Teaching Strategies and Classroom Practices
Transforming Your Course

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Rotational Activity

• When is the last time you had an in depth discussion about race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc. in a SOCIAL setting (not academic/professional). How did the conversation go?
• Describe a prejudice that you were familiarized with as a child.
• Describe the first significant interaction you had with a person not of your race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs.
• Describe a social category that you belong to that you think would surprise most people. Explain how this has affected your life.
• Describe a time that you felt disrespected because of the group you belong to (age, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, weight, ethnic background, etc?)
• What is the one thing that you believe in absolutely and have a difficult time listening to other opinions on? Why is this difficult for you?
• How does any of this relate to your field?
Rotational Activity

• You choose the topic & questions.
  – For Example:
    » How has your socio-cultural background affected your perspective on education? philosophy? engineering? writing? management styles?
    » Summarize a joke or comment that you have heard in a work environment that some people might find offensive. How did you handle the situation?
    » Describe a time when you worked closely with someone of a different ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability/disability. Why do you think that social categorization is important?
    » How would you handle it if you learned one of your students was an undocumented alien?
What does a diversity curriculum look like?

• Curriculum from any subject area may be altered to include diversity content.

• This can be accomplished by:
  1) inclusion of a variety of perspectives
  2) discussions of social contexts, including issues of equity and justice, and/or
  3) activities that foster critical thinking and the development of self-awareness.
A Riddle

• A man and his father are in a car accident. The man is rushed to the hospital for surgery. As he is wheeled into the emergency room, the doctor says, “I can’t operate on him; this is my son.”

• Who is the Doctor?
What does a diversity curriculum look like?

• Expanding curriculum to include a variety of perspectives:
  – allows You to discuss views and ideas that are less common or underrepresented.
  – provides students a more holistic understanding of the subject area.
  – provides positive role models from a variety of different backgrounds and socio-cultural groups.

• Discussion of social issues is another way to reform curriculum.
  – Fostering an environment where students can:
    • ponder ideas such as what it means to be an active citizen.
    • how discrimination and prejudice negatively affect democratic society.
    • how they can become more sensitive and respectful to social differences.

• Diversity lesson plans should encourage students to develop critical thinking skills, as well as increase their self-understanding.
  – You can best encourage this development by modeling critical thinking skills. Encouraging students to recognize their values, feelings, privileges, and biases can facilitate development of self-awareness.
How to transform curriculum

• The process of transforming a diversity curriculum may include:
  – participation in a diversity seminar or workshops
  – examination of current course content
  – support from your colleagues
  – may necessitate personal examination and alterations.
• Diversity curriculum reform may be said to have five stages (Gorski). Higher stages represent greater diversity competence.
Stage 1: Recognition

• You must first recognize that the traditional curriculum is not the only possible content to be taught.

• It is essential that you strive to recognize your own biases, prejudices, and assumptions that may affect your teaching and - ultimately - have an influence on the students.
Silence!!!! I kill you!!!
Sikhs in the USA
Related Instructional Strategies

• Examine your own biases and beliefs.
• Investigate where students are getting their information.
• Multimedia (Youtube)
  – Lecture
  – Discussion
  – Analysis

• Handout
  – The Role of Religion in Understanding Culture
Stage 2: Heroes and Holidays

• After recognizing the need for curriculum reform, you may make an initial effort to integrate other perspectives into your curriculum by:
  – celebrating cultural holidays
  – highlighting famous individuals from non-dominant groups.
Relevant Instructional Strategies

• Put cultural holidays on your syllabus.
• Include major perspectives from diverse theorists.
• Highlight current leaders in the field.
  – Have people bring in relevant newspaper clippings on current leaders?
  – Have people do a report on influential ‘alternative’ perspectives.
• Highlight current developments/issues.
  – (See next slide)
• Handout
  – A Diversity Training Investigation
Even the CCSU Recorder weigh’s in...

Proper Theme Song for Hillary Clinton: “She’s a very kinky girl” when it comes to harnessing power. Being addicted to the political process and achieving the presidency is, to her, one of the sexiest things possible.

Though not Barack Obama’s official campaign theme song, Obama bumped [Jay-Z, “99 Problems”] after beating Hillary in Iowa. “I got 99 problems but a bitch ain’t one” didn’t go over so well with Hillary supporters, but it showed balls on Obama’s part.
Stage 3: Integration

• To move beyond superficial integration of diversity content:
  – integrate information about non-dominant groups across several areas of the curriculum.
    • A lesson plan may incorporate a special lesson, book, or film that highlights members of non-dominant groups.

• Many of the new materials and units incorporated at this stage are only used as secondary sources.
Relevant Instructional Strategies

- Choose particular readings that are related to diversity.
- Designate a particular class or week for a particular topic related to diversity.
  - **Activity:**
    - Crumpled balls of paper (stereotypes/narratives).
  - **Handout:**
    - Home Culture and School Environment Fit
    - Clock Time and Event Time
    - Linguistic Relativity
• Most people with disabilities are in wheelchairs, crutches, or walkers.
• People with physical disabilities also have mental disabilities.
• The greatest barriers to persons with disabilities are physical barriers.
• Government health insurance covers people with disabilities.
• Stereotypes against person with mobility impairments contribute to the erroneous belief that they are asexual.
Superbowl Commercial
Stage 4: Structural Reform

• During this stage you refine your curriculum to weld together your traditional curriculum with diverse perspectives and diversity materials.

• This combination is done seamlessly so as to ensure that one source of information is not seen as primary or more accurate than the other.
• Use a compare and contrast technique – bring in different perspectives and compare and contrast pros and cons.
• Provide diverse critical incidents for each section of the course.
• Handout
  – The Cultural Assimilator
  – Video Games as Cultural Artifacts
Stage 5: Social Action and Awareness

The final stage of this model of curriculum reform involves integrating social issues into curriculum.

- incorporate discussions and activities that address such social issues as equity, democracy, overcoming discrimination/prejudice based on differences in access to power, accommodations for persons with disabilities, etc.

- encourage students to develop their own views and understanding of these concepts based on experiences and increased self-awareness.
Related Instructional Strategies

• Community Engagement
• Out-of-Class Experiences
• Projects
  - The Kabob House
• Dialogue Groups
• Group Dynamics

• Handouts
  - Acculturation Strategies
  - Home Culture and School Environment Fit
Embracing Diversity

• Knowledge and understanding of a student’s culture is integral to effective teaching

• Culturally responsive learning environments increase students’ sense of belonging, engagement in their learning, and development of personal skills.
HOMOSEXUAL PDA
How do you talk about relationships?
Cultural Sensitivity

• Use person-first terms
  – i.e. “person who uses a wheelchair” NOT “disabled person”

• Be aware of:
  – Spirituality and religious issues
  – Communication and interpersonal relationship styles including word choice, voice tone and volume, eye contact, and proper titles
  – Delivering bad news
  – Clothing, hair styles, and body adornment
  – Gender issues and consideration of appropriate male/female interaction
  – Age, respect, and seniority
  – Discipline, correction, and training methods
  – Informal and social interactions
  – Individualism and equality
Defining Diversity

- Diversity is a reflection of ourselves. It is inclusive, embracing different racial, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and differing abilities.
Identity Map Exercise

- Mental Health
- Education
- Acculturation
- Ethnicity/race
- Gender
- Physical Health
- Religion
- Racism/oppresion experiences
- Sexual Orientation
- Marital/family status
- SES
- AGE
- Residence/ Birthplace
Instructional Strategies

- Required Readings (Articles or Textbooks)
- Case-Studies or Simulations
- Guest Lectures
- Written Assignments
- Audio/Visual Presentations
- Role Play
- Critical Incidents
- Dialogue Groups
  - a face to face meeting between two groups who have a history of conflict.
- Cross-Categorization
Dialogue Groups

• A face-to-face meeting between members of two groups that have a history of conflict or potential conflict.
  – Opportunity to break down barriers
  – Opportunity to challenge the ignorance inside and outside oneself
  – New insights, new connections, new identities
  – New questions
  – Building Coalitions
Don’t be afraid to get personal

• What are some of your life experiences with social tensions and uncertainty? How might these experiences shape the curriculum you negotiate?

• How do you, as a teacher, work with students to inquire into the tensions they experience in schools and classrooms?

• How might you understand your inquiries with students into their experiences with tensions as curriculum making?
Re-Write Activity

- Select a brief segment (1-2 paragraphs) of a textbook. Rewrite the material so that is more inclusive of research addressing the influence of diversity.
  - Identify the emic (culture specific)
  - Identify the etic (universal construct)
  - Explain from diverse perspectives
Perspective Taking

• Think about someone about whom you hold some prejudice, such as disabled, overweight, or gay person.

• Make a list of the ways that you typically think about that individual.

• Now try taking the perspective of that individual by imagining being him or her, living in his or her circumstances.

• Write down the thoughts and images that come to mind as you imagine yourself in this person’s place and discuss the effects of this perspective taking with someone.
Brainstorming

• Research the active ingredients of the native American medicinal plants
• Research and invention from another country
• Research a therapeutic practice (i.e. coining) from another country
• Research Handicapped Accessibility in hospitals
• Interview people of X background
• Have everyone explore a different perspective on a particular topic
Brainstorming

- Religion
  - Read holy writings as literature
  - Analyze holy writings for philosophy
- Have students design something for use by those with physical disabilities.
- Have students spend the day in diverse roles and write about their experiences.
- Spending a Day or a Week teaching from the role of someone else (show up dressed as a Muslim, in a wheelchair, etc.)