An Intersectional Model for 21st Century Excellence in Multicultural Teaching and Learning

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Systemic Perspective on Diversity

- Historical legacy of exclusion / inclusion
  - Resistance to desegregation, mission, policies

- Structural diversity
  - Enrollments, faculty and staff hire profiles

- Psychological climate
  - Perceptions of tensions

- Behavioral climate
  - Inter-group relations, social interaction, acts of discrimination, attitudes and prejudices

(Milem, et al)
Social Identity Model

Gender

Ethnicity

Race

Sexual Orientation

Class

Age

Religion

Ability

Border identities

Disadvantaged by association

• Individual *social identities* are best understood as multiple, embedded in systemic dynamics, and, by nature, interlocking.
Intersectionality is a framework that... integrates analysis, theorizing, advocacy, and pedagogy through four theoretical interventions through:

– Centering the Experiences of People of Color
– Complicating Identity
– Unveiling Power in Interconnected Structures of Inequality
– Promoting Social Justice and Social Change

Implications...

• Intersectionality helps us understand how individuals see themselves and how they are treated by others.

• Recognizes that individuals can simultaneously experience oppression and privilege.

• Explicitly links the micro (individual) level and macro (societal) levels of analyses.

• Focuses on points of intersection to get at the complexity of identity.

• Acknowledges that identities mutually constitute and reinforce each other.

Intersectionalities

- Gender Identity/Expression
- Ability
- Sex
- Religion
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Identity
- Age
- Class
Multiple Dimensions of Identity Model

Ethnicity

Race

Class

Sexual Orientation

Gender

Age

Immigration status

Religion

Core

Gender Identity Expression

Context

Family background, sociocultural conditions, current experiences, career decisions and life planning

Personal attributes, characteristics, and identity

Julio Salgado, did his undergrad at Cal State Long Beach.

http://fi2w.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/quip-julio.jpg
Intersectionality isn’t

• An argument for “double” or “triple” oppression (“There is No Hierarchy of Oppressions,” Audre Lorde)
• An argument against the necessity and usefulness of identity-specific resources, programs, and relationships
• Ahistorical – It is not in lieu of remembering, understanding and responding to specific historical legacies
Stereotype Threat

• If African American or female students are asked to identify their race or gender, respectively, at the start of an exam, they will do statistically worse on that exam.

Self Reflection

Self as Teacher

• What brings you to teach this course at this particular time in your life?
• How have you come to understand your complex social identities? Which aspects are most salient for you in the classroom?
• What do you love about teaching? What challenges you about teaching?
• What teacher(s) or mentor(s) of yours have influenced your thinking about how to teach multicultural issues (e.g., race, sexual orientation, genders, social class, religion, etc.)?
• What strengths do you think you “bring to the table”?
• What challenges do you anticipate?
• Who’s theoretical and what experiences have influenced your thinking about the complex issues of social identities?
• Identify ONE (ten) critical choice(s) you have made in your life that have shaped your attitude about race and racism

• List ONE (seven) event(s) that have affected the course of your life on the subjects of race and racism

• And, name and describe ONE (five) person (people) who have profoundly affected the course of your life as you live in our racially divided society.
Intercultural Competency

• Ability to discern greater complexity across similarities and differences. Built on:
  – Self-Awareness (experiences, biases, styles)
  – Empathy
  – Tolerance for ambiguity
  – Flexibility in thought and behavior
  – Patience
  – Curiosity
  – Active Listening
Sample diversity goals

• Cultivating a respect for diverse perspectives
• Developing an ability and willingness to work effectively in diverse groups
• Have a heightened awareness of and sensitivity to ... {gender, class, race issues}
• Learn to identify and reject narrow / oppositional thinking that reduces issues to only two sides (right/wrong, us/them)
• Learn to stay engaged in intergroup dialogues
Five Pedagogical Challenges

- Balance cognitive and emotional components of learning processes
- Acknowledge and support the personal, while illuminating the systemic
- Attend to social relations within the setting
- Utilize reflection and experience as tools for developmental learning
- Value and reward awareness, personal growth, and change as outcomes of the learning process

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Inclusive Teaching

• When core content (cognitive) and process (affective) goals are diversity related, effective teachers:
  – Disclose attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors
  – Create a climate of trust and no defensiveness, so that participants can examine and change/grow
  – Provide students with conceptual organizers, models, and frameworks that encourage self-reflection and analysis
  – Design opportunities to try out and practice new patterns of thought and behavior via experimentation, practice, and application.

Course Assessment Strategies

Formative
• Classroom Assessment Techniques (survey
• When do you feel most included in this course and/or classroom?
• When do you feel most excluded in this course and/or classroom?
(Such questions can be scored on a Likert Scale or asked as an open-ended prompt for narrative responses.)

Summative
• End-of-semester summative assessment measures that ask students to share their perspectives on the social climate of the classroom?

   Are multiple perspectives welcome in this classroom?
Further resources on intersectionality


