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# Preparing Teachers for a Diverse Classroom

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# Preparing Teachers for a Diverse Classroom

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World Congress on Undergraduate Research  
Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg, Germany

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Big ideas. Real-world thinking.

# Research Questions

**What is the beginning level of inter-cultural competency of undergraduate students in the College of Education?**

**How do changes in inter-cultural competency (ICC) compare among pre-service teachers at three data collection points?**



# Key Terms

**Culture** is “the pattern of beliefs, behaviors, and values maintained by groups of interacting people, and passed to future generations” (Hammer & Bennett, 2010).

**Inter-Cultural Competency** is "the capability to accurately understand and adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonality" (Hammer & Bennett, 2010).

# Methodology

**Population:** undergraduate students in the College of Education

**Participants:** 779 students over the course of 10 years

**Setting:** mid-size, Midwestern, public university

**Instrument:** Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

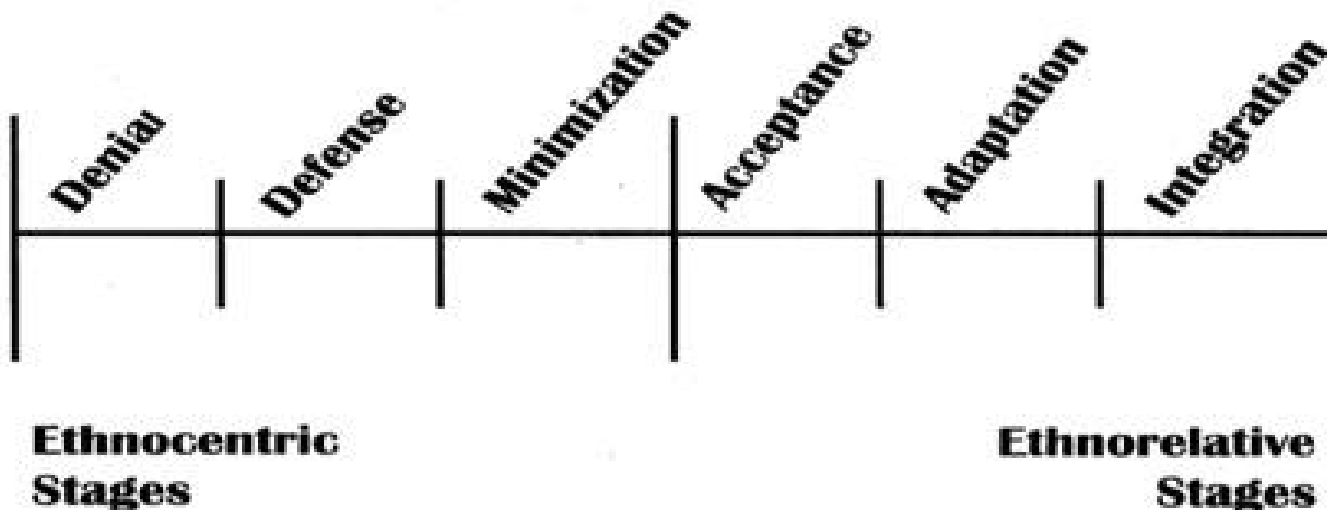
**Procedures:** online survey at 3 different collections points

**Analysis:** SPSS descriptive statistics and t-tests

# Theoretical basis: Developmental Model of Inter-cultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

## Development of Intercultural Sensitivity

Experience of difference →



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# Data Collected

- ❖ demographics (e.g, gender, age, citizenship, childhood region, education level, minority status).
- ❖ academic major, academic classification, instructor.
- ❖ experience with people of cultures different than those of the students (e.g., time living abroad).
- ❖ measure of inter-cultural sensitivity - the *Inter-cultural Development Inventory* (Hammer & Bennett, 1998)
- ❖ collected at the beginning and end of the first semester
- ❖ and just before the final semester of the program (student teaching in elementary school classrooms).

# Participants' Characteristics

N	%	Demographic Information
604	73.5%	Female
769	93.4%	18 – 30 years old
755	91.8%	US citizens
63	7.7%	Ethnic minority in home country
742	90.3%	Childhood in North America
671	81.6%	Never lived out of US
295	35.9%	Second year (33 – 64 credits)
467	56.8%	College of Education

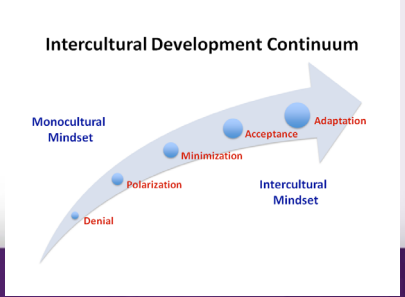




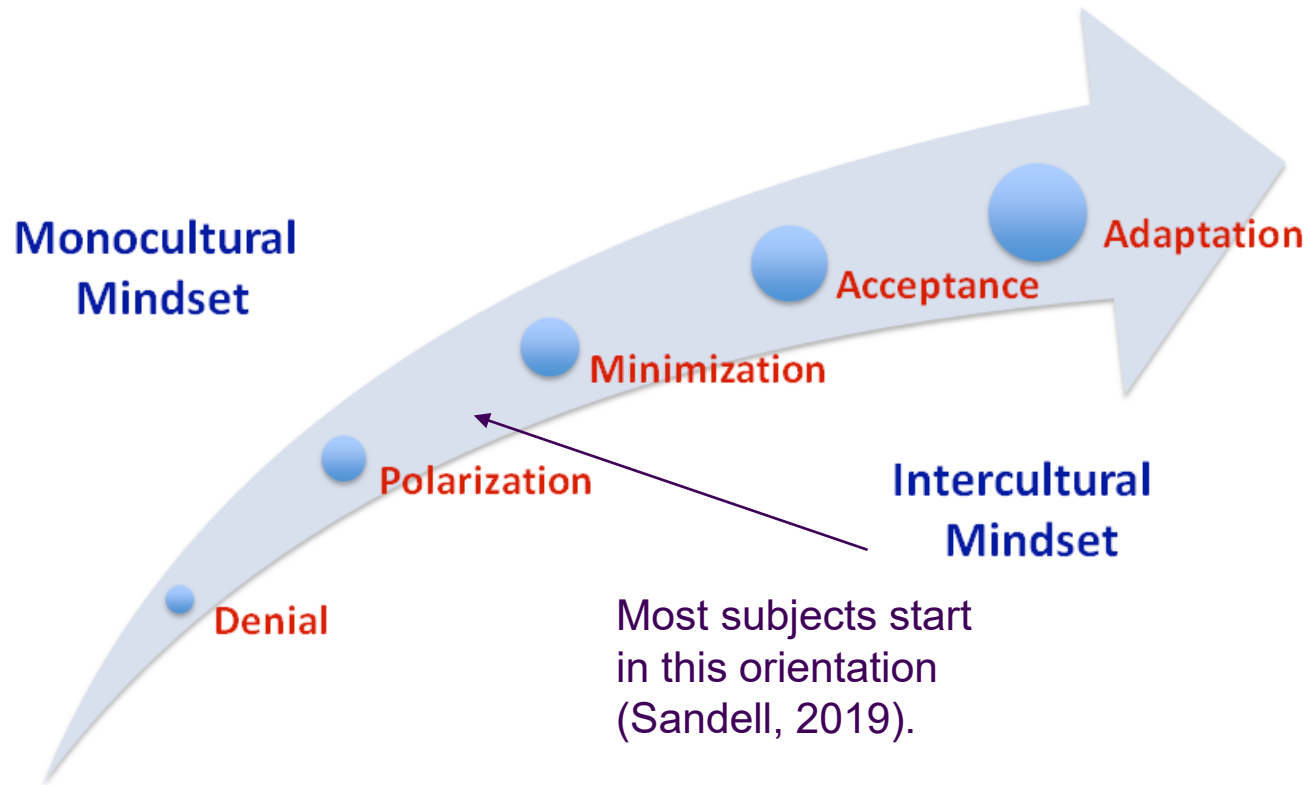
# Beginning Stages of Inter-cultural Competency among Undergraduates

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Developmental Orientation	779	49.570	128.980	88.863	14.667

Analysis showed no significant differences in beginning stages of ICC among undergraduate students  $p < .05$ .



# Intercultural Development Continuum



# Overall Change in ICC during the Teacher Prep Program

Paired Samples t-tests	Mean	N	95% Confidence Interval		t	df	Sig.
			Lower	Upper			
Semester 1 (pre/post)	5.874	48	2.973	8.774	4.074	47	.000
post-422 v post-222	15.805	48	10.157	21.452	5.630	47	.000
post 422 v pre-222	21.679	48	16.373	26.984	8.220	47	.000

# Conclusions

Students who begin their path to becoming teachers start at ethnocentric minimization of cultural differences.

We see statistically significant positive growth at the each of the last two data collection points.

Developing one's Cultural Competency will in turn prepare teachers for a diverse classroom.



# Recommendations

We suggest further studies be conducted to understand the relationship between instructional strategies that will foster intercultural competence.

- ❖ Experience
- ❖ Knowledge
- ❖ Reflection
- ❖ Mentorships

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# Questions?



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