



Leaders in International Higher Education

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Conference Workshop:

**Developing Intercultural
Competence
For International Education
Faculty and Staff**

Facilitator:

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Developing Intercultural Competence For International Education Faculty and Staff



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Intercultural Competence:

a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts.

Cognitive

- Cultural self-awareness
- Culture-general knowledge
- Culture-specific knowledge
- Interaction analysis

Affective

- Curiosity
- Cognitive flexibility
- Motivation
- Openmindedness

Behavioral Skills

- Relationship building skills
- Behavioral skills: listening, problem solving
- Empathy
- Information gathering skills

Intercultural Competence: A Way to Live In Common With Others

Intercultural Competence is a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that supports effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts.

Intercultural competence provides an overarching perspective for weaving together primary concepts for interacting across *both* global and domestic differences. Philosopher Maxine Green (1988) has called on us to recognize our place in “a world lived in common with others.” We are thus able to view the intersections among these contexts, recognizing that the Ukrainian man and the Jamaican woman have much to contribute to the domestic dialogue on culture, race, and gender. Further, the culturally responsive organization allows individuals to do so in a way that honors different values, beliefs, and behaviors, whether the cultural differences are global or domestic. We can—and must—carefully construct a complex, multilayered, widely contexted framework, that is grounded on *both/and*, not *either/or*.

What we share both domestically and globally includes the necessity of:

- Knowing our own cultural identities
- Communicating effectively with others
- Developing knowledge, skills and attitudes that foster understanding
- Managing inevitable contact with others
- Solving problems together
- Engaging our own learning
- Working well with culturally different others

Some frequently discussed issues:

- Are internationalists just avoiding the difficult issues that domestic diversity elicits?
- Don't domestic issues trump global considerations?
- Are internationalists just interested in exotic places and people?
- Do those concerned about social transformation in America fail to see that we live in a global world?
- What about refugees, immigrants, international visitors—are they insignificant in the diversity perspective?
- Is citizenship global or international in the 21st century?
- If we think globally, do we oppress locally?

Intercultural Competence

A Few Things We Know About Intercultural Competence:

- ◆ Cultural knowledge does not necessarily lead to competence.
- ◆ Cultural contact does not necessarily lead to competence.
- ◆ Cultural contact *may* lead to reduction of stereotypes.
- ◆ Language learning may not be sufficient for culture learning.

What *does* lead to Intercultural Competence?

- ◆ Intentional and developmentally sequenced program design.
- ◆ Balancing challenge and support; anxiety reduction.
- ◆ Facilitating learning before, during, and after intercultural experiences.
- ◆ Depth of intercultural experiences, language immersion.
- ◆ Intercultural competence training.
- ◆ Cultivating curiosity and cognitive flexibility.

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Interculturalizing International Education

Cognitive Styles:

Describes how an individual interacts with his or her environment, extracts information from it, constructs and organizes personal knowledge, and then applies that knowledge.

- Traditional education often privileged cognitive styles that demonstrated critical thinking in terms of linear logic, separate ways of knowing (Belenky et al.) and the Doubting Game (Elbow).
- The intercultural approach includes with this perspective spiral logic, connected ways of knowing (Belenky et al.), Eastern ways of thinking (Nisbett) and the Believing Game (Elbow)

Learning Styles:

Describes learner preferences for different types of learning and instructional activities.

- Traditional education often privileged learning styles that reflected a preference for abstraction, reflection, and precision.
- The intercultural approach includes with this perspective concrete, experiential, and metaphorical learning.

Communication Styles:

Describes the patterns of expression and rules for interaction that reflect the values and norms of a culture.

- Traditional education often privileged learners who participated in class with statements that were linear, direct, emotionally restrained, and intellectually confrontive.
- The intercultural approach includes with this perspective engagement that is circular, indirect (even silent), nonconfrontive, and emotionally expressive.

Based on: Belenky, M., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N. & Tarule, J. *Women's Ways of Knowing*. NY: Basic Books, 1997. Peter Elbow. *Writing Without Teachers*. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973. Jonassen, David H., and Barbara L. Grabowski. *Handbook of Individual Differences, Learning, and Instruction*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1993. Nisbett, R. E. *The Geography of Thought*. NY: Free Press: 2003.

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Kolb's Learning Styles...

In The Intercultural Context

Concrete Experience

- ◆ **What we have:** Lots of opportunities for concrete experience (homestays, diverse workgroups, service learning, etc.)
- ◆ **What's missing:** We seldom have structured opportunities for sharing participants' reactions and feelings to the differences they have encountered, the stress they feel, the discoveries they have made.
- ◆ **We need to provide:** Preplanned meetings, scheduled group discussion sessions, informal meals as premeditated occasions for concrete learners to enjoy their learning style, and for other learners to practice their CE skills.

Reflective Observation

- ◆ **What we have:** Lots of perplexed observations ("what did that mean?"), with a fair degree of difficulty in making connections, and not enough time to reflect.
- ◆ **What's missing:** We rarely provide guided reflective observation situations, and time.
- ◆ **We need to provide:** Frameworks for learners to make connections, and the time to develop the reflections. This can include reflection questions for journal activity, planned time for absorption of complex new learning, etc.

Abstract Conceptualization

- ◆ **What we have:** Lots of information on culture specific matters (history, politics, arts, etc.) and learners very accustomed to classroom lectures.
- ◆ **What's missing:** We seldom educate learners about their own developmental processes including their own learning styles. Comprehension of certain culture general concepts and theories is also missing.
- ◆ **We need to provide:** Abstract principles concerning culture shock, prejudice, racism, value differences, etc., as well as attention to the learning processes of the participants, and their capacity to learn-how-to-learn.

Active Experimentation

- ◆ **What we have:** A potential opportunity for AE learners to sample experience and create spontaneous learning projects, unfettered by classroom constraints.
- ◆ **What's missing:** Frequently, the basis for educational AE is missing, since it may not emerge from a healthy comprehension of AC. Experience needs the frameworks for construal to become educational.
- ◆ **We need to provide:** A solid set of concepts for the AE learner to work from (information on ethnographic interviewing, participant observation, etc.) and a safe and supportive climate for the non-AE learners to try out these skills.

Training Templates

Basic Content Areas for Intercultural Training

(This package must either accompany or precede diversity training. When used to provide a foundation for diversity training, the basic package should include examples of U.S. domestic cultural differences.)

- Culture
- Perception
- Language Use
- Cultural Stereotypes
- Nonverbal Communication
- Communication Styles
- Value Contrasts
- Problem-Solving Strategies
- Intercultural Adaptation
(with emphasis on development of intercultural sensitivity, and cultural marginality)

Diversity Supplement_(must be preceded by basic intercultural training)

- Intercultural Adaptation
(with emphasis on ethnic identity development)
- Gender Issues
- Culture Privilege and Race in U.S. America
- Contexts of Power

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Curiosity

Principles for Enhancing Curiosity

To develop our own sense of intercultural curiosity, we need to focus on:

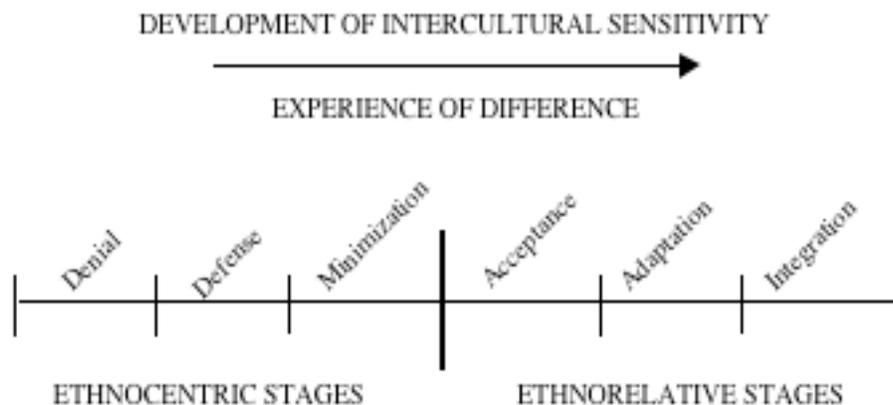
1. Suspending our assumptions and value judgments
2. Practicing cultural humility
3. Enhancing our perception skills
4. Developing multiple perspectives
5. Increase our tolerance of ambiguity
6. Asking questions as culturally appropriate
7. Becoming participant observers as appropriate
8. Becoming analytically inquisitive
9. Assessing the credibility of our intercultural sources

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A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity is a framework that explains the development of increasing sophistication in our experience and navigation of differences. (J. M. Bennett, 1993; M.J. Bennett, 1993; J. M. Bennett & M. J. Bennett, 2004)

This model begins with three *ethnocentric* stages, in which our own culture is experienced as central to reality in some particular way. The latter three stages of the model are termed *ethnorelative*, in which our own culture is viewed in the context of other cultures.



Derived from: Bennett, Milton J. "Towards a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity" in R. Michael Paige, ed. *Education for the Intercultural Experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1993. Also refer to Bennett, Janet M. "Cultural Marginality: Identity Issues in Intercultural Training," in R. Michael Paige, ed. *Education for the Intercultural Experience*.

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Intercultural Competencies Essential For Teaching Across Cultures

The effective intercultural educator has the ability to:

- ◆ Comprehend the role of teaching in the learner's culture
- ◆ Communicate clearly to non-native speakers of the language used in teaching
- ◆ Facilitate multicultural groups (including turn-taking, participation, use of silence, etc.)
- ◆ "Code-shift" from one communication style to another
- ◆ Paraphrase circular or indirect statements respectfully for linear and direct group members
- ◆ Express enthusiasm for the topic in culturally appropriate ways
- ◆ Suspend judgment of alternative cultural norms
- ◆ Recognize and address culture-specific risk factors for learners (loss of face, group identity, etc.)
- ◆ Develop multiple frames of reference for interpreting intercultural situations
- ◆ Demonstrate good judgment in selecting the most appropriate interpretation in a transcultural situation
- ◆ Ask sensitively phrased questions while avoiding premature closure
- ◆ Avoid ethnocentric idioms, slang, and aphorisms
- ◆ Interview a cultural informant to obtain needed information on subjective culture
- ◆ Recognize ethnocentrism in goals, objectives, content, process, media, and course materials, as well as group interaction
- ◆ Motivate learners based on their own values
- ◆ Deliver courses in a variety of methods
- ◆ Interpret nonverbal behavior in culturally appropriate ways
- ◆ Monitor the use of humor for cultural appropriateness
- ◆ Display cultural humility
- ◆ Be culturally self-aware

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