

# **Chapter 11**

## **Diversity and Multiculturalism**

## Chapter 11

### Diversity and Multiculturalism

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*Prejudiced people know very little about the world.*

-- Susanna, 18

*It's easy to hate something you don't know anything about.*

-- Lena, 15

[From posters developed by young people for the ALARM anti-racism campaign of the State of Gotesborg, Sweden]

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#### SCOPE

This chapter provides a sound foundation of information and sample activities for positively and proactively addressing

diversity and multiculturalism within pre-service training. It includes sample activities and materials to increase members' understanding of diversity, encourage recognition of the similarities among people, help develop and reinforce respect for differences, and prepare members to work effectively in multicultural teams and serve diverse communities. Included are definitions of terms, models, and hints for working in diverse environments.

## **IMPORTANCE**

Most AmeriCorps programs involve diverse groups of members, service sites, and recipients of services. Diversity includes many dimensions; members and the populations they will serve are extremely varied not only in their racial/ethnic backgrounds, but also in age, socioeconomic status, gender, physical/mental ability, values, and other characteristics. This chapter is important because it helps grantees to introduce and systematically address diversity and multiculturalism positively and proactively.

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**Hint:** Respect for multiculturalism and diversity should be built into every aspect of the training. The information in this section should be used not only in preparing a specific unit on multiculturalism and diversity, but also in designing the overall training.

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## **TARGETED USERS**

This chapter is designed primarily for use by the individuals designing and delivering the segments of PST dealing with diversity and multiculturalism.

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**Hint:** The role of the facilitator is critical in diversity education. The trainer/facilitator for this unit should be comfortable and skilled in handling conflict, controversy, and emotion. Do not attempt work on diversity and multi-culturalism without an experienced facilitator. If no one among your program staff has related experience, look for someone among your partner organizations or host sites.

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**Hint:** Learning to appreciate diversity and to work effectively with people from different backgrounds involves new knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Think carefully about balancing training emphasizing information and skills with work focusing on emotions and attitudes.

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## EXPECTED LEARNING

This chapter will help grantee training personnel prepare a training unit on diversity and multiculturalism for the PST and make respect for differences an integral part of the entire PST experience. The activities are designed to help prepare members:

- To understand the concepts of culture and diversity and recognize that everyone has culture.
- To develop or increase their acceptance of and respect for differences among individuals and groups.
- To recognize the important similarities among people from varied cultural backgrounds.
- To communicate and work effectively with diverse groups of members and host agency personnel.
- To communicate and work effectively with community members from different cultures and backgrounds.

### RESOURCES: MULTICULTURAL TRAINING

The National Multicultural Institute, one of the AmeriCorps National Training and Technical Assistance contractors, will be arranging multicultural training for AmeriCorps grantee and service site staff in many locations. See *Section D: Resources*, page 607, for contact information.

## RELATED CHAPTERS

AmeriCorps programs without extensive experience with multiculturalism may benefit from obtaining additional information from other sources, as identified in the Resources section at the end of the manual.

## **THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN DOING DIVERSITY TRAINING**

- Everyone has culture. We come from different nationalities and experiences. Understanding our own backgrounds helps us to respect those of others.
- Sometimes attempts to understand and respect differences lead us to under-emphasize what people living in the United States have in common -- such as our basic values of democracy, individual freedom, and access to opportunity. Be sure your training emphasizes similarities as well as differences.
- One of the greatest challenges of encouraging respect for diversity is that it often requires people to change, and change is difficult -- especially when change in attitudes as well as behavior is needed.
- Multiculturalism asks "majority" communities and individuals to share power and resources.
- Nearly all of us (regardless of our cultural backgrounds) have stereotypes about other groups.
- It is important for everyone to be a part of the diversity dialogue. Sometimes people, especially men, from "majority" or "mainstream" communities think that discussions of culture do not apply to them. People from "minority" communities sometimes agree with this viewpoint. Yet multicultural understanding depends on involving people of all cultures in the discussion.
- Once raised, diversity issues should be addressed directly, not minimized or ignored; avoiding them will not make them go away.

## Activity #20: Multicultural USA

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### Trainer's Notes

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#### Trainer Skills Needed:

Some knowledge of Census data about the U.S. population and about the populations of communities where members will be assigned

Sensitivity to issues of racial/ethnic diversity

#### Time Required:

45 minutes

#### Materials Needed:

Copies of self-tests for all members

Overhead projector if you want to show graphs of population

Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint

#### Learning Objectives:

At the end of this activity, members should be able:

- To know facts about the current racial/ethnic composition of the United States and of states or communities where they will be carrying out their project assignments
- To be aware of the growing diversity of the United States
- To recognize that being able to function effectively in multicultural communities is important to them

#### Directions:

Have members sitting in cooperative learning groups, but ask them to work alone initially.

Explain that the activity focuses on two major dimensions of diversity: race and ethnicity.

Have each member individually complete the self-test. Allow about 10 minutes for this process. Then give them answer sheets to score their responses.

Ask groups to share (**report** within the group) what they learned through the self-test, what they found most surprising, and what additional information they would like to have. Have them select someone to report a summary of their discussion to the full group.

#### RESEARCH SHOWS...

...that the use of cooperative learning groups reduces racial tension and encourages multicultural cooperation in the training or classroom.

Listen to the reports. Try to answer the additional questions raised by the groups. Use the overheads if desired.

**RESOURCES:  
POPULATION DIVERSITY GRAPHS**

MOSAICA has provided a set of graphs about U.S. population diversity to the National Service Resource Center, which serves as an information clearinghouse for AmeriCorps grantees. You may request these graphs and use them to make overheads for your pre-service training. Contact:

National Service Resource Center  
ETR Associates  
P.O. Box 1830  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830

Telephone: (800) 860-2684 or  
(831) 438-4060  
TTY: (831) 461-0205  
Fax: (831) 430-9471

E-mail: [jenniferr@etr.org](mailto:jenniferr@etr.org)

Website: <http://www.etr.org/NSRC>

**Process** the experience, asking the group how they feel about what they have learned and why. If some members feel uncomfortable with the information, discuss why. Ask both minority and non-minority group members to discuss their feelings and concerns. Ask the group why the U.S. is so diverse; discuss the relationship to its being part of the "New World," with many different periods of migration and displacement of indigenous populations (this will come up again in later activities).

Now **generalize**; discuss the practical implications of the increasing racial/ethnic diversity of the U.S. Talk a little about immigration or other factors relevant to the locations where the members will be

doing their service assignments. Try to ensure that members make the connection that even if their own communities are not very racially/ethnically diverse, the country as a whole is extremely diverse and becoming more so.

Help members apply the information by considering how they can obtain information about the racial/ethnic composition of the populations in their service site.



### **Demographics Self-Test**

Many people haven't really thought a lot about how racially/ethnically diverse the United States really is. This self-test is designed to let you find out how much you know about racial/ethnic diversity in the United States. Please take a few minutes to complete the form, and then score yourself using the answer sheet. *Circle the correct response(s) to each question. Sometimes, more than one response may be correct.*

1. In 1990, racial/ethnic minorities together made up one-quarter of the United States population. According to recent Census Bureau projections, about what fraction of the U.S. population will be minorities in 2050?
  - a. One-fifth
  - b. One-third
  - c. One-half
  - d. Two-thirds
  
2. In 1990, what type of ancestry were U.S. residents most likely to report? Nearly one in four U.S. residents reported having this ancestry:
  - a. African American
  - b. German
  - c. English
  - d. Irish
  - e. Italian
  
3. In 1990, African Americans were the largest single minority population in the U.S., and Hispanics the second largest. According to Census Bureau projections, Hispanics will become the largest minority before what Census?
  - a. 2010
  - b. 2030
  - c. 2050
  - d. After 2050
  
4. Which racial/ethnic group is growing fastest in percentage terms?
  - a. White non-Hispanics
  - b. Blacks
  - c. Asians and Pacific Islanders
  - d. Hispanics
  - e. Native Americans/Alaskan Natives
  
5. In 1990, what percentage of U.S. residents 18 and over were citizens?
  - a. 60%
  - b. 75%
  - c. 90%
  - d. 95%

6. Between 1990 and 2050, what proportion of the growth of the Hispanic population in the United States is expected to be due to **immigration**, as opposed to natural increase (births to Hispanic parents in the U.S.)?
- a. 1/3                      b. 1/2  
c. 2/3                      d. 3/4
7. In what state or states do Hispanics make up more than one-third of the population?
- a. California                      b. New Mexico  
c. Texas                              d. Florida
8. In 1990, the total U.S. population was more than 248 million. What was the approximate size of the American Indian/Alaskan Native population?
- a. 550,000                      b. 1.2 million  
c. 2.1 million                      d. 4.4 million
9. Native Americans/Alaskan Natives constitute the largest percentage of the population (over 15%) in what state?
- a. California                      b. Alaska  
c. Montana                              d. Arizona  
e. Oklahoma
10. The state with the largest number of Asians and Pacific Islanders is:
- a. Hawaii                              b. Virginia  
c. California                              d. Washington  
d. Oregon
11. African Americans are at least one-fourth of the population of which of the following state(s):
- a. Alabama                              b. Mississippi  
c. Louisiana                              d. Georgia  
e. South Carolina
12. As of 1990, whites were the majority population in every state but one. Which one?
- a. California                              b. Florida  
c. New York                              d. Hawaii  
e. Alabama

## Answer Sheet

- |     |               |     |   |
|-----|---------------|-----|---|
| 1.  | c             | 2.  | b |
| 3.  | a             | 4.  | c |
| 5.  | d             | 6.  | a |
| 7.  | b             | 8.  | c |
| 9.  | b             | 10. | c |
| 11. | a, b, c, d, e | 12. | d |

NOTE: All data come from published documents issued by the Bureau of the Census. Projections for 2050 are the "mid-level" projections from *Population Projections of the United States, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1993 to 2050*, Current Population Reports P25-1104, issued November 1993.

### RESOURCES: MODIFYING THE MULTICULTURAL AMERICA SELF-TEST

This self-test is most useful if it includes questions related to the population of your service sites.

You may want to:

- Add questions about the population composition of a particular region, state, or metropolitan area.
- Focus more on one or two specific racial or ethnic groups important in your service sites.

The supporting information in this chapter include a summary of racial/ethnic information and projections for the United States, and several graphs and tables.

To obtain additional Census information:

- For national data, contact Population Information at (301) 457-2422/2435 (TTY) or visit the Census Bureau's world wide web site at <http://www.census.gov>.
- For information about a specific state, contact your State Data Center. To find the number of that center, or if you have questions about Census information or are not sure where to find what you need, contact Customer Services, at (301) 457-4100.



## Activity #21: Dimensions of Diversity\*

### Trainer's Notes

#### Trainer Skills Needed:

Facilitation skills  
Experience in doing training related to diversity

#### Time Required:

One hour

#### Materials Needed:

Easel pad, markers, and masking tape -- so that each small group can have several pieces of newsprint and several colored markers

*Member Instructions*

*Dimension of Diversity* chart

Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint

#### LESSONS LEARNED: ADDRESSING DIVERSITY ISSUES

AmeriCorps programs have found that teambuilding with diverse members requires helping them not only to respect and value diversity but also to understand some of the common causes of friction between people from different backgrounds. Ignoring these issues or addressing them superficially can lead to problems. While it is healthy for members to continue to grapple with such issues outside the training environment, pre-service training should provide a solid framework of mutual respect and a common affiliation with the AmeriCorps National Service Network as a foundation for such discussions.

#### Learning Objectives:

At the end of this activity, members should be able:

- To define and explain the concept of diversity
- To identify at least ten dimensions of diversity -- the characteristics by which individual and group similarities and differences are typically identified

\*

Adapted from a chart included in *Blueprint for Diversity*, Volunteer Leadership Training Curriculum Models. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America, 1994. Materials compiled by the National Advisory Committee for Project Blueprint and participating United Ways.

- To differentiate primary dimensions of diversity, which cannot be changed, from secondary dimensions, which are changeable

**Skill Development:**

Group process and reaching consensus

**Directions:**

Review the *Member Instructions* with the full group. Have members work in small cooperative learning groups.

First ask members to work alone to choose and write down at least five nouns which best describe who they are.

**Example:** The Trainer should provide five nouns which describe him/her -- for example:

Woman  
Italian American  
Catholic  
Teacher  
Activist

They should share their lists with the group, with the recorder writing them on newsprint. Then they should categorize the nouns, identifying the different "dimensions" represented by the kinds of nouns they picked -- descriptions of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, occupation, nationality, interests, values, etc.

Now ask the groups to try to identify any other categories or dimensions they feel are important in describing and understanding the similarities and differences among people.

Then they should consider the following question:

Which of these categories are **primary** or very difficult to change, and which are **secondary** or possible to change?

Ask the group to draw two concentric circles, a small one inside a larger one -- and put into the small circle the primary dimensions and into the large circle the secondary dimensions. Put farthest from the center those dimensions which can most easily be changed. (For example, you can't change your race so that goes into the small circle, but you can change your occupation so that goes into the large circle. It is possible but not easy to change your

socioeconomic status, so that goes in the large circle but towards the center of it.)

Have the groups **report**: present their pictures and discuss them. Try to generate one master list of primary and secondary dimensions.

Pass out the *Dimensions of Diversity* chart, which provides a set of primary and secondary dimensions of diversity, and discuss whether that chart includes any dimensions that weren't discussed -- and whether your work identified any dimensions that aren't on the chart.

**Process** the exercise; ask how it felt to share the information, and whether other group members seemed surprised at some of the information they shared.

Now **generalize** the information. Discuss the many dimensions of diversity -- the many ways in which people are similar and different, the many different groups to which we all belong. We are U.S. residents, women or men, we have specific religions, races, ethnicities, occupations, interests, and values. Regardless of our backgrounds, people living in the U.S. typically share core values about freedom and democracy and may be very similar on other dimensions. Talk about how an understanding of these dimensions **applies** to or can be used in their roles as AmeriCorps members.



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## *Activity #21: Dimensions of Diversity*

### *Member Instructions*

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#### **Assignment:**

To identify "dimensions" of diversity -- the categories through which we identify ourselves and others and determine similarities and differences among individuals and groups.

#### **Directions:**

Once in cooperative learning groups, decide on the roles for group members, choosing from the cooperative learning roles list posted in the training room.

Sitting in a cooperative learning group but working alone, choose and write down at least five **nouns** or phrases which you feel describe who you are and how you are similar to or different from other people or groups. Take about 5 minutes to do this.

Now share your list with the group. Go around the group listing nouns, with the recorder putting them on newsprint. Keep going around until all the nouns have been recorded. As a group, look at all the words used and see which ones involve similar characteristics. Categorize these nouns into the various "dimensions" represented -- such as race, religion, ethnicity, sex, occupation, interests, values, etc.

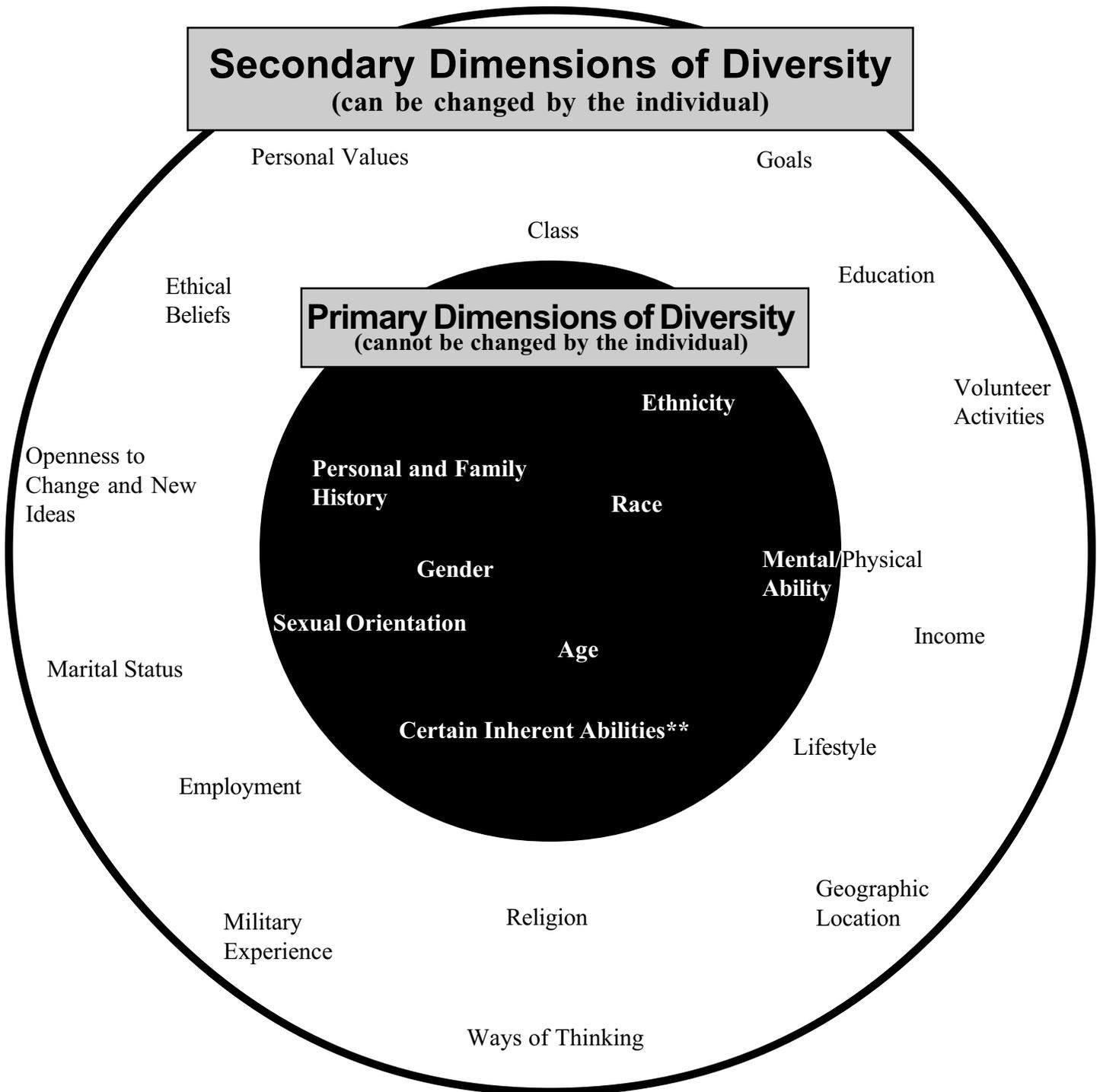
Look at this list and try to identify any other categories or dimensions you feel are important in describing and understanding the similarities and differences among people and groups.

Now consider the following:

- Which of these categories are **primary** or very difficult to change, and which are **secondary** or possible to change?
- Visually differentiate the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity. Draw two concentric circles, a small one inside a larger one -- and put the primary dimensions into the small circle, and the secondary dimensions into the big circle. Put farthest from the center those components which are easiest to change. (For example, you can't change your race, but you can change your occupation. It is possible but not easy to change your socioeconomic status.) Use multiple colors or other artistic approaches as you choose.

Be prepared to share your dimensions of diversity drawing with the full group.

# DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY\*



\* The dimensions listed represent a sampling and are not comprehensive.  
 \*\* Includes abilities such as: perfect pitch, sense of direction, and photographic memory.

## Activity #22: Understanding Culture

### Trainer's Notes

<b>Trainer Skills Needed:</b>	Experience and skills in conducting diversity sessions
<b>Time Required:</b>	2 hours
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	Easel pad, markers, and masking tape -- so that each small group can have several pieces of newsprint and several colored markers <i>Member Instructions</i> <i>The Language of Diversity and Multiculturalism: Concepts and Definitions</i> Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	At the end of this activity, members should be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To define and explain culture</li><li>● To identify major elements of culture, including those that are observable or easy to determine, and those that are not observable or easy to determine</li><li>● To identify some major differences in values among people from different cultures</li></ul>
<b>Skill Development:</b>	Group process Multicultural competence
<b>Directions:</b>	<b>Step 1 - What is Culture?</b>  Review the <i>Member Instructions</i> with the full group. Divide the members into cooperative learning groups. Ask members first to work in pairs to develop a definition of culture.  <div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"><p><b>CULTURE CAN BE DEFINED AS:</b></p><p>The set of values, structures, and practices held in common by a group of people, who are usually identified by ancestry, language, and traditions. The term is also used to describe those characteristics (or "dimensions of diversity") that we are born with, some of which are permanent and some of which can be changed.</p></div>

Then have them share the definitions with the rest of the small group, agree on a joint definition, and put their definition on newsprint.

Then have one group's reporter present their definition to the full group, and others suggest changes until you get to a joint definition.

## **Step 2 - Elements of Culture**

Have each member individually make a list of at least five elements or aspects of culture -- the characteristics they believe describe people's cultural similarities or differences. Give them an example, if you were describing a Navajo or a person from Bosnia-Herzegovina, what kinds of characteristics would you look for to understand that person's culture?

Have the groups do a "round robin" sharing within the group (each member in turn states one element, which is written on newsprint without comment by the recorder, and the facilitator keeps going around the group until all elements have been identified), and then the group asks questions and generates a single list on newsprint. Have the recorders put all the newsprint sheets up on a wall, and work with the group to generate a single master list of the elements of culture.

Look back at your list of dimensions of diversity and see which of these relate to culture. Some dimensions of diversity do relate to culture, while others reflect individual differences.

Ask the groups to look again at your list of the elements of culture, and consider which of these elements or characteristics are

### **ELEMENTS OF CULTURE**

Appearance  
Language  
Habits  
Food  
Dress  
Traditions  
Customs  
Beliefs  
Behavior  
Norms/Rules  
Symbols

observable or obvious to other people -- which are visible or easy to determine -- and which are not likely to be known unless people choose to share them? Compare this to the tip of an iceberg. For example, language is an obvious characteristic. Customs are sometimes visible; values are not, unless we choose to demonstrate them through bumper stickers, pins, or t-shirts.

Note to the group that when asked to identify elements of culture, people usually find it much easier to identify the visible or observable aspects, like language, appearance, dress, and certain traditions, than the less visible ones like family relationships or values.

Discuss the implications of this -- people often believe that they understand someone else because of the visible aspects of culture, like appearance and behavior. Another person's beliefs and values are not visible or obvious, so if you judge from the surface factors, you may be very inaccurate in your assumptions. To understand someone else's culture, you must get to know them and see below the surface, below the tip of the iceberg.

### **Step 3 - Values Quiz (optional)**

If your group is multicultural, you may want to illustrate the great differences in people's values. Use the attached quiz. There are no right or wrong answers; responses depend on cultural values. If your group is relatively homogeneous in cultural backgrounds, the quiz will generate less dramatic differences. It can still be useful if you ask which responses the members feel are "typical" of people from the United States.

**Process** the exercise by asking people to explain varying responses, first in diverse small groups, then for the whole group. Discuss -- see where there were the greatest variations. Ask whether members are surprised by the differences, and see if people from similar ethnic backgrounds or similar ages gave similar responses. Emphasize that no answer is right or wrong.

Discuss the implications of this activity -- these values represent quite different perspectives on the world. If we don't understand the differences, we may find it hard to understand why other people behave as they do, and hard to communicate and interact effectively.

**Variation:**

Instead of using the values quiz, have members work in groups. Assign made-up, non-ethnic cultural traits to individuals in the groups, but make sure the traits are known only to the individuals. Let the groups interact until they find the other people assigned the same traits. Use traits like a cultural prohibition against eating raw vegetables or the ability to run a 3-minute mile.

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## **Activity #22: Understanding Culture**

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### **Member Instructions**

#### **Assignment:**

To define culture, identify some of the important elements of culture, and explore some important cultural differences which may not be immediately obvious or observable.

#### **Directions:**

##### **Step 1 - What is Culture?**

Once in cooperative learning groups, decide on the roles for group members, choosing from the cooperative learning roles list posted in the training room.

Initially, work in pairs to try to develop a definition of culture. Then share your definitions, agree on a joint definition, and put your group's definition on newsprint.

##### **Step 2 - Elements of Culture**

Individually make a list of at least five elements or aspects of culture -- the characteristics you believe describe people's cultural similarities or differences. For example, if you were describing a Navajo or a person from Bosnia-Herzegovina, what kinds of characteristics would you look for to understand that person's culture?

Do "round robin" sharing in the group: Each member in turn should state one element, which the recorder should write on newsprint without comment. The facilitator should keep going around the group until all elements have been identified. Then you can ask questions about the elements listed, and generate a single list on newsprint. Put your newsprint sheet up on a wall with those of the other groups.

##### **Step 3 - Values Quiz (optional)**

Working individually, complete the attached values quiz. There are no right or wrong answers!



## Values Quiz\*

1. **The best way to show a new acquaintance that you are a good person is to:**
  - a. Maintain a formal distance and reserve.
  - b. Narrow the distance through informality and friendliness.
  
2. **To make a work group or committee as productive as possible, you should:**
  - a. Encourage competition among the individuals involved.
  - b. Encourage cooperation among the individuals involved.
  
3. **If you own a building near a river, and almost every year floods damage your building, you should:**
  - a. Move your building or rebuild elsewhere.
  - b. Dam or divert the river.
  
4. **If you develop a radically different but effective way to do something related to your AmeriCorps assignment, you would expect others to:**
  - a. Be excited and welcome the change as progress.
  - b. Be disturbed and reject the change as unproven and potentially dangerous.
  - c. Be neutral but allow a test of your approach.
  
5. **Arriving late at an appointment because you were helping a stranger on the freeway to change a flat tire is:**
  - a. An acceptable reason.
  - b. An unacceptable reason.
  
6. **People are most important to society as:**
  - a. Individual contributors.
  - b. Members of families or clans.
  - c. Members of work groups or teams.
  
7. **Opportunities in life should be given to people:**
  - a. Based on their birth family's position in society.
  - b. Based on their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
  - c. Based on their age and experience.

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\* Refined from a quiz developed by Sally Ware, M.A., Clarkson College, Omaha, Nebraska, and used with United Way groups. For further information, contact David A. Probst, Ed.D., (402) 552-6110. Used with permission.

- 8. Spending time alone:**
  - a. Is a natural need of humans and helps them to satisfy individual needs.
  - b. Is pitiable and probably occurs because they lack friends or are anti-social.
  
- 9. People are fundamentally:**
  - a. Separate individuals with unique needs that they must satisfy independently.
  - b. Members of a group, the needs of whom are more important than the needs of the individual.
  
- 10. People should feel the most pride about:**
  - a. Their own accomplishments.
  - b. Their family's or clan's accomplishments.
  - c. Their work group's or team's accomplishments.
  - d. Their community's or country's accomplishments.
  
- 11. When determining the best solution to problems, a society should look to:**
  - a. The past, which represents the best and most useful source of information for how to live.
  - b. The future, which holds the promise of even better or happier times.
  
- 12. In general, people who are sitting still and not working or playing are probably:**
  - a. Able to afford to be idle and unproductive.
  - b. Developing their inner selves.
  
- 13. Being open and candid with others (saying exactly what you think):**
  - a. Is naive and shows ignorance of social courtesies and complexities.
  - b. Is honest and shows respect for and trust in others.
  
- 14. When important decisions are to be made, the most essential considerations are:**
  - a. Practicality and efficiency.
  - b. Aesthetic, philosophical, and historical ideals.
  - c. Theory and models.
  
- 15. The rewards or end results of personal attainment and human success are:**
  - a. Physical pleasures and comforts.
  - b. Detachment and indifference to physical comforts and pleasures.
  - c. The time to be concerned about others.

## Activity #23: Everyone Has Culture

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### Trainer's Notes

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<b>Trainer Skills Needed:</b>	Experience and skills in conducting diversity sessions
<b>Time Required:</b>	45 minutes
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	<i>Member Instructions</i> One or more <i>Examples</i> (see box following <i>Trainer's Notes</i> )
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	At the end of this activity, members should be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To understand and be able to explain that everyone has culture</li><li>● To identify factors that may lead to discrimination</li></ul>
<b>Skill Development:</b>	Multicultural competence
	<hr/> <b>Hint:</b> This activity can help everyone feel a part of the discussion about multiculturalism. <hr/>
<b>Directions:</b>	Review the <i>Member Instructions</i> with the full group. Have members work individually. Ask them to think about their own family -- including parents, grandparents on both sides of their family, uncles and aunts and cousins, children and children-in-law, siblings and their families. Each member should think about and write down a few sentences covering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● When and why did they come to the United States?</li><li>● What are their backgrounds, in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion?</li><li>● What obstacles did family members or ancestors face as immigrants, and how did they deal with them (or if they were Native American/Alaskan Native, how did they deal with the immigrants who came)?</li></ul> Read or show the members one or more of the examples on the next page to show the kinds of information they might want to

include. Give each person 5 minutes to write down his/her own family background.

Now ask each member to share the information with one other person. Allow 5 minutes for each to present and another 5 minutes to discuss and compare their family backgrounds -- a total of 15 minutes for the interaction.

Bring the group together. Ask two or three members to share their family backgrounds -- ask for volunteers, but try to identify people with different backgrounds.

**Process** the experience -- Is your family background more diverse than you had thought about before? How did it feel to compare backgrounds?

**Generalize** -- Did you find common experiences? Did many of your ancestors come to the U.S. for similar reasons?

**Apply** the information -- How does understanding your own culture help you to work with other people? How can this be useful to you in your project assignment?

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Hint: The activity is especially useful:

- If most of your members are white, for demonstrating that most of us are to some degree multicultural; and
  - If groups are very diverse, to help them understand that many groups of people have faced similar struggles and challenges.
-

## EXAMPLES

**NOTE: Modify these examples to fit your member group and service sites.**

- 1. A White Man:** I am Icelandic, Scottish, and Irish. My ancestors came to this country to escape poverty. My Icelandic grandmother left Iceland during a period when more than half the population left. She was an indentured servant on a farm in Canada; she came across the border to North Dakota in the early 1900s. My Scottish ancestors came in the late 1800s during the "clearances," when they lost their land. I grew up in Hawaii, where my grandfather was in the cavalry. My step-sister in Hawaii has three children; one of them is married to a Filipino, one to a Japanese American, and one to a Mormon.
- 2. An African American woman:** My father's family came to the U.S. as slaves, more than 250 years ago. My mother's family came in the early 1950s from Trinidad, seeking better jobs and better opportunities for their children. Some of my ancestors on my father's side were Cherokee. My family is part Protestant, part Catholic. One of my uncles is Muslim. I have a sister whose husband is Cuban.
- 3. A White Woman:** My father's family is Irish, and they came to this country in the last century during the potato famine. They settled in Boston, where they faced a good deal of discrimination, like signs on employer offices reading "Irish need not apply." My great grandfather became a police officer because that job was open to the Irish. My mother's family is Serbian, and her parents came here after the Second World War, when Serbia became part of Yugoslavia, which became a communist country. My grandparents still speak Serbian at home. They are Orthodox, and find it hard to accept my father's being Catholic due to conflicts with Croats who were Catholics but were allies of the Nazis. My mother tells them that in the U.S., everyone can live together.
- 4. An Hispanic/Native American Man:** My mother's family is Navajo, and live near Window Rock in the Navajo Nation. My father's family is Hispanic, and have lived in Northern New Mexico for more than 250 years. They met when they both taught at an Indian boarding school in New Mexico. My Navajo ancestors were once hunters but now they raise sheep. My father's family are farmers. In the small town nearest to their land, the old ways are still used for irrigation (as described in the movie *The Milagro Beanfield War*), and people still speak Spanish as well as English. On both sides, my family has faced discrimination because of their ethnicity; however, the New Mexico constitution protects language rights. My mother says my father's family is the conquerors who started the process of disenfranchisement of the native people, because he is descended from the conquistadors.



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**Activity #23: Everyone Has Culture**  
**Member Instructions**

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**Assignment:**

To look at your own family as a way of understanding your cultural background and the diversity which may exist within your family.

**Directions:**

Think individually about your own extended family -- including parents, grandparents on both sides of your family, uncles and aunts, your children and children-in-law, siblings and their families.

Write down a few sentences covering the following questions:

- When and why did they come to the United States?
- What are their backgrounds, in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion?
- What obstacles did family members or ancestors face as immigrants, and how did they deal with them (or if they were Native American/Alaskan Native, how did they deal with the immigrants who came)?

Now share your background with one other person. Identify the obstacles your family faced in becoming part of the United States, and discuss what you think are the causes of any negative treatment they received.



## Activity #24: Culture as a Filter for Experience

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### Trainer's Notes

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**Trainer Skills Needed:**

Experience in conducting diversity training

**Time Required:**

2 hours

**Materials Needed:**

*Member Instructions*

Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint

**Learning Objectives:**

At the end of this activity, members should be able:

- To explain the concept of stereotyping
- To define and give examples related to terms used in talking about diversity
- To understand how our reactions and behavior are conditioned by our own culture, our past experiences, cultural stereotypes, and the interactions between different cultural groups

**Skill Development:**

Multicultural competence

Group process

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Hint: Use this exercise right after doing some teambuilding activities.

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**Directions:**

Have members work in small cooperative learning groups. If the members are racially/ethnically diverse, make the groups diverse. Review the *Member Instructions* with the full group.

**Step 1 - Diversity History**

Have members work in cooperative learning groups of three or four. Have each person think about and write down three experiences which have affected his/her attitudes about diversity or people from other groups or cultures. Then have them share. Allow 5 minutes for individual work and 15 minutes to share.

As a full group, discuss how experiences affect our values and behavior, and identify areas of diversity we need to learn more

**LESSONS LEARNED:  
MEMBER PERSPECTIVES**

Discussions of diversity, especially those that involve experiences of discrimination, can be difficult, but are very important. One AmeriCorps member notes that "this type of discussion may open a can of worms among the members (bring out anger, tears, etc.)." However, "don't cut off a discussion that is going well just because it is a touchy subject." Too often a facilitator "would cut us off just when we were finally addressing an issue in our group openly and honestly."

about. Ask how many people have a close personal relationship with someone who is different from them. What is the basis of the difference? How has this relationship affected their attitudes about people from the same group? Discuss the importance of personal contacts and interaction. Ask the members individually to try to define and differentiate the following terms: **stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination**. Discuss these definitions. Note that most people, regardless of cultural background, use stereotypes, and that we need to be aware of this tendency and its negative implications.

**Step 2 - Situations**

Assign half the groups Situation #1 and half Situation #2 in the *Member Instructions*. **GIVE EACH GROUP ONLY ITS OWN SITUATION TO READ.** Ask each member to read the assigned situation and address the questions individually. After 5 minutes, ask the groups to discuss the questions stated. Allow 20 minutes for discussion.

Now ask one group that dealt with Situation #1 to read that situation and present its discussion summary. Then ask other groups to indicate similarities and differences in their reactions and discussion.

## DEFINITIONS

**Prejudice** involves prejudging people without adequate information, forming negative views or beliefs about a group of people without taking the time to obtain information and judge fairly. (Prejudice involves beliefs.)

**Stereotyping** is sometimes considered a subset of prejudice. A stereotype is a standardized mental image that is oversimplified or based on limited experience, and then generalized to a whole group. Stereotypes are often the result of limited contact with and knowledge about those we perceive to be different, and are an expression of our even more limited understanding of what they are like. Stereotypes are often but not always negative; the concept of generalizing about a group from limited experience can be insulting regardless of the content of the stereotype.

**Discrimination** is behavior in which people are treated negatively because of specific cultural or diversity characteristics. (Discrimination involves behavior.)

Now ask a groups that worked with Situation #2 to read it aloud and summarize its discussion. Ask other groups to indicate the similarities and differences in their reactions and discussion.

Ask for some discussion about the differences in perspective between the two groups.

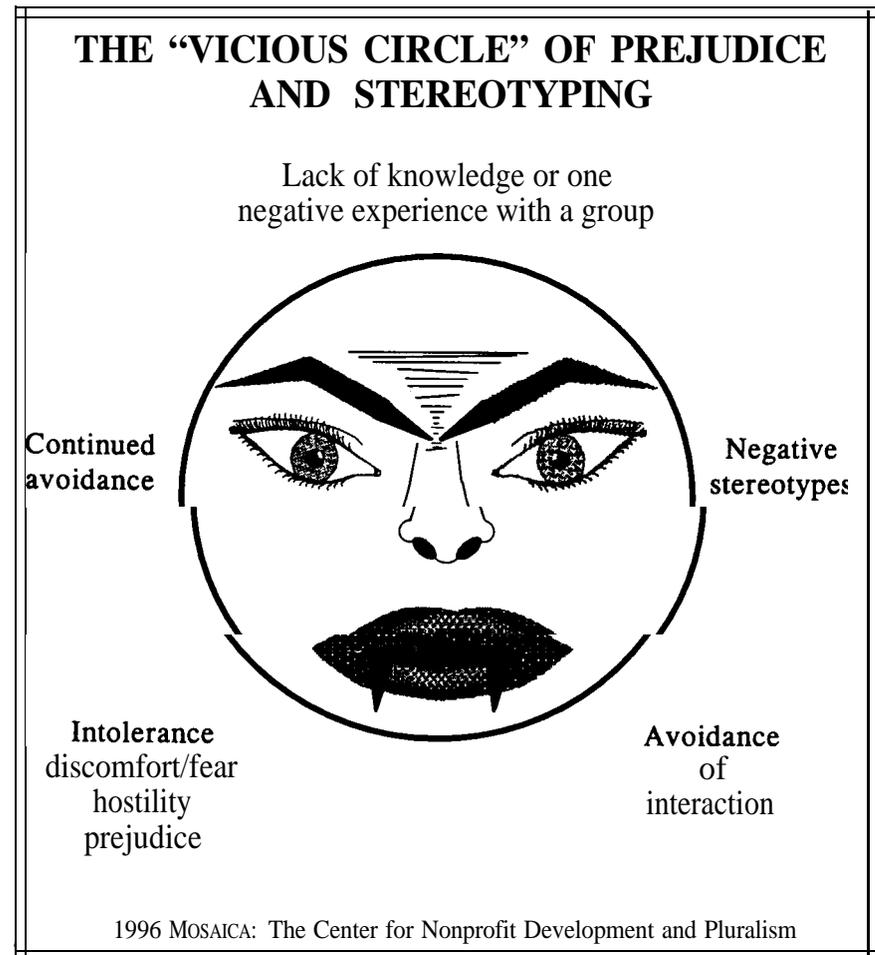
**Process** the experience -- Were members surprised by any of the reactions? Was it hard to talk about these situations? Why?

**Generalize** -- What were the typical reactions and reasons given? What does this tell us about our reactions to other people?

Provide the following additional points if they do not come out in the discussion:

- Our reactions to other people are processed through the filter of experience.

- Fear affects our reactions.
- Even if we want to work together, cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication. It is very important for us to find ways to talk about these situations and work them out positively.



Present the “vicious circle” of stereotyping and prejudice. (Draw it as in the box or with sharp edges.) We may be taught prejudice or adopt a stereotype due to a negative experience. This leads us to avoid interaction with that group. The less we know about another culture, the more we tend to apply negative stereotypes we have learned or heard. These stereotypes inhibit the interaction needed to help us learn about each other. When contact is required, we will be less tolerant of differences, uncomfortable, and perhaps hostile, which reinforces negative

reactions. The more negative the attitudes, the less likely we are to seek the contact that would add new information and help to break the stereotype.

**Optional Activity:**

Assuming that we want to work together and minimize misunderstandings and not hurt each other's feelings, what can we do to establish open communications and avoid problems?

**SAMPLE NORMS FOR DIVERSE MEMBER GROUPS**

1. Pay attention to what others are saying to you.
2. If someone is bothered by the actions of another group member, look for a way to accommodate to his/her concerns and resolve the problem.
3. Treat everyone with the same level of respect, showing your recognition that everyone has equal rights.
4. Learn about and welcome diversity; if your initial reaction to differences is negative, ask yourself if that reaction is due to fear of the unfamiliar.
5. Neither engage in nor condone intolerant behavior within the group; don't make jokes or stereotype and don't permit others to do so.
6. Verbally and publicly support other members of the group in situations where outsiders fail to show respect for diversity.
7. Discuss problems and try to explain your perspective; don't ignore concerns or problems.
8. Talk about problems and concerns directly with the other person(s) involved, not behind their backs.
9. If you can't resolve a problem directly, seek a mediator.
10. Don't make excuses if you have trouble getting along with someone different from you; find a way to make the AmeriCorps team function effectively.

One approach is to consciously develop some norms of behavior. Present the sample norms or ask groups to develop a set of norms for their own interactions.

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## *Activity #24: Culture as a Filter for Experience*

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### *Member Instructions*

#### **Assignment:**

To examine how lack of contact, negative experiences, and stereotypes affect our behavior and our attitudes towards other groups.

#### **Directions:**

Once in cooperative learning groups, decide on the roles for group members, choosing from the cooperative learning roles list posted in the training room.

#### **Step 1 - Diversity History**

- Work in groups of three. Each person should think about and write down three experiences which have affected your attitudes about diversity or about people from other groups or cultures. Take 5 minutes to do this.
- Now share your experience with the other two people in your group. Spend 15 minutes sharing, and discussing why these experiences were important to you. Also think about the dimensions of diversity which seem most likely to lead to prejudice and stereotyping.

#### **Step 2 - Situations**

- Working in your cooperative learning group, discuss the situation assigned to you. You have 20 minutes.

##### **Situation #1**

You are a white woman walking alone after dark in a neighborhood you don't know very well. On the corner, leaning against the wall of a building, you see a group of four young men looking in your direction and talking quietly. They are African American.

- What would be your initial reaction?
- Would the reaction be different if they were white? If they were women? If you lived in the neighborhood?
- What if you were an African American woman? A Latina?

As you try to decide whether to walk by these young men or cross the street to avoid getting too close to them, you see a white police officer come around the corner. He looks very tall and strong.

- What would be your initial reaction?
- Would the reaction be different if the police officer were African American or Hispanic? If the officer were a woman?

Now talk more broadly about the situation and how race/ethnicity, gender, experience, and attitudes affect people's reactions to the situation. Be prepared to summarize your discussion to the full group.

### **Situation #2**

You are one of a group of four young African American men who have just come out of a movie. You are waiting at a corner for another friend who has promised to pick you up. He is late. You are watching for him and talking about the movie, when you notice a middle-aged white woman coming down the street. You see her look at you and stop walking.

- What would be your initial reaction to her?
- Would the reaction be different if you were white? If she were African American or Latino?

As you stand there, a police officer comes around the corner and comes towards you. He is big and tall and he is white.

- What would be your initial reaction?
- Would the reaction be different if the police officer were African American? Hispanic? Female?

Now talk more broadly about the situation and how race/ethnicity, gender, experience, and attitudes affect people's reactions to the situation. Be prepared to summarize your discussion to the full group.

## Activity #25: Working in Multicultural Communities

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### Trainer's Notes

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<b>Trainer Skills Needed:</b>	Experience in conducting diversity training
<b>Time Required:</b>	1 hour
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	<i>Member Instructions</i> Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	At the end of this activity, members should be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To understand that lack of knowledge about other cultures can cause you to behave inappropriately</li><li>● To identify and understand some frequent barriers to effective multicultural communication and interaction</li></ul>
<b>Skill Development:</b>	Multicultural competence
<b>Directions:</b>	<p>Divide the members into small cooperative learning groups. If the group is racially/ethnically diverse, make each group as diverse as possible. Review the <i>Member Instructions</i> with the full group.</p> <p>Assign one or two case studies to each group. Ask that they read the case study individually, and try to answer the three questions. Allow 5 minutes for this. Then have the groups discuss answers to the questions together, allowing about 15 minutes.</p> <p>OPTIONAL: Give the group the list of <i>Some Sources of Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding</i> (in box on next page), and ask them to see which ones apply to their cases.</p> <p>Now ask for <b>reports</b> from each of the groups, asking that the reporter read the situation for the full group.</p> <p>Once all groups have presented, list all the major factors which they think contributed to the problems in the case studies. Put them all on newsprint and discuss them -- with emphasis on how to avoid such problems in your project assignments.</p>

## SOME SOURCES OF CROSS-CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING

**Prejudice** - negative feelings about another group

**Subconscious cultural blindness** - failure to recognize cultural differences

**Conditioning** - habits of behavior based on what you have been taught or experienced

**Projected similarity** - assuming that other people are similar to you

**Projected differences** - assuming other people are different from you

**Cross-cultural misinterpretation** - judging another culture through your reality

**Over-generalizing** - making a general assumption from limited experience

**Tunnel vision** - seeing things narrowly

**Not listening** - not paying attention to information that is being given to you

**Superiority complex** - believing that your culture and your way of doing things are better than those of others

**Unearned privilege** - treating certain people better because of "who they are"; people receiving such treatment are unlikely to recognize it, but those without it tend to recognize it easily

**Lack of appropriate cultural knowledge and skills** - not knowing how to behave when interacting with someone from another culture

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## *Activity #25: Working in Multicultural Communities*

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### *Member Instructions*

#### **Assignment:**

To identify some potential cross-cultural problems which might occur in your project assignments, examine how they occur, and see how they might be avoided.

#### **Directions:**

Once in cooperative learning groups, decide on the roles for group members, choosing from the cooperative learning roles list posted in the training room.

Individually read the case study assigned to you. Discuss answers to the following questions:

- Why did this situation arise?
- How could it be resolved?
- What might have been done to prevent it?

Be prepared to present your case and your responses to the full group.

#### **Situations:**

1. You are accompanying a social worker on a visit to a very low-income Mexican American farmworker family as part of your AmeriCorps assignment. The family offers you a soft drink and some sweet bread. The social worker with you makes a point of saying that she couldn't eat a thing but would really love a glass of water. You accept the refreshments. After you leave, she tells you that you have probably eaten food that was intended for the family's own meal.
2. You serve as a teacher's aide in a fourth grade classroom. You are discussing the children's progress with the teacher. When you mention two Asian children, the teacher reacts negatively. She says she just doesn't feel she can trust them; she says they "always look down and won't look you in the eye." You visited the home of one of those children last week, and the mother told you that the teacher doesn't like her or her child.
3. You are part of a crew which is working in a heavily Hispanic community. Most of the other crew members are Hispanic, and they speak Spanish to each other a lot of the time. This makes you feel left out and angry.

4. You serve as a tutor in an elementary school. Last week, you gave the children the assignment of making a collage from pictures cut out of magazines or books which begin with specific letters of the alphabet. One of the children comes in without the assignment. When you ask her why, she says her mother "wouldn't let me cut up her book."
5. You are making a home visit to a disabled white senior citizen with a social worker who is about your age. She is African American and you are Japanese American. When you arrive, the senior citizen immediately assumes that you are the social worker and the African American is your assistant. She directs all her questions and comments to you, ignoring the social worker.
6. Your crew is working on a national park which is on an Indian reservation. You go down into a deep canyon to do road maintenance. Since you are making good progress, you take a lunch break and decide to walk around. You see the ruins of ancient dwellings and make your way up a steep embankment to see them at close range. While you are there, a Native American sees you and gets very upset.
7. You are with another member and a group of friends, all very similar in appearance and background. Someone makes a joke that includes negative stereotypes about gays, and almost everyone in the group laughs. You laugh especially hard and say that you've never heard anything so funny before. One friend glares at you and walks off.
8. You are working in a community-based organization serving a very diverse immigrant community, including Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander, Ethiopian, and Palestinian families. Most of the staff are themselves immigrants. Last week you were checking your messages at the front desk. You couldn't read the name or message clearly on one of the messages, so you asked for help. The receptionist told you someone else took the message; she couldn't read it either. You mumbled something about wishing people knew English. The receptionist heard you, and now she will no longer interact with you.

## Supporting Information



## Facts about Racial and Ethnic Diversity\*

### RACIAL/ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATIONS TODAY

**As of 1990, one-fourth of the U.S. population was minority.** The largest racial/ethnic minority populations -- Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islander, African American, and American Indian/Alaskan Native -- grew much faster than the white non-Hispanic population during the 1980s.

**Minorities live in every state, but different minorities are concentrated in various states.** As of 1990:

- ◆ **Hispanics are the most geographically concentrated** -- more than 80% live in seven states (California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, and Arizona) -- and over half in just two: California and Texas. New Mexico is 38% Hispanic, and California and Texas are over 25% Hispanic.
- ◆ **Nearly three-fourths of Asians and Pacific Islanders live in seven states** -- California, New York, Hawaii, Texas, New Jersey, Illinois, and Washington -- and nearly two in five live in California, where they are nearly 10% of the population. Asians and Pacific Islanders represent more than 60% of the population of Hawaii.
- ◆ **A little over half of all American Indians and Alaskan Natives live in seven states** -- they are far less concentrated. About one-third live in Oklahoma, California, and Arizona. They are more than 15% of the population of Alaska, and between 5% and 9% of the populations of New Mexico, Oklahoma, Montana, and Arizona.
- ◆ **African Americans are even more spread out among states.** Less than half of African Americans live in seven states -- although they are more than one-fourth of the total population of five states, all in the South -- Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama -- and almost one-fourth in Maryland as well.
- ◆ **Whites are the majority population in every state except Hawaii**, where they are only one-third of the population. (These figures include most Hispanics, since being Hispanic is not considered a race, but rather an ethnicity.)

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\* Prepared by Emily Gantz McKay, MOSAICA, in October 1994 and revised in July 1995; contains material originally prepared and organized for the National Council of La Raza. All information comes from published data from the Bureau of the Census. Data are from the 1990 Census except the projections, which come from the "mid-level" projections in *Population Projections of the United States, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1993 to 2050*, Current Population Reports P25-1104, issued November 1993.

## ETHNICITY AND NATIONALITY

**The United States is a nation of immigrants, and people in the United States come from extremely diverse ethnic backgrounds.** For example, in the 1990 Census, nearly one in four U.S. residents (23%) reported having German ancestry, while about one in seven was Irish (16%) or English (13%).

More than nine in ten U.S. residents (92%) were native-born; nearly 95% were citizens. One in seven (14%) speaks a language other than English at home, but only 6% say they do not speak English "very well."

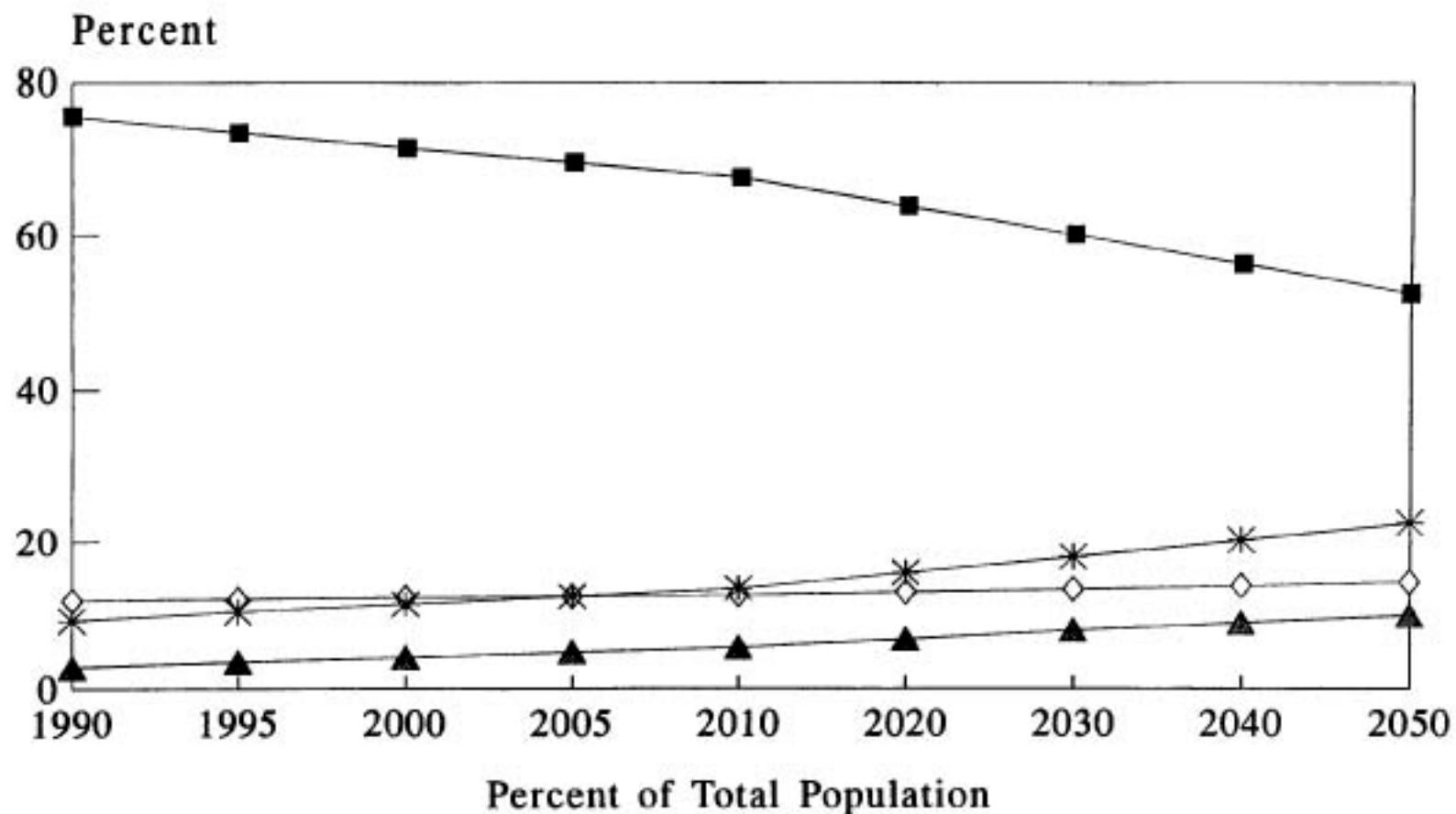
## NATIONAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS

**The U.S. is already culturally diverse, but will be far more so in the future.** According to "middle series" population projections to 2050 released by the Census Bureau at the beginning of October 1993:

- ◆ By 2050, the White non-Hispanic population will decline from three-fourths (75%) to just over half (53%) of the population.
- ◆ The Hispanic population will continue to increase the most in numbers -- two-thirds from natural increase and one-third from immigration. At the current rate of growth, Hispanics will become the largest minority by 2010.
- ◆ The Asian and Pacific Islander population is growing at the fastest rate, and is expected to continue to grow more than 4% a year.
- ◆ The African American population will double by 2050 and after 2012 will have greater numerical growth each year than the White non-Hispanic population.
- ◆ American Indians and Alaskan Natives will double their population by 2050 -- from 2.1 to 4.3 million.

The attached graphs show various minority groups as a percent of the total U.S. population, and as a percent of the total minority population, and show the projected growth in various population groups between 1990 and 2050.

# PROJECTED POPULATION OF THE U.S. BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 1990-2050

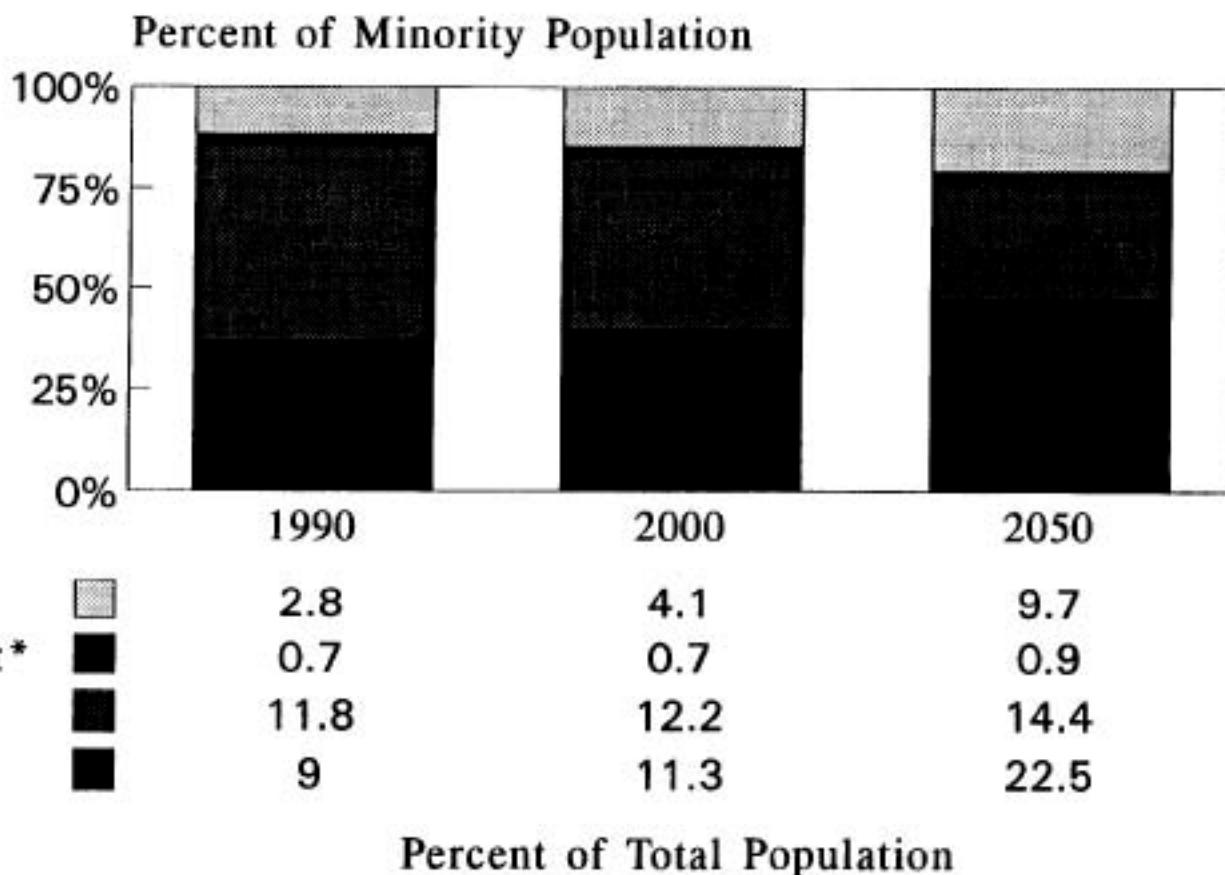


\* Hispanic   ■ White Non-Hisp   ◇ Black Non-Hisp   ▲ Asian/Pac Isl

*Population Projections of the U.S.: 1993-2050, CPR P-25, 1993*

MOSAICA

# COMPOSITION OF THE U.S. MINORITY POPULATION 1990, 2000, AND 2050



\* Non-Hispanic

Population Projections: 1993 to 2050, CPR P25-1104, Nov. 1993, Middle Series  
MOSAICA

## **Ten Tips for Working Effectively with Diverse People and Multicultural Communities**

- 1. Learn about your community, the people you will assist and work with during your service assignment, and your potential community partners.** Before judging people or organizations, find out what they have to say and learn about their backgrounds and needs.
- 2. Respect diverse points of view, even if you don't share them.** Different perspectives need not lead to conflict; there may be no need to either defend your perspective or agree with theirs.
- 3. Value and learn from the strengths and the experiences of others.** Recognize that you have no idea about the obstacles they may have faced and the problems they have had to overcome.
- 4. Give everyone equitable attention and service,** regardless of your personal preferences. Be sure all recipients of services receive helpful, courteous service and full consideration, whether or not you like them personally.
- 5. Treat people as your equals.** Communicate in words and actions that you not only recognize their rights, but also value them as individuals, regardless of their personal characteristics, economic status, or power.
- 6. Eliminate unequal burdens and unequal privileges.** No individual or organization should be given preference over others because of characteristics unrelated to your project's guidelines and regulations.
- 7. Avoid stereotypes and generalizations.** When applied to individuals, they are almost always wrong, and always unfair. Look at people as individuals, not just as members of groups.
- 8. Accept that other individuals, families, and organizations may have needs and preferences which are different from yours.** This does not necessarily make them any less legitimate or reasonable.
- 9. Approach requests for services or assistance by trying to see how to say yes, rather than how to say no.** Follow the rules, but use them as guidelines to appropriate action, not as barriers which justify doing nothing.
- 10. View differences as opportunities to learn, not as complications or disadvantages.** A friendly, interested first reaction to someone new or different sets the foundation for a positive relationship.



## The Language of Diversity and Multiculturalism: Concepts and Definitions

Many terms are used to describe efforts to create settings in which people of different backgrounds and characteristics interact cooperatively, productively, creatively, and effectively. Often, the terms emphasize the school or work setting, but similar terms and concepts apply to a neighborhood, community, or society. There are no universally accepted practical definitions for the terms used in describing the environment to be created or the process of creating it. However, the following definitions and descriptions are commonly used.

**Diversity**\* means differences. The term is used more broadly, to describe the process of organizational change designed to create a supportive environment in which everyone can perform to his/her full potential. In this sense, "valuing diversity" means actively valuing different backgrounds and perspectives; fostering teamwork and cooperation, both within the organization and between it and external entities and individuals with shared missions or project objectives; and recognizing and fully using the skills and talents of everyone associated with the organization. Diversity means working towards an organization or a society in which no one is advantaged or disadvantaged due to cultural heritage or certain unchangeable characteristics.

**Culture** is the set of values, structures, and practices held in common by a group of people, who are usually identified by ancestry, language, and traditions. The term is also used to describe those characteristics (or "dimensions of diversity") that we are born with, some of which are permanent and some of which can be changed.

**Multiculturalism** is often used to mean an environment in which differences among people and groups are recognized, respected, and valued -- they are seen as positive and desirable, rather than negative or threatening. Although slightly different in meaning, it is often used interchangeably with *diversity* and *pluralism*.

**Multicultural competence** goes beyond being aware of culture differences and being sensitive to them, respecting and valuing diversity. It requires translating this knowledge into action. Cultural competence means *demonstrating* the capacity -- the knowledge, understanding, and skills -- to interact effectively with culturally diverse people, recognizing and integrating aspects of their culture into your interactions with them. A culturally competent person interacts with others in ways that are comfortable and appropriate for them, rather than always expecting them to adjust their behavior.

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\* This definition benefited from the description used by Allstate, and by an article in the November 1993 issue of *Managing Diversity* which was written by Al Jackson, Director of Diversity and Staff Development at Scholastic, Inc.

**These terms include all kinds of differences:** race, ethnicity, culture, language, sex, physical ability, sexual orientation, age, dress, language, etc. They refer not only to human interactions, but also to the full range of organizational relationships -- with community members or consumers, partners and cooperating organizations, community residents and institutions, and other individuals and entities with whom we interact.

**A number of other terms are also important in understanding diversity and multiculturalism.** For example:

*Values* are established and accepted ideals, customs, and standards for deciding right and wrong, or deciding whether behavior is proper or improper. Values are often culturally-based.

A *stereotype* is a standardized and usually (but not necessarily) negative mental picture of a group or people, representing an oversimplified opinion, attitude, or judgment. Stereotypes are the result of limited contact with those we perceive to be different, and are an expression of our even more limited knowledge and understanding of what they are like. Stereotypes involve generalizations.

*Prejudice* involves negative views or beliefs about a group of people which reflect the formation of an opinion without taking the time to judge fairly. Prejudices are often the result of stereotypes. (Prejudice involves beliefs.)

*Discrimination* is behavior in which people are treated negatively because of specific cultural or diversity characteristics. (Discrimination involves behavior.)

## MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE CONTINUUM\*

Developing multicultural competence helps you communicate and interact effectively and positively with diverse individuals and groups, in a diverse society. This multicultural competence continuum includes a series of steps used to define various levels of awareness, sensitivity, and competence in dealing with people of various cultures.

<b>Cultural Destructiveness</b>	<b>Cultural Blindness</b>	<b>Cultural Awareness</b>	<b>Cultural Sensitivity</b>	<b>Multicultural Competence</b>
Making people fit the same cultural pattern, and excluding those who don't fit -- forced assimilation. Emphasis on using differences as barriers.	Not seeing or believing there are cultural differences among people. "Everyone is the same."	Being aware that we live and function within a culture of our own and that our identity is shaped by it.	Knowing that there are cultural differences and understanding and accepting different cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors.	Having the capacity to communicate and interact effectively with culturally diverse people, integrating elements of their culture - vocabulary, values, attitudes, rules, and norms. Translation of knowledge into action.

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\* Modified slightly from a continuum developed by Cristina López while at the National Council of La Raza.

