

KNOWLEDGE

UNIT 1: WHAT IS CULTURAL/INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

TIME FRAME: (60 MINUTES)

What is intercultural competence? (30 minutes)

Why is intercultural competence important? (30 minutes)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO KNOW?

As educators, we need to prepare our clientele to live and work in a complex and interdependent society. We need to acknowledge diversity and build community by practicing hospitality, civility, and respect. In creating a respectful environment, we must become more aware and sensitive to the issues and challenges we face living in diverse communities. However, it is not enough for individuals and organizations to be culturally aware and sensitive; we must move beyond this point and begin a journey toward becoming competent in a culturally diverse environment.

OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE:

1. Individuals will be able to identify and understand the different dimensions of cultural/intercultural competence, both at an individual and organizational level.
2. Individuals will understand the importance of addressing cultural issues in serving a diverse clientele.

HOW TO USE THIS INFORMATION:

The information in this unit will assist participants in understanding the concept and importance of becoming culturally competent as individuals and organizations in an increasingly diverse society. Acquiring cultural competence is a life-long process that should occur at both an intellectual and an emotional level. Lectures and exercises will be used to teach this unit. Below in section 1, use exercise (1). In section 2, present lecture (1) first and then use exercise (2).

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

Section 1: Introduction to Cultural Competence:

Exercise 1 (30 minutes) -- What is intercultural competence? (Individual/Organizations)

Section 2: Discussion on Importance of Cultural Competence

Lecture1 (10 minutes) -- Why is Intercultural Competence Important? (Handout "Intercultural Competence Quiz")

Exercise 2 (20 minutes) – Why is Intercultural Competence Important?

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, if applicable:

Anand, R. (2000). Teaching Skills and Cultural Competency: A Guide for Trainers. Fourth Edition. Washington, DC: NMCI Publications.

Multicultural Pavillion: Numerous multicultural resources for educators.

Website: www.curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/multicultural/home.html

Teaching Tolerance: Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center: The Teaching Tolerance project provides free resources to help educators promote racial and cultural understanding in the classroom and beyond.

Website: www.splcenter.org