Diverse Teaching Pedagogy
Creating Cultural Safety in the Classrooms

Multicultural Teaching and Learning Institute
Thursday, April 23, 2009
Tinto’s Social Integration Model

- Most used model to explain and guide studies on retention.

- Academic and social integration are important for college students to succeed and persist

- More than 50% of studies found a positive correlation between social integration and institutional commitment, retention, persistence, transfer, or graduation

- Tinto (1993) concluded that social integration is among the most influential of campus factors
TINTO’S MODEL TIPPED THE ICEBERG?

Social & Academic Integration Capacity

- Cultural Factors
- Linguistic Support
- Faculty-Student Support
- Mentorship
- Organizational Factors
- Family and Environmental Factors
What have we learnt From the Lit:

- Lack of pre college preparedness of minority students impact college performances and retention level?
- Faculty interaction have been identified as important for minority retention
- Financial factors largely contributes to minority high college drop out rate?
- Cultural factors operates as a barrier for minority students
Contributing Factors Literature

- Lack of Role Model
- Cultural & Language differences
- Am I a smart student?
- First Generation college student
- Poor Pre-College Preparation
- Low socio-economical status
- What does the university expects?
Important Points

- Attending to “safety” is critical to an enhanced learning environment.

- An “inclusive” classroom is a safe one.

- Awareness and understanding of the “invisible culture” (Sheets 2005) of the classroom enhances instructor-student interactions.

What Is Your Definition of “Safety” in the Classroom?
What Is Your Definition of “Safety” in the Classroom?

- When have you shut down and not felt safe to discuss anything?
- What helps or hinders classroom safety?
- What do you do to create a safe classroom?
What helps classroom safety?

- Clarity of Purpose
- Clarity of Expectations
- Engage students in developing ground rules
- Model how to have constructive dialogue and inquiry
- Be prepared, not surprised.
What Hinders Classroom Safety?

- Lack of appropriate boundaries or structure
- Disjunctions in teaching and learning styles
- Your response to student resistance – active or passive
- "Contrapower" harassment (harassment of those with more organizational power by those with less)

Source: “Contrapower harassment and the Professorial Archetype: Gender, Race, and Authority in the Classroom” by NiCole T. Buchanan and Tamara A. Bruce, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University, American Association of Colleges and Universities, On Campus With Women, online journal, Fall 2004/Winter 2005, Vol. 34, No. 1 - 2
Engaging Resistance in the Classroom

- Affirm right to resist
- Slow pace of discussion
- Used to illustrate course content and promote insight
- Use “time-outs”
- Alter the mood of the classroom

Source: “Resistance in the Diverse Classroom: Meanings and Opportunities”, Ximena Zurita, Department of Student Development and Pupil Personnel Services, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Jane Mildred, Department of Sociology and Social Work, Westfield State College, American Association of Colleges and Universities, On Campus With Women, online journal, Fall 2004/Winter 2005, Vol. 34, No. 1 - 2
Generating Constructive Dialogue

- **NO:**
  - Blaming
  - Name-calling
  - Sarcasm
  - Aggression
  - Scapegoats
  - Jokes at another’s expense
  - Preaching

- **YES:**
  - Asking (inquiry)
  - Stay on topic
  - “I” messages
  - Check it out
  - Agree to disagree
  - Direct challenges to entire class or to instructor
Defining and Constructing Culturally Safe Classrooms

Some Examples?
Opportunities for Growth

• Awareness of one’s identity and power
• Confronting our own biases
• Responding to biased comments
• Confronting our own doubts and anxiety
• Awareness of our need for student approval
When Was I Effective?

- Praising and recognizing students
- Instructor sharing their own mistakes
- Personal stories of instructor and students
- Student contribution
- Inventory of our triggers
- See next slide
Cultural Safety: A classroom creation
Defining the Classroom

- 4 walls that transcend
- Experts Vs Me interaction
- Vulnerability Vs Need to belong

**GOAL**

- Social construction of reality with a shared vantage point.
- No one person knows enough to stand alone
Identifying Roles thru Clarifying Expectations

- **Instructors** – Describe role and that of the student in knowledge and safety creation

- **Students** – Not expected to be experts but knowledgeable about their own cultural experiences and willing to share

- **Together** search for *Equifinality* – the premise that the same result may be researched from different beginning points
Cautionary points

- Ethnocentrism is always present
  - Belief that one’s own culture or ethnic group is superior to others

- Exceptions to every rule

- Modeling by instructor is key
  - Must be available to diffuse, explain, and create links to various viewpoints
  - Share thinking processes to help students value the experience

*Remember difference should be celebrated*
Teaching “Women and Law” across several generations of women—baby boomers, generation X, and Millennials in same class (Kathy Grove)

- Life experience and context different
- Different experience of gender roles and gender relations
- Knowledge of history different
- Learning styles and preferences different
### Generational Life Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Life Experiences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
<td>Pill approved in 1960 by FDA, Kennedy Assassination, Civil Rights Movement, Man on the Moon, Women’s Movement, Vietnam War, Roe v. Wade, Title IX, Watergate, VCR’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>Reaganomics, Iran Contra, Challenger Accident, AIDS, Cable television, MTV, Personal computers, World Wide Web, Fall of USSR, Gulf War</td>
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<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>Clinton, Cell phones, Digital technology, September 11th, War on Terrorism, “GW”, Reality TV, Global warming, Enron, Iraq War, American Idol, Human Genome, Mars Rover</td>
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# Generational Rights of Adult Woman (age 18)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contraception</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Pay</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Opportunity</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Education</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMLA</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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Techniques (Mix it up)

- Baby boomers: share experience and lived history in class, reflection in writing
- Gen X: Grade rubrics, well-defined schedule and reward system, visuals
- Millennials: Co-create curriculum, group work, presentations
Practice Model  
Cultural Climate Approach

Middlesex Community College in Massachusetts developed programs with an emphasis on supporting cultural diversity and global awareness.

Seven key initiatives included:

- Changing the focus of the orientation program to emphasize the importance of valuing diversity.
- Developing an easy-access program for English-as-a-Second-Language students.
- Revising a portion of the student activities budget to focus on programs that address issues of diversity.
- Creating international student fellowships.
- Creating an international club on campus.
- Integrating the appreciation of cultural differences into the freshman seminar curriculum.
- Developing a student improvisational theater troupe.
- Results--- the programs have reduced the gap existing between minority and white students.
BEST PRACTICE MODEL Components

- Linguistic support—language lab, accessible ESL
- Language barrier tend to affect minority students.
- Specifically Hispanics’ students reading and comprehension skills
- Socioeconomic support
- Organizational initiative to provide minority students with grants and text books loans.
Research indicates that students' cultural background correlates with their preferred learning styles. Students' individual learning preferences are typically accompanied by culturally determined tools. Students’ cultural background influences the way they process information. The fit between teaching and learning styles, facilitate or hinder minorities educational achievement.
BEST PRACTICE MODEL
Components
Faculty-Student Interaction

- The research support the importance of faculty interaction with minority students
- Study infer that minority students benefit from faculty – student relation
- Minority students require reinforcement from faculty especially during the first year of college
- Faculty members included in monitoring and assessment
Reference


Reference


Reference


Clagett, C. A. (1998) Can college actions improve the academic achievement of at-risk minority students?

THANK YOU

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