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A Diversity Curriculum: Integrating Attitudes, Issues, and Applications

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Abstract

Because programs in public administration and affairs face new challenges in preparing students to function effectively in an increasingly pluralistic world and to manage a nontraditional workforce, faculty face the question, "What kind of curriculum will promote the competencies students need to understand diversity and to realize its value in managing high-performing public and nonprofit organizations?"

This question served as the impetus for a pilot seminar on valuing diversity, aimed at providing opportunities to examine in detail the ethical dilemmas, public attitudes and values, and social consequences of the compelling diversity issues of the day.[1]

This article describes the rationale and structure of the seminar as it addressed personal values and attitudes; explored a range of economic, political, and social issues; and, through three case studies, provided the opportunity for students to apply new knowledge and insights. A content analysis of students' final papers identifies common themes in the students' development of the competencies related to valuing diversity. Through this testimony, students articulate the results of a curriculum that integrates personal experience, theory, and practice.

Introduction

In the last decade of the twentieth century, we find powerful evidence that diversity is not just a hot-button academic topic or a fractious political issue. Simply being different has deadly consequences in nations as well as in neighborhoods. At the same time, "managing diversity" is being promoted as a key ingredient for enhancing organizational effectiveness in the public and private sectors.

Since the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, U.S. policymakers concerned with human rights in a pluralistic world have relied primarily on mandates, court decisions, legislation, and administrative regulation to establish new norms of conduct (Kluger, 1976). During these forty

[1]In 1989, the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System created a Commission on Pluralism charged with making the system more pluralistic. This mandate triggered widespread campus activity and, in 1991, the faculty of the Public Policy and Management (PPM) Program of the University of Southern Maine formally approved a Diversity Policy. Also in 1991, NASPAA awarded a five thousand dollar grant to PPM faculty to design and implement a seminar on diversity. I am grateful to both the University of Maine Board of Trustees and the National Association for Schools of Public Affairs and Administration for their initiative and support. Students, faculty, seminar guests, and participants in the case studies also deserve grateful recognition for their contributions to the undertaking. Special acknowledgements to Richard Barringer, who co-taught the seminar, and to Miriam Clasby, who was an inspiration and generous mentor throughout the process.

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years, concerns for individual rights have expanded from attention to racial and ethnic origins to considerations of gender, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental condition, and economic status. Today, court decisions, laws, and regulations continue to clarify and refine policies and procedures for ensuring individual and group rights.

This approach to dealing with diverse populations focuses on specific target groups and, in its logic, categories for target populations are infinite. In practice, efforts to deal with diversity typically shift serially from one group to another. Incremental approaches yield, at best, fragmented results. Furthermore, because these initiatives challenge accepted social norms, their success depends on broad public understanding and acceptance. Yet the process for understanding how new norms become internalized by the public and thus achieve the legitimacy necessary for fundamental change in values, attitudes, and behaviors continues to challenge policymakers.

Such unresolved issues take on new urgency in the light of rapid and dramatic demographic changes—both national and global. In the United States, managers in both the public and private sectors are trying to prepare for an expected increase in nontraditional participants in the labor force (Woodridge and Wester, 1991). By 2000, white males, who dominated entrants to the labor force prior to 1985, will comprise only 15 percent of net entrants to the workforce; the remaining 85 percent of new workers will include U.S.-born white females (42 percent), immigrants (23 percent), and minorities (20 percent) (Johnston and Packer, 1987). As Jackson and Ruderman (1996) point out, although changes in the demographic composition of the labor market are not as dramatic as sometimes portrayed in the popular press, other forces are operating to make diversity a salient concern. These forces include the advancement of women and people of color up the organizational hierarchy; increased age diversity, manifested in both a greater proportion of older workers in the workforce and more instances of younger employees supervising their elders; the recognition of the need for the workforce to be responsive to the organization's clients or customers; and the impact of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

As academics, consultants, and human resources personnel try new strategies for dealing with diverse populations, they lurch from one rationale or approach to another, frequently with disappointing results. Curriculum experts for M.B.A. programs debate whether the classroom or the worksite is the proper locus for such learning, while diversity consultants find that confrontation tactics heighten antagonisms and instigate new lawsuits (Deutsch, 1994; Murray, 1993).

Programs in public administration and affairs, therefore, face new challenges in preparing students to function effectively in an

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increasingly pluralistic world and to manage a nontraditional workforce. If mandates alone are inadequate to address issues of diversity, and if the field is a conceptual muddle, the task of faculty can be reduced to a simple question: What kind of curriculum will promote the competencies students need to understand diversity and to realize its value in managing high-performing public and nonprofit organizations?

This question served as the impetus for a 1992 curriculum initiative by the graduate Public Policy and Management Program of the University of Southern Maine—a pilot seminar on valuing diversity, aimed at providing opportunities to examine in detail the ethical dilemmas, attitudes and values, and social consequences of the compelling diversity issues of the day and, through the experience, to develop the competencies of the students in valuing diversity.

Competencies can be defined in many different ways, but if we are to engage people in work as whole people, then we need to take a holistic approach to each individual and employ a concept of competency that includes knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and contextual skills. In addition, we need to recognize the importance of critical reflection and the ability to learn from experience (Bernotavicz, 1992).

"Valuing diversity" is a term that has gained currency in recent years as we have moved from the concepts of the melting pot and treating people equally to recognizing the value that diversity brings to society and to the workplace. From an organizational perspective, Thomas (1990) describes this goal as one of "tapping fully the human resource potential of every member of the workforce." From a societal perspective, Havel (1992) calls for promoting "the ability to see things as others do."

The impetus for the seminar, therefore, was a desire to provide a learning experience for students that engaged them fully as individuals in addressing a critical social issue and included both "head" and "heart" experiences.

Designing a Curriculum to Address Attitudes, Issues, and Applications

The curriculum design rested on three basic premises:

- An understanding of self and an openness to the experience of others (with an aim to individualize each person) is essential for personal, group, or social change.
- Personal values, attitudes, and feelings can and must be integrated with rigorous conceptual analysis.
- New insights and understandings need to be tested and practiced.

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Course materials, therefore, were structured to integrate personal experience, theory, and practice by focusing on three levels: values and attitudes, knowledge of the issues, and applications.

The curriculum design used a six-step strategy in creating competency learning experiences: recognition, understanding, self-assessment, skill practice, application, and follow-up support (Spenser and Spenser, 1993). The curriculum highlighted generic managerial competencies derived from a review of the literature of effective managers in the private and public sectors (Boyatzis, 1982): problem analysis, judgment, social interaction, written communication, oral communication, and self-assessment. The content-related competencies were derived from a review of the literature on diversity (Smith and Johnson, 1991; Thomas, 1991). The exhibit on the following page presents an edited listing of the course competencies.

Concepts related to adult learning—such as narrative as a tool for learning, reflective practice, and learning organizations (Bruner, 1985; Schoen, 1987; Senge, 1990)—also helped to shape the four seminar objectives:

1. To identify and define personal and public values and attitudes that affect understanding and valuing diversity
2. To describe and discuss issues relating to diversity, their historical context, and their relevance to understanding and implementing public policy
3. To document and analyze issues in case materials related to diversity issues in public policy and management
4. To describe and demonstrate competencies needed for effective performance in an increasingly pluralistic world.

These objectives provided the structure for four curriculum units: Values and Attitudes, Public Policy Issues, Applications, and Synthesis.

Values and Attitudes

As graduate students in an overwhelmingly white institution, seminar participants—five women and four men—were white, middle class, and liberal, with relatively homogeneous backgrounds. Because the seminar was an elective, they formed a self-selected group with obvious motivation to explore the topic of diversity.

The first unit of study focused on values and attitudes toward individual and group differences. In the first class, students completed a questionnaire, the Diversity Awareness Profile (DAP) (Grote, n.d.), which was used as the basis for class discussion on the range of attitudes and behavior related to diversity and the students' goals in registering for the class. The DAP organizes responses in five categories:

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Exhibit 1: *Course Competencies*

Problem Analysis: Seek out relevant data and analyze complex information to determine the important elements of a problem situation; employ theoretical frameworks to explicate problem situations.

Judgment: Reach logical conclusions and make high-quality decisions based on available information; identify commonalities or pattern repetitions in behavior or information.

Interpersonal Sensitivity: Perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of others; demonstrate skill in resolving conflicts and tact in dealing with others; deal effectively with emotional issues; be able to help people who are different see common challenges and needs.

Self-Awareness: Understanding how one's personal beliefs and values may affect others (includes stereotypes, biases, assumptions).

Leadership: Taking responsibility for being a champion of diversity ("walking the talk").

Diversity content: Knowledge of evolution and history of diversity work, definitions, language and terminology of diversity, range of "isms" and related subject matters, conceptual frameworks for understanding diversity.

Legal Issues: Legislative background and history (Civil Rights, Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, ADA etc.), compliance issues for organizations, protected classes, issues of discrimination, quotas.

Psychological Issues: Concepts of power, dominance and oppression, roots of prejudice, awareness of potential stereotypes, developmental stages for individuals and organizations, from denial to valuing difference and organizational inclusiveness.

Organizational systems: Understanding organizational dynamics for change, organizational structure, institutionalized biases and inequities, structural determinants of behavior; ability to identify and challenge establishment norms, collusions and negative behaviors

Group process: Ability to process and organize teamwork, personal and learning styles, stages of group process, task/process issues, group facilitation skills.

Communication skills: Ability to communicate cross-culturally, ability to use language that is inclusive and sensitive to a broad, diverse population, ability to work with people having diverse communication styles.

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naive offender, perpetuator, avoider, change agent, fighter. As might be predicted given the commonalities of the group, in both the initial profile and the retake at the conclusion of the seminar, students all clustered in and around the change agent category. Three who fell within the upper limits of the avoider category in the first round moved into the change agent category in the second. One student who shifted from change agent to avoider explained that, by the conclusion of the seminar, he was more sensitive and more honest in his responses.

Following the first class, students privately taped their responses to a questionnaire about their personal history and background; their interactions with others who are different; their opinions about integration and affirmative action; and current trends to address diversity. This tape was then stored until the end of the seminar, when students reviewed their responses to prepare a six-page paper assessing any changes in their attitudes and perspectives.

In the first four class sessions, students examined different theoretical frameworks for understanding diversity: Tatum's (1992) synthesis of two models for the development of racial identity, and Kirkham's (1988) framework for analyzing breadth of awareness and depth of understanding. Additional readings reviewed historical patterns of response to group difference. Students also developed guidelines for working in teams to help assess how individual differences affect task performance.

The Rosabeth Moss Kanter presentation *A Tale of "O"* (1993) was used to clarify the concept of diversity and to help students recognize their personal experiences. Sketching typical experiences of token "Os" in a world of "Xs," the presentation stimulated lively discussion of various student experiences of being something "other" from the mainstream.

To encourage self-assessment, students were assigned two additional tasks: to monitor and document their reactions and feelings about the course experience in a weekly personal learning journal and to monitor and document the effectiveness of the small group process in valuing differences and completing the task assignment.

These materials were specifically designed to introduce new perspectives and to use careful analysis to defuse tensions. If, as Perry notes, cognitive and moral maturity moves in stages from rigid and judgmental positions about right and wrong to broader understanding of complexity and ambiguity, such experiences are not only desirable but necessary for adult growth and development (Perry, 1981).

Issues

The second unit focused on critical analysis by examining a wide range of issues pertinent to diversity. Through assigned readings, students

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explored historical, legal, economic, geographic, political, and organizational issues as well as cultural aspects such as backlash and continuing tensions in society. Guest speakers from the university and from external groups presented analyses of topics such as economic factors, changing organizational paradigms, and patterns of federal legislation from the sixties to the Americans With Disabilities Act. A professor from the law school who had been active in the Civil Rights movement in the sixties, for example, conducted a Socratic dialogue on the legal basis of affirmative action. A Marxist economist from the Business School presented the results of his research on the economic status of women. The Executive Director of a fundamental Christian organization and a state legislator active in the gay rights movement debated political issues of equity, backlash, and quotas. Exposed to various interpretative models, students engaged in framing, unframing, and reframing their views of complex issues.

Applications

Three topics for case studies were selected to encourage students to explore in depth how diversity issues and the implementation of public policy interrelate in practice. Working in groups, the students also directly faced the task of accommodating diverse perspectives to experience at a micro level issues related to valuing diversity in effective group process and task accomplishment. Students received both written guidelines for effective teamwork and personal coaching by three faculty members assigned as resources to the three case study teams. In the pilot seminar, student teams first constructed the cases, researching and writing up the materials and then presenting the case for class analysis. In later seminars, student teams used the completed cases for class presentations. Working with the case materials, case presentations, and class discussions called for analytic, interpersonal, and communication competencies.

Review and Synthesis

The final two seminar sessions provided opportunities for summation and reflection. First, students returned to their initial taped interview to prepare a self-assessment documenting their individual efforts to reinterpret past experiences and perspectives. A content analysis of these papers provided the basis for class discussion in the final synthesis session.

Outcomes of the Seminar

The pilot seminar produced three case studies and a content analysis of the student self-assessments.

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Case Studies

In constructing the case studies, students applied new competency behaviors and knowledge: they utilized the conceptual frameworks presented in class to frame the case and explicate the problem situation.

- *Confronting Sexual Harassment:* This case concerns the treatment of women in a nontraditional workplace. It describes features of organizational behavior that promote discrimination and make the organization legally liable, and it also identifies strategies available to both workers and management for changing the organizational culture. The narrative documents the organizational climate at a large shipbuilding firm and key incidents that led to the reform of policy and practice.
- *Access to Public Transportation:* This case describes the development and operation of a city public transportation system. The city saw the design of a bus system as a transportation issue and focused on service; the Association for Handicapped Persons viewed the provision of handicapped-accessible buses as a civil right. The narrative traces events leading to a complaint of discrimination against the city and the decision points for both parties.
- *Maine Indian Lands Claim:* This case focuses on an effort to rectify past injustice and raises the questions "Who pays? Who decides? And on what grounds?" The narrative records the events that led to an $81.5 million settlement by the federal government and an agreement with the state of Maine to purchase 300,000 acres of land. The resulting conflicts engaged state and federal legislatures, judiciary, and administration.

In addition to the narratives, case materials included pertinent background readings. The teams also framed discussion questions to probe ethical, political, and administrative issues and implications.

Student Reports

A major goal of the course was to develop the meta competence of critical reflectivity—the capacity to reflect upon and make meaning of experience (Perry, 1981). The following content analysis of student reports uses the conceptual frameworks introduced during the course. The summary illustrates shifts in values and attitudes and charts a developmental process toward personal commitment as students meet challenges to their current views of the work and document new strategies for action.

Becoming Aware

Tatum's synthesis of models for racial identity development identifies six phases that can be applied to student learning about diversity in the

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seminar: contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, immersion/emersion, and autonomy (Tatum, 1992). At the beginning of the course, students were in the contact stage, which is characterized by a lack of awareness of cultural and institutional racism and of one's own white privilege and often of naive curiosity about or fear of others based on stereotypes. Kanter's *A Tale of "O"* (1993) served as a vehicle to examine one's own white privilege, explore personal feelings and values, and identify ways in which each class member felt "different":

> *I was intrigued by the variations in perceptions of difference expressed by members of the class. Some of the ways in which people are different have serious and long-term consequences; others cause momentary feelings of discomfort; still others may be a source of pride. Some differences are a result of steps consciously chosen; others are accidents of birth.*

The presentation also provided a framework for understanding that the feeling of being different is not just based on an individual perspective but is a function of situational imperatives; numbers, power, and authority determine who is in the dominant and targeted group.

Guest speakers and class readings encouraged new understanding of cultural diversity and institutional prejudice. For many students, these understandings marked the beginning of the disintegration stage:

> *[In the past] I have greeted all information about discrimination with skepticism. I reacted to the Tale of "O" by writing that it's all about perception, not reality. I have been brought up to believe in self-determinism and meritocracy. If I work hard, I'll be successful. If I want to accomplish something, the only thing standing in the way is me. I have been surprised at how strong and deeply rooted those beliefs are in me. This semester I've allowed myself to consider another possibility. In fact, I now do believe that discrimination not only exists but is everywhere.*
>
> *One of the important learnings to come out of the seminar was the issue of racial identity for whites and the invisibility of white privilege. . .The opposite of the invisibility of privilege is perhaps the invisibility of the negative stereotypes that influence cultural thinking and responses to minorities. . .The job of educating oneself becomes daunting when we are subject to subtle and powerful messages that are virtually impossible to see.*

This new awareness caused several students to re-examine their assumptions about their beliefs and to think of events, friends, and issues from their past:

> *I have come to realize, quite painfully I might add, that whether or not we realized it, we were silent perpetuators of a status quo*

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> *that views protected class members as second-class citizens. Through greater awareness and appreciation for the difficulties encountered by protected class members, my own attitudes have changed. While I previously espoused the view that society provides equal opportunity for everyone (including protected classes) who makes an effort, I now realize that protected classes are not afforded many of the same privileges that dominant groups traditionally have been. Systematic bias and prejudice prevail and work against the equal and fair treatment of members of protected classes.*

Another student, reviewing her initial taped interview, found several themes that reflected her changed consciousness, including a changed view of her parents:

> *In speaking about my parent's values on the tape, I failed to differentiate between their views and their behavior. I identified my parents as enlightened and liberal, having much the same values as mine. I didn't connect the question to their behavior. As parents, they were extremely sexist, intolerant of other viewpoints, and very protective of their religious identity (our kind of people). I also noticed I hadn't differentiated between my mother and my father, but rather had referred to them as "my parents." I really was speaking of my father. My mother, although she rarely was confronting, had different responses than my father's rigid scientific viewpoint. I was taken aback at my sexist inculturation, that hadn't even identified her separate from him.*

The next stage of identity awareness, reintegration, is characterized by an acceptance of the status quo, of the superiority of the dominant group and "blaming the victim." To move out of this phase, a catalyst for continued self-examination is needed. The course appeared to offer this catalyst, because there was little evidence in class discussion or papers of students becoming stuck.

The final three stages of racial identity awareness reflect various responses to new stimulus. In the pseudo-independence stage, the individual is abandoning beliefs in white superiority, but may still behave in ways that unintentionally perpetuate the system. The white person often tries to disavow his or her own whiteness, through active affiliation with blacks. During the immersion/emersion phase, the individual, uncomfortable with whiteness yet unable to truly be anything else, may begin searching for a new more comfortable way to be white. In the autonomy stage, the individual has internalized a newly defined sense of oneself as white. The positive feelings associated with this redefinition energize the person's efforts to confront racism and

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oppression in his or her daily life. Helms suggests that autonomy be considered "an ongoing process. . .wherein the person is continually open to new information and new ways of thinking about racial and cultural variables" (1990).

In their final papers, several students demonstrated a new awareness, a consciousness of a new identity, and the recognition that their lives were going to be a process of trying out new behaviors in active engagement. For one, it was a realization of the need to move from a private, internally focused stance:

> *Right words, intentions, beliefs do not necessarily translate into right action. When a situation becomes personal, actions don't always reflect the spoken values. . .What I have seen. . .is that action is as important. . .more important, than the words. Life's about "walking your talk". . .For a person hesitant to speak up or take action, the message has been very clear and profound. I can only learn so much sitting still. Experience is the only means of finding out who you are and what you feel. Just having the "correct" values is not enough. . .I feel like I have a tremendous amount of work to do, but I am excited at the prospect of taking my newly developed sense of diversity into other situations.*

From Passive to Active Behavior

Both the Diversity Awareness Profile and materials presented by Beverly Tatum describe a continuum of behavior. Passive behavior includes accepting stereotypes, institutional discrimination, the status quo, and inaction, while active behavior is expressed by such things as segregation, name calling, telling jokes, or actively discriminating. In contrast, active behavior also includes legislating for civil rights, being a change agent. In Tatum's model there is no category for passive anti-racist behavior. For several students this analysis highlighted the importance of action:

The theme of being proactive or taking action recurred throughout the course:

> *[Speakers] all addressed the fundamental importance of action in addressing the challenges of diversity. Each expressed the idea from a different perspective: each contributed to a broader understanding of the issue. [For example] unless affirmative action is accompanied by proactive efforts, it will not be effective. We have to reflect on and genuinely explore the ways in which long-term prejudice has created structural disadvantage that affirmative action cannot overcome without thoughtful policies shaped to meet the need of particular groups. Understanding the corporate culture and its role in fostering diversity or promoting oppression is important if significant changes are to be made.*

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Dimensions of Diversity

Issues of diversity cover a spectrum from private thoughts and feelings to social policy. A two-dimensional framework provided by Kirkham focused on breadth of awareness of the complexity of the issues (including interpersonal, intergroup, institutional, and societal) and then a depth of understanding or insight (including cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and core values) (1988). Students found this framework helpful in mapping their personal territory regarding the issues, as well as for understanding the constraints on action:

> *I see my perceptions being stuck in the behavioral depth of understanding and the intergroup breadth of awareness. I do not see myself as having enough influence to change the institutional awareness of the organization that I work in, nor do I see my depth of understanding moving quickly beyond the behavioral level. Trying to integrate the valuing of diversity into my emotional understanding is a goal I have set for myself. It is where I feel that I can advance. After deepening my understanding I will be in a position to address, to a greater extent, the values of the organization.*

This framework also provided a way of understanding that solutions to problems may involve structural and systemic change, as well as attitudinal change:

> *Integration to me is the process of getting black kids into white schools. Unification is the process of building an economy that creates enough wealth for blacks so that they build schools that white kids want to go to. Hate and mistrust is overcome better with economic success than it is with bussing school kids. The building of an economy is of course no easy project but it has something that integration didn't have, incentive.*

In addition, the framework underscored the role of the various institutional components (legal, cultural, organizational) in effecting change:

> *While the legal framework draws the line between what is permissible and what is not, setting limits for both individual and organizational behavior, it is just one piece of a broader strategy for addressing prejudice. Organizations offer the opportunity to create frameworks and reinforce behavior on a daily basis.*

Redressing the Balance

Kanter's materials helped students understand that discrimination arises from disparities or inequities in numbers/power/authority (1993). Redressing the balance, therefore, requires giving something up. One

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student, her eyes newly opened to her privileged position, acknowledged that, while attitude change might have occurred, the real rub would come when she personally had to give something up:

> *With my new awareness, I see privilege everywhere. I am especially conscious of how subtle privilege is, that it surfaces when decisions rub up against one's own life. It's not until my child starts playing with poor uneducated children that I see my elitism. When it costs me money to put lifts on the buses, my liberal words start to fade.*

Another student recognized that, with fundamental changes in institutions, everyone could benefit:

> *I appreciate the seriousness of the issues presented by those who oppose affirmative action and recognize that members of the dominant group may suffer disadvantage as old imbalances are corrected. As long as society remains a hierarchy, that will be an inevitable result of any true diversity policy. Room at the top is limited; the number of people available is growing. New models of organizational structure that distribute power and responsibility more widely are one way to look at diffusing the conflict associated with developing diversity.*

Working with Diversity

Taking home learning and acting on it became part of the responsibility of small groups working on the case studies. The three small groups demonstrated varying degrees of understanding and effectiveness in accomplishing this task. For some, it was a frustrating experience:

> *We did not do a very good job at valuing and utilizing differences to our advantage. Instead of assessing each group member's strengths and weaknesses at the beginning and working to capitalize upon those strengths, we tended to divide work in an ad hoc and random manner, receiving less than possible from each group member.*

For others, building upon the differences among group members became a source of strength:

> *Fears. . .all faded as the work progressed. The minor conflicts we had managed to work out without major destruction. At some point, I started seeing (us) as different, but it was in our thought processes, skills, weaknesses. They were individual qualities that I appreciated and valued, not differences that threatened me.*

What Does Valuing Diversity Mean?

Early in the course, Tatum challenged the group by asserting that valuing diversity is not enough. In her view, we need to become more

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activist and to become anti-oppressive. Students echoed her concern with the limitation of the course title:

> *The term "valuing diversity" seems to me to be somewhat shallow. We need to do more than value diversity, we need to value the unity of a diverse society. The issue comes down to social intimacy, it is easy to value diversity from a distance. What is difficult is to attempt some kind of unification.*

Students articulated three distinct points they had learned. First, we are all different:

> *Everyone considers themselves an "O" to some degree. In fact if there is an answer to the problem of prejudice, it lies in just that phenomenon. . .If everyone was an "O," we would care for the protected classes because we would identify with them. Once we all got into the same boat we would be that much closer to moving in the same direction.*

But recognizing the "O"-ness of each individual should not involve treating everyone as "just like us":

> *Valuing diversity does not mean treating everyone as if they are the same. To act "color-blind" is to assume that race, ethnicity, or religion has no impact on a person's life: an absurd proposition.*

Instead, we need to value others as they are on their terms:

> *Integration needs to include an acceptance of individuals who are part of a protected class on their terms rather than on the terms of the dominant group. If an "O" cannot act like an "O," both the individual and the group lose. The group loses the unique perspective and contributions of the "O," and the individual suffers emotional trauma through the denial of self.*

One student recalled Jesse Jackson's metaphor of the Rainbow Coalition, a description of American society as a patchwork quilt comprised of different pieces of cloth joined together by a common thread:

> *In order that this society incorporate and absorb the contributions of all of its elements, whatever the color, sex, age, or ability, there must be a much greater awareness on the part of each person of the value of diversity in our lives and institutions. . .It will require that each individual make a personal commitment to be a change agent for diversity.*

Summary

The experience of faculty and students involved in this seminar in some ways paralleled the public reaction to the eruption of tension in Los

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Angeles following the Rodney King verdict, which occurred in the spring of 1992 while the seminar was being held. We were all startled to realize the pervasiveness of privilege in our society, and to recognize that, as long as we continue to benefit from this privilege, the complex array of laws and regulations provides only an illusion of equity. Accustomed to thinking of ourselves as being without prejudice, the course challenged us to move beyond simply valuing diversity to becoming more activist as change agents for a society that embraces diversity as a central value.

As faculty, we were also challenged to create new types of learning experiences for future leaders to help them in the painful, personal process of examining and readjusting their mental models of the world, doing the "double loop learning" that Argyris (1982) advocates for effective job performance. Havel (1992) offers an admonition that is helpful to both teachers and learners alike in facing this challenge:

> We must try harder to understand than to explain. The way forward is not in the mere construction of universal systemic solutions, to be applied to reality from the outside; it is also in seeking to get to the heart of reality through personal experience. Such an approach promotes an atmosphere of tolerant solidarity and unity in diversity based on mutual respect, genuine pluralism and parallelism. In a word, human uniqueness, human action and human spirit must be rehabilitated.

This diversity curriculum is not presented as a template for universal use. It stands only as an example of a curriculum that promotes the integration of personal experience, theory, and practice. It is grounded in the conviction that such an integrated approach is essential in a world where valuing diversity is a critical issue in society and within organizations.

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