

G575: Multicultural Counseling and Psychotherapy

Indiana University School of Education

Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology

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Overview

Cross-cultural or multicultural counseling/psychotherapy research, theory, and practice took prominence in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s, prompted by the civil rights movement and subsequent social movements of the time. Since its inception, mental health practitioners have been urged to consider how culture, race and other forces related to human diversity and oppression affected their clients, their relationships, and more generally, the practice of counseling and psychotherapy. Depending on the emphasis, multicultural counseling can include a myriad of factors, including race, ethnicity, class (or socioeconomic status), gender, intellectual ability, religious preference, physical ability and sexual orientation. In this course, we will address each of these factors but the focus will be on race, ethnicity, and on the similarities and intersection of these two constructs and those already mentioned.

Underscored in this course are the following assumptions: (1) the development of racially and culturally responsive practitioners is a lifelong process that entails ingredients integral to growth and positive change, i.e., reality-testing, self-reflection, risk-taking, and moral decision-making; (2) every person within a system is affected by culture and by oppressive forces that exist within the system, and (3) professional excellence in counseling and psychotherapy can be achieved by the practitioners ability to perceive him- or herself holistically and by inference, perceive and provide counseling and psychotherapy to his or her client from a similarly holistic perspective.

The objectives in the course are as follows. In the course, students will learn:

definitions of terms and constructs related to societal oppression and their relevance to psychological functioning and development;

characteristics and concerns of diverse groups based on a sociopolitical perspective;

how the development of enlightened perspectives on societal oppression can have an impact on counseling and psychotherapy of all clients, and particularly among clients of color, the aged, women, the physically challenged, and those with gay/lesbian/bisexual orientations;

strategies for working effectively with diverse individuals, families, and groups in a counseling and psychotherapy context that include issues germane to psychological growth;

ethical considerations in the infusion of matters on human diversity in counseling and psychotherapy.

Required Readings

Helms, J. E., & Cook, D. A. (1999). Using race and culture in counseling and psychotherapy: Theory and process. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Cyrus, V. (1993). Experiencing race, class, and gender in the United States (3rd ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

Thompson, C. E., & Carter, R. T. (1997). Racial identity theory: Applications to individual, group, and

organizational interventions. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Optional Readings

Ball, E. Slaves in the family. New York: Bantam.

Coles, R. (1994). The story of Ruby Bridges. New York: Scholastic.

Requirements

Assignment 1: Overcoming My Resistance

Resistance is defined to behaviors that can potentially obstruct learning. It can occur in the process of counseling and psychotherapy and in the process of learning. Resistance to learning about multicultural issues is likely because these are the issues that can prompt uncomfortable feelings like anger, guilt, shame, or confusion. As an ongoing assignment, I am asking each student to identify areas of resistance to learning about multiculturalism. A good way to begin this exercise is to think about some of the attitudes and beliefs one might hold and then to construct ways to test them. Please note: EVERYONE HAS RESISTANCE. It isn't positive or negative, it simply is. Coming up with your resistance may be difficult at first, but as you read the textbook and some of the narratives, view the films, or even reflect on the events occurring both within and outside of class, I'm sure you will find yourself coming up with ideas and questions that may serve as blocks to learning. The article by Kathleen Ryan in the Cyrus textbook on page 400 can give you some ideas about resistance.

For example, one person may believe that the best way to be effective is to be color-blind and to believe that all this multicultural stuff is really for the birds. This would be resistance because this person has essentially dismissed multicultural learning in favor of what they perceive to be a more humanistic way of behaving and being with clients. One way to test this resistance is to try to determine if in fact, the lectures, readings, and so forth are actually anti-humanistic. One may discuss it with a friend (and this person should choose someone whom he/she believes will not simply agree with that particular perspective). Rather than going the intellectual route, some people might decide to test out some of the material that counters the notion of color-blindness and take an informal "survey" of how they've done.

Lets take another example of resistance and ways to overcome it. Lets say a person rationalizes that she ought to fraternize solely with people who are similar to her and conversely, stay away from people who aren't similar because this makes her uncomfortable. One behavioral way to test this resistance is to break out of the comfort zone and visit places that will expose her to people who are different than her. Perhaps a Latino man who is hesitant around Asian people will visit a Korean church in town. Yet another example is that of a White person who believes that the perspectives of people of color are not valid as those of Whites. This person may choose to view "Lead Story" (a news program told from the perspectives of Black journalists on BET), read Black magazines, or listen to a lecture by a scholar of color. Each of these examples relates to issues of race/ethnicity, but you can also choose other characteristics, like sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or physical disability.

Your assignment is to identify at least one resistance, develop weekly strategies on how you can overcome your resistance, then implement the strategies. Please keep in mind that you may be involved in some "minor" strategies as you go through the course, such as tuning in more to commentary of race-related issues by news media, family or friends. However, the assignment is that you select strategies that are deliberate and purposeful (the purpose being to overcome the resistance). The less "intellectual" and more hands-on and interactive the experience, the better.

Assignment 2: Exercise in Conveying Social Justice (Choose one)

CHOICE ONE: One of the recommended books in this course is a childrens book titled The Story of Ruby

Bridges. Written by noted psychiatrist Robert Coles, this story provides an opportunity to teach issues of social justice and coping to a child. Your assignment is to read the story to a child between the ages of 4 and 9 and to engage in a dialogue about the story.

CHOICE TWO: View a movie or video and do a critical analysis of it. Watch the movie with a friend or family member who may not be as enlightened on the issues of race, gender, social class, or sexual orientation representation in the media and engage in a discussion about your analysis. This need not be a movie that focuses solely or primarily on persons of color, gays, the poor, or the like. Any commercial film will do. Box office hits are especially encouraged

Please complete a written narrative of both assignments, with the total page numbers not exceeding 10 pages. Please complete assignment #2 (either choice 1 or 2) by June 9. The written portion for Assignment One is due on the last day of class, June 14th.

Course Requirements

Midterm Examination	100
Assignment 1	75
Assignment 2	25
Final Examination	100
	300

Grading Procedure

A+	99-100
A	93-98
A-	90-92
B+	85-89
B	80-84
C	75-79
F	Below 75

Schedule of Events and Readings

Tuesday, 8/29	Introduction and overview Helms & Cook, chapters 1-3
Tuesday, 9/5	History of psychologys role in societal racism Helms & Cook, chapters 4-5 In Cyrus: Staples, p. 201; McIntosh, p. 194; Hu-DeHart, p. 164; Ryan, p. 416
Tuesday, 9/12	Sociopolitical histories of original and culture-based socioracial groups Film: "bell hooks: Cultural Criticism and Transformation" Helms & Cook, chapters 6-7 In Cyrus: Wu, p. 37; Altman, p. 99; Lips, p. 76; Southern Poverty Law Center, p. 223
Tuesday, 9/19	Models of oppression: Avenues for facilitated change through counseling and psychotherapy Film: "Multicultural Counseling: Issues of Ethnic Diversity" The therapy process Helms & Cook, chapters 8-10 Thompson & Carter, 3-6
Tuesday, 9/26	Film: "Multicultural Counseling: Issues of Diversity"

The therapy process, contd.

(Midterm exam will be based on lectures and reading material through Friday, May 19th)
In Cyrus: Swet, p. 148; Churchill, p. 206; Burk & Shaw, p. 249; Goldberg, p. 251; Doyle, p. 277; Unknown, p. 285

- Tuesday, 10/3 A review of materials and practice by role-playing
MIDTERM EXAMINATION Take home due Wednesday the 31st
(Asian American Conference)
- Tuesday, 10/10 Group counseling, indigenous healing and applications of racial identity theory to group
and organizational interventions
Helms & Cook, chapters 12-13
Thompson & Carter, chapters 8, 9, 11, & 12
- Tuesday, 10/17 Conceptions of mental health and therapeutic change
In Cyrus: Daseler, p. 212, Williams, p. 140
Cooper Thompson, p. 95, Levine, p. 55; Nahata, p. 346
- Tuesday, 10/24 Inciting change outside of traditional counseling
Film: "Starting Small: Teaching Tolerance" (A Southern Poverty Law Center gift)
In Cyrus: Chavez, p. 468; Southern Poverty Law Center, p. 472; Taliman, p. 483; Davis,
p. 485
- Tuesday, 10/31 Review of material, discussion of Assignment Two projects; ASSIGNMENT TWO
PROJECTS DUE BY CLOSE OF DAY
- Tuesday, 11/7 FINAL EXAMINATION open book, open notes; ASSIGNMENT ONE PROJECTS
DUE BY CLOSE OF DAY
- Tuesday, 11/14
- Tuesday, 11/21
- Tuesday, 11/28
- Tuesday, 12/5 LAST DAY OF CLASS

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULED ON December 12th