

DIVERSITY: AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF SCHOLARLY TEACHING AND LEARNING

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What Does it Mean to Discuss Diversity as a Scholarly Activity??

- Must be intellectually compelling and conceptually sound
- Incorporate research as a frame of reference
- Develop an assessment plan
- Generate a culture of evidence (Direct and Indirect)
- Present results for public scrutiny
- Promote organizational change and innovation

Teaching for Retention

- Teaching for Student Outcomes
 - Cognitive Outcomes
 - Content
 - Grades
 - Other Goals (Academic + Nonacademic
 - Competency Testing
 - Placement Testing
- Teaching with Support Services
 - Tutoring
 - Advising
 - Mentoring
 - Connection to Centers (Learning, Writing)
 - Academic Affairs + Student Affairs Interface
 - Connection to Developmental Programs
- Faculty Development (Incentives)

The Impact of Diversity on Students

(A review of the research)

Diversity initiatives have an impact on both majority and minority students and it is positive

Student satisfaction with college (majority and minority students)

Cognitive development and general academic success

Preparation to function in a pluralistic society/work force

Reduction in tension associated with volatile and controversial issues (classroom climate)

The Impact of Diversity on Students (A review of the research) *Cont.*

The quality of faculty and peer involvement

Enhancement of teaching effectiveness

Self segregation significantly more characteristic of majority students

Commitments to diversity and to educational excellence are mutually reinforcing

Inadequate/superficial programming are not effective (institutions must alter culture and organize for a more diverse future)

National Campus Diversity Project at Harvard University

■ Research conducted by Dr. Dean Whitla on:

- Undergraduate students
- Law school students (Harvard and seven other select law schools)
- Medical school students

■ **Central finding:** the majority of students in each group found the presence of a diverse student body central to their educational experience.

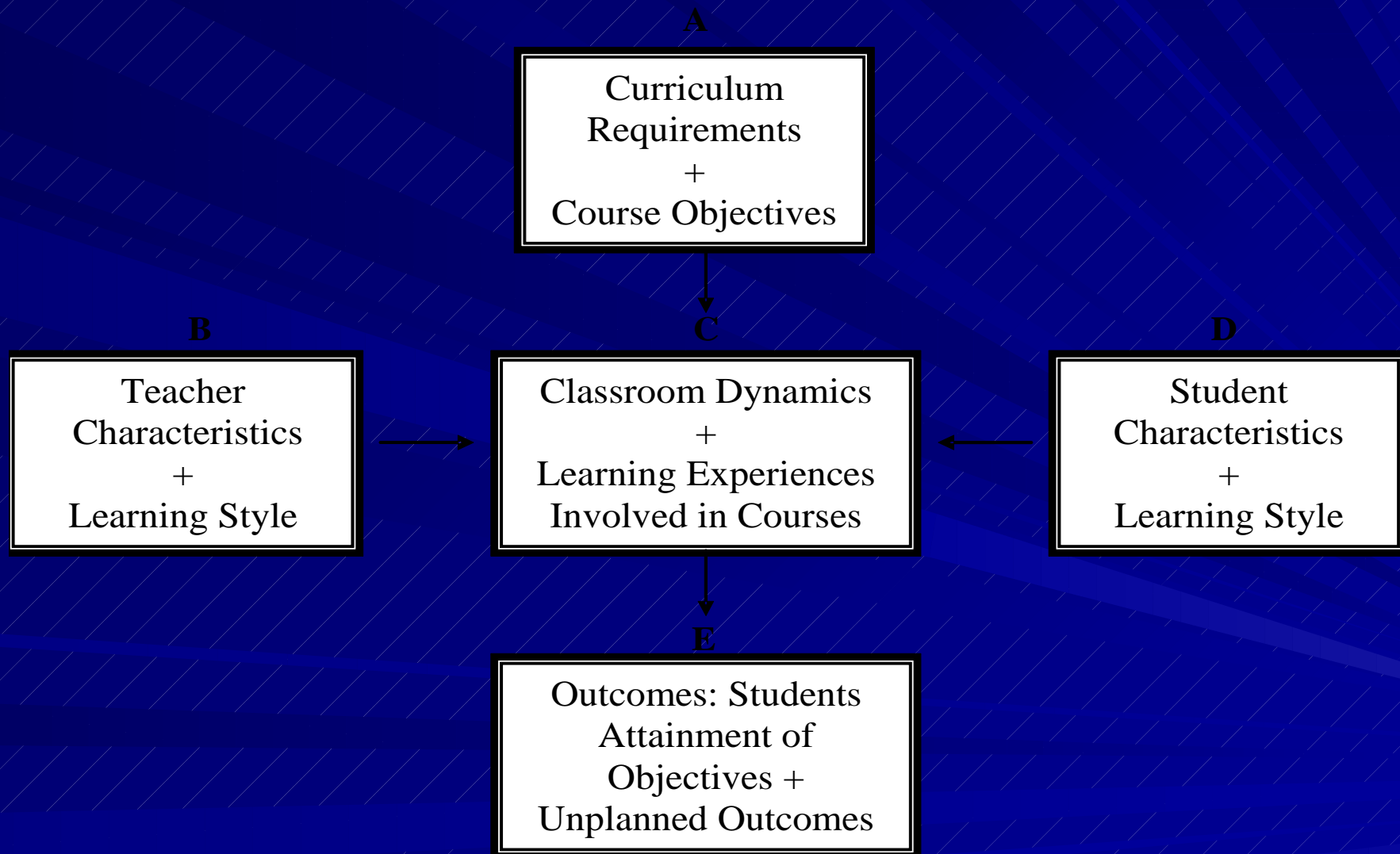
Harvard Medical School Student Population

- The overwhelming majority detailed the personal and public benefits of a diverse student body:
 - Improved medical education
 - Heightened concern for underserved populations
 - Improved cultural competency in clinical practice
- Heightened concern about priorities in medical research

Three Major Forces Affecting Management Today

- Globalization of Markets & Organizations
- Management of Diversity
- Management of Technology
- Source: AACSB Strategic Issues Committee

PRIMARY INPUTS OF A COURSE



Do You Have

- A philosophy of teaching and teaching excellence
↓
- Connected to a model of learning
↓
- Which acknowledges characteristics of the learner
and the learning environment
↓
- Which utilizes appropriate strategies, tools, and techniques
↓
- And which incorporates assessment and evaluation in order to maintain quality

Faculty Problems With Students Who Exhibit Diverse Skill Levels Which Suggest Academic Difficulty

- **Does not determine problems of students until too late. Why?**
 - Instructor is content-centered and not student-centered
 - Little or no classroom assessment occurs other than with tests or quizzes
 - Does not know when or where student “bottlenecks” occur

Faculty Problems With Students Who Exhibit Diverse Skill Levels Which Suggest Academic Difficulty *Cont.*

- **Provides inappropriate feedback when**
 - Questions are asked (doesn't discern student difficulty from question)
 - Even if problem is detected still provides student with inappropriate feedback

Faculty Problems With Students Who Exhibit Diverse Skill Levels Which Suggest Academic Difficulty

Cont.

- **Doesn't facilitate general cognitive skill of student**
 - Does not utilize techniques or strategies to help student become better thinker, questioner, problem-solver, writer, etc.

Inclusiveness In Science and Math Courses

- Make the contributions of underrepresented groups visible
- Assess materials for content-based biases
- Address/deconstruct beliefs about “difference” (Example: bio-genetic explanations of behavior)
- Eliminate cultural/political biases toward dichotomies that are portrayed as natural hierarchies
- Present science and math in social, political and economic contexts (not separate from society)

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCIENCE – MATH MODELS FOR MINORITY STUDENTS

The Teacher :

- Fosters a sense of community grounded on the shared experience of doing serious work
- Utilizes student feedback to periodically assess teaching ability
- Individualizes and personalizes classroom presentations when necessary
- Introduces relevance of information to be learned
- Provides students with hands-on activities and involvement
- Provides appropriate feedback when students experience conceptual difficulties
- Acknowledges developmental level of students and teaches to that level
- Varies instructional method
- Encourages students to express their reasoning process in their own words (especially futility)
- Guides students in learning how to frame new questions
- Guides students in the use of alternate learning strategies
- Shows connections between isolated pieces of information

Assessing Higher-Order Competencies: Looking at Impact & Effectiveness

- Does University of North Carolina at Wilmington produce graduates who are critical thinkers and active learners?
- Which “best practices” are utilized across disciplines at University of North Carolina at Wilmington to promote critical thinking and active learning?
- How does the faculty evaluation of teaching and provide evidence that the outcomes associated with critical thinking and active learning are being realized?

Seven Habits of Mind That Dispose One Toward Critical Thinking

- Truth-Seeking (measures intellectual honesty)
- Open-Mindedness (measures tolerance for new ideas and divergent views)
- Analyticity (measures alertness to problem situations and potential difficulties)
- Systematicity (measures the inclination to be organized, focused, diligent, and persevering)

Seven Habits of Mind That Dispose One Toward Critical Thinking

- Inquisitiveness (measures intellectual curiosity and the intention to learn)
- Cognitive Maturity (measures judiciousness, prudent decision making and ability to see the complexity in problems)
- Critical Thinking Self-Confidence (measures the trust one places in one's own reasoning)

From: "The Critical Thinking Album" Insight Assessment and the California Academic Press, April 2002

Diversity and Critical Thinking

- How do we help students to connect the intellectual/academic concept (diversity) to its social/political reality?
- What aspect of the aforementioned discussion involves risk-taking for the student, and how does this inhibit critical thinking?
- What is the students' current way of knowing and what does the instructor do with this information?

Diversity and Critical Thinking

Cont.

- What was taught in previous courses and what will be taught in later courses?
- In classes where students are diverse, what ground rules should the instructor establish about
 - The nature of communication
 - The occurrence of conflict
 - The nature of small group interaction

ALCOA Project

Course: Introductory Physical Chemistry (CH 331)

Dr. Laura Sremaniak & Ms. Sheila Maness

■ Objectives

- Cultivating the cognitive and affective domains
- Creating an awareness of student responsibility to learning
- Incorporating a historical context to course material
- Bringing abstract ideas into an understanding format
- Utilizing case studies to establish relevance to students' disciplinary interests

Teaching Strategies that Engage Differences in the Classroom

- Acknowledging distinct learning styles
- Interactions among diverse teaching and learning styles
- Exploring difference and commonality through collaboration
- Using writing and rhetoric to explore differences across the curriculum
- Elevating the discourse on diversity through Learning Communities

Teaching Strategies that Engage Differences in the Classroom

cont

- Exploring differences through the use of thinking schemes
- Classroom assessment and student feedback: pedagogical resources on inclusion
- Allow students to convey reactive feelings to accumulated information
- Using levels of questioning to contrast differences

Diversity as an Intellectual or Educational Experience: What Student Outcomes Do You Expect?

- Deeper understanding of:
 - Different cultures, people
 - Perspectives
 - Disciplines
- Enhance analytical and decision-making skills
- Comfortable with ambiguity and conflict
- Openness to growth through dialogue in pluralistic communities (offshoot: become global communicators)
- Ability to analyze and understand persuasive arguments
- Inclusion of voice of underrepresented students

Curriculum Content

Historical background of American diversity and the history of key groups (women, African-American, Hispanic, others).

Describing the diversity of American society

- Views of diversity in American society
- Social, cultural, demographic
- Religion (and ideology)
- Economic status and patterns
- Political power, policy, and empowerment strategies
- Cultural expression (literature, the arts)

Curriculum Content

cont.

Diversity-related challenges facing our society:
What do we do?

- Economic: Diversity in the workplace
- Social, cultural: Attitudes, social separation, interpersonal strain, multiculturalism
- Political: Polity, political change and empowerment

Learning Outcomes: Cultural and Ethnic Diversity

- Examine the social construction of identities by race, gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and so forth
- Recognize various forms of stereotyping, prejudice, privilege and discrimination
- Understand cultural differences in identity development
- Distinguish between individual responsibility and structural barriers to choice and opportunity

Learning Outcomes: Cultural and Ethnic Diversity

Cont.

- Distinguish facts, cultural assumptions, interpretations and opinions relating to issues of diversity
- Take a supportable position in face of irreconcilable cultural differences
- Think about complex issues from different cultural perspectives
- Differentiate between personal discomfort and intellectual disagreement in cultural conflict situations

When/How Does the Formal Application of Diversity Serve as an Attractive Recruiting/Retention Tool?

When it is connected to strengthening the curriculum (General Education, First Year Seminars, Diversity Requirements, etc.)

When it assumes a core identity among new/existing majors/minors/concentrations/graduate programs

When it strengthens the tradition of international education, globalism and study abroad

When it contributes to quality and uniformity across interdisciplinary areas

When it promotes an integrative and comparative analysis of the discipline and of scholarship

When it intellectually transforms how faculty think about themselves, their research and their teaching (a diverse faculty community)