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UNLV College of Education Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter

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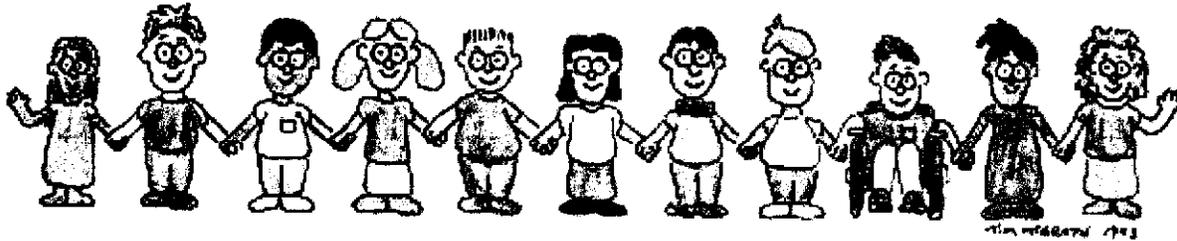
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***This newsletter is published twice a semester. All contributions are welcome and should be addressed to Kyle Higgins, 895-1102, email: higgins@nevada.edu. ***

INVITED GUEST COLUMN

**Multicultural Education and Training
Offered Through Project MCE, Clark County School District
by Karla J. McComb, Assistant Director for Project MCE
with the assistance of Gary Waters, Administrative Specialist**

The Clark County School District has long recognized the need to provide training and support for teachers and other staff in the area of multicultural education. In 1992, the development and funding of a multicultural education program, Project MCE, formalized, for the first time, the district's commitment to providing students with a true multicultural education. Project MCE is a part of the CCSD Compensatory Education Division, Elise Ax, Assistant Superintendent.

Multicultural education, in its inclusive definition, represents all diversity issues, not just race and culture. This approach to the subject of multiculturalism has instituted revolutionary practices which have begun to create not multicultural education, but, rather, education that is multicultural. While issues of race and culture remain paramount, so too are the barriers to respect and understanding that are inherent in the other categories of multiculturalism: religion, gender, elitism, ageism, ableism, and sizeism. The training and resources offered through Project MCE are designed to empower all members of the school community to function effectively in a diverse society.

Sensitivity is a topic which includes many issues. We most often think of sensitivity in terms of cultural backgrounds, but modern research has expanded the definition to include

sensitivity to other issues, such as ableism (those with physical and/or mental disabilities), ageism (dealing with senior citizens), different religious beliefs, gender (equality for both sexes), etc. Since its inception, the goal of Project MCE's diversity program has been to inform all district employees about the issues they will confront when dealing with the cultural backgrounds, ability levels, physical status, and other sensitivity issues represented within our student and employee population; and to train employees in techniques that will better prepare them in the classroom and work site to deal with these issues.

Project MCE is a comprehensive resource training program for the recognition and appreciation of diversity issues within the Clark County School District and the communities it serves. It is the only program within the Clark County School District whose **primary** mission is to provide education, training, and resources in cultural sensitivity and related educational issues. Project MCE promotes, offers and provides programs, services and activities which foster knowledge, understanding and respect for cultural differences and human diversity. Through its mission and efforts, Project MCE seeks to promote sensitivity to individual and cultural differences, understanding, and tolerance; thereby maximizing learning performance, achievement, and personal development in schools, higher education, career choices and transitions, and lifelong learning.

Training is a major focus of this program. Inservices are offered to teachers, administrators, and other district staff on a variety of topics related to multicultural education and diversity issues. These presentations and programs can be scheduled for group, team, department, school or departmental meetings. In addition, individual consultation and assistance to teachers through personal assistance and resources is available. Topics available for presentation include: how to develop programs, services and activities on multicultural issues, community diversity and educational equity and access, and developing sensitivity to students from different cultures.

In addition, school-based multicultural representatives have been identified at each school in an effort to directly support programs in every school. Project MCE offers these staff members both facilitation and support. Technical assistance is also available to the schools' multicultural committees, composed of administrators, cross-discipline teachers, parents, and students. Teachers and others are encouraged to attend special conferences on sensitivity, diversity, and access issues as well as special topics such as the Holocaust and multicultural storytelling.

The staff members of Project MCE, including 15 teacher-trainers, offer a wide range of professional development opportunities to people both within and outside of the Clark County School District in the areas of multicultural education, workplace diversity, gender equity, and educational equity. We are most pleased to be utilized as presenters in UNLV courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level on a variety of topics. District-developed 15 hour (one credit) class topics include infusion of multicultural concepts in specific curriculum areas; use of multicultural literature; language development/acquisition and storytelling; understanding surface and deep culture elements in American and other world societies; sexual harassment identification; reduction and elimination in schools and the workplace; gender issues affecting performance and achievement in instruction methods and learning; creating safe learning environments and reducing violence; hate crimes; and, learning styles across cultures.

Project MCE also facilitates and distributes teacher-developed guides and reference materials to assist teachers in multicultural instruction. The basic sensitivity guide is *Out of Many - One, A Culture-to-Culture Guide*, which was written a number of years ago by the current assistant director for Project MCE. Its use is recommended for all employees. Project MCE promotes teacher initiative in developing multicultural education materials and assists teachers in sharing information, techniques, ideas, resources, methods, and other items.

A key component of the program is the dissemination of information throughout Southern Nevada. A monthly newsletter, with cultural information and teaching ideas, is distributed to all teachers. Two years ago, we began publishing the *Southern Nevada Cultural Community Resources Guide*, a comprehensive listing of community members, organizations and groups willing to provide cultural information, resources and presentations to schools and educators. The listings in the guide can be used, mostly without cost, to augment classroom instruction and activities on multicultural issues. Each school library and school based multicultural representative has a copy of the guide available for review and use. In addition, the guide is available on the Project MCE web site. As an example of community cooperation, the guide, for the past two years, has been published by Nevada Power Co. The Project MCE Library, housed at 601 North Ninth Street in Las Vegas, contains books, videos, periodicals, kits, and other resources for classroom and community use. UNLV faculty and students are invited to visit the library and check out materials.

In the ninth largest school district in the nation, our student and employee diversity must be recognized and celebrated as a key to student success. All efforts of Project MCE are aimed at promoting the positive climate in which a diverse population can develop and prosper. We are pleased to be an educational partner of UNLV and the College of Education in this endeavor.

For more information regarding Project MCE and its services call, visit, or check out our web site:

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SECOND LANGUAGE ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

by Maria G. Ramirez

Acronyms, abbreviations, and clipped forms are used every day in an effort to simplify communication, but from time to time, the opposite affect results. Often the three types of word-formation processes just mentioned are taken for granted by those who employ them in their work, although some forms associated with certain professions are known by the public at large. Ad is one of the most commonly used clipped forms, the shortened form of the word advertisement. Who doesn't remember referring to psychology in college as psych, another clipped form? Acronyms and abbreviations are also used daily with minimal conscious thought or effort. April 15th, income tax day, is associated with the IRS, the Internal Revenue Service. IRS, an abbreviation, is formed by taking the first letter of each word and referring to the phrase by its letter names, thus IRS.

Acronyms differ from abbreviations, since the first letter of the phrase are pronounced as words, such as NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As just illustrated, the three word-formation processes, acronyms, abbreviations, and clipped forms, are not the same although all attempt to make communication easier while trying to conserve time and preserve one's vocal cords.

Common second language acronyms and abbreviations referring to programs include TESOL, TESL, bilingual education, referred to as BE, and English as a second language, ESL. Other acronyms and abbreviations exist for describing second language students. Students whose proficiency in English is limited are called LEP, corresponding to limited English proficient. Students who achieve proficiency in English are referred to as FEP, fluent English proficient or full English proficient.

Occasionally, members of the profession, frustrated with the imprecise meanings associated with certain acronyms, will propose different acronyms. PAL, proficient in another language, was such an attempt several years ago. The acronym was used regionally but failed to receive national recognition and, while it may still be used by some in the

profession, its meaning will not be understood universally by all. A couple of years ago, the abbreviation, ELL, English language learners, appeared on the national scene. This too was an effort to describe more precisely the second language learner found in ESL and bilingual education programs.

Recently, the Second Language Program (SLP) of the Clark County School District (CCSD) changed its name to the English Language Learners Program Department (ELLPD), an abbreviation that does not necessarily roll off the tongue easily, so why was the name changed? The new name does not change the programs that are part of the department, bilingual education and English as a second language, but it does attempt to more accurately describe the students it serves, as well as the goals of the two programs. While Second Language Program is understood in professional circles, it doesn't carry the meaning, among the general public, that English language learner will. The average person will not struggle trying to understand the goals of the English Language Learners Program and the students its serves, but the abbreviation will require deliberate thought to recall and use. If the goal of any change is to improve, than the ELLPD name change can be said to be responsive to a growing trend in SLPs by referring to students as English language learners, but don't be surprised if the name changes in the future, since change is inevitable.

THE ENGLISH ONLY MOVEMENT

by Steve McCafferty

There are now 24 states that have passed laws that make English their "official" language. The reasons behind this are many, but two of the major ones will be examined here with an attempt to suggest why the thinking behind them is faulty. One of the major concerns of this movement (also called "English First")

derives out of the nature of a democratic society: namely, immigrant communities, as they grow in population also gain more political clout and

as such could legislate linguistic policy. The belief is that if groups from Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish language backgrounds, for example, are all vying for a linguistic voice, the country will go the way of Canada, that is, there will be a linguistic "civil war" that could ultimately result in the splitting up of the country. This ignores, however, that unlike Canada, there has never been any question for over 200 years that English is the language of the country - official or not - despite being primarily comprised of immigrants. Also, the 1990 census determined that only about 2% of the population speaks little or no English, which indicates that immigrants must have a desire to learn the language.

Another argument put forth by this movement is that immigrants are reluctant to become part of American culture, that they do not want to lose their heritage, which in this case includes "replacing" their first language. Again, it is important to point out the extent, in terms of numbers, to which immigrants apparently do wish to learn English. More importantly, moreover, is the reality of not learning the language. Those people who arrive in this country without proficiency in English face difficulties in a number of areas, not the least of which is finding employment. Also, once proficient in the language, people often report incidents where they were taken advantage of economically or otherwise because of their inability to read contracts, rules and regulations of the workplace, etc.

It is important to point out that although the English Only faction advocates that immigrants learn English and not rely on their native language when engaged in public activities, the legislative bills they propose do not include provisions for language education programs. To say the least this is a contradictory position. At worst it seems an attempt to disenfranchise, on a linguistic basis, minority populations in this country.

An alternative movement is English Plus. This group also sees the learning of English as a critical dimension in the lives of immigrants to this country. However English Plus views English proficiency as an act of empowerment, and, furthermore, sees the importance of maintaining the first language,

recognizing the advantages of a multilingual society. As such, this organization is a strong supporter of both bilingual and ESL education programs.

WHAT I DID DURING MY SUMMER VACATION

by Stanley Zehm

During our past and all too short summer, I had a wonderful opportunity to present a workshop to European teacher educators in Sodertalje, Sweden. I met, worked with, and exchanged ideas about cultural diversity with teacher educators from Scandinavia, Germany, France, Holland, Israel, Hungary, Italy, Finland, Africa, India, and other countries of the world. I was struck with the warm and welcome reception my American colleagues and I received from the representative teacher educators from these diverse nations. They were hungry for any ideas we could share with them for preparing their teachers to deal with the challenges of cultural diversity that recent waves of immigrants were bringing to their nations.

Thirteen American teacher educators presented workshops at this conference of the International Association for Intercultural Education. This number represented over two thirds of the presentations and workshops at this annual conference supported by the government of the European Union (EU). Dr. Elizabeth Cohen, Professor of Education at Stanford University, made the keynote presentation and challenged European educators to recognize and treat the academic disorders in their schools that stem from the low academic status assigned advertently and inadvertently by students and teachers to immigrant students, students of color, and students from families living in poverty. Selected schools in the EU are now employing Cohen's "Complex Instruction" intervention strategies to provide

inclusion to all students of all ethnicities, cultures, and economic levels.

During our participation in this conference, we were approached by teacher educators from Hungary seeking assistance with building a teacher education program for the Roma (Gypsies). Our assistance was also sought by teacher educators and teachers seeking to heal wounds between Israeli and Arab students. Teacher educators from South Africa, Japan, Korea, India, and the Philippines came to this conference seeking ideas to better prepare their teachers to provide for the unique cultural diversity needs of their students. It was both a thrilling and humbling experience. It began to appear that the American contingent were expected to possess some kind of "cultural diversity" magic to solve problems associated with cultural conflicts.

I brought home from this conference several perceptions that I would like to share with you. First of all, I was impressed with the degree to which teacher educators from these diverse cultures and regions of the world were developing a global sense. They were all proud of their own nation's culture as evidenced on the night when the participants sang songs that mirrored their national identities. Yet they all demonstrated a commitment to the belief that the survival of their national cultural values was heavily dependent on international cooperation and global involvement.

The second perception I want to share with you is an outgrowth of the first. The global sense I recognized in these teacher educators, who came from all over the world to participate in this international conference on diversity, was demonstrated by their belief in the value of a global emphasis in the preparation of preservice and inservice teachers.

This emphasis on the global preparation of teachers is reflected in their school curriculum. I had the opportunity to interact with teacher educators, teachers, and high school students from Finland. I was impressed with their linguistic skills; they were *all* trilingual, speaking fluent English and Swedish--- in addition to their native language. They *all* recognized the benefits of international cooperation. The high school students knew their global geography; they all knew where Las Vegas was, but were surprised to learn that Las

Vegas had a large university. I appreciated the value they were placing on global education and began to reflect about the needs of *our* students for bilingualism and a global perspective.

I brought back a number of additional perceptions that I would like to share with you over coffee, but there is one that merits sharing at the end of this reflective piece. I was moved, impressed, and challenged by one attitude that I saw exhibited by most of the participants at this international conference. It was an attitude--- especially displayed by participants from Ireland, the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa, Pakistan, and India. It was an attitude reflecting the belief that we all must learn to respect and cooperate with each other if we are to have any hope of ending the senseless culture wars that continue to devastate our planet and destroy our children. It was an attitude reflecting a belief that education can provide the people of our planet with access to the resources they need to address poverty---the primary barrier to multicultural respect and equality. I was edified and challenged that teacher educators from around the world were looking to the United States for leadership to help them activate their dream of learning to live together in harmony, mutual respect, prosperity, and peace.

INCLUSION ISSUES: FREQUENT QUESTIONS

by John Filler and Jan Butz

Several people have asked questions concerning social skills development for children with disabilities within the general education classroom. We know that the formation of these skills leads to the emergence of valued social relationships, and it is the nature and extent of these relationships that largely define the "richness" of one's life. The formation of friendships and the positive interaction among peers is ultimately one of the

main things we remember of our days spent in school.

QUESTION ONE: Should I individualize social skills instruction for the student with a disability?

When we think of the skills that are important for the formation of positive social relations (greeting, sharing, turn-taking, etc), we need to keep in mind that we are focusing on interactions that involve two or more people. While many children with disabilities need to learn specific skills to enhance their ability to positively interact with their peers, it is reasonable to assume that children without disabilities also need to learn how to interact positively with their peers. Thus, the target for our instruction should be a set of individuals, not a specific individual.

QUESTION TWO: Should social skills instruction be a separate activity in the classroom?

Teaching needs to happen in the context of activities that provide natural opportunities for positive interaction to occur. For students with disabilities this increases the likelihood that the learning of the targeted social skill will generalize to other situations other than the situation in which the skill is taught.

QUESTION THREE: Can you give me some suggestions for including social skills instruction within the context of my classroom?

Here are a couple of suggestions:

Nametag Activity: A good activity for students to introduce themselves to each other involves the making of individual nametags. Provide the students with magazines and ask them to cut out pictures that they like or that illustrate things they like to do. Have them use the pictures to decorate their nametag. Then have the students move around the room and find someone who has a nametag with similar pictures on their tag and introduce themselves and share what is on their nametags. This movement can be repeated several times. Students can then share with the whole class.

Friend of the Week: Designate an area of the room as the "friendship corner". In this portion of the room display photos and items

that are meaningful to the children being featured (different children each week). As each child is featured, have him/her bring in items to share that reflect his/her interests (a family pet, a favorite toy) and photos of him/herself. The class can publish a *Book of Friends* with each student contributing a chapter concerning their interests and accomplishments.

For more ideas contact Jan Butz at: JCBUTZ@aol.com.

CONNECTING CULTURES THROUGH STORIES: CELEBRATING ORAL TRADITION

by Cyndi Giorgis

Traditional literature, often those stories we refer to as fairy tales or folklore, is based in the rich heritage of stories that have come to us from cultures around the world. Traditional literature provides a window on cultural beliefs as well as the spiritual and psychological qualities that are part of our human nature. The books reviewed below are versions and variants of stories we may remember from years past or new stories that may become some of your favorites.

With two short words, "Now lis'en", author Alan Schroeder calls our attention to another version of Cinderella, *Smoky Mountain Rose: An Appalachia Cinderella*. Told through engaging dialect, the story is set in the heart of the Smoky Mountains where an old trapper and his daughter Rose decide it's time for Pa to get hitched again. The trouble starts a'brewin when stepma Gertie and her mean and vain daughters Annie and Liza June move in. Rose is put to doin' every chore, but Pa feels it best not to say anything because Gertie is about the crossest, fearsomest woman in Tarbelly Creek. When a real rich fellar by the name of Seb decides to have a fancy party to find himself a wife, the step-sisters begin dreamin' about dancin' the

night away. Brad Sneed's fine paintin' of rich watercolor illustrations helps to spin the tale in real Cinderella fashion. Using angular lines to draw readers into the action, Sneed provides an upclose perspective or sense of movement as seen when Seb pursues Rose at midnight as she is rattlin' down the road. A delightful use of storytellin' on an old familiar story. Other versions to enjoy include the Algonquin Indian Cinderella, *The Rough-Face Girl* by Rafe Martin or "Catskinella" found in Virginia Hamilton's, *Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fairy Tales and True Tales*.

Another new perspective on an old story can be found in *Rumpelstiltskin's Daughter*, written and illustrated by Diane Stanley. Readers will recall from the traditional version, the miller's daughter had the daunting task of weaving straw into gold with the ultimate goal of marrying the king. Stanley begins her version by informing us that the miller's daughter chose to marry Rumpelstiltskin instead of the king. Sixteen years later, their only daughter finds herself in the same predicament as her mother. Rumpelstiltskin's daughter could call on her father to assist her, but she decides to use her own creative devices and ends up turning the troubled kingdom into a pleasurable place to live. In doing so, Rumpelstiltskin's daughter doesn't ask for riches or marriage, but a prestigious position in the king's government. Stanley's full-color illustrations provide another dimension of hilarity to the story. A fractured fairy tale with a strong female character to be enjoyed for both its witty text and stunning, yet comical illustrations.

Lois Ehlert takes a traditional Mayan tale and creates an exquisite and striking picture book, *Cuckoo*. In this exhilarating adaption, Cuckoo is a beautiful bird, but somewhat lazy. She spends most of her days singing rather than gathering seeds to plant for food, which does little to endear her to the other birds. When a fire breaks out in the field the night before the birds' annual harvest, it is cuckoo who works tirelessly throughout the night picking up the seeds one by one and taking them to Mole's tunnel. By morning, Cuckoo's feathers are scorched black and her song has been diminished. However, through her heroic efforts, she has gained the respect and admiration of the other birds. Ehlert's simply

told tale appears in both English and Spanish, but it's the remarkable paper collage that catch the reader's eye. Inspired by Mexican crafts and folk art, the colors are exceptionally bright and almost electric. *Cuckoo* is the last book in the trilogy of folktales created by Ehlert which also includes a woodland tale entitled *Mole's Hill* and *Moon Rope*, a Peruvian folktale.

The Hired Hand is a powerful story based on an African American folktale first recorded in 1891 and retold by Robert D. San Souci. The story takes place in an anti-slavery Quaker town "down Virginia way." One day, a stranger comes to the sawmill to learn a new trade from Old Sam. His son, Young Sam, is lazy and deceitful, but happy to have the new hired help to boss around. The story unfolds when an old farmer comes to the sawmill complaining of misery in his back. The hired hand offers to fix him up and mixes handfuls of sawdust and magic words to cure the farmer along with the bonus of making him young again. Young Sam sneaks a look at the magical encounter and attempts to duplicate the feat by "curing" the farmer's wife. Unfortunately, all goes wrong and Young Sam is put on trial for murder. Jerry Pinkney's soft watercolor and pencil illustrations take us back to a magical period in folk tales. His intricate and expressive artwork provides us with a perspective of a time when emancipated Blacks were openly a part of several Colonial communities.

Rudolfo Anaya has retold the story of La Llorona, the crying woman who haunts rivers, lakes and lonely roads at night as she searches for her children. Unlike many of the original versions in which La Llorona takes the life of her children, *Maya's Children* is a character born with a shining sun birthmark that indicates she is immortal. The god of time, Senor Tiempo is angered by this and decides that if Maya is to live forever, she will do so without the children she bears many years later. Anaya has adapted the traditional story for a younger audience in hopes that it will be an

interesting and valuable story from Latin American culture rather than one which frightens children. Maria Baca adds her expressive oil paintings to the text which adds to the Maya's feelings of dismay and the enjoyment of the story. Storyteller Joe Hayes has published a version of *La Llorona* for older audiences which will be an interesting comparison to the retelling by Anaya.

Years ago, folklore was the literature of the people and told to young and old alike. Readers today still enjoy the many versions and variants of these stories as they are usually short, humorous, have fast-moving plots and almost always end. . . happily ever after.

Books reviewed:

Anaya, R. *Maya's children: The story of La Llorona*. Ill. by M. Baca. New York: Hyperion. Unpaged. ISBN 0-7868-0152-2.

Ehlert, L. (1997). *Cuckoo*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace. Unpaged. ISBN 0-15-200274-X.

Ehlert, L. (1994). *Mole's hill*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace. Unpaged. ISBN 0-15-255116-6.

Ehlert, L. (1992). *Moon rope*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace. Unpaged. ISBN 0-15-255343-6.

Hamilton, V. (1995). *Her stories: African American folktales, fairy tales and true tales*. Ill. by L. & D. Dillon. New York: Scholastic. 114 pp. ISBN 0-590-47370-0.

Hayes, J. (1986). *La Llorona*. Ill. by V. Trego-Hill. San Antonio, TX: Cinco Puntos. 32 pp. ISBN 0-938317-02-4.

Martin, R. (1992). *The rough-face girl*. Ill. D. Shannon. New York: Putnam. Unpaged. ISBN 0-399-21859-9.

San Souci, R. D. (1997). *The hired hand*. Ill. by J. Pinkney. New York: Dial. Unpaged. ISBN 0-8037-1296-0.

Schroeder, A. (1997). *Smoky Mountain Rose: An Appalachian Cinderella*. Ill. by B. Sneed. New York: Dial. Unpaged. ISBN 0-8037-1733-4.

Stanley, D. (1997). *Rumpelstiltskin's daughter*. New York: Morrow. Unpaged. ISBN 0-688-14328-8.

SUGGESTED MULTICULTURAL INFUSION ACTIVITIES

by Porter Lee Troutman, Jr. and Nancy Gallavan

What is an Integrated Syllabus and/or Curriculum ?

An integrated curriculum requires course transformation and changing the classroom environment. It is difficult to change one without the other. Building on the work of Troutman et al. (1996), Scott (1995), and Higginbotham (1988), curriculum integration can be viewed as consisting of three components: a.) nonlinear learning/personal knowledge - adding to and deepening one's personal knowledge about ethnicity, class, gender, exceptionality, religion, sexual orientation, etc.; b.) transforming the content and structure of the course to meet the learning needs, learning styles, and life experiences of diverse student populations; and, c.) changing the classroom environment to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all students.

Why should I integrate my curriculum or course syllabus?

Integration includes the diverse society, the number of people of color that continue to be left out of our history, and the number of diverse students of colors predicted to be in our classrooms by the year 2000. Neglect, distortions, and stereotypes in college curriculum can cause a devastating effect for all of us. For example, two-thirds of African American children in grades K-12 know very little about their identities while European American children grow up knowing little but stereotypical knowledge about other ethnic groups.

Why should I start with a Personal Assessment?

Transformation of a traditional course syllabus to an integrated course syllabus should start with where we are in teaching an inclusive

curriculum. We can begin by asking ourselves: What do I already know? What do I know about ethnicity, class, gender, exceptionality, religion, language, culture, pluralism, and equity? How can I find out more information?

We need to rethink our past historical knowledge and move to achieve one of the five types of knowledge that Banks (1996) explores (personal/cultural knowledge) with students. We cannot rely on traditional resources; we must explore new information and resources. Start small by including ethnic speakers, community representatives, relevant audio materials, video materials, films, and books.

What does Course Transformation Involve?

After we begin the process of increasing our personal/culture knowledge of students, we can think about a course we want to transform by asking:

1. What is the goal of this course?
2. What basic assumptions seem to frame the organization of material on the syllabus?
3. How successful is this syllabus? What pleases me about my current treatment of diversity in this course?
4. How would I like to improve the way I address diversity in this course?
5. What are some problems or obstacles to transforming my course?

We might further evaluate the course based on the following questions, a modification of those posed by sociologist Margaret Andersen (1988):

1. Where do women, people of color, lesbians, and people who are gay appear in my course syllabus and assigned and/or suggested readings?
2. Does my syllabus teach that all group experience is grounded in ethnicity/race, class, and gender or is one group generalized while all other are particularized?
3. Are race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability segregated in one section of the course?
4. Is ethnicity or race discussed only in the context of poverty and other social problems? Are the experiences of lesbians and people who are gay discussed only in the context of sexuality?

5. Are women and people of color conceptualized primarily as victims rather than as active agents of social change and continuity?

6. Are people of color and women seen only through taken for granted frameworks of disciplined knowledge? Does my course silence their experiences except when they fit existing concepts and theories in my discipline?

The goal here is to restructure our courses to be not just inclusive but integrative of all groups. The goal is to change our focus from one centered on European American male and/or females as the norm to one that genuinely focuses on diversity, diversity as similar and different, not superior/inferior. As Margaret Andersen (1988) suggests, "How would my course change if non-whites, non-white women, or women were at its center?"

This requires first and foremost that you take the responsibility and the initiative to know about culture, pluralism, equity, ethnicity, gender, class, religion, age, exceptionality, and their educational implications. This requires new knowledge, new approaches, new materials, and creative use of old materials.

THE UNIVERSITY..., THE COLLEGE..., THE DEPARTMENT..., THE CLASSROOM,...A CHILLY CLIMATE FOR WOMEN?

by Joyce Nelson-Leaf

Going home from a meeting the other afternoon, I heard a discussion on KNPR regarding the Army's report on sexual harassment. The interviewee stated that sexual harassment was not as pervasive as sexual discrimination. He stated his concern about the fact that it was not acceptable to state the opinion that "blacks should not be in the Army," yet it was acceptable to state the opinion that "women should not be in the Army." During the interview he alluded to an

"environment" that made women feel unwelcome. His example is just one among many examples of the kinds of behaviors that take place in an institution or a business that create an environment that makes assimilation into that organization difficult or impossible. As he said, it is not the harassment that is pervasive or the overt discrimination so much as the subtle kinds of things that wear upon its targets. When combined from a whole day, or semester, or year it can create an atmosphere which is not conducive to learning or professional success and can even become hostile. What makes this especially damaging is that the people who create this unwelcomeness are oftentimes unaware that their behavior is oppressive. What they may consider as friendly repartée is actually offensive. To make it worse, many times it is not questioned by the recipient because it is masked in such friendliness or lack of awareness that s/he is caught off guard and has difficulty confronting it at that given moment.

If you have kept up with the news, you know that the U.S. Army is taking a hard look at itself in regards to its environment. UNLV's 40th anniversary may make it a good time for us to take a hard look at ourselves. A report published in 1982 "*The Classroom Climate: A Chilly One for Women?*" by the American Association of Colleges (AAC) discusses the inequities in education for women on university and college campuses throughout the United States. It gives an excellent framework for us to use in assessing ourselves. As you review the list below, think about times when you have used sexual/racial innuendo when giving "helpful" advice or kidding around. Consider when you may have pointed out someone's differences from you when carrying on a conversation. Take a hard look at your beliefs about gender roles and various groups of people. Think about the nonverbal messages you may send. Ask yourself how sensitive you are to how others receive what you say (verbally or nonverbally).

Please review the following list from the AAC report* for yourself. This is what they

found in 1982 on campus, consider how it is today on our campus.....

- comments that disparage women in

general or their intellectual ability.

- comments that disparage women's seriousness and/or academic commitment.

- comments that divert discussion of a female student's (colleague's) work toward a discussion of their physical attributes or appearance.

- comments about female faculty that define them in terms of their sex rather than their professional status or that disparage their professional accomplishments.

- comments that refer to males as "men" but to females as "girls," "gals," etc. rather than "women."

- comments that rely on sexist humor as a classroom device.

- comments that disparage scholarship about women, or that ridicule specific works because they deal with women's perceptions and feelings.

- making eye contact more often with men than with women.

- nodding and gesturing more often in response to men's questions and comments than to women's.

- modulating tone (e.g. using a tone that communicates interest when talking with men, but a patronizing or impatient tone when talking with women).

- assuming a posture of attentiveness when men speak (e.g. leaning forward), but the opposite when women make comments (e.g. looking at the clock).

- making direct sexual overtures.

- not taking into account differences in communication patterns** that can carry into the classroom or a meeting. For example:

- men talk more than women

- men talk for longer periods and take more turns at speaking

- men exert more control over the topic of conversation

- men interrupt women much more frequently than women interrupt men

- men's interruptions of women more often introduce trivial or inappropriately