

Kaitlin Hughes

Celebrating Diversity Paper

September 22, 2008

Going into the Diversity workshop on Sunday morning, I was dreading it, thinking it would be another boring, long meeting, telling us what we should do when certain situations arise in our teaching career. I did not know many people at the workshop so I felt sort of awkward and uncomfortable, wanting to leave right away. However, my instincts could not have been more wrong. Attending the Celebrating Diversity Workshop has helped me to see and understand how to successfully maintain relationships without encountering issues such as stereotyping, discrimination, and mistreatment of various groups.

I grew up in a very small, secluded town where diversity is a term seldom heard. Issues with race, ethnicity, and cultural differences were something you only heard when sitting in History, Geography, and maybe English. It was a total transformation going from high school to college and seeing such a difference in the cultural diversity, and I knew there was a lot I needed to learn and accept. At the workshop I was able to open up in the positive environment around me, and talk about things that I may have encountered in the past or may come up to in the future. We got to know one another and learn a lot from each other.

One of my favorite activities of the day was the "Identity Groups-What groups are you in?" game. We were all divided into a group which we were involved with such as athletes, musicians, Democrats, Christians, and so on, having about 15 different groups. We were able to discuss things that people say about our specified group that we do not like and what we

wish people knew about us. After several minutes we came back as a big group and presented our “identity group”. It was interesting to hear each group’s characteristics and what they wish was not said about them. I found that I felt guilty because I had made fun of that group at one time, with things that they wish were not said about them. It was interesting to see their side of things and what affects them. Now, I really try to watch what I say out loud, and I think it through in my head so I do not hurt another’s feelings.

From the workshop, I learned that diversity is an important issue in today’s society that needs to be looked upon and brought out more. In my teaching career, I hope to be able to have the experience of having a wide variety of ethnicity in my classroom. I think it would be a great experience for all the students to learn about different cultures and backgrounds, and understanding it as a young age will help them accept it more in the future. I could plan games, parties, and other activities focused around individuals’ personal background and lifestyle. I think this would be beneficial for my students and also for myself. It would help with my student’s feelings about others and might help to eliminate prejudicial comments and jokes that so often cause violence and discrimination.

Not only did we learn how to deal with these issues during our teaching career, we also learned how to overcome relationship problems and getting along with people in our everyday work and social life. Everyone works or will work with others that are from a different “identity group” than themselves, and you have to be able to cooperate with them in order to accomplish something. Many people shared personal stories that were probably uncomfortable for them to share, but I was thankful that they contributed them to us. It

helped me to see a different side of people and situations that I would not ordinarily perceive. It assisted my understanding of prejudicial comments and discrimination problems so that I could stick up for a peer or friend the next time I witness a related circumstance.

Sometimes it is so hard to remember that everyone is equal and we all have feelings so we need to be careful not to hurt those feelings of our friends, peers, students, and others around us. I can honestly say that I have been guilty of making fun of others because of their differences, but through this workshop I have grown and become more open and respectful to people of different diversities. Now, I enjoy meeting all kinds of people, hearing about their backgrounds, and learning from them; creating relationships that do not deal with discrimination, stereotyping, and other mistreatment. I am now very thankful that I attended the Diversity Workshop.

Candidate's name: Kaitlin Hughes Date: 12/2008

Dept. Chair's signature: Heather Schilling Pass Redo

All education majors are required to attend a Celebrating Diversity Workshop and submit an acceptable reflection paper prior to their junior interview. Following the workshop, teacher candidates write a two-page paper in which they reflect upon their involvement at the workshop. What new insight, sensitivity, and appreciation has been gained? How has your thinking changed? What can you do to celebrate diversity in your teaching career? Submit the paper to the Education Office for assessment by the Chair of the Department.

A candidate must receive an average score of 2.50 or higher in order to pass this particular requirements. If a candidate does not successfully meet the requirements outlined in the rubric and assignment, s/he may redo the Celebrating Diversity paper.

Celebrating Diversity Workshop Rubric

CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	SCORE
ORGANIZATION	Ideas/events are presented in a random fashion.	One or more major lapses in the logical progression of ideas/events is evident.	There is a logical progression of ideas/events and is reasonably complete, although minor lapses may be present.	Organization is a logical progression of ideas/events and is unified and complete.	4
FOCUS ON QUESTIONS OUTLINED IN ASSIGNMENT	May fail to establish focus on topic/subject.	May lose or may exhibit major lapses in focus on topic/subject.	May exhibit minor lapses in focus on topic/subject.	Maintains focus on topic/subject throughout response.	4
SUPPORT	An attempt has been made to add support information, but it was unrelated or confusing.	Support information has major weaknesses in relatedness to and/or support of the topic/subject.	Support information has minor weaknesses in relatedness to and/or support of the topic/subject.	Support information is related to and supportive of the topic/subject.	4
WRITING STYLE: VOCABULARY	Lacks use of vocabulary that is precise, purposeful, and mature.	Exhibits minimal use of vocabulary that is precise, purposeful, and/or mture.	Exhibits reasonable use of vocabulary that is precise, purposeful, and/or somewhat mature.	Exhibits skillful use of vocabulary that is precise, purposeful, and mature.	4
STYLE: SENTENCE FLUENCY	Sentence fluency is lacking.	Demonstrates minimal sentence fluency.	Demonstrates reasonable sentence fluency.	Demonstrates skillful sentence fluency (varies length, good flow rhythm, and varied structure).	3

GRAMMAR AND SPELLING	Essay has four or more misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Essay has three misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Essay has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Essay has no misspellings or grammatical errors	3
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