

## Creating a Supportive Environment for Trainees and Faculty/Supervisors: Focus on Diversity

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## Overview

- ◆ Developing a program that incorporates and infuses diversity in all aspects of the curriculum
- ◆ Creating an environment that supports and values diversity and individuals from diverse backgrounds

## “Diversity is a key to excellence”

- ◆ Strengthening cultural competence in mental health care
  - Access to care
  - Patient satisfaction
- ◆ Intellectual engagement and valuing diverse perspectives
- ◆ Respect for individual and cultural differences
- ◆ Emphasis on fairness and equity, social justice, and public service

Quote from Sullivan Commission report (2004)

## Making and Sustaining Change

- ◆ Leadership at the individual and institutional levels
- ◆ Obtaining institutional backing and faculty and staff “buy-in”
- ◆ Program self-assessment
- ◆ Planning for change – identifying specific targets and strategies
- ◆ Making small changes over time
- ◆ Assessing outcomes

## Supportive Environments

- ◆ Respecting and encouraging students’ and trainees’ interests and goals
- ◆ Facilitating their educational and training goals
- ◆ Fostering professional development in line with their goals and sense of identity as emerging professionals

## Components of a Multiculturally Infused Psychology Curriculum (Fouad, 2006)

- ◆ Mission statement – includes having all faculty committed to goals of diversity
- ◆ Active recruitment of diverse students and trainees
- ◆ Active recruitment/retention of diverse faculty

## Components of a Multiculturally Infused Psychology Curriculum (Fouad, 2006)

- ◆ Increasing cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills in faculty and students
- ◆ Infusion of a culture-centered approach throughout the curriculum
  - didactics/courses, practicum/clinical training, research, mentoring, supervision
- ◆ Evaluation of students/trainees on cultural competence at least annually

## Strategies

- ◆ Advertisement
- ◆ Recruitment and selection processes
- ◆ Mentoring
- ◆ Didactics and training opportunities
- ◆ Creating a “diversity-friendly” work environment
- ◆ Long-term view with ongoing and continually evolving efforts

## Advertisement

- ◆ Brochure and website – emphasis on multicultural competence training and issues of diversity, especially didactic/course offerings and multicultural clinical and research opportunities
- ◆ Active outreach to diverse students and candidates
- ◆ Posting on Division 44 and 45 listservs and newsletter and other venues
- ◆ Making connections with colleges and graduate programs with significant numbers of diverse students
- ◆ Highlighting “diversity effectiveness” in the institution, department, and program missions

## Recruitment and Selection Processes

- ◆ Highlighting opportunities to work with diverse populations
- ◆ Meeting with diverse faculty/staff to provide a “welcoming face” to visiting candidates
- ◆ Asking questions during interviews that resonate with applicants from diverse backgrounds and assess for cultural and diversity awareness
- ◆ Diversity an additional factor in selection and ranking decisions

## Faculty and Mentoring

- ◆ Diverse faculty and staff at all program levels
- ◆ Multicultural committee or workgroup of faculty and students
- ◆ Ensuring ongoing diversity training for supervisors and other staff
- ◆ Supervisors/faculty encouraged to be active in professional organizations devoted to providing networking, mentoring, and scholarship opportunities for diverse students
- ◆ Students encouraged to become active in these organizations and supported to attend conferences such as Multicultural Summit or Winter Roundtable

## Mentoring Strategies and Programs

- ◆ Matching a student/trainee to another professional of the same race, ethnicity, or cultural background (mentor and role model)
- ◆ Ongoing support and mentoring group for ethnic minority students/trainees from several programs in the same region

## Didactics and Training

- ◆ Infusing multicultural competence in required training activities
  - Intern orientation diversity awareness exercises
  - Integrated didactics and training experiences
  - Diverse speakers for seminar series
- ◆ Rotations in “Multicultural Affairs” and other specialty training experiences (e.g., with LGBT clients)
- ◆ Monthly Diversity Journal Club or “brown bag” discussion for staff and trainees
- ◆ Modeling being “lifelong multicultural learners”

## Specific Training Objectives

- ◆ Requiring interns to:
  - conduct treatment and assessments with patients from different cultural backgrounds than themselves
  - obtain consultation and/or supervision from a psychologist or staff member of the same cultural background as the client on at least one therapy and assessment case in which cultural issues are a significant issue
  - write up a “cultural formulation” on a patient for whom cultural issues might present a barrier to access to competent treatment

## Community Connections

- ◆ Making connections with community agencies serving diverse populations
- ◆ Additional role models and mentors
- ◆ Making connections with community members, including from diverse faith communities
- ◆ Seeking grant-funded opportunities to engage in community-oriented clinical training and research, and otherwise supporting ongoing research on diversity issues by faculty

## Other Ideas

- ◆ Ensuring a “diversity-friendly” work environment
  - office and department decorations, esp. at holidays
- ◆ Recruiting diverse students earlier in the pipeline (e.g., undergraduates, practicum)
- ◆ Committing to retaining outstanding diverse interns as postdocs, and postdocs as staff
- ◆ Creating a “Multicultural Postdoctoral Fellowship” to serve as a pipeline for staff hiring

## Future Directions

- ◆ Continued **institutionalization** of multicultural guidelines
- ◆ **Balancing** these goals among competing interests, priorities, and challenges
- ◆ Developing more and effective methods for ongoing **program evaluation**