


Increasing Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity to Diversity

clcu NYGEAR UP Webinar Series

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Carol Dahir, Ed.D., Counselor Education

New York Institute of Technology

Caroldahir@aol.com; cdahir@nyit.edu



Today's let's think about

- expanding our cultural awareness to work with diverse student populations and their families
- culturally sensitive academic and career advising
- collaborating and teaming with teachers and administrators



Our Charge

- School counselors have an ethical responsibility (ASCA, 2016) to collaborate with teachers to help raise the level of knowledge, understanding, and skills so that the diverse needs of individual students are met.
- Every counselor must improve one's individual cultural competence in order to consult and collaborate with faculty and other school based professionals.



What Do We Know.....

- About the students in our school?
- Ethnic diversity?
- Racial diversity?
- Religious diversity?
- Cultural diversity?



The Bigger Picture of Diversity

- Race
- Ethnicity/Nationality
- Language
- Age
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Family configuration
- Socioeconomic status
- Family Configuration
- Mobility
- Religion
- Physical, emotional, and learning disabilities

What's missing?

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Cultural Competence is Critical in 21st Century Schools Everywhere

Cultural competence is the ability to successfully appreciate, understand, and communicate with students who come from cultures that are different than your own (Moule, 2012).

To accomplish this requires acquiring knowledge, skills, sensitivities, and awareness that are effective when working with diverse student populations.



Making Connections

- Cultural awareness
- Cultural competence
- Understanding and respecting diversity



Getting to know each other!

- How do you define yourself?
.....by racial identity or ethnicity or cultural heritage or all three?

Introduce yourself and share one thing that is important to you about your: racial identity or ethnicity or cultural heritage?



Our Culture Perspective Influences Our Counseling

- Cultural Identity
- Cultural Viewpoint
- Intercultural Communication
- Social Justice

How does culture influence the way we work
with students?

Let's explore.....



Developing a Cultural Identity

- My racial identity is important to who I am ●
- My ethnic identity influences my interactions with others ●
- My gender is important influence in the way I identify myself ●
- Social class influences how I relate to others. ●



Developing a Cultural Viewpoint

- I am able to discuss the influence of racial and ethnic identity on student-adult relationship. ●
- I seek to expand my knowledge about other cultures, especially those of the students and colleagues I work with. ●
- I realize that people from the same culture may have divergent views, values, beliefs, and customs. ●



Developing Intercultural Communication Skills

- I can use culturally competent communication skills with all parents, teachers, and school administrators. ●
- I am aware of culturally insensitive topics, gestures, and body language. ●
- I am aware when race or culture or ethnicity of a student is a problem for a colleague. ●



Ability to Challenge Biases and Beliefs (Social Justice)

- I can advocate for school policies, programs and services that enhance a positive school climate and are equitable and responsive to diverse student populations. ●
- I am willing to speak up when confronted with biases or prejudices about individual or groups of students. ●
- I am able to reduce social/institutional barriers that keep students from achieving their potential. ●



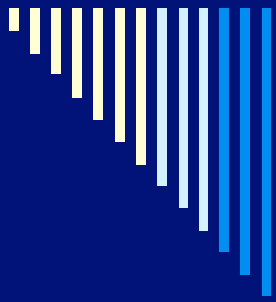
As a Culturally Competent Counselor

- I can demonstrate sensitivity to others, and skillfulness in relating to diverse individuals, groups and classrooms. ●
- I can recognize when my beliefs and values are interfering with providing the best services to my students. ●
- I am aware as to how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of students. ●



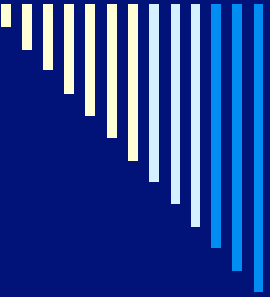
What Defines You?

- ▶ Personal awareness is a key step in developing cultural awareness and competency.
- ▶ Activity: Your personal identity
 - ▶ How do you define yourself?
 - ▶ What are your most important personal and cultural values?



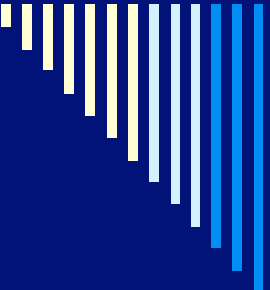
School counselors can
.....ensure that diverse student
individual needs are respected and
supported.

How will you do this?



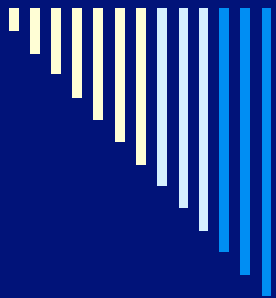
School counselors can
.....become culturally and
linguistically knowledgeable
about their school's population.

How will you do this?



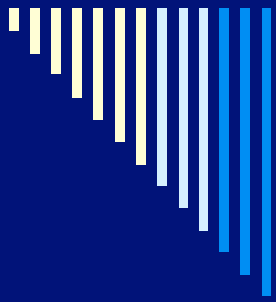
School counselors can.....
establish strong links with the
community; and, connect diverse
students and their families with
services not available at school.

How will you do this?



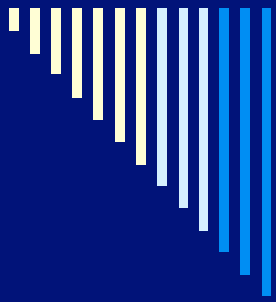
EVERY school should pride itself on being an inclusive caring and respectful learning community of children and adults.

How can the school counselor can be a catalyst to make that happen?



School counselors can.....
help teachers to design classroom
activities that strengthen students'
academic, social, emotional, and career
skills.

How will you do this?



School counselors **AND** Teachers
together can.....
ensure that individual needs are
respected and supported.

How will you do this?



Think About

- What can you do to foster a multicultural atmosphere in their schools?
- What cultural biases are you aware of that impact a student's decision about his or her future goals?



What is Culturally Competent School?

A school that has a broad view of cultural diversity includes not only differences in race and ethnic backgrounds but also “diverse sexual orientation, religious traditions, age groups and learning differences” and “typically invites everyone to learn and change” (p. 208).

A school that is culturally competent recognizes the diversity of its students and promotes a sense of community around it.



Creating a Culturally Compatible Climate

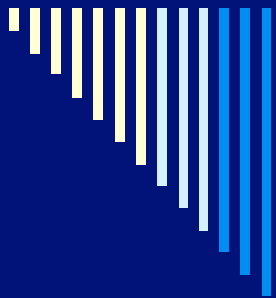
School counselors can provide the initiative and leadership to ensure that culturally and developmentally appropriate activities are an integral part of the school counseling program and are directly linked to fostering a climate built on respect and caring.

Can you provide some examples?



Daily Challenges

- 1. Working with new immigrants who are displaced or refugees**
- 2. Working with family conflict of values**
- 3. Working with special education students (learning, physical, emotional disabilities)**
- 4. Helping students from different economic backgrounds work and learn together**
- 5. Understanding gender differences**
- 6. Motivating children who come from families where there is no father figure**



What's on Your Mind?

In my school (building/district).....



How Can You Make Change Happen?

- ❑ Be knowledgeable
- ❑ Hold fast to your social justice mindset
- ❑ Believe in people; model that belief
- ❑ Build bridges among groups
- ❑ Lead by example
- ❑ Be visible and accessible.
- ❑ **Empower others**
- ❑ Build capacity for success



Where to begin....

- ❑ Explore personal attitudes and beliefs about working with diverse populations;
- ❑ Reflect on your cultural awareness to improve student achievement;
- ❑ Identify new strategies to support our ethnically diverse student populations in our schools; and,
- ❑ Raise more questions than we can possibly have answers for.



The Journey is the Destination

Cultural competence for educators is not a destination, rather, it is a lifelong journey that requires continual and intentional research, expansion of our knowledge bases, practice, and the integration of culturally competent approaches in all aspects of teaching and learning.



Resources

American School Counselor Association

www.schoolcounselor.org

- ❑ ASCA National Model for Comprehensive School Counseling (2012)
- ❑ ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors (2014)
- ❑ ASCA Professional School Counselor Competencies (2007)
- ❑ ASCA Ethical Standards (2016)



References

Bucher, R. (2008). *Cultural intelligence*.

Moule, J., 2012. *Cultural competence: A primer for educators*.

Spradlin, L.K. (2012). *Diversity matters: Understanding diversity in schools*.

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Contact clcu Outreach

Susan Nesbitt Perez, Ph.D.
VP, Outreach and Financial Aid
susan@cicu.org

Rebecca Barger
Assistant Director
rebecca@cicu.org

Alyssa McGrath
Assistant Director
alyssa@cicu.org

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Jul. 25, 9am: **Creating A College-Going Culture**

Jul. 26, 9am: **Where are You in Implementation of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program?**

Jul. 27, 10am: **The Importance of Early College and Career Awareness: A Curriculum**

Jul. 29, 2pm: **Connecting Students to STEM Opportunities**

Aug. 2, 10am: **Financial Aid Counseling 101 – Basics Your Students and Parents Need to Know**

Aug. 9, 10am: **Why 9th Grade is Important for College-Bound Students**

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