



Celebrating Diversity & Honoring Differences

Being the Change You Want to See

The Meaning of Diversity

Cultural Diversity means different things to different people, but primarily refers to the differences between people's "master statuses," which include:

- Race
- Social class
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability

Theories of Difference

Most people's views of themselves, society, and the world are rooted in either *Essentialist* or *Constructivist* fundamental viewpoints



Essentialism vs. Constructivism

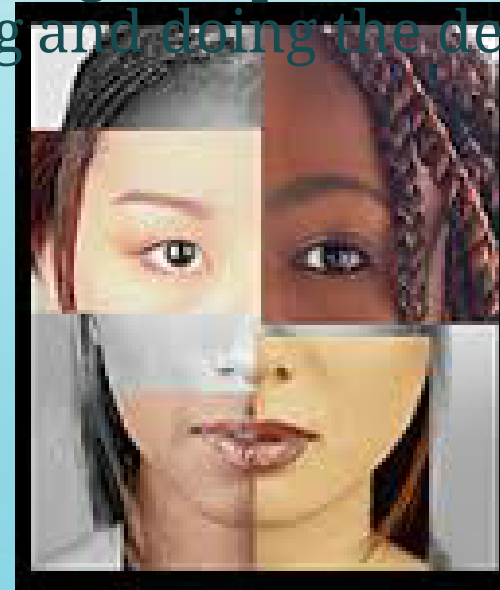
Essentialist perspective

Reflects a belief in the inherent, in-bred nature of things and people



Constructivist perspective

Reflects an understanding that meaning is socially and culturally constructed (what something is depends on who is looking and doing the defining)



How Diversity Affects the School

- Diversity creates an environment where people who are different can **interact with and learn from and about each other**
- Diversity can **catalyze conflicts** and/or **facilitate meaningful engagement**
- Diversity in academic settings requires **cultural competence, cultural sensitivity, and culturally responsive teaching methods**

Benefits of Diversity

In order to experience the benefits of diversity...

ENGAGEMENT is the key!

Benefits of diversity include:

Opportunities to **TRANSFORM**

our thinking,

our theories,

and ourselves!



Challenges of Diversity

- Intersectionality
- Dichotomies
- Disagreements and conflicts
- We fear encountering others' traumas



Overcoming the Challenges of Diversity

It all begins with you!

Four Recommended Steps to help overcome the challenges of diversity:

1. Increase your tolerance for making mistakes
2. Appreciate the statuses you occupy
3. Be willing to “sit in the fire”
4. Be an ally and appreciate your allies

Overcoming the Challenges of Diversity

Recognize that **DIFFERENCE ALWAYS EXISTS...**



Practical Ways to Support Diversity

1. Be inclusive
2. Be an ally
3. Diversity training
4. Recognize assets
5. Challenge hegemony



FREE YOUR MINDS AND THE REST WILL FOLLOW!



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