



**Culturally Mediated Instruction
A Critical Tool in Achieving the Dream**

*Culturally Mediated Instruction: A
Critical Tool in Achieving the Dream*

Facilitated

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Overview of Presentation

- The American Community College
- Classroom Practice and Organizational Culture Unplugged
- The Theory of Cultural Mediation in Instruction
- Extending the Conceptual Base of the Learning College
- Comparing Educational Paradigms
- Transforming Organizational Culture: Learning College Principles
- The Culturally Responsive Classroom
- The Future of CMI/CRP



The American Community College

Community colleges are centers of educational opportunity. They are an American invention that put publicly funded higher education at close-to-home facilities, beginning nearly 100 years ago with Joliet Junior College. Since then, they have been inclusive institutions that welcome all who desire to learn, regardless of wealth, heritage, or previous academic experience. (AACC)



The American Community College (continued)

- Historically, one of the community college's greatest strengths has been its understanding of diverse student populations
- The community college's mission is directly tied to values which emphasize mutual concern for all people - including human rights, self-determination, and social equity
- The classroom and the culture of the organization should reflect these values



Classroom Practice and Organizational Culture Unplugged

The data on access and attainment gaps for community college students indicate that *institutional policies and state and federal postsecondary education policies need to change. Community college leaders and state policymakers should be asking a number of questions about issues and challenges that have led to widening gaps in academic preparation, college participation, and educational attainment.* If community colleges are to continue providing educational opportunities for all Americans, policymakers, and community college leaders must assess the needs of their communities and craft policies that close the access and attainment gaps in their states...

Derek Price: Borrowing Inequality: Race, Class and Student Loans (2004)



Classroom Practice and Organizational Culture Unplugged (continued)

- Current analysis of classroom environment does not fully take into consideration the influence of culture on learning
- All learners deserve high quality instruction appropriately linked to their experiences and backgrounds
- Transformation of classroom practice extends the conceptual base of the learning college to include diverse learners
- Teaching and learning can be improved through inclusive organizational policies, practices and procedures



The Theory of Cultural Mediation in Instruction

Two components based on the centrality of the students' home- culture in framing memory structures and mental operations:

First, teaching and learning are more meaningful and productive when curriculum content and instructional processes include:

- culturally mediated cognition
- culturally appropriate social situations for learning
- culturally valued knowledge

Second, the authenticity of learning is validated for learners by the interactions and relationships between adult members of the community and school personnel

(Hollins, 1996)



Culturally Mediated Cognition

- Culturally mediated cognition in instruction refers to approaches using the ways of ***knowing***, ***understanding***, ***representing***, and ***expressing*** typically employed in a particular culture

(Hollins, 1996)



Culturally Appropriate Social Situations

- Culturally appropriate social situations for learning refers to relationships among students and between teachers and students during classroom instruction that are consistent with cultural values and practices

(Hollins, 1996)



Culturally Valued Knowledge in Curriculum Content

- Culturally valued knowledge in curriculum content refers to the inclusion of knowledge valued within the students' home-culture

(Hollins, 1996)



Extending the Conceptual Base of the Learning College

- A paradigm shift has taken hold in American higher education
- Old Paradigm: A college exists to provide instruction
- New Paradigm: A college exists to produce learning
- This shift changes everything

Comparing Educational Paradigms



Instruction Paradigm

- Knowledge exists as a separate entity
- Knowledge comes in “chunks” acquired through the senses
- Learning is cumulative and linear
- Fits the storehouse of knowledge metaphor

Learning Paradigm

- Knowledge exists in each person’s mind
- Knowledge is constructed, created, and “gotten”
- Learning is a nesting and interacting of frameworks
- Fits learning how to ride a bicycle metaphor

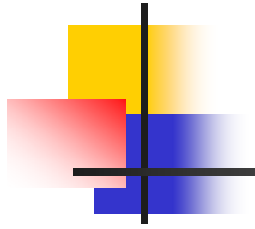
Comparing Educational Paradigms

Instruction Paradigm

Learning Paradigm

- Learning is teacher centered and controlled
- “Live” teacher, “live” students required
- The classroom and learning are competitive and individualistic
- Talent and ability are rare
- Learning is student centered and controlled
- “Active” learner required, but not “live” teacher
- Learning environments and learning are collaborative, and supportive
- Talent and ability are abundant

(Barr & Tagg, 1995)



Transforming Organizational Culture

The Learning College

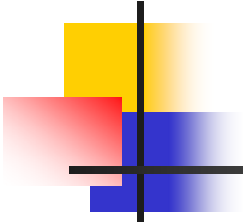


Learning College Principles

- **Creates substantive change in individual learners**
- **Engages learners as full partners in the learning process, and requires them to assume primary responsibility for their choices**
- **Creates and offers as many options for learning as possible**
- **Assists learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities**
- **Defines the roles of learning facilitators by the needs of the learners**
- **Succeeds when its learning facilitators can document improved and expanded learning on the part of learners**

(O' Banion, 1997)

The Culturally Responsive Classroom





Demonstrates Understanding of Diverse Learners

- understands that cultures and social groups differ in ways that are critical and affect learning
- understands social, emotional and intellectual characteristics of learners (e.g. *strong relational, frankness of manner, caring, respect, resistance to verbal dueling*)
- understands learner prior knowledge and uses it in planning (*storytelling, folklore, folk culture, ritual, back channeling, nvc, ...*)
- considers, accommodates, and integrates the physical, social, emotional, cognitive characteristics of learners into classroom practice (*ganas, interactive...*)



Selects Appropriate Goals

- develops clear, achievable learning goals
- accounts for learner diversity in setting learning goals
- sets goals suitable for a variety of learners
- plans curricula that are achievable but also challenging for learners at various developmental levels



Designs Coherent Opportunities for Student Learning

- acknowledges that all learners can learn at highest levels when developmental factors are recognized, respected, and accommodated
- chooses learning activities to support learning with understanding by diverse learners (*direct instruction, antiphony, verve.*)
- purposively sequences learning activities so they facilitate learning with understanding by diverse learners
- purposively selects learning materials and resources to support learning with understanding by diverse learners
- plans explicitly for instructional grouping
- designs productive individual and group tasks
- is creative, flexible and thorough in planning and organizing for learning by diverse learners
- considers opportunities for ongoing assessment
- with varieties of methods of assessment that accommodate cultural variation



Engages Diverse Learners

- uses teaching approaches that are sensitive to the multiple experiences of learners and that address different learning and performance modes
- establishes instructional groupings to productively engage diverse learners
- selects learning tasks, technologies and instructional strategies for enhancing student engagement
- represents content in multiple ways, appropriate to the culturally diverse and special needs inclusive classroom (*concrete as well as abstract methods of delivery*)
- facilitates connections of new content to the learner's prior understandings and experience
- chooses instructional materials to engage diverse learners
- paces instruction to facilitate learning by all (*recognizes variation in communication and learning style*)



Assesses Student Learning Outcomes

- understands the characteristics, uses, advantages and limitations of different types of assessment appropriate for evaluating how diverse students learn, what they know and are able to do
- checks for student understanding continuously using a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques (e.g. observation, portfolios of student work, projects, student self assessments, and peer assessment) to enhance her/his knowledge of individual learners, evaluate students' progress and performances, and modify teaching and learning strategies
- provides high quality feedback to learners to facilitate continued learning
- provides feedback in a timely manner



Manages Instructor and Learner Interactions

- communicates clear standards for conduct to learners
- understands how culture influences human interactions and behavior
- fosters respect, cooperation, and resolution of conflict
- proactively manages student behavior
- responds to misbehavior effectively and sensitively
- demonstrates sensitivity and respect for students
- creates learning communities in which learners assume responsibility for themselves and one another, participate in decision making, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning activities



Communicates Effectively Using Verbal, Nonverbal, and Media Communication Practices

- ...understands communication theory and norms, language development, and the role of dialect [(BE) vs. (SE)] and language variation in learning among diverse learners
- understands how cultural and gender differences can affect communication in the classroom
- anticipates possible student misunderstandings (*looks for teachable moments*)
- uses a variety of media communication tools, including audio-visual aids and computers, to enrich learning opportunities
- provides and *checks for* clear directions and procedures
- uses appropriate and effective questioning and discussion techniques



Supporting the Transformation

*Building the Foundation to Establish and
Sustain Change*



Instructional Development

- Incorporate diversity into the curriculum and develop alternative instructional methods which recognize multicultural and multicognitive learning
- Incorporate new instructional technologies into the learning process
- The Nairobi Method



The Nairobi Method

A philosophy that is designed to encourage miseducated, culturally and linguistically different adults to believe that a literacy education can make a positive difference in the way they live their lives. It includes intellectual excitement, knowledge of the educational system and their history (Slogans, posters, speakers, pep talks in classes, peer mentoring). Teachers call students , provide support services, child care, personal counseling, community service projects, community forums, strong faculty development.

(Hoover, McPhail, Ginyard, 1992)



A CASE STUDY: The Community College of Baltimore County

- CCBC Closing the Gap Initiative
- Committees on Instruction, Professional development, Student Services, Cyber-discussion
- Pilot Course on Culturally Responsive Instruction



Faculty Development

- Provide ongoing staff development activities that promote a multicultural and multicognitive, student-centered learning environment
- Emphasize program review and learning outcomes assessment to evaluate and improve student learning for all learners



Eight Principles for Training a Culturally Responsive Faculty

If colleges are committed to providing optimum learning environments for all students, then we believe that colleges have to figure out how to produce successful outcomes for all learners. We ask the question, how much more relevant would faculty development be if it were understood that recognition of a student's culture is vitally important to the learning outcomes in the classroom?

(McPhail & Costner, 2005)



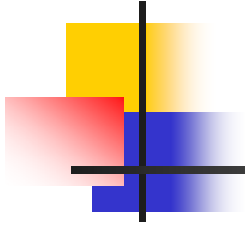
Culturally Responsive Faculty Development: A Summary

- 1) Develop Activities That Focus on Cultural Responsiveness
- 2) Ensure That All Faculty Respect the Culture of Their Students
- 3) Value and Celebrate Culture – Promote Cultural Sensitivity
- 4) Embrace an Empowerment Culture
- 5) Communicate the College's Commitment to Cultural Responsiveness
- 6) Take Away Barriers that Impede Progress
- 7) Help Faculty to Use Effective Pedagogical Methods for Teaching Learners of Color
- 8) Create a Culturally Responsive Organizational Culture



In Conclusion

- The community college, with all its limitations, remains a location of “possibility” for diverse learners. What is needed to transform these students is for the college to fully engage in the validation of students and to recognize that not all students can be expected to learn or to get involved in institutional life in the same way. The challenge for community colleges is to create a learning environment for all students to feel free to learn, free to be who they are, and validated for what they know and believe.



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