



CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND THE MPA CURRICULUM

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CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- Contemporary public administration research is increasingly emphasizing the need for the public sector to explore culture competency initiatives underscored by the continually changing demographics of the United States.



CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- Broadly defined, culture competency reflects specific actions or policies within an organization enabling it to more effectively serve its culturally diverse populations.
- The more diverse a population becomes, the more diverse the unique cultural differences will be.



CULTURAL COMPETENCY EDUCATION

- Health Care
- Social Work
- Nursing
- Education
- Public Administration



HEALTH CARE

- The notion of incorporating cultural competency into the curriculum of higher education is not new.
- Higher education programs for the health profession have explored and practiced teaching cultural competency for the past three decades.
- More importantly, it has been found that cultural competency training both improves the knowledge of health professionals and improves the attitudes and skills of health professionals.



SOCIAL WORK

- A study of social work education programs outlines three objectives for students to embark towards cultural competence:
 - 1) to raise the students' awareness about the importance of being culturally competent;
 - 2) to create an atmosphere in which students and teachers can ask questions and share their knowledge about cultures; and
 - 3) to increase the amount of information the students have about cultures, including their own



NURSING

- Conceptual approaches for teaching cultural competency in nursing education include:
 - Knowledge-based programs highlight information such as definitions about culture and related concepts.
 - Second, attitude-based curricula underscore the impact of social-cultural factors on patient's values through self-reflection.
 - The third major conceptual approach toward cultural competency teaching is skill-building.



PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

- The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) advances the notion of diversity across curricula with their guidelines for public affairs schools seeking accreditation.
- As NASPAA notes, public affairs graduates are “required to function in increasingly diverse and heterogeneous organizational settings” therefore, “course and curriculum materials as well as other programmatic activities should expose students to issues relating to race and gender and develop in them the capacity to work effectively with individuals representing diverse backgrounds” (NASPAA, 2009, p. 1).



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FOR A CULTURALLY COMPETENCY CURRICULUM IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

- Knowledge-Based
- Attitude-Based
- Skills-Based
- Community-Based



KNOWLEDGE-BASED

- Definition/Terms
- Local and National Demographics
- Societal Disparities
- Policy and Legal



ATTITUDE-BASED

- Self-reflection
- Societal Biases
- Organizational Culture/Change



SKILLS-BASED

- Communication
- Program Development
- Program Assessment
- Technology



COMMUNITY-BASED

- Public Involvement
- Non-Profit Partnerships
- Internships



CONCLUSION

- This presentation does not present an exhaustive list of content examples.
- It is evident that there are ample opportunities for public affairs and administration programs to make their curriculum more culturally competent, if they are not already doing so



THANK YOU

