



The Experience of “Building a Multiculturally Competent Professional Community”

The Multicultural Research and Training Lab (MRTL) was organized by a cohort of Psychology faculty members at Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, to provide Psy.D. students engaged in multicultural research a space to discuss and receive feedback on their clinical dissertations topics. In addition to offering dissertation support, the MRTL provides opportunity for students to engage in discourse on their views of how effectively the Psy.D. Program is contributing to their multicultural competence as well as ways the institution might offer a more welcoming experience for students from diverse backgrounds.

As a group committed to advancing competence in multicultural issues, we created a forum that was student-driven, based on information-sharing and scholarly dialogue, and fostered the creation of professional relationships. The birth of the conference, *Building a Multiculturally Competent Professional Community*,” was envisioned as the nascent formation of a community of future clinicians and researchers who shared in this value.

Key Points in Creating the Forum

1. *Accessibility of conference.* No cost to attendees.
2. *Collaborative.* An interactive, participatory format is encouraged among presenters and between presenters and conference attendees.
3. *Congress-type discussion among student attendees.* Space is provided to empower students to brainstorm ways in which they can serve as agents of institutional and social change.
4. *Development of the “whole” student.* An experience that not only emphasizes a student’s intellect but the development of skills and attitudes that makes for a successful, multiculturally competent professional and practitioner.
5. *Openness.* Support questioning and the re-conceptualization of psychological constructs and theories, assessment, and best practices.
6. *Welcoming to all who wish to attend.* Commitment to multicultural issues is not only among those who self-identify as multicultural clinicians and researchers but is a sensibility shared by many.
7. *Two Cs: Critical mass and commitment.* There must be a critical mass of students and faculty who are committed to stimulating institutional change.

MRTL website: <http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/psychology/mrtl/>

October 2006 Conference Program

Panel 1: Identity Development and Culture in Therapeutic Work with Adolescents

Regina Corpuz, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Counseling Ethnic Adolescents: Identity Development, Treatment Issues, and Multicultural Counseling Techniques

Donald E. Grant, Jr., Alliant International University, California School of Professional Psychology,
Combating Factors Adversely Affecting Reality Formation among African American Adolescent Males

Jessica K. Prince, University of La Verne, *The Culture of Group Homes*

Panel 2: Culturally Valid Psychological Assessment

Jeanette Francis and Lionel Lee, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
The Impact of Culture on Neuropsychological Assessment

Negar Shekarabi, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Iranian Americans and the MMPI-2: Considering Cultural Factors in the Assessment of Psychopathology

Panel 3: Therapeutic Considerations in Working with Latino/a Clients

Saul G. Alamilla, University of California, Santa Barbara, Gevirtz Graduate School of Education,
Adherence to Latino/a Cultural Values and Behaviour, Acculturative Stress, and Psychological Symptomatology

Mariela Gamsie, Alliant International University, California School of Professional Psychology,
Function of Language in Psychotherapy with Bilingual and Spanish-Speaking Patients: Barriers, Risks, and Recommendations

Panel 4: Culture and the Socio-Emotional Development of Children

Janice Keener, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
School Intervention for Latino Families with Chronic Illness

Heather Sweet, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Promoting Gender Equality in Early Childhood

Panel 5: Developmental, Psychological, and Social Considerations in Therapeutic Work with LGBT Clients

Mimi Hoang, Ph.D., Alliant International University, California School of Professional Psychology,
Bisexual Women: Investigating Ambi Identity, Internalized Monosexism, and Infidelity

Carolyn O'Keefe, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Gaining Competence in Working with LGBT Clients

Kim Stanley, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Psychosocial Adjustment in the Face of Stigma among Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Individuals

Panel 6: Assessing Multicultural Competence in a University Setting

Michael B. Ganz, Joshua R. Wolff, and Heather L. Himes, Biola University, Rosemead School of Psychology, *Assessing Evangelical Christian College Students' Attitudes Toward Sexual Diversity*

Angela Hunt-Williams, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Multicultural Training: A Qualitative Evaluation of a Psy.D. Program

Michael Moodian, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Using the Intercultural Development Inventory to Assist in Building a Multiculturally Competent Professional Community