

Table 1.1. Characteristics of a Multiculturally Competent Student Affairs Practitioner

<i>Multicultural Awareness</i>	<i>Multicultural Knowledge</i>	<i>Multicultural Skills</i>
A belief that differences are valuable and that learning about others who are culturally different is necessary and rewarding	Knowledge of diverse cultures and oppressed groups (i.e., history, traditions, values, customs, resources, issues)	Ability to identify and openly discuss cultural differences and issues
A willingness to take risks and see them as necessary and important for personal and professional growth	Information about how change occurs for individual values and behaviors	Ability to assess the impact of cultural differences on communication and effectively communicate across those differences
A personal commitment to justice, social change, and combating depression	Knowledge about the ways that cultural differences affect verbal and nonverbal communication	Capability to empathize and genuinely connect with individuals who are culturally different from themselves
A belief in the value and significance of their own cultural heritage and worldview as a starting place for understanding others who are culturally different	Knowledge about how gender, class, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, sexual orientation, age, religion or spirituality, and disability and ability affect individuals and their experiences	Ability to incorporate new learning and prior learning in new situations
A willingness to self-examine and, when necessary, challenge and change their own values, worldview, assumptions, and biases	Information about culturally appropriate resources and how to make referrals	Ability to gain the trust and respect of individuals who are culturally different from themselves

<i>Multicultural Awareness</i>	<i>Multicultural Knowledge</i>	<i>Multicultural Skills</i>
An openness to change, and belief that change is necessary and positive	Information about the nature of institutional oppression and power	Capability to accurately assess their own multicultural skills, comfort level, growth, and development
An acceptance of other worldviews and perspectives and a willingness to acknowledge that, as individuals, they do not have all the answers	Knowledge about identity development models and the acculturation process for members of oppressed groups and their impact on individuals, groups, intergroup relations, and society	Ability to differentiate among individual differences, cultural differences, and universal similarities
A belief that cultural differences do not have to interfere with effective communication or meaningful relationships	Knowledge about within-group differences and understanding of multiple identities and multiple oppressions	Ability to challenge and support individuals and systems around oppression issues in a manner that optimizes multicultural interventions
Awareness of their own cultural heritage and how it affects their worldview, values, and assumptions	Information and understanding of internalized oppression and its impact on identity and self-esteem	Ability to make individual, group, and institutional multicultural interventions
Awareness of their own behavior and its impact on others	Knowledge about institutional barriers that limit access to and success in higher education for members of oppressed groups	Ability to use cultural knowledge and sensitivity to make more culturally sensitive and appropriate interventions
Awareness of the interpersonal process that occurs within a multicultural dyad	Knowledge about systems theories and how systems change	

Source: Pope and Reynolds (1997). Used by permission.

Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs
 - Pope/Reynolds/Mueller

Things You Can Do Next

Make a thought to action connection

Realize that this is a lifelong journey (it requires daily homework)

Recognize your cultural blind spots and work with them

Ask questions—pause and wonder

Move beyond shame and blame to a place of mutual productivity

Build trust and relationships across cultures thru sharing knowledge and information

Participate in collective learning (fosters teamwork)

Check your teaching methods. Do they promote the “isms”:

Overtly and intentionally (name calling)

Overtly and unintentionally (meeting a person of color and assuming their profession)

Covertly and intentionally (employment discrimination, jokes)

Covertly and unintentionally (visual aids, unspoken messages)

READ and Talk to Others

Gloria Ladson-Billings (To Teach and the Dreamkeepers)

Beverly Daniel Tatum (Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria)

Visit: http://www.tolerance.org/hidden_bias/index.html for hidden bias tests

What you can do to become more inclusive:

Learn to confront a racist remark. Say, "I find what you're saying offensive (disgusting). Please keep your views to yourself."

Inform your co-workers/peers that racist remarks are forbidden under Civil Rights Laws and that you do not wish to work in an environment where racist remarks are uttered.

Report incidents to the people in charge.

Visit the worship service of different ethnic groups.

Create a personal vision statement with your reasons for eliminating racism.

Review/Change your statement as you change. Display your statement so you can read it frequently.

Embrace your ethnic heritage and wish not to be judged or judge others by the color of skin, way of life, native tongue or faith.

Reclaim a relationship.

Read a book. See a movie.

Start a project.

Join an organization.

Visit a place.

See an art exhibit.

Become an ally (a person committed to our struggle as well as your own).

Become knowledgeable about the history and current situation of different groups.

Identify and learn about white heroines/heroes from white heritage who fought/fight against racism.

Research your culture and a culture other than your own (specific groups, specific individuals, holidays, customs, leaders, sports figures, artists, art, music, dance, food, clothing, family life, religion). Look for commonalities/differences.

Plan to do a service learning project in this, your new community.

I'm
Ready
To Talk

Wear a Button—Invite a Conversation

Use these ground rules to guide your conversations about race.

1. Always first ask if someone is willing to talk with you about an issue of race (even if they are wearing their button).
2. Take the risk to initiate a conversation about race. Gather the courage to move beyond your discomfort.
3. Engage in self-care. When you aren't feeling up to talking, it is okay not to talk (and take off your button).
4. In your conversations, strive first to *understand* and second to be understood.
5. For white people: Enter into conversations about race with the perspective that people of color usually have greater insight on the topic.
6. For people of color: Recognize that many white people are working hard to understand of white privilege.
7. For white people: Stay in the conversation and resist the temptation to retreat when people of color express strong emotions about race issues.
8. For people of color: Stay in the conversation and resist the temptation to disengage from conversations about race that are emotionally challenging.
9. Avoid phrases like "I didn't mean to make you angry," or "I didn't intend to offend you" as ways of sidestepping responsibility for the impact you have made on another person. Instead, listen carefully and with empathy.
10. Express your time limits for conversations up front.
11. Monitor your feelings throughout the conversation, and be willing to share those feelings as you proceed.
12. Use cross-race conversations as an opportunity to get new information and insight.