

Stephanie Hofer

November 19, 2009

### Celebrating Diversity

On November 8, 2009, I participated in the Celebrating Diversity Workshop directed by Professor of Social Work Barb Burdge at Manchester College. The purpose of this workshop is to give participants a place to learn about and discuss issues mainly dealing with stereotyping, prejudice, and mistreatment of a specific group. During this workshop, I learned more about different groups that typically get targeted with these issues, how to spot and correct these issues on the spot, and how to prevent these issues in the future as much as possible.

Our first eye-opening activity involved learning just how many different groups there are that get targeted with stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. We got to know each other by asking nine different questions to and about other participants, which related to diversity. From this activity I learned that there were many different culture groups, cultural backgrounds, and people that came from diverse communities just in our workshop. There were roughly twenty participants and out of those, there was a lot more diversity and experience in diversity than I expected. After the introduction to diversity in our own learning area, we discussed overall diversity comments and quotes from famous people about diversity. I learned that many people agree that diversity is important in order for learning and experiences of other cultures to take place. We learn so much from diversity and talking to people who are different than ourselves. In fact, the next activity made me think more about myself and what identity groups I belonged to, such as: a student, a sister, a daughter, a leader, an employee, a friend, and a future teacher, just to name a few. I realized that I associated myself with a vast array of groups that I had not even thought of before this workshop. This made me aware of how diverse my experiences,

excellent  
summary

— great!



personality, and hobbies are. I was able to connect with other people that had these same identity groups during the group aerobics section of the workshop. Anyone who pertained to a group that was mentioned by the director was instructed to stand and clap for themselves and for others. This activity made me proud of whom I am and the group that I identify myself with because I learned to appreciate my own groups as well as those of others.

After discussing diversity as a whole and learning about the various identity groups, we discussed how to spot and correct the issues of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. These issues happen because not all people agree with diversity. When there is conflict and a certain group gets targeted, misinformation that we have been told about another group is taken in and becomes a sort of automatic recording in our mind when we encounter that certain group of people. We discussed these recordings during the workshop and I realized that there are actually many places that stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination are prominent. The main source is the media. For example, we discussed that there may be two different ways to refer to a certain group of people and society and the media have associated one reference word with a positive connotation and one reference word with a negative connotation. I agree with this theory because I, too, had negative and positive connotations for a same group of people without realizing it. This section of the workshop opened my eyes to this kind of thinking and showed me that is indeed a problem in society. One way to prevent this problem that I learned from the workshop is to counter internalized oppression. If I am unsure of the groups that I belong to, then I will never be able to appreciate those that others belong to as well. We discussed our different groups further by picking one of our many groups and concentrating on that one alone. I worked with two other education majors and we discussed how teachers get stereotyped, experience prejudice,

good

Yes  
Grrr!

and encounter discrimination. We concentrated on two main aspects: what we never again want people to say, think, or do towards our group (teachers) and what is good about our group. It was nice to be able to stick up for our group and explain how we view our group. I learned a lot from this activity because I had to think about the perspectives and multiple view points of those that put our group down and how I could counter their put-downs, a skill I learned earlier in the workshop. I continued to use this skill throughout the other aspect of spotting and correcting issues when we told personal stories of discrimination in a community setting. This was a rewarding activity because I was able to relate to my fellow workshop participants.

The final section of the workshop was aimed toward learning how to prevent issues concerning stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. I learned some important skills that showed me what my options are if I am confronted with prejudicial comments or jokes. Unfortunately, I have experienced this situation frequently. I am thankful that I now know how to counteract these comments because before this workshop, I did not know how to stop them and still maintain a relationship with the person I was talking to during our discussion. I learned to listen first then explain why I don't believe the comment was appropriate. I learned to ask open-ended questions to prevent further conflict and/or confrontation and that it is definitely best to talk to the offending person in private, rather than in a group setting. This is the skill that I have been working on most since the workshop. Before this experience, I honestly was not aware of its importance. To enhance this section of the workshop, I filled out a chart designed to give me certain goals to help prevent prejudicial comments in the future. I have decided that my goal is to stop stereotyping in my society and to praise what I value or appreciate about the identity groups of both myself and of others.

great skill to learn!

I believe that this workshop was very helpful and informative. I took with me many experiences that showed me the truth about different groups that get targeted, how to spot and correct prejudicial issues, and how to prevent these issues in the future. These skills are essential for me to have, understand, and utilize in my future classroom. My students will not use stereotypical, prejudicial, or discriminatory comments in my classroom. Being respectful is essential to diversity and diversity is essential to being creative. Creativity holds the key to every classroom around our ever-changing, diverse globe.

*Good reflection!*

Candidate's name: Stephanie Hofer

Date: 11-20-09

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 2.5 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
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	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
<b>FOCUS ON QUESTIONS OUTLINED IN ASSIGNMENT</b>	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
<b>SUPPORT</b>	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
<b>WRITING STYLE: VOCABULARY</b>	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
<b>STYLE: SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	Sentence fluency is lacking.	Demonstrates minimal sentence fluency.	Demonstrates reasonable sentence fluency.	Demonstrates skillful sentence fluency (varies length, good flow rhythm, and varied structure).	4
<b>GRAMMAR AND SPELLING</b>	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	4

COMMENTS ON BACK:

*Wow! great reflection!*