



## 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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