean that students cannot learn. Faculty should have a large repertoire of teaching approaches and be flexible in their methods of instruction.
3. Focus on creating opportunities for all students to learn; do not focus on grades.

4. Examine course content and literature with a critical eye (see the Appendix for resources on teaching about diversity). Keep in mind whether the research studies, literature, philosophy, history, and other contributions being discussed represent culturally diverse groups. For example, most studies in psychology have included European American, college students. Consequently, the results from these studies may not be representative of non-European American individuals, those who are from lower SES, or those who did not attend college. And, when cultural minorities are presented, make sure not to portray their contributions as exceptions to a rule.
5. Use language and examples that respect diversity. Although inadvertent at times, the language that instructors use conveys to students their worldviews, biases, and standards of acceptable beliefs and behaviors. For example, be careful to not refer to only White Americans or European Americans as “Americans” because there are ethnic minority students who are also Americans. If using examples in class or on examinations, try to have individuals in the examples represent diverse cultures. If discussing people and their professions, make sure to use females in traditionally male-dominated fields (and vice versa) and to do so in ways that do not suggest that they are the exceptions (for example, use “doctor” rather than “lady doctor,” “nurse” rather than “male nurse”).
6. Use multiple means of assessing effective learning. A good way to approach this task is to think about what you would like students to learn (e.g., application, concepts, theories, etc.). Then, think about how learning usually has been assessed and whether these methods are inclusive of diverse students. Finally, think about other ways that learning can be assessed.
7. Do not assume that culturally different students will differ from those with whose cultures you are familiar. Differences are not inherently bad. Remember that students have multiple identities.
8. Continually assess your teaching strengths and areas for improvement.
9. Have colleagues or mentors examine possible biases in teaching practices (e.g., <http://www.lemoyne.edu/OTRP/otrpresources/peerreview.html>). Videotape yourself. Seek feedback from students regarding their learning.
10. Seek consultation from mentors and colleagues.

Selected Print Resources on Teaching About Diversity

- Bronstein, P., & Quina, K. (Eds.). (2003). *Teaching gender and multicultural awareness: Resources for the psychology classroom*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Cannon, L. W. (1990). Fostering positive race, class, and gender dynamics in the classroom. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 1&2, 126-134.
- Singelis, T. M. (Ed.). (1998). *Teaching about culture, ethnicity, & diversity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Trimble, J. E., Stevenson, M. R., & Worell, J. P. (2004). *Toward an inclusive psychology: Infusing the introductory psychology course with diversity content*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Selected Web Resources on Teaching About Diversity

- Diversity and Ethnic Studies Virtual Community
<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~savega/divweb2.htm>
- Diversity Web: An Interactive Resource Hub for Higher Education
<http://www.inform.umd.edu/diversityweb>
- The National Center for Curriculum Transformation Resources on Women
<http://saber.towson.edu:80/ncctrw/welcome2.html>

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology (OTRP)

<http://www.lemoyne.edu/OTRP/index.html>

Sexual Orientation: Science, Education, and Policy

<http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/index.html>

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues: Readings on Teaching about Diversity and Intergroup Relations

http://www.spssi.org/teach_cc_lists3.html

References

- Aronson, J. M. (Ed.). (2002). *Improving academic achievement: Impact of psychological factors on education* (pp. 209-225). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Berker, A., & Horn, L. (2003). Work first, study second: Adult undergraduates who combine employment and postsecondary enrollment (NCES 2003-167) [Electronic version]. *Education Statistics Quarterly*, 5 (3). Retrieved July 16, 2004, from http://nces.edu.gov/programs/quarterly/vol_5/5_3/4_1.asp
- Chan, C. S. (2003). Psychological issues of Asian Americans. In P. Bronstein & K. Quina (Eds.), *Teaching gender and multicultural awareness: Resources for the psychology classroom* (179-193). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Chism, N. V. N., Cano, J., & Pruitt, A. S. (1989). Teaching in a diverse environment: Knowledge and skills needed by Tas. In J. D. Nyquist, R. D. Abott, & D. H. Wulff (Eds.), *Teaching assistant training in the 1990s*. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, no. 39 (23-36). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cohen, G. L., Steele, C. M., & Ross, L. D. (1999). The mentor's dilemma: Providing critical feedback across the racial divide. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 1302-1318.
- Crocker, J., Voelkl, K., Testa, M., & Major, B. (1991). Social stigma: The affective consequences of attributional ambiguity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 218-228.
- Croizet, J. C., & Claire, T. (1998). Extending the concept of stereotype and threat to social class: The intellectual underperformance of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 24, 588-594.
- Devine, P. G., & Elliot, A. J. (1995). Are racial stereotypes really fading? The Princeton trilogy revisited. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 21, 1139-1150.
- Dovidio, J. F., Kawakami, K., & Gaertner, S. L. (2002). Implicit and explicit prejudice and interracial interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 62-68.
- Educational Testing Service (2000). *Crossing the great divide: Can we achieve equity with Generation Y? Executive summary*. Educational Testing Service Leadership 2000 Series. Retrieved January 12, 2004, from <http://www.nacua.org/messages/execsummary.pdf>
- Feldman, R. S., & Saletsky, R. D. (1986). Nonverbal interracial teacher-student interaction. In R. S. Feldman (Ed.), *The social psychology of education: Current research and theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fugita, S. S., Wexley, K. N., & Hillery, J. M. (1974). Black-White differences in nonverbal behavior in an interview setting. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 4, 343-350.
- Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (1986). The aversive form of racism. In S. L. Gaertner & J. F. Dovidio (Eds.), *Prejudice, discrimination, and racism* (pp. 61-89). Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
- Gurung, R. A. R. (2003). Comparing cultural and individual learning tendencies. *American Psychologist*, 58, 145-146.
- Ho, E. A., Sanbonmatsu, D. M., & Akimoto, S. A. (2002). The effects of comparative status on social stereotypes: How the perceived success of some persons affects the stereotypes of others. *Social Cognition*, 20, 36-57.

- LaFrance, M., Henley, N. M., Hall, J. A., & Halberstadt, A. G. (1997). Nonverbal behavior: Are women's superior skills caused by their oppression? In M. R. Walsh (Ed.), *Women, men, & gender: Ongoing debates* (pp. 101-133). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- LaFrance, M., & Mayo, C. (1976). Racial differences in gaze behavior during conversations: Two systematic observational studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *33*, 547-552.
- Littleford, L. N., Wright, M. O., & Sayoc-Parial, M. S. (2005). White students' intergroup anxiety during same-race and interracial interactions: A multi-method approach. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *27*, 85-94.
- Littleford, L. N., & Wright, M. O. (1998). Health consequences of positive and negative interracial interactions at a predominantly Caucasian public university. *Journal of Gender, Culture, and Health*, *3*, 129-145.
- McClanaghan, M. E. (2000). A strategy for helping students learn how to learn. *Education*, *120*, 479-486.
- NCES National Center for Education Statistics (2000a). *Enrollment in Title IV institutions, by degree-granting status, level and control of institutions, attendance status, gender, and race and ethnicity: United States, fall 2000*. Retrieved July 16, 2004, from <http://nces.ed.gov/quicktables/Detail.asp?Key=901>
- NCES National Center for Education Statistics (2000b). *Postsecondary students with disabilities: Enrollment, services, and persistence*. Retrieved July 16, 2004, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2000/2000092.pdf>
- Newhill, C. E. (1990). The role of culture in the development of paranoid symptomatology. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *60*, 176-185.
- Noble, A., & Mullins, G. (1999, July). *Valuing diversity: Teaching students with a disability*. Paper presented at the HERDSA Annual International Conference, Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved July 16, 2004, from <http://www.herdsa.org.au/branches/vic/Cornerstones/pdf/Noble.PDF>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2000). Does intergroup contact reduce prejudice: Recent meta-analytic findings. In S. Oskamp (Ed.), *Reducing prejudice and discrimination. The Claremont Symposium on Applied Social Psychology* (pp. 93-114). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. E. (1991). *The person and the situation: Perspectives of social psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Sadker, M., & Sadker, D. (1992). Ensuring equitable participation in college classes. In L. L. B. Border & N. V. N. Chism (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity*. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, no. 49 (pp. 49-56). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Saenz, D. S. (1994). Token status and problem-solving deficits: Detrimental effects of distinctiveness and performance monitoring. *Social Cognition*, *12*, 61-74.
- Smith, D. M., & Gates, G. J. (2001). *Gay and lesbian families in the United States: Same-sex unmarried partner households: A preliminary analysis of 2000 United States census data*. Retrieved November 8, 2004, from <http://www.hrc.org/Content/ContentGroups/Publications1/census.pdf>
- Steele, C. M. (1997). A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and performance. *American Psychologist*, *52*, 613-629.
- Stephan, W. G., Boniecki, K. A., Ybarra, A., Ervin, K. S., Jackson, L. A., McNatt, P. S., & Renfro, C. L. (2002). The role of threats in the racial attitudes of Blacks and Whites. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *28*, 1242-1254.
- Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (1985). Intergroup anxiety. *Journal of Social Issues*, *41*, 157-175.
- Taylor, D. M., Wright, S. C., Moghaddam, F. M., & Lalonde, R. N. (1990). The personal/group discrimination discrepancy: Perceiving my group, but not myself, to be a target for discrimination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *16*, 254-262

- Tweed, R. G., & Lehman, D. R. (2002). Learning considered within a cultural context: Confucian and Socratic Approaches. *American Psychologist, 57*, 89-99.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2003). *Self-described religious identification of adult population: 1990 and 2001*. Retrieved November 5, 2004, from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/pop.pdf>
- Wright, M. O., & Littleford, L. N. (2002). Experiences and beliefs as predictors of ethnic identity and intergroup relations. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 30*, 2-20.