

# Exploring Multicultural Learning Styles: Our Responsibility to Provide Culturally Responsive Teaching



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# Overview

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- Personal Identity Model (Arredondo, et. al.)
- Demographic Differences at GWCC
- Culturally Responsive Teaching: 5 Elements
- Final Thoughts/Successes/Learning Experiences



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What is IDENTITY??

# Dimensions Model

## “A” Dimensions

Age  
Race  
Culture  
Sexual Orientation  
Gender  
Social Class  
Language  
Physicality

## “B” Dimensions

Educational Background  
Geographic Location  
Relationship Status  
Hobbies/Recreational  
Interests  
Work Experience  
Religion

## “C” Dimensions

Historical Moments/Eras

Arredondo, P., Toporek, R., Brown, S. P., Sanchez, J., Locke, D. C., Sanchez, J., Stadler, H. (1996). Operationalization of the Multicultural Counseling Competencies. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 24*(1), 42-78.

# Why is Cultural Identity important for learning?

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“If a plant is to unfold its specific nature to the full, it must first be able to grow in the soil in which it is planted.”

- Carl Jung

# CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING:

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"...when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of references of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly ... academic outcomes improve when diverse students are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters." (Gay, 2000, 2002)

# Demographics



How Do We Look  
Different?



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# DIMENSION “A”

## Comparison

# GENDER

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## □ GWCC Faculty

- Males 36.7% (36)
- Females 63.3% (62)

## □ GWCC Students

- Males 47% (3230)
- Females 51% (3475)

# AVERAGE AGE

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## □ GWCC Faculty

- 48 years old (MCCCD)

## □ GWCC Students

- Under 20 – 26% (1832)
- Under 35 – 55% (3830)
- Under 45 – 70% (4872)

# RACE/ETHNICITY

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## □ GWCC Faculty

- White 80.6% (79)
- Black 8.2% (8)
- Hispanic 5.1% (5)
- Nat. Am. 1% (1)
- A/PI 5.1% (5)

## □ GWCC Students

- White 49% (3341)
- Black 9% (599)
- Hispanic 25% (1723)
- Nat. Am. 5% (319)
- A/PI 4% (277)

# RACE/ETHNICITY

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- In different terms...
  - 2918 (43%) Students of Color
  - 19 (19.4%) Faculty of Color

# Dimension C

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What is one of the most significant historical events you can recall from your lifetime?

# DIMENSION “C”

## HISTORICAL MOMENTS/ERAS

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- Immigration
- War/Terrorism
- Divorce
- Economic Recession
- Technology

# What does this comparison mean?

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- On multiple significant levels, we are different from our students.
- It is our **responsibility** to address these differences in our role as teachers and through our instructional approaches.
- It "...is an ethical and practical need to make classrooms mirror the heterogeneity of the student population." (Latham, 1997)

# Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT): 5 Elements

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- 1) Develop a knowledge base about cultural diversity
- 2) Include ethnic & cultural diversity content in curriculum
- 3) Demonstrate caring & build learning communities
- 4) Communicate with diverse students
- 5) Respond to diversity in the delivery of instruction

1) Develop a knowledge base about cultural diversity

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A) Knowledge of OTHERS

B) Knowledge of SELF

# A) Knowledge of OTHERS

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\*knowledge of values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, & relational patterns

\*understanding of the complexity of identity and all the potential intersections

\* awareness of **within group differences**

## B) Knowledge of SELF

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\* Where are YOU in your own Racial Identity development?

\* What are YOUR stories, definitions, values, interpretations, experiences...this is where your teaching style started

\* What are YOUR cultural beliefs and prejudices (tow. race, gender, SES, sexual orientation, age, religion, ability, etc.)

\* Reflect on how YOUR cultural beliefs and prejudices influence your teaching

## 2) Include ethnic & cultural diversity content in curriculum

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- ❑ “Formal” curricula – textbooks, instructional materials, topics covered...or not covered
- ❑ Symbolic curricula – images/visuals displayed in classrooms, offices, on bulletin boards
- ❑ Societal curricula – how ideas/impressions from media are critically analyzed

### 3) Demonstrate caring & build learning communities

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- "Caring is a moral imperative, a social responsibility, and a **pedagogical necessity**." (Gay, 2002)
- Caring = **action-oriented**; demonstrates high expectations & uses imaginative strategies (Gay, 2002)
- Establish Inclusion = create learning environment where **students feel respected and connected**. (Bouchard & Kunze, 2003)

### 3) Demonstrate caring & build learning communities

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- ❑ Students of Color are often more interested in connection with the “bearer of the message” than the message itself (Wilson, 1998)
- ❑ Connection & Caring = Instructor Competence; students try harder (ask more questions, study more, utilize office hours) in classes when they feel connected to the instructor (Wilson, 1998)

# How do you demonstrate caring ?

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- Accessibility, Approachability, Availability
  - Going beyond posted office hours
  - Mindfulness of tone of voice & body language
  - Title used
  - Expression of emotion – coming off as “superhuman”
  - Sharing small, appropriate, personal anecdotes
  - Connecting students to campus resources – taking them rather than handing them a phone number

(Wilson, 1998)

## 4) Communicate w/ethnically diverse students

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“...communication is the ground of meeting and the foundation of community – without “meeting” and “community” in the classroom, learning can be difficult to accomplish for some students.”  
(Gay, 2002)

# Communication Styles:

## Mainstream

- Passive-receptive style
  - Speaker active
  - Listener passive
  
- One “right” answer
  
- Topic-centered = quality determined by focus & clarity; linear

## Outside the Mainstream

- Active-participatory style
  - Speaker/listener roles are fluid
  - Listener expected to engage
  
- Look for multiple answers
  
- Topic-chaining = more circular; build context, performance, story-telling

(Gay, 2002)

## 5) Respond to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction

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“...the only way to meet diverse learning needs is to intentionally apply diverse strategies.” (Guild, 1994)

“Professors must come out from behind their podiums and make contact with their students if they want to reduce the attrition rates on their minority students.”  
(Wilson, 1998)

# Diverse Teaching Methods

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- ❑ Topic-chaining = story-telling teaching style
- ❑ Creating context when introducing new information (**Personal Relevance**)
- ❑ Communal cultural structures = cooperative group learning, peer coaching, collaborative projects
- ❑ Use of motion, movement, and frequent task variability – active projects
- ❑ Use of multicultural examples and evidence in teaching theories, concepts, ideas
- ❑ Use of discussion (small & large group) AND quiet time for reflection
- ❑ Use of visuals and imagery

# Diverse Teaching Methods

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- ❑ Instructional Conversation- dialog that brings together prior knowledge and experiences with new material to build understanding
- ❑ Use of “Check-in” questions – “What do you hear me saying?”
- ❑ Encourage Questions – so not viewed as “weakness” or “loss of face”
- ❑ Encourage students to use their own cultural tools - (language, myths, metaphors) to apply extant knowledge to new information...cultural relevance
- ❑ Use of varied examples – to illustrate points



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What Else? Final Thoughts....