

Proposal: Innovative Pedagogy for Multicultural Teaching

The Program on Inter-group Relations (IGR) and the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) are proposing a series of activities to strengthen faculty capacity and institutional resources for multicultural teaching at the University of Michigan. Professors Patricia Gurin and Mark Chesler, two faculty members with a national reputation on multicultural teaching and learning, are committed to working with IGR and CRLT and being fully engaged in the planning and implementation of these activities.

The UM campus is currently primed for a new level of institutional investment in multicultural teaching for three primary reasons:

- Expertise and analysis developed in connection with the lawsuits,
- New energy in committees like the Provost's Committee on Diverse Democracy and The President's Diversity Council,
- The 50th commemoration of Brown v. Board of Education.

A Four-Pronged Approach

We propose four sets of interrelated activities that together form a coherent plan to increase faculty capability for using diversity in educationally beneficial ways. These activities begin and end with a large seminar, between which are in-depth seminars for sub-sets of faculty who take part in the initial large seminar and who are prepared to assist in the final large seminar.

- 1) A Provost's Faculty Seminar on Multicultural Teaching to be held in conjunction with the Board V. Brown retrospective celebration, May 2004 (intended for 150-200 faculty campus-wide)
- 2) A Multicultural Multiple-Day Teaching Workshop (a subset of approximately 30 faculty who participated in the Provost's Seminar, May 2004)
- 3) An On-Going Year-Long Teaching Program (a sub-set of approximately 12-15 faculty who participated in the May Workshop)
- 4) An Integrative Campus-Wide Multicultural Teaching/Learning Conference (intended for 150-200 faculty in spring 2005)

In evaluating the impact of racial/ethnic diversity on student educational outcomes, Gurin et al. (1999, 2002, in press) demonstrated that direct experience with diversity in classrooms and in the peer culture can foster intellectual engagement, active thinking, appreciation of multiple points of view, and a number of cognitive and attitudinal development outcomes important for leadership in a diverse democracy. CRLT and the Program on Inter-group Relations are two important institutional resources that develop faculty capacity to become effective teachers in these multicultural classrooms—resources that are not yet fully utilized in our decentralized and discipline-bound campus culture. An additional expected benefit of this program will be broader participation of regular faculty teaching in the courses offered by the Program in Inter-group Relations.