

Cultural Issues in Higher Education

EDA/EDP 5391

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TEXTBOOKS:

Bucher, R. D., (2004). *Diversity consciousness: Opening our minds to people, cultures, and opportunities*. Columbus, OH: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Diller, J.V. (2004). *Cultural diversity: A primer for the human services* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

This course explores topics relevant to providing educational and psychological services to diverse student populations in higher education. Students will be expected to participate in class activities, service learning, research, and group work. This system is designed to help ensure that everyone is able to contribute meaningfully to class activities as well as demonstrate understanding and learning.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define key concepts associated with inter-group relations (culture, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, minority group, social class, acculturation/adaptation, assimilation, multiculturalism, stratification, discrimination, racism, and oppression).
2. Identify similarities & differences in values, beliefs, needs, and experiences of diverse populations.
3. Analyze social systems in terms of equality, equity, social, and distributive justice.
4. Identify the impact of diversity on groups and organizations at a macro level, including institutional racism and other forms of discrimination.
5. Describe how stereotypes about diverse populations impact the policy-making process.
6. Develop a personal framework for diversity-informed practice, including an ability to articulate the key skills, values, and theoretical perspectives needed to practice with people from a particular diverse group.
7. Develop competence in facilitating student success in higher education.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and EVALUATION:

- Regular attendance is required. Absence from more than one class will result in the reduction in course grade, unless absence occurs due to dire circumstances or excused illness.
- Participation and contribution to class discussions is imperative.
- Completion of reading assignments, service learning projects, research, and presentations are expected to be timely and of high quality.

Grading Scale Points:

A= 91-100 **B+**= 88-90 **B**= 81-87 **C+**= 79-80 **C**= 71-78 **D**= 68-70 **F**=67 and below

A. Ancestry Paper (5%)

Each student will write a 3-5 page paper that explores his/her ethnic roots and the assimilation experiences of parents, grandparents, and/or other significant influential relatives in the student's life. Further details will be given in class.

B. Reading Responses (10 %)

Students will submit a type-written reaction paper approximately one page in length (double-spaced, 12pt.font) at the beginning of each class. These reading responses should be a personal reaction to the assigned reading for that day or may be a personal reaction to class discussions from the previous class meeting (new insights, how the readings relate to other topics in higher education, implications for future research, etc.). Students may substitute a journal article they found in place of the assigned reading in the LRC as long as it addresses the same topic.

C. Reflection Assignment (10%)

Part I: At the beginning of the semester, each student will be asked to tape record a self-assessment of their own ideas and attitudes about multiculturalism. Using the *Interview Guide*, include your own experiences and how the experiences of others have affected you personally. Make sure to include examples of what you are discussing.

Part II: At the end of the semester, each student will listen to the tape and respond to the self-reflection in a 3-5 page essay. Refer to only ideas, events, and readings that were most significant to you in your analysis. Due date is indicated on the class calendar.

D. Research Project (15%)

Students may choose ONE of the following options:

1. *Personal Interview.*

The student will find a person (who belongs to one of the minority groups discussed in class) who is willing to be interviewed. The student will conduct an in-depth interview with this person exploring demographic information, family background, traditions, ethnic/racial identity, and experiences with oppression, coping strategies, and attitudes toward oppressors. The interview should last between 40 – 60 minutes; notes may be taken, or if the person is comfortable with tape-recording, the interview may be tape recorded. The student will then compare and contrast this information with his/her own life experience, especially in the areas of opportunity, oppression, and attitudes toward the majority. All identifying information (e.g., name, address) about the person must be omitted or altered in the paper to protect the person's right to confidentiality.

2. *Media Analysis.*

The student will select a current event that is receiving coverage in the media (i.e., television news or documentaries, radio, magazines, newspapers). The student will conduct an exhaustive analysis for elements of sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, ableism, etc. This will require that the student expose him/herself to 4 – 5 examples from various media sources (if the sources include television or radio, then it will be useful to video- or tape-record, if possible). Given this selection of media samples, the student will write a paper including the following components—

- a. identification of the issue, its relevance to higher education, and rationale for selecting this issue.

- b. description of how minorities are portrayed (indicating the nature of the portrayal).
- c. examples from class readings about concerns of the minority group that needed to be addressed in the media coverage.

E. Multicultural Experiences (MC) (20%)

Each student will visit **TWO** sites: ethnic communities, events, programs, celebrations, etc. that enable him/her to feel, experience, learn, and understand more about cultures different from his/her own. A report for each site, ranging from 3-5 pages, will be submitted to the instructor before or on the due date indicated on the calendar. The report should include photos, programs, quotes, or any other supporting materials of the experience and how it relates to this class. Three-five research articles should also be included in the report (with a reference list) to help support the experience or add understanding to the topic.

A presentation of **ONE** of the two MC experiences will be presented during class at the specified date. Handouts, visual aids, samples of cultural foods, clothing, etc. should be provided for the class presentation.

*****ONE MC Experience MAY BE SUBSTITUTED BY A MOVIE:** An analysis of one movie, approved by the instructor, may be submitted. During the presentation, the student may bring the video and show the class a small segment to enhance his/her class presentation.

F. Two Examinations (40%) Details will be provided in class.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR OF CLASS ACTIVITIES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Readings	Assignment Due
August		
22	<i>Overview of course & requirements: Intro. to Multicultural Competence</i>	
29	<i>Multicultural competence</i> Readings: (Bucher) Ch. 2; (Diller) Ch. 1 & 2	Reading Response Ancestry Paper
September		
5	<i>Culture, social class, social identity</i> Readings: (Bucher) Ch. 1; (Diller) Ch. 4 ; LRC Article	Reflection Assignment I. Reading Response
12	<i>Barriers to success</i> Readings: (Bucher) Ch. 3; (Diller) Ch. 3	Video: Color of Fear Reading Response
19	<i>Developing diversity consciousness: Confronting the “isms”</i> Readings: (Bucher) Ch. 4; (Diller) Ch. 6	Reading Response
26	<i>Communication and service delivery</i> Readings: (Bucher) Ch. 5; (Diller) Ch. 7	Reading Response
October		
3	<i>International & immigration issues</i> Readings: LRC Articles Take Home Mid-term	Video: Farmingville Reading Response
10	<i>Immigration (Cont’d); Students of Color</i> Readings: (Diller) Ch. 5 & 8; LRC Articles	Reading Response
17	WALK	
24	<i>African-American and Biracial Population</i> Readings: (Diller) Ch. 11; LRC Articles	Reading Response.
31	<i>Latino Population</i> Readings: (Diller) Ch. 9; LRC Articles	Reading Response
November		
7	<i>Asian Population</i> Readings: (Diller) Ch. 12; LRC Articles	Reading Response
14	<i>Native American Population</i> Readings: (Diller) Ch. 10; LRC Articles	Reading Response
21	<i>Special Populations and other minority groups</i> Readings: LRC Articles	Reading Response Research Project
28	<i>Future Directions</i> Readings: (Bucher) Ch. 6 & 7; (Diller) Ch. 13 & 14	Reading Response
December		
5	Multicultural Experience Presentations/Reports Due Take Home Final Exam	Reflection Assignment II.

Reflection Assignment

Part I (Remember only YOU will hear this tape, so be thorough)

A. Background (Be brief, most of this was covered in your Historical Paper)

1. Age, Birthplace
2. Brief description of what you know about your parent's backgrounds
3. Social class and status when growing up. Current status (e.g., job or source of income)

B. Experience and Contact

1. When did you first learn there were different racial and ethnic groups in this country? What were you told about groups other than your own as a child? Do you remember your first contact with a person of a racial/ethnic group different than your own? When? What kind of relationship was it?
2. When did you first learn there were people with different abilities in this country? As a child, what were you told about people with different abilities? Do you remember your first contact with a person with different abilities? When? What kind of relationship was it?
3. When did you first learn there were people who practiced different religions in this country? As a child, what were you told about people who practiced different religions? Do you remember your first contact with a person who practiced different religions? When? What kind of relationship was it?
4. When did you first learn there were people with different sexual orientations in this country? What were you told about people with different sexual orientations? Do you remember your first contact with a person with different sexual orientations? When? What kind of relationship was it?
5. Do you remember when you first were aware of gender differences? Do you remember your first friendship with a person of the opposite sex?
6. What was your experience of diversity?
 - a. in your neighborhood where you grew up?
 - b. in your grade or elementary school?
 - c. in junior high or high school? College?
 - d. in the military (if relevant)?
 - e. on jobs you have worked?

References

Bucher, R. D., (2004). *Diversity consciousness: Opening our minds to people, cultures, and opportunities*. Columbus, OH: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Diller, J.V. (2004). *Cultural diversity: A primer for the human services* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning

Payne, R. K. (2001). *A framework for understanding poverty*. Highlands, TX: aha! Process, Inc.

Reflection Assignment

Part II: Listen to your tape and answer the following questions:

1. What experiences have influenced how you interact with groups of people different than you?
2. How has your understanding of other cultures in terms of religion, age, gender, and ethnicity changed, if at all? Address each area separately.
3. How are you able to organize and structure your initial thoughts, beliefs, and ideas in terms of what we have studied? Give examples.
4. What did you hear in your tape that you were not aware of before (terms used, beliefs, stereotypes)?