

Meeting the Needs of Underserved and Underrepresented Students: The Role of Administrators at Predominantly White Institutions



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Overview

- Session objectives
 - Increase cultural competence to better serve
 - Students of color
 - 1st generation college students
 - LGBTQIA identified students
 - Have a space to “troubleshoot” past experiences and plan for the future
- Content
 - Working with specific populations/cultural values and relevant factors
 - How to integrate the above into work with students
- Outcomes
 - Increased awareness and knowledge
 - Improved practices/skills
 - Ultimately, enhanced services for students

Who are we talking about?

- Underrepresented students :
 - Race/ethnicity - students of color
 - Sexual orientation - lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, pansexual, etc. students
 - Gender identity - transgender, gender non-binary
 - Socioeconomic status - under resourced households, 1st generation to attend college



Why are we are we talking about these students in particular?

- Because they're underserved and it's our job to serve *all* students
- All of the aforementioned student groups are statistically less likely to
 - Use physical and mental health services
 - In the community
 - On campus
 - Engage campus resources

Pre-information Exercise (5-10 minutes)

- Take some time to answer the questions on the following slide independently
- We'll be coming back to them during the “troubleshooting” portion of this session

What have your experiences working with underrepresented populations been like?

- Where do you find you struggle the most?
- Where do you believe you excel?
- What do you wish you knew more about?
- How do you know when you've made a mistake in your interactions with students?
- What do you do when you've made an interpersonal mistake as an administrator?

Cultural Values/Relevant Factors for Specific Populations

Preface to cultural Values/Relevant Factors Review

- All groups are heterogeneous
 - Goal in review is to gain familiarity with these concepts *not* to stereotype based on them
- Adherence to the following values depends on a number of factors such as
 - Acculturation level- assumption of dominant group cultural values (MacCluskie, 2010)
 - Enculturation - adherence to one's culture of origin (Altugan, 2015)
 - Generational status
 - Identity denial vs. identity assertion (Kim, 2015)

Latino/a/x American Values

- Familismo - family orientation
- Personalismo - preferences for relationships with people rather than institutions
- Respeto - respecting familial roles
- Confianza - trust and intimacy in relationships
- Fatalismo - fatalism
- Controlarse - self-containment/consciousness



Latinx Cultural Values (continued)

- Aguantarse - resilience/ability to withstand stress
- Educacion - academic, moral, and interpersonal education
- Marianismo/machismo - adherence to traditional gender roles

Hall (2010)

Black and African American Cultural Values

- Umoja - unity in the family and community
- Kujichagulia - self determination
- Ujima - collective work and responsibility
- Ujamaa - cooperative economics
- Nia - purpose
- Kuumba - creativity
- Imani - faith in people, parents, teachers, righteousness of the struggle



Asian Pacific American Cultural Values

- Collectivism
- Conformity to norms
- Emotional self-control
- Family recognition through achievement
- Filial piety
- Humility



Koppelman (2014)

American Indian and Alaska Native Cultural Values

- Harmony and Balance - honoring one's sense of connection
 - with nature, with group/others, between mind and body
- Family -identity as a member of family and responsibility for other members (both nuclear and tribal)
- Spirituality
 - traditions
 - ceremonies



Hays, & Erford (2014)

Factors Impacting the Experiences of LGBTQIA Individuals

- Sexual identity development
 - Takes place within the context of “the margins”
 - Limited representation/fear of rejection by important close others
- Gender identity development
 - Context
 - Binary dichotomy
 - Gender identity is often invisible and assumed by others



Baruth & Manning (2012)

Factors Impacting the Experiences of LGBTQIA Individuals (continued)

- Importance of context
 - When context for identity development doesn't affirm
 - Increased rates of mental health concerns
 - Increased risk for suicidality
 - Decreased access to supportive others
- Coming out processes
 - Only required as a result of heterosexism/normativity
 - Regularly occurring across contexts

Factors impacting the Experiences of 1st Generation College Students

- Lack of generational knowledge and related support
- Disconnection from support system/folks from home as a direct result of education
 - becoming an “outsider”
- Imposter syndrome
 - relative to school community
- Pressure to succeed



Moreno (2016)

Implications of Cultural Values and Relevant Factors for Our Work with Students

Incorporating Cultural Values and Relevant Factors into Interactions with Students

- The rationale
 - Service seeking/resource use requires
 - Vulnerability/acknowledgement of needs
 - Awareness of available resources
 - Returning to services requires
 - Feeling respected, understood, and cared for
 - Trust in providers/administrators



Incorporating Cultural Values and Relevant Factors into Interactions with Students

- Strategies
 - Intentional engagement efforts
 - Verbal prompting that expresses openness and affirmation of students' identities

Incorporating Cultural Values and Relevant Background Factors into Work with Students

- Ask students about their role in their families and communities → Familismo, collectivism, balance
 - Explore and honor students' familial ties and obligations
- Allow students to self-define goals and needs → Kujichagulia
 - Don't impose "standard" or "normative" student goals and needs

Incorporating Cultural Values and Relevant Background Factors into Work with Students (continued)

- Acknowledge the role finances play in student decision-making around
 - Health services, use of other campus resources, involvement in extracurricular activities
 - Acknowledge and honor students' financial responsibility *to family*
- Communicate understanding around students support systems' limited familiarity with higher education

When Campus Community Values and Cultural Values are at Odds

- Acknowledge conflicts between cultural and school values/expectations
 - Validate students' experiences of microaggressions
 - Don't deny student-identified conflicts between values
 - Sit with and resolve (when possible)
- Assist students in developing capacity to make decisions that reflect the balance they need
 - Encourage them to make use of available campus and community resources

Walking the Walk - Targeted Engagement Efforts

- Administrator/provider presence at campus community events of affinity groups
 - cultural fairs and rallies - show up
- Providing educational programming around particular health issues to those affinity groups
 - e.g. sexual health programs at the campus LGBTQIA Center
- Reflecting the groups in staffing
- Posting student affinity group event advertisements in office

Talking the Talk - Language Use

- Talking about students' backgrounds and identity comfortably...
 - Takes practice, so start doing it with each other
 - When interacting with students reflect openness in your introduction
 - Name
 - Pronouns
 - Ask the same of students
 - Integrate pieces of your cultural background into the conversation
- Context is important when asking students about their background
 - Provide students with a sense of why you're asking specific questions
 - Example “To get a more comprehensive picture of who you are,” “To better understand what you’re looking for/goals,” and “To collaboratively figure out what might work best for you in this situation”
- Use open questions that don't assume particular experience based on students' identities
 - “How do you identify in terms of.....”
 - What is access to resources like in your home?

Troubleshooting...

Problemsolving...

(Review of past experiences with the goal of improving future experiences)

What have your experiences working with underrepresented students been like?

- Where do you find you struggle the most?
- Where do you believe you excel?
- What do you wish you knew more about?
- How do you know when you've made a mistake in your interactions with students?
- What do you do when you've made a mistake as an administrator?

Final Questions

- What can you do to improve your ability to serve underrepresented and underserved students?
- How will you know when you've improved?

Concluding Thoughts

- Our role is to ensure *all students* at our institutions have the potential to thrive
 - Microaggressions/interpersonal mistakes will occur
 - Acknowledging when we make mistakes and modeling repairs increases your value as a resource for students
- It's important to consider *who* the students we serve *are*
 - identity
 - past experiences
 - values and goals



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