

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
College of Education
Department of Education Policy and Leadership
EDPL 338
LEARNING ABOUT CULTURAL DIVERSITY
THROUGH INTERGROUP DIALOGUE
1 Credit
Fall 2004

Course Description

This course engages students, from one or more cultural identity groups, in facilitated dialogue about the similarities and differences of experience that exist within a group and/or between and across groups. The goal of intergroup dialogue is for students to develop comfort with, and skill for, discourse on difficult topics toward the end of fostering positive, meaningful, and sustained cross-group relationships.

Whereas in debate, students learn to listen to gain advantage, in intergroup dialogue, students learn to listen to gain understanding. In so doing, students develop increased multicultural interaction facility, heightened intergroup awareness and sensitivity, and greater commitment to civic engagement.

Reading Packet—Available at *Media Express*

General Objectives

1. “Knowing”—Epistemological/Choice

Students will develop increased personal and political awareness of cultural identity affiliation and difference, as well as increased knowledge about equity and diversity;

2. “Know How”—Epistemological/Choice

Students will develop increased communication and conflict exploration skills, as well as growth in perspective taking and complex thinking; students will develop the ability to juxtapose as well as integrate personal narrative and critical academic analysis;

3. “Being”—Ontological/Seeing

Students will develop decreased propensity for stereotyping, a reduction in intergroup interaction anxiety, increased comfort with multiculturalism, greater appreciation for difference, and increased motivation for cross-group bridge-building;

4. “Doing”—Axiomatic/Responsibility

Students will develop interest in taking action to bring about equity and justice.

Learning Expectations/Methods of Evaluation

1. Dialogue Attendance & Participation—50%

Students must attend 7 of the 8 dialogue sessions to earn the course credit.

Dialogue Attendance Policy

Students should be aware that the nature of learning in intergroup dialogue is cumulative (for example, understanding concepts discussed in the third dialogue is, to some degree, contingent upon having attended the first and second dialogues). Therefore, it is crucial that each student attend every dialogue.

Students will sign a dialogue attendance sheet at the beginning of each dialogue. Students who arrive to a dialogue session late will sign a late dialogue attendance sheet at the conclusion of each dialogue.

Dialogue Participation Policy

Each student is expected to contribute to each dialogue session and to engage in related activities.

2. Assigned Reading—25% (see also, Daily Reflections below)

Each student should be prepared to and is expected to participate in discussion of all assigned readings. All students are required to read all of the articles in each of the 5 sections of the reading packet. Students should bring 5 critical comments or questions handwritten on 3x5 cards for each section of readings; these comments/questions will be used to structure discussion during each dialogue session. Each card should have the student's name written on the back. Students should hand in these cards at the beginning of each session.

3. Daily Reflections—25% (10% for personal narrative, 15% for critical connection to readings)

At the conclusion of each dialogue session, students will be given 10-15 minutes to hand-write a reflection on their experience of the session. The length of these reflections should be determined by the content, not the reverse. Reflections should weave the students' personal narratives on the session with their critical analysis of the readings discussed in it. Reflections should be thoughtful; students are expected to engage in self-critique, to comment on or critique the contributions of other students in the session, to bring in related narratives from other sources (e.g., comments from friends or family with whom they discussed the dialogue) in a critically conscious manner, as well as to integrate relevant learnings gleaned from other academic sources (e.g., readings from a class or another dialogue, independent research, etc.).

Criterion for Evaluation and Grading

Students will be evaluated on dialogue attendance and participation, and the completion of all other learning expectations. Students will be graded on the *quality* of their contributions to the dialogue—their creativity, the degree to which their effort to understand and grow from the dialogues/activities/readings/reflections is demonstrated, the degree to which they work to share and develop their thinking, and their timeliness in completing assignments (5 points per day will be subtracted for lateness on the comment/question cards and reflections)—and not on the content of their opinions.

Grading Rubric

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% or less

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Overall Dialogue Facilitation
2. Office Hour/Phone Availability
3. Student Support and Affirmation
4. Other...

Methodology

1. Problem-Posing Dialogue/Activities
2. Individual Reading Assignments
3. Individual Writing Assignments

Impact Statement

In the discussion of politically complex and charged issues, like those at focus in this course, interpersonal as well as intellectual discomfort may arise. It is necessary to engage in discussion of these issues in order to come to a comprehensive, critically conscious understanding of how prejudice and discrimination operate in our lives and the larger world around us. It is only by engaging in the open and honest discussion of inequity that we can learn how to build inclusive and socially just communities both on-campus and beyond. If you become particularly distressed about any discussion please speak to the course facilitator(s) immediately, and/or take advantage of the services offered by the campus' Counseling Center located on the first floor of the Shoemaker Building.

Equal Educational Opportunity Policy Statement

In accordance with federal, state, local, and university policies (especially with respect to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act), access to equal educational opportunity is paramount. Thus, every effort will be made to arrange for reasonable accommodations to ensure that such opportunity exists and is measurable in terms of equality of outcomes for every student on the basis of race; ethnicity; language; geographic origin; socioeconomic class, sex and gender; gender identity and expression; sexual orientation; physical, developmental, and psychological ability; religious, faith-based, spiritual, and/or secular affiliation; age and generation; and physical appearance; among other categories of identity.

Statement on Academic Integrity

The university has approved a Code of Academic Integrity available on the web at www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Departments/jpo/code_acinteg.html. The code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without

authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The code strives to promote a “community of trust” on our campus.

Statement on Learning

Students are responsible for *discovering* learning through the dialogues, interactive activities, reflections, and readings.

Statement on Health

Please take the time to eat right, exercise, and get enough rest. You will be better for it.

Desired Student Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will have developed:

1. “Knowing”—Epistemological/Choice

increased personal and political awareness of cultural identity affiliation and difference, as well as increased knowledge about equity and diversity;

2. “Know How”—Epistemological/Choice

increased communication and conflict exploration skills, as well as growth in perspective taking and complex thinking; the ability to juxtapose as well as integrate personal narrative and critical academic analysis;

3. “Being”—Ontological/Seeing

decreased propensity for stereotyping, a reduction in intergroup interaction anxiety, increased comfort with multiculturalism, greater appreciation for difference, and increased motivation for cross-group bridge-building;

4. “Doing”—Axiomatic/Choice

interest in taking action to bring about equity and justice.

Course Outline

Weeks 1-2—Beginning the Dialogue (Relationship Building)

Welcome

Introductions

Articulation of Expectations for, and Concerns about, the Dialogue

Review of Syllabus

Decide on Parameters for Dialogue:

- ways in which respect will be demonstrated for everyone's perspective in the dialogue
- strategies for ensuring that everyone is included in the dialogue; that no one person or group dominates the discussion
- what the content focus or foci for the dialogue will be, identification of the salient “issues” within the content-focus areas of the dialogue

Interactive Activity: What Do You *Know* About and What Do You Want to *Learn* About the Other Group(s)?/Others TBA

Activity Debriefing

Prioritization of Salient Issue to Begin Next Dialogue

Daily Reflections (without connection to readings)

Assignments:

Readings

Comment/Question Cards

Week 3—Feeling Each Other Out (Building Trust)

Collect Comment/Question Cards

Reintroduction of Prioritized Salient Issue to Begin Dialogue

Generative Discussion of Issue and Readings, Problem-Posing Facilitation using Comment/Question Cards

Interactive Activity: Power Walk/Others TBA

Activity Debriefing

Meta-Analysis

- where are we?
- where do we want to go?
- how do we get there?
- what are the barriers to our getting there?
- what strategies can we identify for overcoming the barriers?

Prioritization of Salient Issue to Begin Next Dialogue

Daily Reflection (with connection to readings)

Assignments:

Readings

Comment/Question Cards

Week 4—Testing the Water, Taking a Stand (Managing Tension)

Collect Comment/Question Cards

Reintroduction of Prioritized Salient Issue to Begin Dialogue

Generative Discussion of Issue and Readings, Problem-Posing Facilitation using Comment/Question Cards

Interactive Activity: “Act Like a Member of *Your* Group, Act Like a Member of *Their* Group”/Others TBA

Activity Debriefing

Meta-Analysis

- where are we?
- where do we want to go?
- how do we get there?
- what are the barriers to our getting there?
- what strategies can we identify for overcoming the barriers?

Prioritization of Salient Issue to Begin Next Dialogue

Daily Reflection (with connection to readings)

Assignments:

Readings

Comment/Question Cards

Week 5—Confronting Anger and Pain (Mediating Discord)

Collect Comment/Question Cards

Reintroduction of Prioritized Salient Issue to Begin Dialogue

Generative Discussion of Issue and Readings, Problem-Posing Facilitation using Comment/Question Cards

Interactive Activity: Caucus Groups/Others TBA

Activity Debriefing

Meta-Analysis

- where are we?
- where do we want to go?
- how do we get there?
- what are the barriers to our getting there?
- what strategies can we identify for overcoming the barriers?

Prioritization of Salient Issue to Begin Next Dialogue

Daily Reflection (with connection to readings)

Assignments:

Readings

Comment/Question Cards

Week 6—Finding Ways to Come Together (Resolving Conflict, Living with Ambiguity)

Collect Comment/Question Cards

Reintroduction of Prioritized Salient Issue to Begin Dialogue

Generative Discussion of Issue and Readings, Problem-Posing Facilitation using Comment/Question Cards

Interactive Activity: Fishbowls/Others TBA

Activity Debriefing

Meta-Analysis

- where are we?
- where do we want to go?
- how do we get there?
- what are the barriers to our getting there?
- what strategies can we identify for overcoming the barriers?

Prioritization of Salient Issue to Begin Next Dialogue

Daily Reflection (with connection to readings)

Assignments:

Readings

Comment/Question Cards

Week 7-8—Next Steps, Continuing the Dialogue on Our Own (Moving Toward Taking Collective Action)

Collect Comment/Question Cards

Reintroduction of Prioritized Salient Issue to Begin Dialogue

Generative Discussion of Issue and Readings, Problem-Posing Facilitation using
Comment/Question Cards

Interactive Activity: Specific Question for a Specific Student in the Dialogue (written
onto cards and passed to co-facilitators to ask; anonymity in asking question
optional, answering question optional)/Others TBA

Activity Debriefing

Meta-Analyses

- where are we?
- where do we want to go?
- how do we get there?
- what are the barriers to our getting there?
- what strategies can we identify for overcoming the barriers?

Final Daily Reflections (with connection to readings)

Next Steps→ Action→ Campus/Community Engagement/Service/Experiential Activities
and/or Other Ideas

Verbal Assessments

Written Evaluations

Celebrations/Recognition/Graduation