CULTURAL COMPETENCIES
FOR OUTREACH PROFESSIONALS

KEY DEFINITIONS:

Diversity:
Differences are expressed in many ways including race, sex, age, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, religion, class, philosophy and culture. (WSU Strategic Plan – 2008)

Culture:
A socially transmitted worldview learned and shared by a group which influences values, beliefs, customs and behaviors and which is reflected in their language, material culture, food, and social institutions. (Andrews & Boyle, 1999; Axelson, 1993; Burchum, 2002; Leininger, 1991, 1995; Mead, 1955; Pauwels, 1995; Purnell & Paulanka, 1998; Salmond, 2000; Schriver, 1995).

Cultural competence:
“A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. Competence, in particular, implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by [participants] in their communities.” (Adapted from Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989).

Culturally competent programs and services:
Programs and services which are respectful of and responsive to the cultural needs of partners. (Adapted from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health, 2001)
CULTURAL COMPETENCIES

Competency: Cultural Awareness
Skill Set
- Explore personal and cultural values, biases, prejudices and views.
- Identify ways in which culture shapes beliefs, practices, and values.
- Identify similarities and differences among cultures.
- Recognize his/her own culture(s), including organizational culture.

Competency: Cultural Understanding
Skill Set
- Understand the developmental nature of cultural competencies.
- Describe issues and concerns which arise when values, beliefs, and practices differ from those of the dominant culture.
- Recognize ways culture affects participation in organizational programs and services.

Competency: Cultural Knowledge
Skill Set
- Develop familiarity with specific cultures, with an emphasis on the diverse audiences in your geographic area.
- Use conceptual and theoretical models for understanding human culture especially the ways in which they differ from one’s own.
- Identify appropriate cultural guides and build productive relationships with them.

Competency: Cultural Interaction
Skill Set
- Recognize factors impacting successful intercultural communication.
- Use concepts and theories of intercultural communication.
- Manage intercultural conflicts effectively.
- Interact productively and seek input and guidance from cultural partners.
- Form new programmatic partnerships across intercultural differences.

Competency: Cultural Sensitivity
Skill Set
- Identify historical and sociological influences on specific cultural interactions.
- Recognize the impact of privilege, inequality and oppression in daily contexts.

OUTCOMES FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCIES

CULTURALLY COMPETENT PROFESSIONALS:
- Engage in culturally diverse settings, initiatives and programs.
- Integrate cultural competencies in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and services.
- Practice strategies for successful intercultural communication in professional settings.

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Adapted from: Burchum 2002

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REFERENCES:


American Speech-Language Hearing Association. (2004). Knowledge and skills needed by speech-language pathologists and audiologists to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services. ASHA Supplement 24, in press.


