

A CRITICAL READING OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES' PROGRAMMING – AND EXPERIMENTATION WITH ALTERNATIVES

Internationalizing Higher Education 2016

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OVERVIEW

- Place of Mind: Who am I and where am I?
- Theoretical framework:
 - Critical global citizenship education
- Program critique
- New possibilities
- Navigating my place of mind



PLACE OF MIND: WHO AM I AND WHERE AM I?



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



CRITICAL GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

- encourage students to engage with multiple perspectives in order to learn and transform their own views, identities, and relationships
- expose and address assumptions, biases, contexts, imbalances, injustices, relationships and structures that maintain the privilege of some at the expense of others
- promote experimentation with other ways of thinking and relating to others, rather than prescribing behaviors

Andreotti, 2006; Pike, 2008; Richardson, 2008; Schultz, 2007; Taylor, 2011



PROGRAM CRITIQUE



INTERCULTURAL/DIVERSITY INITIATIVES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Co-facilitation of such workshops as:

- Students: “Vital skills for success in the Canadian workplace”
- Staff/faculty: “Intercultural fluency workshop - maximizing the benefits of diversity”

Campus consulting:

- Campus partners: i.e. increase the number of international students who use the gym; manage international students in residence
- Faculty: i.e. increase spoken participation of international students in my class

Public relations:

- Feature diverse cultures on our campus; demonstrate internationalization via visuals of food/dress/performances; highlight increasing numbers of international students



SOME GOOD WORK BEING DONE

- Workshops and consultation demonstrate responsibility to our diverse student population - to support learning and community
- Showcasing diverse perspectives and cultures through UBC's stories demonstrates a desire to move beyond a "single story"



CRITICAL GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CRITIQUE

- intercultural initiatives framed in terms of “our” own success, leaving little room for “us” to be challenged
 - Workshop question: to what extent will working with, communicating with culturally different people be part of your success?*
 - Media stories selectively demonstrate the diversity of our campus
 - Global Fest cultural celebration
 - Disaster relief efforts

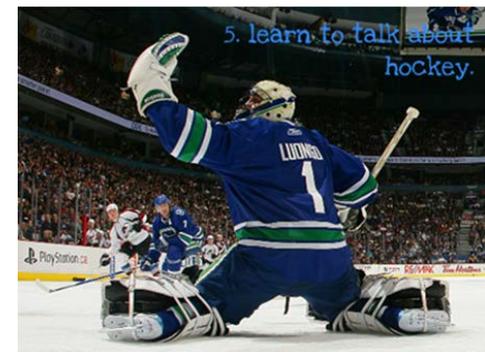
* From “Intercultural fluency workshop - maximizing the benefits of diversity”



CRITICAL GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CRITIQUE

- International students are taught to fit into mainstream ways of being/knowing and are seen to be a “challenge” when they don’t
- little space to question mainstream
 - Many workshops open with: “what is an intercultural challenge you would like to resolve”?
 - Lack of student participation in class attributed to “their” issues fitting in, rather than “our” issues in adapting pedagogy for alternative ways of knowing/being

*Image from “Vital skills for success in the Canadian workplace”



CRITICAL GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CRITIQUE

- Focus on dichotomies and categories without space to deconstruct these or acknowledge intersectionality
 - Carrie, can you please provide “some explanation of high-context/low-context communicators, linear/circular, direct/indirect, etc. Are you able to ...provide some tips on how to manage when communicating to someone of the opposite style?”



CRITICAL GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CRITIQUE

- intercultural learning as acquisition of knowledge and skills (think: gain, cultural capital, achievable), rather than an iterative, relational learning practice
 - Learning about vs. learning from
 - Sense that another person is knowable
 - Follow the model and your problems are solved!



NEW POSSIBILITIES – CRITICAL GCE FRAMEWORK



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NEW INTERCULTURAL/DIVERSITY INITIATIVES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Foster emergence of oppositional student voices/perspectives that challenge the mainstream
 - Hire and train student staff with critical standpoint
 - Work with students from multiple positions to develop alternative curriculum and pedagogy for intercultural workshops
 - Publish student stories via blog and department publications/reports
 - Support oppositional student initiatives



E.G. OPPOSITIONAL STUDENT INITIATIVES

The Privilege Project - Jada Larkin



NEW INTERCULTURAL/DIVERSITY INITIATIVES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Support the expression of multiple voices and perspectives in transformational settings (i.e. counterstories)
 - Leverage student networks to develop initiatives, programs and services
 - Hire international and Canadian students within our office
 - Establish structured/ongoing collaboration with student clubs and course unions, other UBC units such as Aboriginal Programs and Services, and academic programs/faculty such as Cultural Studies
 - Intercultural Committee



E.G. FEATURING STUDENTS' CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

The Other Side
- Mirabelle Arodi



NEW INTERCULTURAL/DIVERSITY INITIATIVES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Create intentional spaces for critical dialogue and creative expressions – where assumptions are challenged and students can experiment with alternative ways of being and relating
 - Intercultural committee
 - International Programs and Service space
 - Decorated with oppositional student art
 - Hosts debates and discussions
 - Online spaces – i.e. blog, social media campaigns



E.G.

THE GLOBAL SPECTRUM BLOG & DISCUSSION SERIES

Student-directed, facilitated and promoted, with support of intercultural educator

Questions mainstream perspectives and introducing alternative ways of being/relating to what may be represented through official channels

Example topics:

- Feminism in diverse contexts around the world
- Africa: Many voices or one story?

www.theglobalspectrum.org



NAVIGATING MY PLACE OF MIND



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

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a place of mind
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