DISSERTATION

TRANSFORMATION: THE IMPACTS OF AN INTERCULTURAL EXPLORATION ON

PRESERVICE TEACHERS

Submitted by

Christine June Aguilar

School of Education

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Doctoral Committee:

        Advisor: William Timpson

        Jennifer Cross
        Nathalie Kees
        Carole Makela

ABSTRACT

TRANSFORMATION: THE IMPACTS OF AN INTERCULTURAL EXPLORATION ON

PRESERVICE TEACHERS

This action research study focuses on the impacts of an Intercultural Exploration project on 52 preservice teachers enrolled in sections of *Schooling in the United States* course at Colorado State University in the School of Education. Goals of the course include the intention that students will exhibit increased multicultural awareness and cross-cultural competence as applied to school settings. To inform the study, a review of the literature on multicultural education, intercultural theory, and transformational learning was conducted. The Intercultural Exploration project provided students the opportunity to explore their biases and areas where they lacked understanding of cultural groups, beliefs, and practices. Students spent four hours in a formal or informal setting focusing on one of their biases or lack of understanding.

Students wrote essays to describe why they choose their projects, their feelings before and after the experience, how they developed their beliefs and how the project may impact their future personal and professional behaviors. A five level Transformational Rating was developed to assess student transformation based on reported beliefs before and after the project and predicted future personal and professional behaviors. Using the Transformational Rating Students rated their experience and the instructor/researcher rated each experience based on essay responses. The average rating by the instructor/researcher was 3.71 and the average rating by the students was 3.16, indicating that there was a transformation in at least two areas: beliefs, predictions of personal behavior, and professional behavior.

Projects were themed by the instructor/researcher as religion (16), behavior (10), mental/physical status (8), socioeconomic status (5), social groups/organizations (3), sexual orientation (3), careers (3), current issues (2), and ethnicity/culture (2). Reasons students chose their projects were because they wanted to explore their own bias (27) or saw opportunities to learn/understand other perspectives (24). Students reported that their beliefs prior to the project were developed due to upbringing (18), media (11), negative experiences (8) and other (6).

As a final step, students presented their projects and were asked to discuss the impacts of presenting to and listening to their peers. Following presentations, students said they felt the impact of sharing the Intercultural Exploration though uncomfortable at times, helped them to further understand and articulate their beliefs, while others felt it was an opportunity for their peers to get to know them better. After listening to their peers present, students expressed they enjoyed listening to the variety of presentations. Students also said they learned from their peers and developed a greater awareness of intercultural issues. Students noted they felt a close connection to their peers and some were surprised at the number of religious focused projects.

The majority of students was positively impacted by the Intercultural Exploration and experienced a transformation as measured by pre and post beliefs and predicted future personal and professional behaviors. Students were impacted positively by sharing and listening to the Intercultural Exploration.

Additional research could focus on replication of the study in other locations to compare results, variations on the project, and a more detailed Transformational Rating. Observing students in their first teaching assignments and examining long-term impacts might provide information for future training of preservice teachers in multicultural competence.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

In today's society, colleges and universities across the United States are expected to offer courses that develop an understanding of diversity by their students in teacher training programs. The increasing diversity among the U.S. population in general and on college campuses in particular (Justiz, 1994; Spring, 2007) has led colleges to attempt to better prepare their students to work with diverse populations and become *multiculturally competent.*

There is increasing pressure on both preservice and inservice teachers to provide equitable experiences for all students through being multiculturally competent and able to skillfully facilitate learning and success with diverse populations. The majority of pre K-12 teachers entering the educational profession are white, female, and from middle class backgrounds while the student population is increasingly diverse (Hodgkinson, 2002). This student population and their families represent cultures that are extremely varied not only in racial identity and religion, but also in less obvious ways such as lifestyles, cultural practices, beliefs and behaviors, mental health, socioeconomic status, learning styles, sexual orientations, and life experiences among others.

For example consider the following:

- Between 2001 and 2011, an average of over 1 million persons obtained legal resident status in the United States (*Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*, 2011).
- It is estimated that 7.2 million Americans under the age of 20 are lesbian or gay and that as many as 14 million school-aged children have one parent who is gay or lesbian (Singer & Deschamps, 1994).

- Approximately 21% of children under 18 were living in poverty in 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

- During the 2009-2010 school year, an estimated 10% or 4.7 million students attending public schools were considered to be English Language Learners (ELLs) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

- In 2011, for students ages 5-17, 37% of their parents held a bachelor's degree or higher (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

- Approximately 28% of students lived in single parent households (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

- During the 2009-2010 school year, approximately 13% or 6.5 million students were being served under the Individuals with Disability Act (IDEA) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

The Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) (2010) is the accrediting body for teacher education programs. Recognized by the United States Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, TEAC is a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving academic degree programs for professional educators, those who will teach and lead in schools pre-K through grade 12. TEAC's focus is to support the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified professional educators. TEAC *Principles and Standards for Teacher Education Programs* (Teacher Education Accreditation Council, 2010) state that programs must provide evidence that its candidates have addressed the theme of "Multicultural perspectives and understanding" (p.1). Standard and principle 1.4.2 states "Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives" (p. 1).

Further, the most recent draft of Colorado Department of Education's Professional

Teaching Standard II states the expectation that teachers "strive to close achievement gaps and to

prepare diverse student populations for postsecondary success" (Colorado Professional Teacher

Standards Commission, 2011, January 30, Draft) and outlines in Standard II "Teachers will

establish a respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students." Standard II b.

says "Teachers demonstrate a commitment to and respect for diversity in the school community

and world." It explains:

> Teachers draw on diverse cultural competencies to design and implement lessons that
> counteract stereotypes, incorporate the histories and contributions of all cultures, and
> provide access and equity in the school. Teachers recognize the influence of
> race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion and other aspects of culture, family
> and identity on a student's development and personality and respond to the relevant
> backgrounds of individual students and families. (Colorado Professional Teaching
> Standards, 2011, p. 2)

To comply with state and national accreditation requirements, Colorado State University

requires a course titled *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275), as part of their teacher

preparation program. The University Catalog describes the course as exploration into the social,

political, historical, and economic forces that shape the United States system of public schooling

(PreKindergarden-12th grade) (Colorado State University, 2012). The course is required for all

students intending to enter the teacher licensure program and students must have earned a

minimum of 30 credits to register for the course. In addition, the course is one of 19 possible

selections that satisfy the required three credits of Category 3 in the All University Core

Curriculum: Foundations and Perspectives C. Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement of all

baccalaureate programs of study. The main core objective of the course related to this project is

(see Appendix A):

> Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

5. Exhibit increased multicultural awareness and cross-cultural competence as applied to school settings.

> 5.c) Act as a reflective practitioner who habitually reflects on how one's own cultural background may influence how she/he teaches and what knowledge she/he values.

The Teacher Education Standard that support this project is (See Appendix A):

> 8.2—Develop, on the part of the students, positive behavior and respect for the rights of others, and those moral standards necessary for personal, family, and community well-being.

The guiding framework used to teach the course is a series of four umbrella questions that are embedded throughout the course:

1. What was, is, and should be the purpose of schooling in the United States?

2. What is your role as a future teacher in fulfilling that purpose?

3. How does schooling continue the existing cultural, political, social, economic, environmental order?

4. How can schooling transform the existing cultural, political, social, economic, environmental order?

This course is offered each semester with class sizes ranging from 10 to 40 students and approximately twelve sections are taught each year. The course is organized into four main sections of study. Section one and two focus on specific issues of diversity such as the history of marginalized groups in the United States and on multicultural theories. These sections culminate with the presentation of the students' Intercultural Exploration. Section three: Reconstruction of Schooling and section four: Empowerment of You in Schooling focus on school law, funding, and other topics less related to diversity provide closure to the course.

The Intercultural Exploration, the focus of this study, is one of the main assignments as outlined in the syllabus (see Appendix A). In addition to the Intercultural Exploration project,

other course assignments include an educational autobiography paper to explore and reflect on the student's educational experiences, positionality, and multicultural experiences; a four-hour classroom observation; a group research and presentation on a topic in education; and a scholarly narrative paper answering the four umbrella questions. Readings, reading reactions, journal entries, quizzes, and participation in class activities rounded out the learning activities.

While the language of policies and recommendations for teacher preparation states teachers should be able to successfully teach diverse populations (Teacher Education Accreditation Council, 2010; Colorado Professional Teacher Standards Commission, 2011), there is no specific curriculum provided that is believed to best support teachers to meet these expectations. Teacher preparation programs attempt to address these requirements through courses focusing on historical background of the United States' education system and various ethnic populations, learning styles, and differentiated instruction for individual differences. However, there was no evidence in the literature regarding preservice teachers' levels of transformation upon completion of these courses.

There is very little in the literature regarding short-term experiences that focus on preservice teachers examining their biases and lack of multicultural knowledge by engaging in activities that challenge and potentially change these beliefs. In addition to practices currently in place, there must be opportunities for individual transformation that enhances the ability to identify and challenge one's biases, which may be obstacles to multicultural competence both personally and professionally. Many questions remain to be answered for teacher preparation programs. What experiences offer the opportunity for individual transformation? What training can develop a deepen awareness of and challenge to one's prejudices and biases? How can preservice teachers be exposed to experiences that provide the beginnings of a journey to an

open heart, a curious and open mind, continued self-reflection, exploration, and improvement? How may experiences offered in teacher training programs provide future teachers skills to develop shared meaning and understanding in the relationships they hope to create with their students?

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are expected to demonstrate cultural competency and abilities to understand and facilitate relationships with students, staff, and parents of varying cultural backgrounds. The Teacher Preparation Program at Colorado State University has one course, *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275)*,* which specifically focuses on multicultural competence and inclusive curriculum practices, including a review of the history of marginalized groups in the United States and the public education system. How may a project in this course provide opportunities that inspire students to be committed to a lifelong journey of expanding their competencies to engage with diverse students and families? How does the Intercultural Exploration experience impact transformation of students' beliefs and perceptions of their future personal and professional behaviors?

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand the impacts of an Intercultural Exploration on preservice teachers' beliefs and perceptions of future personal and professional behaviors. As this was an action research project with multiple cycles, each one provided opportunities to improve upon the project. A total of seven cycles were completed from the Spring of 2011 through Spring of 2013. It is my intention that the study will be an impetus for teachers to engage in their own action research projects. Additionally, the specific Intercultural Exploration

may inspire instructors of preservice teachers seeking to explore intercultural beliefs and future behaviors to incorporate similar activities in their courses.

The research questions are:

1. What are the impacts of an Intercultural Exploration on transformation in beliefs or predictions of future actions among preservice teachers enrolled in Schooling in the United States (EDUC 275)?

    1a. What are students' beliefs before and after the Intercultural Exploration?

    1b. Why do students choose their specific projects?

    1c. How do students report they developed their beliefs prior to the Intercultural Exploration?

    1d. What are students' predictions of their future personal and professional behaviors as a result of participating in the Intercultural Exploration?

2. What levels of transformation occur in students as a result of the Intercultural Exploration as measured by the Transformational Rating and rated by instructor and student?

3. What do students report about the impact of presenting and listening to peers following the Intercultural Exploration?

    3a. What do students report is the impact of sharing their Intercultural Exploration with their peers?

    3b. What do students report is the impact of listening to their peers share their Intercultural Explorations?

Terms and Definitions

Action Research: A systematic inquiry conducted by teachers, administrators, counselors or others with interest in teaching, learning, or school related issues. The process involves identifying a problem or concern, collecting data, analyzing, and interpreting data and developing a plan of action (Mills, 2007).

Culture: Heritage and historic memory, geographic or regional origin, circumstance and situation, and affinity or relational bonds (Anderson & Davis, 2012, p. vii).

Diversity: Ranges of differences in race, ethnicity, social groups, age, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, religion, occupation, disability, learning styles, behaviors, beliefs, practices, family structure, and other cultural factors.

Intercultural competence: The ability to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts (Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 149).

Multicultural education: Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process. As an idea, multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups (Banks, 1997, para. 1).

Preservice teacher: Students involved in a period of guided, supervised teaching leading to becoming a competent teaching professional (Virginian Wesleyan College, 2013).

Transformative learning: A process of change of meaning, perspectives, habits of mind, and mindsets that may move them to more be more inclusive and discriminating. It is reflective and can guide actions (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

Delimitations

The study was confined to students enrolled in *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275) with the instructor/researcher in the spring of 2013 at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. The study included 52 students. All data collected may not be from all 52 students due to non-responses and incomplete reporting. The Intercultural Exploration projects and resulting data and analysis may not be representative of students enrolled in other *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275) courses or other teacher training courses at other universities.

Limitations and Assumptions

Students were to complete the project as a part of the course requirements and were given the opportunity to consent to have their essays and surveys analyzed for the purpose of the study as a part of the Internal Review Board approved consent process. It is my belief that students answered their essays and the anonymous surveys honestly.

Researcher's Personal Teaching Style

I have been asked if I believe that any instructor could assign the Intercultural Exploration project and have similar results to those reported in this study. My answer is that each instructor's personal style, along with his or her personal disclosure and approach to the material, creates a classroom climate that shapes the way students receive information and complete assignments. This style and the environment created are primary drivers of the learning students take away from the course. Each student brings a unique background, set of current circumstances, and degree of readiness to learn. The results of the project would likely vary depending on all of these factors.

To gain an understanding of my own perspective as a teacher and individual, and the possible influence I may have had on the findings of the project, the following description of the major influences on my approach to teaching is provided. Over the course of my twenty-years in the field of education, I have been influenced in my teaching by my desire to express joy and creativity and to know, understand, and appreciate each individual and to be known by them. In addition, specific authors have helped me to develop and strengthen my beliefs about teaching and my classroom presence as the instructor. I am including a brief discussion of each of the writings that have impacted my teaching and classroom climate.

Palmer's work, specifically the book, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (1998), encouraged me to approach teaching as a way to "…bring more light and life into the world" (p. 8). Palmer helped me to see that teaching is a spiritual calling. The practice of teaching demands that I be on my own journey toward wholeness, openness, and contributions. To contribute at the highest level of good as an educator, I must continually seek to be balanced, curious, adventurous, loving, and kind. Palmer cautions teachers to be aware of the "…assumptions that students are brain-dead leads to pedagogies that deaden their brains" (p. 37). He encourages teachers to "…treat our students with civility and compassion…challenged as well as welcomed" (p. 82). He reminds teachers "Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness" (p.11) and recommends teachers provide "…gaps in which students can think their own thoughts...invite students to probe the unknown…reveal what they have learned…establish a schedule that allows time for the unexpected" (p. 136). The beauty of his writing and the way he powerfully supports teaching as a noble important life calling frames the way that I approach teaching.

Kessler's (2000) *The Soul of Education: Helping Students Find Connection, Compassion, and Character at School* allowed me to further explore the idea that teaching is about connection. While I may have intuitively attempted to connect with my students**,** I did not understand the depth of the importance of connections and the ideal that connecting to students supports successful learning outcomes, until I read Kessler's work. The *Seven Gateways to the Soul in Education* is Kessler's recommended model of connecting with and nourishing the souls of students. Students yearn for a deep connection; long for silence and solitude; search for meaning and purpose; hunger for joy and delight; and urge for initiation and transcendence (Kessler, 2000). Kessler recognizes the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States as protecting students from having a worldview or religion imposed on them and distinguishes the "vital relationships among teaching, learning, and education of the human heart" (p. xiv) as imperatives in the classroom. In my role as a teacher, I became aware that reaching students' hearts is a necessary foundation for optimal learning.

Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 2005, first published in 1995) focused on the concept of emotional literacy, "a shorthand term for the idea that children's emotional and social skills can be cultivated, and that doing so gives them decided advantages in their cognitive abilities, in their personal adjustment, and in their resiliency through life" (p. 33). Following the publication of Goleman's work, educators began to create programs with social and emotional learning (SEL) in mind. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) developed five competencies for students' social and emotional learning (SEL) based on research evidence in the areas of teacher effectiveness, student engagement, and parental and community involvement (Bond & Hauf, 2004; Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004, Nation et al., 2003; Weare & Nind, 2011 as cited by CASEL, 2011). The competencies are: self-awareness, self-

management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. This framework of social and emotional learning competencies is a guide I use in my daily interactions with students.

An article that has had a strong influence on my teaching approach is "Dialogical Pedagogy in Teacher Education: Toward an Education for Democracy" (Fernandez-Balboa & Marshall, 1994). The idea of dialogical pedagogy warns against traditional teaching strategies as the ultimate source of information and as the enforcer of what? It encourages a classroom that approaches learning as an active process where students construct knowledge and the teacher guides activities. The principles that I have incorporated into my class from Fernadez-Balboa and Marshall include the right to speak, the right to remain silent, and the right to regulate the process.

Jensen's *Walking on Water: Reading, Writing, and Revolution* (2004) has encouraged me to have more fun, be more creative, curious, and flexible in the classroom. This memoir of his teaching at a college and a maximum security prison encourages teaching and learning to be about finding one's own voice and developing freedom and creativity. I have progressively and successfully given more control of the classroom to my students, thanks to his encouragement. "…I don't know how anyone could possibly say that he or she has successfully run a writing class without having played hide and go seek…"(p. 146).

The most recent book that has impacted the way I approach my role as a teacher has been *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* (Cain, 2012). Based on recent science and study of the brain, it encourages a serious reconsideration of the way introverts and extroverts are treated in our society. As a teacher, it has changed the way I manage group projects, classroom discussions, oral presentations, and my interpretations of

perceived student involvement or lack of involvement. I have attempted to create a classroom environment that allows for both introvert and extrovert personality types to thrive.

I have a teaching style that was likely intuitive from the start and has been further refined by experiences as a student and through additional support from some of the authors discussed above. Regardless of the content or age group I teach, my approach is based on the following underlying principles that guide my interactions with students.

- Each of us brings wisdom and knowledge to the classroom that should be engaged and respected.

- Each student is a unique individual who has a preferred way of learning and communicating, which must be considered when designing the structure of the course, daily lessons, and assignments.

- Flexibility is important.

- Self-reflection is necessary to ensure that my motivations and actions will produce the highest good.

- Self-disclosure and sharing my learning journey both inside and outside the classroom are important models for students.

The personal mission statement that has guided me since I created it as part of a requirement for my Masters in Education from the University of Wyoming in 1998 is "I am a person at peace, who has a balance of professional life, personal life and individuality and who experiences successes in each area. I will guide others so that they may have a life that is fulfilling."

Can another instructor replicate the results reported by students that occurred when I was instructing? I again note Palmer's observation, "Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness" (p.11). I believe that similar outcomes are achievable for other instructors if the instructor possesses the commitment to connecting with students, themselves, and connecting with the unique individuals who enter their lives both inside and outside of the classroom.

Researcher's Intercultural Exploration Statement

In the development of the Intercultural Exploration in *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275), I sought to provide an experience for preservice teachers that would significantly impact them over a period of time and increase their understanding of and success with students from diverse backgrounds. While I believed that readings, discussions, and assignments are helpful in providing background knowledge in the area of multiculturalism, I wanted to provide students an opportunity to engage in self-reflection of their biases within a safe framework that allowed them to explore and potentially transform their beliefs and predictions of personal and professional behaviors. Having taught action research to preservice and inservice masters' level students while working on my dissertation, it was clear that using action research as the method to study the impacts of the Intercultural Exploration was an excellent match for me as an instructor and as a researcher. It is my hope that this study will provide encouragement for instructors of preservice teachers to incorporate an Intercultural Exploration into their courses and instructors seeking to understand the action research process will find this example helpful to action research projects in their classrooms.

Summary

The expectations for teachers to exhibit multicultural awareness and cross-cultural competence with students and their families are clear in national and state policies. Teacher

training programs have responded to these mandates through the inclusion of courses such as

Schooling in the United States (EDUC 275), which seek to develop teachers as reflective

practitioners who assess their cultural backgrounds and examine how these may influence their

practice as a teacher. The Intercultural Exploration aimed to provide students with the

opportunity to explore their biases and lack of understanding, as well as to experience a

transformation in their beliefs and predictions of personal and professional behaviors.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This study sought to explore the impacts of an Intercultural Exploration on transformation in beliefs or predictions of future actions among preservice teachers enrolled in *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275). It also sought to understand the impact of presenting and listening to the Intercultural Exploration within the same course. The study was informed by relevant literature in the area of multicultural education and the underpinnings of intercultural and transformational theory. Research literature that had similar components to the study is highlighted. Finally, action research studies that focused on transformation experiences were included.

The literature supported the relevance and importance of the study at this time period in education, specifically the training of preservice teachers in the area of multicultural competence.

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education, to be fully understood, must be grounded in a common definition of culture. Culture is a specific and shared pattern of behaviors and interactions, beliefs, and understandings collectively held by members of a group. According to Banks, Banks, and McGee (1989), culture is not a tangible artifact, rather it is the interpretation and perception of them; it is not material objects, but the values and symbols inherent within them. In *Creating culturally considerate schools: Educating without bias* Anderson and Davis (2012), provide a broad definition of culture as one that avoids being limited to issues of race and ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status. They encourage that the definition of culture should incorporate the essence of intersectionality to include the consideration of "…Heritage and

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Historic Memory, Geographic or Regional Origin, Circumstance and Situation, and Affinity or Relational Bonds (*sic*)" (p. vii).

What is Multicultural Education? The ideal future teacher workforce is expected to demonstrate multicultural competence. Many phrases are used interchangeably to describe this standard. Ladson-Billings (2003) defines *culturally responsive* teachers as holding high expectations of their students, being culturally relevant in terms of how and what they teach, and promoting a socially conscious classroom environment. Hogan (2006) says critical multiculturalism teaches students to question socially constructed identity categories such as race and ethnicity. Banks (2011) defines multicultural education as an idea, an educational reform movement, which seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups.

Rhoads (1998) found three philosophical positions underlying multiculturalism in higher learning including: conservative multiculturalism, mainstream multiculturalism, and critical multiculturalism. Conservative multiculturalism stresses that courses on diverse cultures should be added to the already established curriculum while still maintaining the Western perspective. Mainstream multiculturalism focuses on offering courses and educational experiences that expose students to a wide range of cultures and worldviews to better understand the "other" and as a means to achieve greater tolerance for people of diverse and varied cultures and identities. The criticism of conservative and mainstream multiculturalism was that these approaches were focused on tolerance and not transformation.

Rhoads (1998) found that Bensimon's (1994) focus on social transformation based on diverse cultures and identities was best captured by the term critical multiculturalism. He stated:

Coming to terms with cultural diversity involves much more than simply recognizing

differences based on race or ethnicity. Cultural differences also exist when one examines

social groups defined by age, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status (p. 42).

Critical multiculturalism is a liberating form of pedagogy, which challenges students to become

knowledgeable of the social, political, and economic forces that have shaped their lives and the

lives of others (Friere, 1970; Giroux, 1992; hooks, 1994; Rhoads, 1998).

A contemporary analysis of multicultural education by Wrigley, Lingard, and Thompson

(2012) emphasizes that the complex idea of culture is about shared meaning. They point out that

the current understanding of culture in school change literature is lacking in "…careful

consideration of everyday actions, interactions, discourses, visual displays and so on, as they

impact learning" (p. 102). They contend it is important to examine and question the impact on

education provided to all students. Specifically, consideration should be given to the:

- cultural messages of classrooms dominated by the teacher's voice, closed questions, and rituals of transmission of superior wisdom;
- current culture of educational target setting and accountability systems as opposed to more fruitful forms of educational responsibility;
- assumptions about how ability and intelligence impact classroom interactions;
- prejudicial assumptions about single parents, ethnic minorities and 'dysfunctional' working-class families.

According to Banks (2011), multicultural education is a process that involves changing the total school environment to create equal educational opportunities for all students, reflecting diverse cultures and groups within a society and within the nation's classrooms.

Why Do We Need Multicultural Education? There is a difference between the current student and teacher race demographics that should be considered. According to the National Center for Educational Information (2011) the majority of the K-12 public school teaching population currently identifies as white (Figure 1).
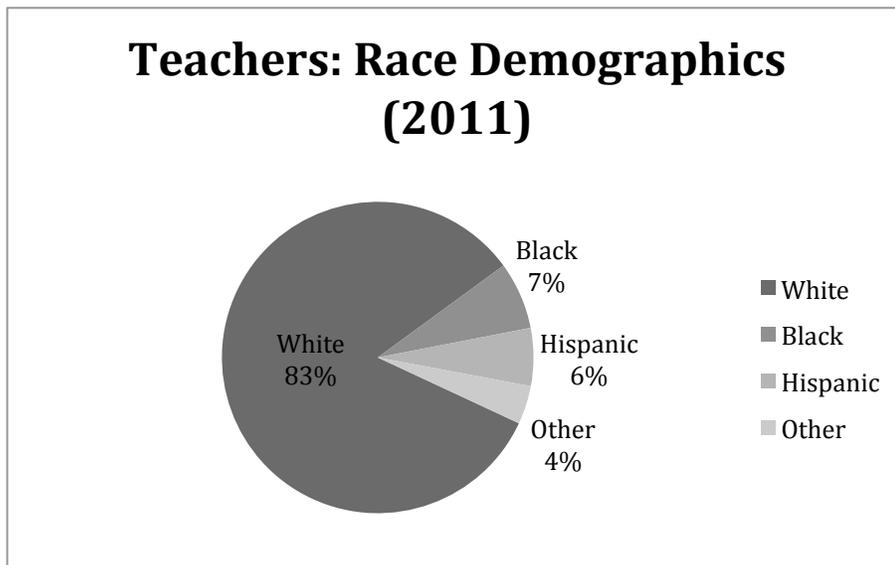
Figure 1. Demographics of K-12 Public School Teachers by Race. This figure shows the percentages by teacher race.

In contrast to the teacher race demographics, the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, show the student race demographics are much different (Figure 2). For example, whites represent 54% of the current student population in contrast to the 83% of teachers who report being white. Further, the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student population in the United States is predicted to increase. The U.S. Census Bureau (2004) predicts

that approximately 50% of the U.S. population will be of non-white origin by the year 2050.

Hispanics will constitute almost 25%, non-Hispanic blacks 12 %, Asians 8% and, 5% other.

Student Race Demographics 2010

23%

16%

53%

5%

2%

1%

- White - 53%
- Hispanic - 23%
- Black - 16%
- Asian/ Pacific Islander - 5%
- Multi-Racial - 2%
- American Indian/ Alaska Native - 1%
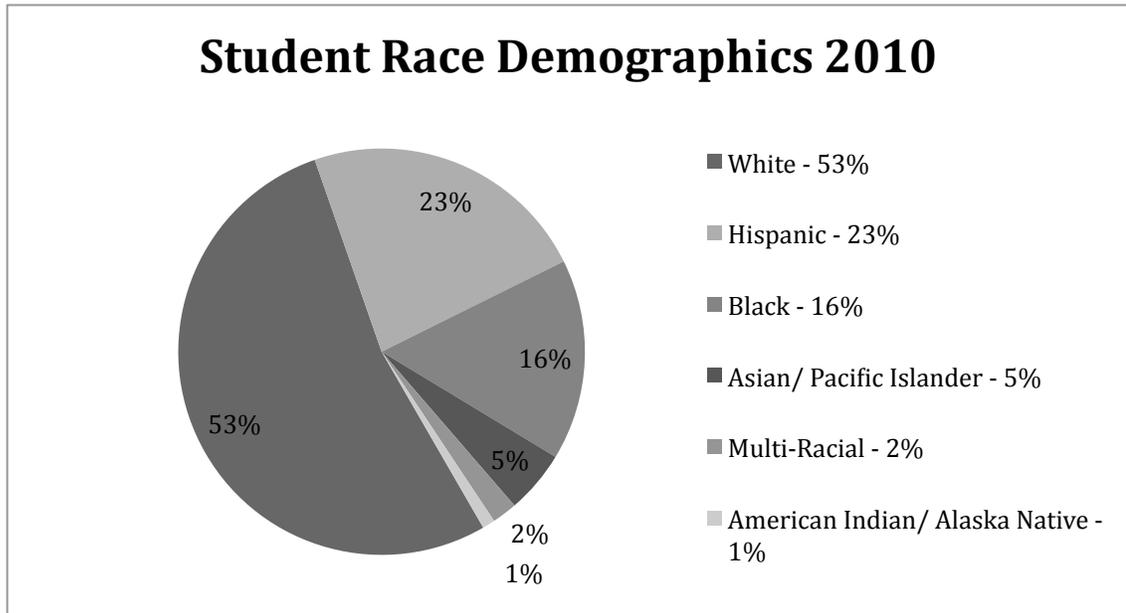
Figure 2. Demographics of K-12 Public School Students by Race. This figure shows the

percentages by student race.

Dantley and Tillman (2010) point out that there are significant disparities in educational

opportunities and outcomes among various groups with differences in race, ethnicity, social

class, sexual orientation, and primary language. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that

when preparing future teachers, we must find ways to enhance the multicultural sensitivity of

those who teach in classrooms. The goals of multicultural education are ideals that teachers and

administrators should constantly strive to achieve (Banks, 2011).

Preparing preservice teachers for multicultural classrooms. It is clear that there is a

need to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to develop competency in multiculturalism

and diversity. How should these challenges be addressed? Applebaum (2009) recognizes social

foundations courses that include a focus on multiculturalism and diversity are challenging to teach as there is a tension between experiences that may be viewed as partisan while being educational. Alquist (1991) summarizes what many instructors must ask themselves when teaching preservice teachers in areas of multiculturalism and diversity saying:

> How can the teacher, as problem poser, reflect student reality back to the student in a nonthreatening, problematic way that will induce self-examination and critical questioning without imposition? (p. 165)

The opportunity for the examination of self and the development of teacher identity were a theme in the literature. There is a gap between this kind of theoretical frame and preservice teacher students' willingness to re-think their racial identity and "place" in society (Hogan, 2006). Olsen (2011) comments that making use of teacher identity as a conceptual tool is "essential in order to capture, celebrate, and make positive use of the inherent diversity of all teachers, students, and educational settings" (p. 267). Teacher education practitioners should approach teacher self as a "multifaceted, frequently composed of competing parts, and as much about emotions and ideologies as about rational bodies of intellectual knowledge" (p. 267). Olsen (2011) summarizes:

> Teacher identity offers a holistic framework for how teachers can identify and adjust their professional identities in relation to dimensions of diversity such as race, culture, language, class, sexuality, religion, physical ability, national origin, and geography, just to name a few (p. 267).

Activities that require preservice teachers to examine aspects of their culture and its effects leads to an awareness of cultural similarities and a deeper understanding of the influence

of cultural differences in teaching and learning (Irvine, 2003). Villegas and Lucas (2002) maintain that sociocultural consciousness can be developed through personal examination of attitudes and dispositions resulting from a self-examination of one's culture and inequities within the current educational system and society as a whole. This may lead to preservice teachers who have more positive expectations of working with culturally diverse students.

In a study conducted by Howrey and Whelan-Kim (2009), preservice teachers' attitudes regarding culturally responsive teaching practices were examined. "Culturally responsive pedagogy for preservice teachers includes prolonged study of the concept of culture, themselves as cultural beings, and viewpoints and experiences of individuals from other cultures" (p. 125). In a study conducted by Brown, Parsons, and Worley (2009), 100 elementary preservice teacher essays on diversity were analyzed for the metaphors to uncover the meanings and understandings not directly or consciously articulated. Three recommendations resulted from their research. First, "teacher educators should begin by deconstructing their own stances, perhaps through analyzing their own assumptions and their own metaphors" (p. 99). Second, "… keep in the forefront of teacher education practice the understanding that emancipatory learning happens best in supportive, respectful environments" (p. 99). Finally, it was recommended to support "… intellectual risk-taking among teacher education faculty and preservice teachers in order to foster knowledge construction and the development of moral imagination" (p. 100). In a study examining conversations on the meaning of social justice among teacher education faculty over a period of time it was recognized that while most programs require preservice teachers to take a course on multiculturalism or diversity, there are limited opportunities for students to engage in self-examination as very few programs offer a multiculturalism perspective within courses in the education program (Zollers et al., 2000).

Enhancing inservice teachers multicultural competence. In the book, *Developing*

critical cultural competence: A guide for 21st century educators (Cooper and He, 2011), a guide

for professional development focuses on what professional development should look like and

gives specific tools for a system for teachers unpacking diversity in their lives and then moving

outward to consider their students, their school, and the communities the school serves. Cooper

and Levin encourage teachers develop a deep understanding of diversity and be skilled in cross-

cultural communication by engaging in private and public opportunities for self-reflection to

recognize personal biases and assumptions and understanding why these exist. They note that

culturally competent educators reflect on their practices and seek knowledge about their students,

families, and communities. A professional development curriculum that develops critical

cultural competence would include empathy activities noting:

> We believe the kinds of activities that get teachers and administrators out of their
>
> comfort zone and out of their classrooms or school and into the community…are needed
>
> to move from cultural awareness to cultural competence and finally to critical cultural
>
> competence (p. 29).

According to Banks (2001), becoming culturally responsive is an ongoing process that

must be personal. Studies on identity assert that a teacher's professional identity is:

- dynamic and not fixed,
- a relation between some kind of core identity and multiple selves,
- both a process and a product,
- an ongoing and situated dialectic among person, others, history, and professional

  contexts,

- a political project as much as an ontological frame,

- socially situated and therefore not traditionally psychological,

- clearly differentiated from a teacher's role,

- not clearly differentiated from a teacher's "self" (Olsen, 2011).

Instructing preservice teachers in multicultural education. In the article *Learning about racism*, Tatum (1992) described experiences teaching a college course focusing on the psychology of racism. Having taught the course 18 times at three different institutions - including a large public university, a small state college, and an elite women's college with class sizes of 30 students, Tatum identifies strategies for overcoming student resistance. First, the classroom environment must recognize that students' "Understanding and unlearning of prejudice and racism is (*sic*) a lifelong process that may have begun prior to enrolling in this class, and which will surely continue after the course is over" (p. 4).   Consideration should be given to creating a classroom and school climate of safety that includes specific guidelines for dialogue and non-blaming assumptions for exploration within courses where students are tasked to explore diversity is recommended. Ladson-Billings (2009) states, "no single course or set of field experiences is capable of preparing preservice students to meet the needs of diverse learners" (p. 463). A combination of autobiography, restructured field experiences, situated pedagogies, and returning to the classroom of experts is what will lead to improvements in teaching. Nieto (2009) believes prospective teachers should be given opportunities to reflect on the issues of multiculturalism before working with students from diverse backgrounds. Nieto outlines imperatives for teacher education specifically identifying the need to prepare future teachers to approach teaching as a lifelong journey of transformation saying:

I believe that our major responsibility is twofold: to help teachers and prospective teachers affirm the linguistic, cultural, and experiential diversity of their students while at the same time opening up new vistas, opportunities, and challenges that expand their worlds (p. 476).

Helms (1992) developed a model to explain ways an individual develops a racial identity entitled the *White Racial Identity Development Model*. The model proposes that there are two main phases of the continuum--abandonment of racism and defining a non- racist identity. The model proposes that development begins with contact between blacks and whites in which whites are oblivious to racism and have not considered racial and cultural differences as important. In the disintegration phase, there is an increasing consciousness of one's whiteness yet a disbelief that racism exists. Reintegration involves an intolerance of other minority groups. There is movement through Pseudo-Independence that includes an understanding of Euro-American white privilege and Immersion/Emersion where one is willing to truly confront biases and more actively confront racism. Finally, in the autonomy phase, one is knowledgeable about racism and develops a non-racist identity. The model emphasizes a movement along a continuum with six phases from contact to autonomy as shown in Figure 3.

| 1. Contact | 2. Disintegration | 3. Reintegration | 4. Pseudo-Independence | 5. Immersion/ Emersion | 6. Autonomy |

Figure 3. White Racial Identity Development Model. Shows the phases a person may move through from initial contact with other races to clearly seeing self and others in a non-racist way.

In contrast to Helms's focus on individual development, Banks' (2003) research focuses on curriculum within schools and identifies approaches to integrating ethnic content into the elementary and high school curriculum happens in stages. Schools may celebrate a multicultural

holiday without transforming the curriculum in a way that shifts perspectives. Banks' *Four Levels of Multicultural Curriculum Reform* is as follows:

- Level 1: The Contributions Approach: focus on heroes, holidays, discrete cultural elements;

- Level 2: The Additive Approach: Content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing structure;

- Level 3: The Transformation Approach: Curriculum structure is changed so that students are enabled to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and multicultural groups;

- Level 4: The Social Action Approach: Students make decisions on important social issues and take action to help solve them (Banks, 2003, p. 15).

Intercultural Theory

The *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* developed by Bennett (1993) was created as a framework to explain the observed and reported experiences of people in intercultural situations. The model is "not a model of changes in attitudes and behavior. Rather, it is a model of the development of cognitive structure" (p. 153, as cited in Bennett & Bennett, 2004). The model is structured in two main stages with sub stages that are sequential in nature, see Figure 4. Ethnocentric Stages include denial, defense, and minimization and Ethnorelative Stages include acceptance, adaptation, and integration.
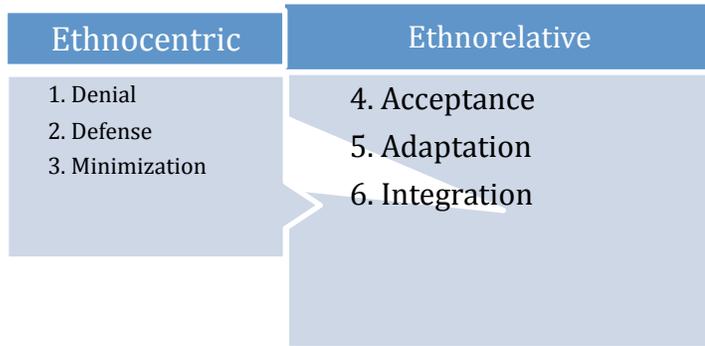
Figure 4. *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*

Edward T. Hall (1959) is recognized as the father of the field of intercultural training and was the first to use the term "intercultural communication" and to focus on "micro-culture". He was in the Foreign Services Institute as the director of the U.S. State Department's Point IV Training Program in Washington, DC. His primary focus was on training foreign services officers in culture and the intersection of culture and communication. He promoted experiential learning techniques emphasizing awareness of one's cultural conditioning, training for actual everyday encounters among people who are culturally different, accepting differences in a nonjudgmental manner, and paying attention to the problems of adapting to a foreign culture. Hall pointed out the need to "fully comprehend ourselves but to the need to delve into the internal transitions that are made when personal transformation results from intercultural experience" (Hall, 1956 as cited in Landis, Bennett, & Bennett, 2004, p. 30).

In the *Handbook of Intercultural Training* (Landis, Bennett, & Bennett, 2004), Paige provides an overview of intercultural training instruments in the chapter *Instrumentation in intercultural training* (p. 85) and proposes ten purposes for using instruments in intercultural training.

1. Assessing personal development.

2. Assessing and developing organizations.

3. Analyzing audiences.

4. Exploring cultural, racial, and ethnic identity issues.

5. Demonstrating cultural forms of humane diversity.

6. Presenting theory and bridging theory to practice.

7. Examining topics salient to the training program.

8. Overcoming resistance.

9. Facilitating data-based training.

10. Varying the training activities (p. 87).

There are many instruments available for evaluation of intercultural readiness, competence and training.

Intercultural competence is broadly defined as "the ability to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts" (Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 149). The authors refer to the intercultural skill set as "heartset" and include attitudes of curiosity and tolerance of ambiguity, which are seen as motivators for seeking cultural differences. Intercultural skill sets include the ability to analyze interaction, predict misunderstandings, and fashion adaptive behavior. The approach to intercultural competence is based on the idea "knowledge, attitude, and behavior must work together for development to occur" (Bennett, 2001; Bennett, 2003; Klopf, 2001; Lustig & Koester, 1999; Ting-Toomey, 1999, as cited in Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 149).

Transformation Theory

Transformational learning is a way of understanding the process that occurs when a person experiences or is exposed to new information that causes a change in her/his beliefs and behaviors. Transformation theory attempts to explain the process of formulating individual understandings and beliefs. Mezirow, who is known as a key researcher in the area of transformation, emphasizes transformation is "Formulating more dependable beliefs about our experience, assessing their contexts, seeking informed agreement on their meaning and justification, and making decisions on the resulting insights are central to the adult learning process" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 4). Mezirow identifies four key components central to adult learning process formulating more dependable beliefs about our experiences, assessing contexts, seeking informed agreement on meaning and justification, and making decisions on resulting insights (Mezirow, 2000, p. 4).

Transformative theory includes:

- learning to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others;
- gaining greater control over our lives as socially responsible clear thinking decision makers.

Transformational learning, also referred to in the literature as mindful learning (Mezirow, 2000, p. 7), is the continuous creation of new categories, openness to new information, and awareness of more than one perspective. The opposite is mindlessness that involves relying on past forms of action or previously established distinctions and categories. Transformative learning is a process of transformation of meaning, perspectives, habits of mind, and mindsets that may move

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people to be more inclusive and discriminating. It is reflective and guides actions (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

Transformative learning demands an awareness of how we come to our knowledge and awareness about the values that lead to our perspectives. Transformation includes elaborating existing frames of reference, learning new frames of reference, transforming points of view, and transforming habits of the mind. The literature provides recommendations for the optimal situations for transformative learning including that the individual wants to learn (Mezirow, 2000, p. 30), a willingness to assess reasons and make tentative judgments regarding contested beliefs (King & Kitchner, 1994), and the opportunity to make public the dilemma to be worked through (Boyd, 1991).

> A sense of agency implies that one can understand perceptively and requires the ability and disposition to become critically reflective of one's own assumptions as well as those of others, engage fully and freely in discourse to validate one's beliefs, and effectively take reflective action to implement them (Mezirow, 2000, p. 24).

Mezirow recognizes that transformations may be sudden, dramatic, reorienting insights, or incremental, involving a progressive series of changes in related points of view that culminate in a transformation in habit of mind (Mezirow, 2000, p. 21). The most significant and emotionally exacting transformations involve a critique of previously unexamined premises regarding one's self. Transformations often follow some variation of the following:

- disorienting dilemma,
- self examining feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame;
- critically assessing assumptions,

- recognizing discontent and the process of transformation are shared,

- exploring options for new roles, relationships and actions,

- planning a course of action,

- acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans,

- trying on new roles,

- building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships,

- reintegrating into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

  (Mezirow, J., 2000, p. 22).

A transformative learner may be so inspired with their insights that they may form cells of

resistance to unexamined cultural norms in organizations, communities, families and political

life and they become active agents of cultural change (Mezirow, J., 2000, p. 30). Transformative

learning involves conceptualization of new ideas. Vosniadou and Brewer, 1987 suggest the

learning can fall into categories of:

- Accretion: accumulation of additional information within existing cognitive

  schema (understanding);

- Tuning: evolutionary changes in one's cognitive structures, including improving

  the accuracy of schemata to fit the new data required;

- Weak Restructuring: existing theories are elaborated and new relationships are

  made among the data;

- Radical Restructuring: discovery of new paradigms, new core concepts, and the

  creation of new schematic structures. (p. 34)

Revans (1982) contends that changes in beliefs may be the result of objective or subjective reframing. Objective reframing is the critical reflection on the assumptions of others encountered in a narrative or in task-oriented problem solving (i.e., "action learning") (Revans, 1982). Subjective reframing involves critical self-reflection of one's assumptions about the following:

- a narrative--applying a reflective insight from someone else's narrative to one's own experience,

- a system--economic, cultural, political, educational, communal, or other,

- an organization or workplace,

- feelings and interpersonal relations,

- the way one learns including frames of reference. (p. 23)

Adult education is a place where protected learning environments can be created and transformation encouraged as Mezirow points out "Adult educators are never neutral. They are cultural activists committed to support and extend those canon, social practices, institutions, and systems that foster fuller freer participation in reflective discourse, transformative learning, reflective action and a greater realization of agency for all learners" (Mezirow, J., 2000, p. 30).

Studies focusing on transformation. A phenomenographic study (Paakkari, Tynajala, & Kannas, 2011), of critical aspects of learning conceptions among 20 health education student teachers, identified six concepts of learning from their essays and semi-structured interviews. The concepts included "learning as 1) the reproduction of acquired health knowledge, 2) the application of health knowledge, 3) developing personal meanings on health matters, 4) the

transformation of individual thinking, 5) personal growth, and 6) collective meaning making" (p. 705). The researchers state:

> student teachers should be exposed to the situations where they are challenged to reflect and see variations…to become aware of the variations in ways of experiencing learning, and to ponder the differences between their current way of understanding and the more advanced ways of understanding that they may be moving towards (p. 712).

Kligyte (2011) sought to understand early career academics' changes in practice while enrolled in a University Learning and Teaching program. Using a transformative learning framework, the researcher analyzed 23 reflective pieces written after the program in which academics described their self-initiated teaching development activities. The evidence implies:

> a move from non-reflective habitual action to more conscious practice, a more sophisticated view of teaching than previously held, increased agency where teaching practice is perceived as something that can be developed, increased confidence, and a more multifaceted conception of an academic role than their original conception" (p. 201).

Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory (described above) and Kegan's Constructive Development Theory were the frameworks for analyzing the 23 reflective essays. Kegan's theory contends that as individuals mature they become more aware of the assumptions and forces that dictate their choices and behaviors. The hierarchical stages identified by Kegan include Childhood Stages, Imperial Stages, Interpersonal Stage, Institutional Stage, and Inter-Individual Stage. Essays were first analyzed for broad areas and patterns where changes in teaching were described. Cases, where evidence of a reflection on assumptions regarding

teaching and a transformation in perspective, were the focus. Two broad categories of external

'change to practice' and internal 'change to self' were identified. Changes to practice included

such themes as review of aspects of curriculum, expanded repertoire of teaching strategies, and

scholarly approach to teaching and leadership. Changes to self included the themes of shift from

compliance and mimicking to more integrated approaches, reconsidered role as teacher,

increased confidence, and transformation and change in a frame of reference. The study

maintains that research to examine and conceptualize change should avoid 'before and after'

type impact evaluations and seek a more holistic understanding through such data as

transformative narratives to more fully understand the impact and the sometimes elusive

evidence of effectiveness.

In a study conducted by Causey, Thomas, and Armento (2000) on the effects of a

'treatment' on teacher beliefs, 24 preservice teachers in an undergraduate middle grades social

studies methods class in an urban university participated in a "diversity treatment". The

treatment began with student self-analysis and identification of areas for their investigation in the

area of diversity. Students completed in-class activities, readings, and structured discourse about

diversity. One exercise included the construction of an autobiographical narrative in which

students' explored their beliefs, knowledge, and prior experience and attitudes about diversity.

The most powerful component for the students as reported by the researchers was an immersion

experience in an urban school. After six weeks of in-class work, students developed an action

plan for increasing their knowledge about experiences with diversity. The professor (it is not

clear if the researchers are also the professors) points out "It was important that students feel an

ownership for their own plans"; the professor tried to develop what Cummins (1994) calls

'collaborative' rather than 'coercive' relationships and to build a sense of community among

learners (Nieto, 1998). At the end of the immersion experience, students wrote essays assessing their growth. Data from 24 students were qualitatively analyzed to search for patterns in pre-experience essays and diversity plans. Patterns included the role of family, schooling, and religion in the formation of beliefs about diversity; the range of prior experiences with diverse groups of people and reactions to those experiences; and readiness for change indicated by thoughtfulness and tendencies toward analytical thinking and metacognition (p. 36). Researchers found that many of the interns gained new insights and new knowledge about themselves and others from the experience. "The post-essays reflected the strength and power of their internships in urban schools and their experiences carrying out the action plan" (p. 37). "A well articulated program with attention to diversity issues over several semesters offers the best hope for moving preservice teachers toward greater cultural sensitivity and knowledge and toward strength and effectiveness in culturally diverse classrooms" (Grant & Secada, 1990; McDiarmid & Prince, 1993; Pohan, 1996 as cited in Causey, Thomas, Armento, 2000, p. 43).

In their review of literature, Lederach was cited as having impacted their thinking with his reasoning that spaces that connect the 'not like-minded and not-like-situated' can lead to social change and have the potential to support development of positive relationships among conflicting groups, to decrease negative stereotypes, and to eliminate violence (Christopher & Taylor, 2012, p. 297). Christopher and Taylor explained their vision for teacher education as a vehicle to promote positive social change (p. 298).

Capella-Santana (2003) engaged in an exploration of teacher candidates' multicultural attitudes and knowledge. The research sought to understand what factors contributed to positive changes during their time in a teacher education program. It was found that fieldwork experiences in culturally and ethnically diverse settings, courses in multicultural and bilingual

education and interactions with classmates may have contributed to positive changes in multicultural attitudes and knowledge.

In a study that lasted one and a half years and included 52 participants, a short-term three-week international student teaching experience was investigated as a transformational learning opportunity. Researchers found that short-term international student teaching internships provide opportunities for students to better understand themselves and who they want to become as teachers (Lupi & Batey, 2009). Their experiences in the teacher-training program included three teaching internships in culturally and ethnically diverse schools and one multicultural course. Data were collected from two questionnaires and individual interviews. Statistical analysis and student interviews indicated that multicultural attitudes and knowledge could be positively changed during a teacher preparation program.

Tanase and Wang (2010) examined preservice teachers' transformation of beliefs in a teacher education classroom and found that the four preservice teachers brought different beliefs with different levels of strength that may be consistent or contradictory to what teacher educators are seeking to teach. The intention of the study was to understand the degree of change undergone by each of the four participants after exposure to a short-term intervention. Tanase and Wang (2010) found that preservice teachers' change throughout a course might be substantial, moderate, or no change. It is "important to develop a deeper understanding about the nature and strength of preservice teachers' epistemological beliefs and use it as a base for designing teacher education programs" (Tanase & Wang, 2010, p. 1247), "…the course needs to offer opportunities for preservice teachers to expose and examine their ideas independently and in collaboration with others in relevant teaching contexts" (Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998). They further argue for a process in the classroom in which beliefs are "not consistent

with those embedded in what they need to learn in their courses can be hopefully identified, challenged, and modified while those beliefs consistent with what they need to learn should be reinforced and contextualized in teaching practice" (p. 1247).

Interestingly as with this dissertation's study, the first author of the research paper was the instructor of the class. As with this dissertation's course, the study was conducted in an introduction course focused on exposing students to "different theories of learning and teaching while providing them with challenging situations that would lead to a conceptual change in their beliefs in teaching and learning" (p. 1240). The study exposed the participants to course content through readings, case studies, and class discussions, however, the specific content is unclear in the paper. Multiple data sources were collected and evaluated to understand the preservice teachers' initial and final beliefs regarding nature of knowledge, learning, and teaching including a pre and post survey with open ended questions, weekly reflections, a drawing of their future classroom, observations of the preservice teachers' behavior in the course classroom and a 20 minute micro-teaching activity. The researchers' analysis showed that participants may bring different personal beliefs into teacher education classrooms and conceptual change was possible during short-term intervention. These authors proposed research should be conducted to see if the beliefs developed in teacher education classes would be sustained over time. Additionally, they recommended longitudinal studies on epistemological growth and how the growth may impact their beliefs of teaching and learning and their teaching practice (Bondy et al., 2007).

The self-reflection of individuals who plan to be teachers is much discussed and encouraged in the literature. Maria Montessori (1996, p. 182) asserted "We insist…that a teacher must prepare himself interiorly by systematically studying himself so that he can tear out his most deeply rooted defects, those in fact which impede his relations with children" (p. 182).

Carl Jung similarly, strongly advised that before seeking to change a child, examination of self must be sought (Jung, 1940). Bennett echoed Montessori's and Jung's sage advice saying that parents and teachers are tasked with putting our own house in order before they attempt to put the child's house in order (Bennett et al, 1984).

In an action research project using transformative learning theory, Gravett sought to change the perspectives and practices of higher education teachers from teacher-centered to a learning-centered dialogic approach (2004). Researchers identified transformative learning as being when individuals gain awareness of current habits of mind, critique their assumptions and premises, assess alternative views, and make a decision to let go of an old perspective in favor of a new one or to synthesize old and new as leading to more justified beliefs to guide their actions. The researcher acknowledged the idea that transformation cannot be mandated as it involved much more than mere change (Apps, 1994). "Developmental processes should not merely present the new or desired way of thinking and doing, but should involve participants in examining, enhancing and converting their personal reality" (p. 260). The study concluded "action research has the potential to explore transformative learning in educational settings" (p. 270) and action research has been overlooked in research on transformative learning (Taylor, K. 2000).

In a study conducted by Mathew, Ng, Patton, Waschuk, & Wong, (2008), a graduate course "Toward an integrative approach to equity in higher education" offered at a Canadian university in 2002, researchers sought to understand four students' learning journeys regarding their perceptions and experiences in the course and their understanding, incorporation and resistance of the idea and new practices. Researchers concluded "…learning is an open and

indeterminate process that cannot be prescribed. Much of what they learned arose out of disagreement, discomfort and tension" (p. 1).

In a study conducted by Christopher and Taylor (2012) used action research to assess 28 student teachers' perceptions of their learning and the impact of a two-hour workshop with a social justice and peace education framework. The researchers were teacher educators who developed a curriculum to guide student teachers in secondary education to contribute to more just and compassionate schools in an effort to improve the teacher education program of their university. The main goal of the workshop was to develop students' critical consciousness in the areas of social and economic injustice, human rights, and issues in schooling with the hope to inspire students to act as social justice advocates in their roles as teachers. A questionnaire using a Likert scale and open-ended questions was given to student teachers attending the workshop. The conclusion was that the workshop, offered twice over a two-year period to the same group of student teachers, provided effective guidance in developing an initial understanding of social justice education and an awareness of the importance of making their classrooms and schools more just in the future. The teacher education program had an exit assessment that required students to write a work sample that identified how they had included principles of a just and democratic society in the units they taught during student teaching. These work samples did not seem to be effective in identifying teacher focus on just and democratic societies in lessons. From this they concluded that student teachers needed more guidance in developing their critical consciousness to more fully address concepts of social justice and peace education.

Literature Review Summary

The literature on multicultural education, intercultural theory, and transformational theory support the idea that the Intercultural Exploration of this study has the possibility to show

transformation of preservice teacher beliefs and predictions of future personal and professional behaviors. The literature on multicultural education outlines the need for preservice teachers to be multiculturally compentent to ensure equity for all students and the best education possible regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual preference and many other variations that each student and family may bring to their classrooms.

Intercultural Theory provides a framework for understanding the stages that people may experience when in intercultural situations. It involves understanding of self, experiences with those who are multiculturally different from self, and a change in beliefs and acceptance. Personal transformation is an integral part of developing intercultural competence. Transformational theory describes the process of a person being faced with new information that causes a change in beliefs and behaviors. Transformative theory is reflective, and like Intercultural theory focuses on self-examination as a primary step in the process. It is a process that progresses in phases that may begin with a disorienting dilemma and may culminate with a new perspective.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

An expectation of teachers in today's classroom from federal, state, and local viewpoints is the ability to successfully teach students who each bring to the classroom varied sets of characteristics that impact their learning. With such high demands on teachers to fulfill a long list of expectations related to content mastery, achievement, and development, teacher training programs must offer well developed and research supported curricula that enhance cultural competence skill development for preservice teachers.

Context of Study

This study focuses on an Intercultural Exploration within the *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275) course at Colorado State University. The course is required for the Licensure Programs for Teaching: Pre-K through Grade 3, K-Grade 12, and Grades 7-12. The purpose of this study was to understand if a class project that offered preservice teachers' opportunities to explore their biases or lack of understanding could produce evidence of transformation in beliefs and predictions of future personal and professional behaviors. The study included two pilot studies in the Summer 2012 and Fall 2012 and the final study was conducted in the Spring 2013.

The Intercultural Exploration, the focus of this study, is the researcher's attempt to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to begin or continue their journey to becoming multiculturally competent in order to best serve the diverse classrooms they will teach. The Intercultural Exploration was designed with a broad definition of diversity, an open and encouraging college classroom environment, and a spirit of sharing learning. Friere's (1970) argument that helping students to connect theory to action is a necessary component of liberatory forms of pedagogy, was a guiding principle in the creation of this project.

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The course description for *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 27) stated "Social, political, historical, and economic forces that shape the U.S. system of public schooling (P-12)." The framework used to teach the course as described in the syllabus (see Appendix A) was a series of four questions:

1. What was, is, and should be the purpose of schooling in the United States?

2. What is your role as a future teacher in fulfilling that purpose?

3. How does schooling continue the existing order?

4. How can schooling transform the existing order?

The course offered by the instructor/researcher was organized in four main parts. The first two parts of the course culminate in the presentation of the students' Intercultural Exploration projects.

- Construction of Schooling, Part 1

U.S. history pertaining to schools, dialogical pedagogy, educational philosophies, learning styles, multiple intelligences, personality styles, teacher and student centered teaching approaches.

- Deconstruction of Schooling, Part 2

History of marginalized groups in the United States and in schooling, gender differences, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered and queer issues (GLBTQ), privilege, poverty.

Parts three and four do not impact the Intercultural Exploration project as they occur following the project.

- Reconstruction of Schooling Part 3

    Social and emotional learning, spirituality in schools, the heart and soul of education.

- Empowerment of You Part 4

Student presentations in the areas of school law, funding, special programs, behavior

management, career choices.

Multiple sections of the course are offered each fall and spring semesters with one section

offered in the summer for a total of 12 sections. Course sections were taught by different

instructors over the course of a year. Class sizes range from 15 students in the summer to 40

students in the fall and spring semesters.

Action Research Design

Action research methodology in this study provided an opportunity to improve the

researcher's practice as an instructor, while contributing to the literature on the use of action

research as a method and Intercultural Exploration projects to transform learning. Action

research is characterized as research that is done by teachers, administrators, counselors or others

connected with a school to better understand a problem or concern, gather data, analyze data, and

provide solutions. Investigations can be focused on how a specific school operates, how teachers

teach, or how students learn (Mills, 2007).

In this action research study, the Intercultural Exploration project was my attempt as an

instructor, also functioning as the researcher, to create and put into action a project that would

best achieve the course's intention to "foster social change agents committed to social justice:

understood here as fair and just institutional/structural arrangements and

personal/social/professional relationships that provide access, opportunity, and inclusion of

historically marginalized or oppressed individuals and/or groups of people" (Syllabus, see

Appendix A). The project also addressed a course objective that states "students will be able to

exhibit increased multicultural awareness and cross-cultural competence as applied to school

settings including being culturally responsive in teaching, being culturally inclusive in curricula,

understanding the concepts of marginalization, oppression, and privilege, and finally to act as a reflective practitioner who habitually reflects on how one's own cultural background which may influence how she/he teaches and what knowledge she/he values."

Kurt Lewin, who is credited with coining the term action research in his paper *Action research and minority problems* (1946), described the process as program planning, program execution, and follow-up evaluations. In addition to Lewin, many recognize action as a cyclical process (Bachman, 2001; Calhoun, 1994; Hendricks, 2006; Piggot-Irvine, 2007; Stringer, 2007; Riel, 2007; as cited in Mertler, 2009, p. 13-18). Action research offers an opportunity for classroom teachers to improve their classrooms though engaging in a structured process that results in specific actions. Johnson (2008, pp. 29-31) summarized action research as systematic, does not have to be complicated or elaborate to be rigorous or effective, must be planned adequately before beginning to collect data, varied in length, sometimes grounded in theory. To ensure rigor in action research, Mertler (2009) summarizes the following recommendations based on the work of Melrose (2001), Mills (2007) and Stringer (2007): repetition of the cycle, prolonged engagement and persistent observation, experience with the process, triangulation of data, member checking and participant debriefing. In addition to these recommendations, a literature review should be included to allow the researcher to develop a theoretical context, to "make a connection between theory and your classroom practice" (Johnson, 2008, p. 75). Johnson acknowledges that the literature review process provides guidance about what has been done and how to ensure that your research is as efficient and effective as possible. Academic journals, web sites specifically designed for educators, books, and experts are good resources with Johnson recommending 50 or more sources in a doctoral dissertation.

Johnson (2008), who is well known in the field of action research, recommends that when teachers undertake action research it is an opportunity for an organized investigation of one's own practice. Action research data collection is described as systematic, meaning that there is a plan for data collection including what data will be collected, when, how and how often. Action research is intended to be dynamic and it is allowable and even recommended that changes in the research plan can and should occur based on what makes sense or reveals itself as the study progresses. Qualitative data in the form of information, observations, or facts are used most often for action research projects. Johnson (2008) summarizes action research as having five essential steps:

1. determining what you want to study,

2. deciding what and how data should be collected,

3. collecting and analyzing data,

4. creating an action plan,

5. sharing findings. (p. 28)

Johnson (2008) recommends the following actions to ensure accuracy and credibility in collecting and analyzing data:

- Record observations carefully and precisely.

- Describe all phases of data collection and analysis.

- Record and report everything that is of importance.

- Be as objective as possible in describing and interpreting what you see.

- Use enough data sources.

- Use the right kinds of data sources.

- Look long enough and deep enough.

Validity, triangulation, and reliability must also be considered when conducting action research analysis.

Action Research as a Cyclical Process

Previous to my becoming an instructor of *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275), the course assignment designed to meet the objective of increased cultural awareness and intercultural competence was a project requiring students to observe in a K-12 classroom for four hours, and interview a teacher and a 'cultural other' asking four questions related to their opinions of schooling in the United States. The project concluded with a requirement to write a paper comparing and contrasting the information gathered. When I began teaching the course, I decided to create a meaningful, action-oriented assignment designed to meet this course objective.

As an instructor tasked by national, state, and university standards with the immensely important responsibility of facilitating preservice teachers to an understanding of diversity and an ability to serve diverse populations of students, it became clear that there needed to be an experiential project focusing on diversity required in the course. The process of improving my classroom instruction regarding the above course objectives began during my initial semester teaching the course in the Spring 2011 semester. I decided not to use the combination of a classroom observation, teacher interview and cultural other interview in a paper, which was being used in the *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275) course by other instructors. I worked on modifications to the project to specifically focus on the diversity component and made changes each semester in Spring 2011, Summer 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012.

Pilot Action Research

I had struggled each semester to increase the depth of experience, the authenticity of self-reflection, and the transformative opportunities offered in the project. After reflecting on the changes that had occurred over the previous four semesters in the student projects and subsequent reactions to peer presentations, I decided to perform an action research study as a way to improve the diversity project and understand the impacts on students (see Appendix B). The Diversity Project described in the pilot study of Summer 2012 is one that developed over time. This iteration of my action research was the focus of the required Ph.D. preliminary exam research manuscript *A Case Study: The Impacts of Diversity Projects on Preservice Teachers.*

In this pilot study, a lens of constructivism was used to examine the impact of a diversity project on preservice teachers' understanding of diversity. The paradigm of constructivism was used because it is a way for individuals to construct meaning of the world through experiences. "The researcher is able to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas" (Creswell, 2007, p. 20.) Specifically, the term diversity refers to race and ethnicity and differences identified by Rhoads (1998) among social groups of age, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status. Diversity for the purposes of this project may include differences in religion, occupation, disability, learning styles, behaviors, beliefs, practices, family structure, and other differences as defined by individual students for their exploration.

The following questions framed the Summer 2012 pilot study:

1. In what ways will preservice teachers explore diversity?
2. How will preservice teachers be impacted by their individual projects?
3. How will preservice teachers be impacted by the group presentations?

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A total of 13 students participated. Students had the choice of four project options and each

option was chosen by at least two students.

Component One: Create something that addresses one or more of the below options.

1. To demonstrate a deeper understanding/commitment to incorporating diversity in your future in your classroom or personal life.
2. To demonstrate your transformation and incorporation of diversity personally and/or professionally.
3. To show your ability to facilitate the diversity experience in your classroom/meeting the needs of all learners.
4. To show an understanding of a diverse perspective.

It was clear that both the activity and the presentation and listening to peers' projects were

impactful. The freedom for each student to select their area of growth and their method for

exploration contributed to the positive results. The requirement to create something or do

something related to diversity allowed for creativity, risk taking, and honesty that was important

to the exploration of self as related to diversity. Component Three requiring student

presentations to the group had benefits in demonstrating diverse perspectives to fellow students.

In this pilot study, I was focused primarily on refining the assignment and on developing

a way to analyze student projects. Because the students were familiar with Banks' (2003) *Four*

Levels of Multicultural Curriculum Reform, this was the ranking method used by students in the

required reflection component of their project. Students were asked to identify their project as

being institutional, personal or instructional and to identify the Level of the Project as being

Contributions, Additive, Transformational, or Social Action (Banks, 2003, p. 15). Seven of the

projects were of a more personal reflective nature and six of the projects were of a more

professional, direct relationship to classroom teaching with none having an institutional focus.

While the use of Banks' *Four Levels of Multicultural Curriculum Reform* (2011) connected the

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Diversity Project directly to curriculum presented in the course, it was not useful in demonstrating individual impact on preservice teacher transformation. For future projects, consideration of a different rating scale, more focused on individual transformation rather than the levels of curriculum infusion should be provided. Subsequent iterations involved researcher identification of themes and transformational rating of student projects.

A survey with two questions was given to the students following the presentations to their peers. The responses to the question, *What benefits/new ideas/learning did you personally receive from the assignment?* were analyzed to confirm that the project was meaningful and created some transformation in learning. Data provided evidence that students were impacted in positive ways by the project, but the question needed to be posed in a different way to more accurately elicit and gauge the impact of the project.

Students were asked to respond to a second question, *Which project/projects were especially meaningful to you? Please explain.* Student responses indicated preferences for certain projects, however, the preference for their peer's projects did not seem to be linked to the impact of the project on individual students. Thus this question was removed in the next iteration of the study.

In a collective debriefing following student presentations, students indicated the project was one of the most meaningful they had ever experienced, sharing that they learned from their project as well as the presentations from other students. Many expressed this project was an excellent way to encourage lifelong learning in the area of diversity.

The Summer 2012 pilot study indicated that students explored their understanding of diversity in some creative and meaningful ways. Those who did an activity to explore diversity

seemed to receive the most meaningful results. The request for students to describe their projects as institutional, personal or professional did not provide any important information in how the project impacted students.

The structure of the pilot project was deliberately open-ended, typical of a constructivist approach. Many students initially reacted negatively to the lack of specific direction from the instructor, however, students later recognized that this challenged them to define and explore diversity in unique ways. Since this was the first time I collected data and attempted to analyze outcomes of the Diversity Project, the writing of this research allowed me to see the historical perspective of multicultural education as defined, as needed, and as implemented. While this Diversity Project pilot study did demonstrate an impact on students and provide evidence of the beginning of a journey, it was concluded that the project needed modifications in initial directions, in data collection strategies and data analysis.

Fall 2012 Pilot Study. In the Fall 2012 semester, I conducted a second pilot study. As I reflected on the previous four semesters and the summer 2012, I felt the intention of the project focus on developing a greater understanding of other cultures had improved each semester. Based on student feedback, I changed the name of the project to Intercultural Exploration (see Appendix B). I felt this would enhance the scope of what students might choose to do for their projects, compared to a diversity project, as diversity sometimes is narrowly interpreted as an ethnic or racial connotation. Another modification was to narrow the directions of the project to a single focus on engaging in an activity (approximately 4 hours) that is culturally (language, ethnicity, race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ideology, exceptionality, lifestyles experience, etc) unfamiliar to you.

Component 1: Engage in an activity. Consider some of the following when designing your activity:

- personal experience or lack of experience regarding individuals/groups that are marginalized, oppressed, feared, misunderstood, judged, ignored, despised, overlooked or forgotten.
- doing something out of your comfort zone.
- creativity.
- trying to think like a cultural insider- position take and show empathy from insider's perspective rather than your own cultural lens.
- a belief or way of life, hard for you to understand.

Component 2: Reflect in a personal essay. Include the following:

- Why did you choose the activity?
- What were your own thoughts, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group before engaging in the activity?
- What were your own thoughts, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group after engaging in the activity?
- How will having completed this activity impact you personally?
- How will having completed this activity impact you professionally?

Component 3: Present your Intercultural Exploration during class.

The intention of the Fall 2012 pilot study was to refine elements of the project, data collection, and data analysis. There were 77 participants across two course sections. I analyzed 23 randomly selected student projects. The reason for not analyzing all of the projects was in the interest of time and preparation for the Spring 2013 dissertation study. Student essays were collected and following the student presentations, each student was asked to complete a survey with four questions (see Appendix B).

Based on the recommendation of Miles and Huberman (1994) I created a document summary from in an excel spreadsheet. I engaged in qualitative content analysis of the essays to reduce the data and make sense of the volumes of quantitative material (Patton, 2002). I identified core consistencies and meanings and placed key phrases regarding activity details,

beliefs before and after the project, and perception of personal and professional impact into the excel spreadsheet.

Using student pseudonyms, I placed student essay responses regarding description of the activity in key phrases. Following, the researcher engaged in the open coding method that produced themes that fit the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The themes and their frequency were: practice (8), religion (8), sexual preference (3), disability (2), socioeconomic (1), and other (1). The themes found from the first level of coding were not reduced to more abstract levels because it would not have added to the analysis.

After a review of the literature specifically in the area of transformation, I did not find an instrument that would adequately assess the students' changes in beliefs and development of future actions. Evidence of transformation was defined as specific changes in beliefs and predictions of future actions that indicate change. I decided to use an ordinal scale as described by Creswell (2008) that would provide options where participants would rank from no transformation to transformation in the three identified areas of pre and post beliefs, and predicted personal and professional behaviors. I created a five level Transformational Rating to evaluate the level of transformation based on student written responses in the essay. The levels were:

1. no evidence of transformation in beliefs, predicted personal or professional action
2. evidence of transformation in one area: beliefs, predicted personal or professional action
3. evidence of transformation in two areas: beliefs, predicted personal or professional action

4. evidence of transformation in all three areas: beliefs, predicted personal or professional action

5. evidence of transformation in all three areas: beliefs, predicted personal or professional action and plan for next action

The most common transformation rating for both the instructor and the students was a three or four. The average rating given by the instructor was 3.59. The average rating given by the student was 3.05. There were many powerful differences in the beliefs of students before and after their experience and in their predictions of future personal and professional impacts. Figure 5 shows the transformation as rated by both instructor and student.


Transformation Rating
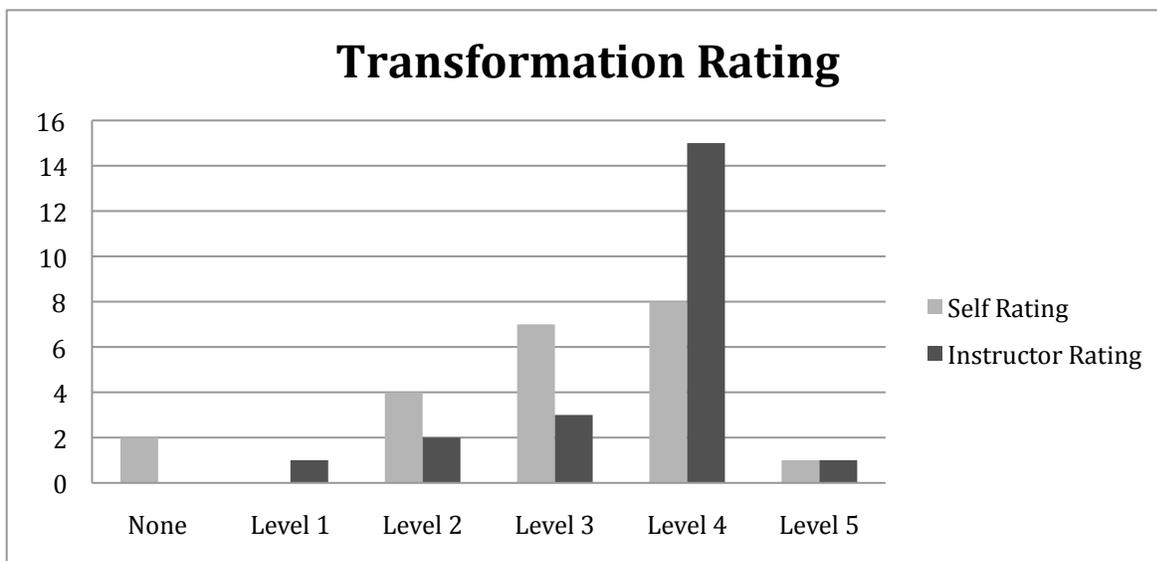
Figure 5. Fall 2012 Transformation rating by instructor and student.

While analyzing the motivations for students' choice of project, two distinct categories emerged. The first were students' preconceived notions, lack of information, or biases toward a particular group but no direct experience. The other reason for choice was because of a specific

experience and a desire to more fully understand the issue. I decided to continue to analyze this in future studies to see if the projects continue to fall into two distinct motivations.

Student Follow Up Survey (see Appendix C). In keeping with the principles of action research I continued to analyze and refine the questions on this survey. Question one regarding how many hours spent on the project was asked to understand if there was a relationship between time spent on the project and level of transformation. The data were not meaningful as it was clear on reading the survey responses that students did not understand the question. For example, some students responded by breaking out the amount of time spent on the project and the amount of time spent writing the responses to Component Two and preparing for the presentation. Other students gave one number and it was not clear if this amounted to a total of time spent on project and writing or only on the project. My best guess is that students spent from 1 to 10 hours engaged in the project and the time did not seem to have an impact on the level of transformation.

For the survey question *What do students report after hearing their peers Intercultural Exploration projects?* a benefit that students pointed out, which I had not previously considered, was the additional processing done to concisely present their experience to their peers and this activity seemed to be an important part of the project. For some, it was in the telling, not the listening. One student said the "impact was sharing in front of class I had to open myself up and I am not used to that, it was hard for me." Many expressed enjoyment in completing the project, for example, one student reported, "one of my favorite things we did all semester. It was nice to know no matter how open minded someone may seem, everyone has something either they disagree with or don't know anything about. This project also taught me how many different cultures and types." Or "It allowed me to experience what my classmates did and see how it

affected them. It kind of changed the way I thought about some things." Or "I could do this intercultural activity repeatedly, because I so strongly believe in the importance of understanding not only the infinite cultures that students are a part of, but also the importance of understanding different lifestyles." A comment that summed up the importance of the experience was "Sharing helped gain the perspective as if I'd done 50 projects."

Summary. The Fall 2012 Pilot Study analysis indicated that there was evidence transformation occurred for most students during their engagement in the Intercultural Exploration. Based on analysis, I determined which changes to make to the final iteration of the project planned for Spring 2013. To assist students in more reasoned consideration of what project they would consider, I decided to start the discussion and brainstorming of the project earlier in the semester and have students work in small groups to discuss their ideas earlier in the semester. I suspected that discussion that occurs earlier and more often and that asks for both self-reflection and sharing in small groups may increase the learning and improve the quality of the experience for each student. I required students to turn in a written plan approximately one month before the projects were due. Finally, I made minor changes to the essay and reduced the survey to two questions.

Research Design Spring 2013

Based on work that began in the Spring 2011 semester and continued each semester for six semesters including two pilot studies, this action research project then entered another cycle in the Spring 2013 semester. The Intercultural Exploration is a part of the requirements of the course and is intended to address the intention, objectives, and standards covered by the course.

Based on the pilot studies, the research questions for the Spring 2013 study were refined to the following:

1. What are the impacts of an Intercultural Exploration on transformation in beliefs or predictions of future actions among preservice teachers enrolled in Schooling in the United States?

    a. What are students' beliefs before and after the Intercultural Exploration?

    b. Why do students choose their specific projects?

    c. How do students report they developed their beliefs prior to the Intercultural Exploration?

    d. What are students' predictions of their future personal and professional behaviors as a result of participating in the Intercultural Exploration?

2. What levels of transformation occur in students as a result of the Intercultural Exploration as measured by the Transformational Rating Instrument and rated by instructor and student?

3. What do students report about the impact of presenting and listening to peers following the Intercultural Exploration?

    a. What do students report is the impact of sharing their Intercultural Exploration with their peers?

    b. What do students report is the impact of listening to their peers share their Intercultural Explorations?

Sources of data consisted of my field notes, student essays, instructor and student ratings on Transformational Rating Instrument, and students' responses to an anonymous survey.

Participants. The participants included students from two sections of *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275) taught by the instructor in the Spring 2013. There were 52 participants. Students have a minimum of 30 credit hours before enrolling in the course.

Role of the Researcher. With the researcher also in the role of instructor, it is important to consider the impact of the students' desire to please the teacher or get a good grade. Macfarlane and Gourlay (2009) question reflection assignments warning that there may be a fake reflection or dramatic revelation to pass the course requirements. My course evaluations in the past six semesters, consistently indicate that students view me as a safe, caring, non-threatening instructor who cares about the authentic learning of my students. Given the extensive development and pilot study work that went into my action research, I am confident that students reported their beliefs in the Fall 2012 pilot project before and after the project along with their predictions about future impacts personally and professionally in a truthful manner. In a class discussion following the project presentations, when I shared the concern with students that they may be showing what they perceived to be socially acceptable reflections or dramatic revelations, for example, one student in the class expressed that there was so much trust between myself and the students that they knew I expected them to do the project and would not punish them with a lower grade for results or reward them for embellishing.

Data Collection. I applied for and received exempt status from the Research Integrity and Compliance Review Office (IRB) at Colorado State University. This was based on Category One "Research conducted in established or commonly accepted education settings, involving normal education practices, such as …(b) research on the effectiveness of…instructional techniques, curricula or classroom management methods" (Colorado State University

Institutional Review Board, 2008).   Students were asked to give consent to have the regularly

assigned Intercultural Exploration (see Appendix C) analyzed for the purposes of research.

Students received a consent letter (see Appendix F) stating:

- The purpose of this study is (a.) to understand how the Intercultural Exploration Project impacts students in the Schooling in the United States course in terms of transformation of beliefs, feelings, and perceptions of future personal and professional behaviors and (b.) to improve the project as an assignment in the course.

- You can opt in or out of having your Intercultural Exploration Project (IEP) Components 1, 2, 3 analyzed as apart of the research project.   This will not impact your grade in any way.

- You may choose to complete or not complete the survey. This will not impact your grade for the IEP in any way. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

  Students were provided consent forms by a third party and the instructor/researcher did

not know who had agreed to participate until after final course grades were posted. Students

were informed that pseudonyms would be used in any written analyses or publications. Students

were asked to complete the Transformational Rating Instrument (see Appendix D) to be handed

in with their essays. Following the presentations, students were asked to complete an

anonymous survey that was collected by a third party (see Appendix E).

  In order to prepare students for success in the Intercultural Exploration, I introduced the

concepts over the course of multiple course sessions. Table 2 shows the steps taken to assist

students in the development of their project activities.

Table 2

Intercultural Exploration Project Timeline Spring 2013

Phase	Student	Instructor
Phase I	• Brainstormed in journals and groups	• Introduced Intercultural Exploration project (see Appendix C)
Phase II	• Turned in written proposal • Received feedback from instructor	• Provided students with examples of previous projects • Kept field notes throughout project
Phase III	• Student oral presentations to class • Students turned in essays	• Third party administered follow up survey (see Appendix E)
Phase IV	• Students rated their experience on Transformational Rating Instrument • Students completed survey	• Used student essays for Transformation Rating Instrument • Inter rater reliability- second assessment of essays on Transformation Rating Instrument • Compared student and instructor Transformation Ratings • Coded student topics in themes • Themed survey responses

Summary. This chapter discussed the pilot studies of the Summer and Fall 2012. Data collection, analysis, and lessons learned were highlighted. Methodology for the Spring 2013 data collection and analysis was detailed. Findings are discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This action research project involved multiple cycles of analysis of student work, revising of the Intercultural Exploration project, and development of the Transformational Rating. This chapter focuses on findings of the Spring 2013 iteration. The chapter is organized by research questions and the related findings.

Data Sources

Data collected included essays, Transformational Rating and anonymous surveys following presentations. Students turned in essays and rated their transformation based on the Transformation Rating. Essay responses regarding beliefs before and after the project and predicted personal and professional impacts were used by the researcher to rate each student on the Transformational Rating. Following student presentations, students completed an anonymous survey asking what the impact of giving and listening to the presentations was on them. Table 3 shows the research questions and the data that were collected and analyzed to answer each question.

Table 3

Research Questions and Data Source

Research Questions	Data and Its Source
1. What are the impacts of an Intercultural Exploration on transformation in beliefs or predictions of future actions among preservice teachers enrolled in Schooling in the United States?	
1a. What are students' beliefs before and after the Intercultural Exploration?	Beliefs before (essay Q5) and beliefs after (essay Q7)

1b. Why do students choose their specific projects?	Why chose (essay Q4)
1c. How do students report they developed their beliefs prior to the Intercultural Exploration?	How developed (essay Q6)
1d.What are students' predictions of their future personal and professional behaviors?	Prediction of personal impact (essay Q8) and prediction of professional impact (essay Q9)
2. What levels of transformation occur in students as a result of the Intercultural Exploration as measured by the Transformational Rating Instrument and rated by researcher and student?	Student and researcher rating on Transformational Rating
3. What do students report about the impact of presenting and listening to peers following the Intercultural Exploration?	
3a. What do students report is the impact of sharing their Intercultural Exploration with their peers?	Impact on you of sharing your Intercultural Exploration project with your peers (Anonymous student survey Q1)
3b. What do students report is the impact of listening to their peers share their Intercultural Exploration?	Impact of listening to your peers share their Intercultural Exploration Project (Anonymous student survey Q1)

Data Analysis

There were 52 students who consented to have their essays evaluated as part of the research. As in the Fall 2012 pilot study a document summary form in an excel spreadsheet was created (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Using the same methods as the Fall 2012 pilot study, I placed key phrases regarding activity details, beliefs before and after the project, and perception of personal and professional impact into the excel spreadsheet (Patton, 2002).

The first three essay questions (see Appendix C) asked for title (Q1), description (Q2) and details of the activity (Q3). Using these three responses, each student's Intercultural Exploration essay was coded into a theme.

Inductive coding was used to analyze why students chose their projects (Q4) and how students developed beliefs (Q6). Themes were inductively created. Beliefs before activity (Q5), beliefs after activity (Q7), predicted personal impact (Q8), and predicted professional impact (Q9). Using the key phrases regarding student beliefs before and after the project, and perception of personal and professional impact each student was rated on a Transformational Rating and recorded in the spreadsheet. Students rated their experiences using the Transformational Rating on a sheet separate from their essays (see Appendix D). Transformational Ratings were analyzed to determine student and researcher rating averages, modes, and a comparison between researcher and student ratings. Sample student quotes were selected to provide rich descriptions and further explain themes, beliefs before and after, and perception of future personal and professional impacts.

Following students' in class presentations to their peers, students completed an anonymous survey with two questions: *What do you feel was the impact on you of sharing your*

Intercultural Exploration project with your peers? and *What do you feel was the impact of listening to your peers share their Intercultural Exploration Project?* (see Appendix E). Responses to the survey were recorded in a spreadsheet and then inductively coded and themes developed. Sample student narratives were selected to further illustrate student responses.

Analysis of Essays

Project theme. Each essay was read to familiarize myself with the overall content of the essays. Then I read them a second time to code each project in a theme based on the primary project focus. Themes were identified inductively after reading all essays. Themes and their frequency included: religion (16), behavior (10), mental/physical status (8), socioeconomic status (5), social groups/organizations (3), sexual orientation (3), careers (3), current issues (2), and nationality/culture (2); see Figure 6.
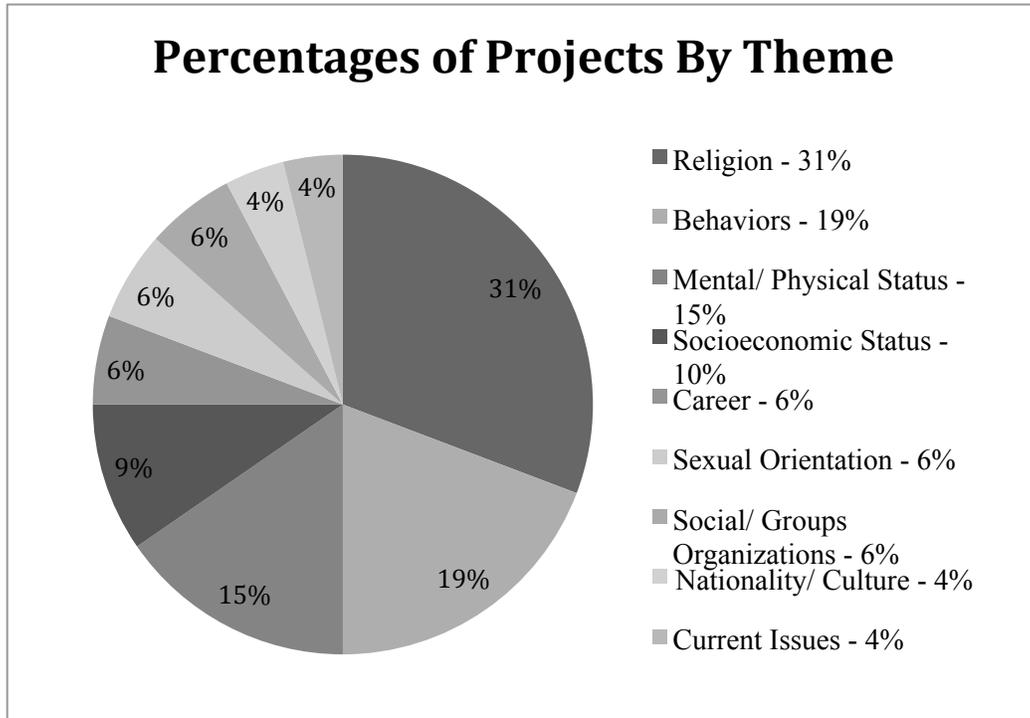
Figure 6. Project breakdown by theme and percentage of projects in each theme.

Table 4 shows the topic content of the project themes with the specific activities.

Table 4

Details of project themes

Project Themes	Activity Involved
Religion (16)	Atheist, Baptist, Buddhist, Catholic, Christian Nondenominational, Christian Universalist, Islamic, Jewish, Mormon, Protestant, Seventh Day Adventist
Behaviors (10)	Art Collaboration, Helping Others, Rock Climbing, Skate Parks, Body Objectification, Polygamy, Pro Life Protesting, Vegan/Vegetarian, Wearing No Makeup
Mental/Physical Status (8)	Alcohol or Drug Addiction, Life Threatening Allergies, Senior Citizen Residence, Special Needs Adult Day Care, Special Needs Child Daycare
Socioeconomics (5)	Homelessness, Thrift Stores
Social Group/Organization (3)	Hipsters, Planned Parenthood, Sororities
Sexual Orientation (3)	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (GLBTQ)
Careers (3)	Military, Police
Current issues (2)	Gun control
Nationality/Culture (2)	Islamic, Saudi Arabian

When placing the projects into themes, I used the student's underlying reason for choosing the project to determine the theme. For example, students whose projects focused on pro-life protests were categorized as behavior because the primary focus was on the behavior of protesting even though the protestors may have had religious reasons for protesting.

Transformational Rating

Before and after project beliefs and predicted future personal and professional behaviors (Research Questions 1a and 1d and 2). Students were asked to describe in their essays (Q5, Q7) *What were your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group* before and after the activity/project and (Q8, Q9) *How will having completed this activity impact you personally and professionally?* The responses to these questions were the basis to rate each student on the Transformational Rating. To ensure inter rater reliability, a colleague read all of the papers and gave the student a rating on the Transformational Rating. Ratings of the colleague were compared to the researcher ratings and all but two were the same. The two where there was a difference were only differing by one point.

The average on the Transformational Rating by the researcher was 3.71 and the average rating by the students was 3.16. This indicates that most students transformed in at least two of the areas (beliefs, predicted personal action, or predicted professional action). Of 52 projects analyzed by the researcher, 48 students rated as having a level of transformation between two and five. Of the 50 projects students self rated, 46 rated themselves as having a level of transformation between two and five, see Figure 7.

Students' and Researcher's Ratings on the Transformational Rating
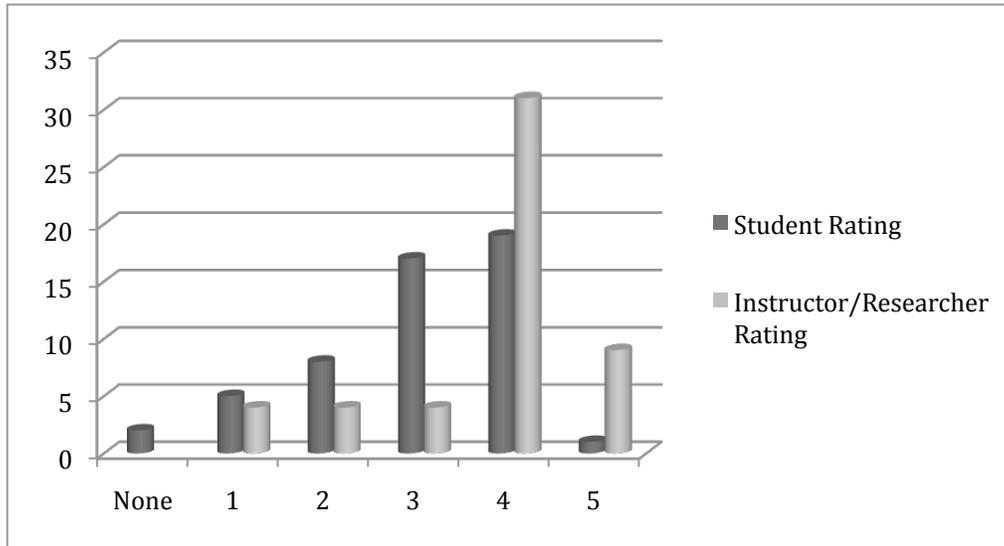
Figure 7. Student and Researcher's evaluation of project on the Transformational Rating.

Projects Themes, Sample Quotes and Transformational Rating. Examples of projects organized by theme with details of before and after project beliefs and perceived future personal and professional behaviors are below. These quotes illustrate the interconnectedness of the research questions and how regardless of the project theme, students experienced transformation in all three areas - beliefs, predicted personal action, and predicted professional action.

Religion. The sixteen projects themed as religion included explorations of the atheist, Baptist, Buddhist, Catholic, Christian Nondenominational, Christian Universalist, Islamic,

Jewish, Mormon, Protestant, and Seventh Day Adventist faiths. Some projects focused on multiple religions.

- Explored Christian Universalist and Reformed Judaism with the student describing herself as a "recovering Catholic." She described a "general dislike of Christian fundamentalist, charasmatics and Calvanists." The project "brought me to a partial reconciliation with all of the bad stuff that has happened to my husband and me during the last two years." She said she now recognizes "God is bigger than me- he can take away my pain, my anger, my fear and my cursing- and he'll forgive me because he is love." The student rated herself as a five on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a four. The difference in the ratings may be that I did not see evidence of a specific behavior change in her essay which would have rated as a five and the student may have perceived a specific behavior change in herself that she did not share.

- Explored Buddhist beliefs and practice of meditation and attended two Buddhist centers to learn about the ideologies of the faith and one Buddhist meditation center to learn about the techniques of meditation. He described his reason for choosing the project:

> extremely skeptical due to my upbringing…I was spoon-fed religion, and religious ideologies, and expected to carry them throughout my life without opportunity to question them, or choose a path of discovery for myself.

In terms of his beliefs toward religion, he described:

> (I) avoid any sort of confrontation in which religion may be expressed…despise the idea of preaching ideals to uninterested ears with the intent of shoving one's own values down another's throat…my disgust for individuals who thrive on sharing their religious beliefs.

He additionally stated "I have never been very interested in Buddhism…did not know anything about it." Following his project he said "…everyone whom I interacted with was friendly and engaging…neither intrusive nor aggressive…I feel enlightened." He explained the two types of meditation he learned and said after practicing meditation:

> …it was an incredible to experience the clarity of mind after meditation…I felt as if I were in control of every aspect of my life, and quite honestly, I have been meditating on my own time…I am more open towards implementing Buddhist ideals in my life…and I respect the Buddhist culture more.

The student said the project impacted him personally and professionally in "I will better be able to relate to my Buddhist students." He sees a place for meditation in the classroom saying:

> I feel that it will definitely help students solidify information, relax after a stressful day, and even give them a chance to help calm their ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) or ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyper-Activity Disorder). Additionally, it will definitely help me if I have a long or stressful day on the job.

He rated himself as a three on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a five. The student's essay showed evidence of transformation of beliefs, personal and professional impacts, and immediate incorporation of meditation in daily life. This was the reason for the researcher's rating of five.

- Met with someone of the Islam faith to:

> get to know them and pray with them… (I) knew it would be taking me far out of my comfort zone…I am an introvert and it can be very hard for me to meet new people, let alone who may not have a whole lot in common with me…a culture I knew next-to-nothing about.

Before the meeting he said:

I thought Muslims had disdain towards Americans and Christians…Islam might have some violent undertones…appeared to me that Islam nations like Iran just wanted to kill non-Muslims and take over the world.

The student's beliefs changed quickly:

within the first 30 minutes my entire opinion began to change…Jason (name changed) was one of the kindest, most respectful people I had ever met…seemed endlessly humble…he showed me that Islam truly is a religion that is peace-loving…I have a lot of respect for Muslims now.

Both the student and the researcher rated a four on the Transformational Rating.

Behavior. The ten projects themed as behavior included explorations of art collaboration, helping others, rock climbing, skate parks, body objectification, polygamy, pro life protesting, vegan and vegetarian, and wearing no makeup.

• Spent a day during the weekend assisting with a group of 14 youth from diverse backgrounds in a dress for success project. He reflected that as an athlete he is often asked to volunteer for projects that "give back" to the community.

He described himself as having:

no interest in helping others on the weekend, the weekend is a time for me to relax and enjoy myself. I never think twice about giving up my weekend, time and money to help others, let alone out of Fort Collins.

He reflected that being involved in the project was impactful saying:

Wow, was the only word I can describe how this experience has helped change the way I think about myself and my career…Little did I know this experience would change me and my outlook on life…it allowed me to give back to kids that have very little…I realized that teaching is for me and that I enjoy doing it even if it involves working on the weekend…as long as I am making one person in the world be hopeful about reaching their goals, I have done what I'm on this planet to do.

The student rated himself as a three on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a four.

- Explored vegetarianism by going meat free for a week, eating at a vegetarian restaurant and attending an animal rights meeting. Before the activity, the student shared:

> I grew up eating meat and my parents were from a farm background where meat and potatoes was served at every meal…I did not understand why someone would become vegetarian…God gave us meat so as I see it, why not eat it…it tastes really good and I am not a huge fan of salad.

Following his experience he said:

> The project transformed my view on vegetarianism and the people who practice it…They (the animal rights group) all seemed so aware of the world around them, and I found myself somewhat jealous of their perceptions of life…If my misunderstanding was to the extent that I would make fun of people who were vegetarians, then there was really an issue inside of me…No doubt as a teacher I will have vegetarian students in my classroom and it's very important that I do not have any negative thoughts towards them.

The student said he is considering not eating meat one day a week. He rated himself as a four on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a five due to the student sharing the possibility of not eating meat one day a week as an immediate behavior change.

Mental/Physical Status. The eight projects themed as mental or physical status included alcohol or drug addiction, life threatening allergies, senior citizen residence, special needs adult day care, and special needs child daycare.

- Spent the day with a 15 year old high school student who has a life threatening allergy to dairy and her family. The student also viewed a series of videos about allergies. She said before the experience:

> I assumed that (her) situation was blown way out of proportion and that surely her family was taking a common ailment and making it into a big deal. I have always been suspicious and ignorant of food allergies.

Following the experience she said:

> To those of you with allergies: Please forgive me for my previous ignorance and disinterest. I am sorry…I need to be a more compassionate person towards those who suffer from allergies. I should not jump to conclusions…I don't just need to be content ready to teach, I need to be compassionately ready to teach!

Both the student and the researcher gave a four rating on the Transformational Rating.

- Volunteered at a short-term care facility for children with developmental disabilities. The student said before the experience:

    I feel like an awful person saying this, but being around special needs individuals makes me uncomfortable…I just didn't know how to interact with them.

Following the experience said:

    (I have a) completely different understanding and acceptance of special needs individuals…I want to volunteer there more…Now when I see special needs individuals I don't get nervous or anxious…I feel prepared to handle any situation (with special needs students) that I might face as a teacher.

The student rated herself as a four on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was

a five. The researcher rating was a five given that the student expressed a plan to continue

volunteering immediately following the project.

- Attended Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings explaining:

    I didn't understand how someone could throw their life away for alcohol. I viewed these people as liars…just giving up on life…weak, why couldn't they just stop?

Following attendance at multiple AA meetings she said:

    I have been at the point in life where you just want to let go because your emotions of sadness and emptiness seem to engulf you the only difference is she chose alcohol as her outlet and I chose therapy, but we had the same story. This opened my eyes to see that these are people just like me that looked for help in a different way. Once again you cannot judge someone because most if not all of the time you will be wrong. I was wrong.

The student rated herself as a four on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was

a five. The researcher rating was a five based on the student's commitment described in the

essay to immediately find ways to support alcoholics.

Socioeconomic. There were five projects with the socioeconomic theme included youth

and adult homelessness and a thrift shop.

- Volunteered at the Sisters of Carmen Center that she initially described as a thrift shop.

  Before the project she said:

  > I have a fear of used items…I think that I will get some sort of disease or sickness if I buy clothes, shoes or bedding…I decided to spend time here to really understand why people choose to shop at centers like Sister Carmen…I have always thought people who shopped at thrift/used clothing stores …are dirty…I had fear I would be judged as being a snob.

Following her experience she said:

> I learned that they also provide nutritional/health classes, child services, individual/family advocacy, and more for the people in the community…this is an incredible life-saving service…I really felt connected…I now see that (Sister Carmen Center) in a positive light…I will stop throwing my used stuff away, I am going to start donating it all to help others- but from a place of solidarity rather than charity…it solidified that I want to help children and families at-risk in my community.

The student rated herself as a four on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a five based on the student's plans to continue volunteering at the center and to donate items.

Sexual Orientation. Three student projects were in the theme of sexual preference with each of the three projects focusing on Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgendered Queer (GLBTQ) identities through visiting communities and interviewing individuals.

Career. Three student projects were in the theme of career with one project focusing on military and two focusing on police.

Social Group/Organization. The three projects themed as social group/organization included hipsters, Planned Parenthood, and sororities.

- Explored the organization of Planned Parenthood saying:

  I preconceived Planned Parenthood as only offering and promoting abortion services…They stood for everything that was against what I stood for.

Following the activity she said:

I realized I had judged them too quickly and ignorantly. I didn't realize all of the services that they do provide that I view as positive…I gained respect for them as an organization and knowledge of what Planned Parenthood does stand for….It has taught me on an overall level that we should not judge so quickly…(As a professional) It would be my duty not to judge and to provide the knowledge I might have….we should always make sure we have gained the amount of knowledge we need to make an educated informed decision.

The student rated herself as a three on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a four as there was evidence of a change in the three areas of beliefs and predicted personal and professional impacts.

Current Issues. Two projects were in the theme of current issues with both projects focusing on the National Rifle Association and the current discussions on gun control.

- Focused on gun regulation and interviewed a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA). Before the experience said:

> I tended to view people who didn't support gun regulation as somewhat arrogant, extremely opinionated, and lacking in open-mindedness…

Following his experience he said:

> …nearly all of my assumptions about this group were incorrect…it completely changed my perspective on gun regulation. I am now almost more opposed to gun regulation than I am supportive of it…it made me realize how important it is not to remain ignorant of other people's perspectives. It's very easy to isolate yourself with people who share the same opinion as you and therefore never understand the opposing view.

The student rated himself as a three on the Transformational Rating and the researcher rating was a four.

Ethnicity/Culture. The two projects themed as ethnicity/culture focused on Saudi Arabian and Islamic cultures.

Low Transformational Ratings. Of the 52 projects, eight students were rated a one or two on the Transformational Rating as rated by the researcher. I read these eight another time looking for an understanding of why I gave the rating I did. For each of these, the commonality seemed to be that the students did not seek to understand the viewpoint, either they did not speak to the people or listen/observe who they claimed to be seeking to understand with an open mind or they seemed so entrenched in their opinions that they did not seem to be able to see another perspective.

Student ratings of self on the Transformation Rating, 12 rated themselves as a one or two. As I attempted to understand why their ratings were one or two, the reasons seemed to fall into two themes with one identified as Lack of effort/Lack of seeking to understand a perspective (6) and the other were misunderstanding (6) in use of rating. For example projects:

- Rated by the researcher and the student as a one on the Transformational Rating with the researcher identified reason for the rating in the theme of Lack of effort/Lack of seeking to understand a perspective. The student chose to attend Catholic Mass at a church she had disassociated with when she was 13 years old. She said:

  > Nothing makes me more uncomfortable than religion and churchgoers and nothing is worse, in my opinion than Catholic mass… My discomfort with Catholics comes from the hypocrisy of them not actually practicing what they preach. I do not like that Catholics don't approve of gay people. I judge Catholics for the judgment and misunderstanding on their part.

  Following the activity, she said:

  > My thoughts are still the same about Catholics. I know that I can never return to St. John's.

In this case, it may have been that the project only involved attending mass and did not involve seeking deeper understanding of why people would choose the religion and the church.

- Rated by the student as a one on the Transformational Rating with an researcher rating of four said before the experience "My thoughts on atheism were acceptance but disagreement, as well as curiosity…" Following the experience, she said:

> I left this activity with my same beliefs, but a higher knowledge base…acceptance of every single belief in the classroom is vital…I hope one day to come to an understanding of each and every religion I may encounter…and to be in full acceptance and understanding of each and every individual.

It seemed that the student rated herself as a one because her religious beliefs did not change, however, in her essay the student explained that her knowledge base and acceptance increased which caused me to give her a rating of four. The Transformational Rating was intended to measure a move toward increased knowledge or understanding and did not necessarily require a change in one's core beliefs but rather a change in understanding. Student misunderstanding of the rating may have been the explanation for the difference between a one (student) and four (researcher) ratings.

There were five student projects where the student's rating and researcher's ratings differed by two or more points with such ratings as 3 (student) and 5 (researcher;) 2 (student) and 4 (researcher); and 4 (student) and 3 (researcher). Three students gave themselves a higher rating than the researcher. There were 26 students in which the researcher gave a higher rating than the student. On reflection, there may have been confusion among students about how to use the Transformational Rating and what each level meant when applying to their projects.

Low Transformation. There were some students who did not describe a significant impact in relation to transformation. A few of these projects are described below.

- Focused on the Mormon faith saying "I had the opportunity to learn from a sect often considered a cult by no small number…" He said "I endeavored to keep an open mind, not to what is clearly absurdity, but to their own natures and why they hold them…"

Following his experience he said:

> Our discourse has not changed my professional actions…In the end I respect people as people, despite some of them having ideas that are no more absurd than those who believe in actual magic, dragons, or aliens…I still can't fully comprehend how people can delude themselves with such fantastic elements…

Both the student and the researcher rated the experience as a one on the Transformational Rating.

- Spent time in an upscale nursing home. Before the experience, she said "…why do people work here? Is it even moral? What family would bring their elderly members here?" Her project involved interacting in a knitting group with the residents. Following her experience, she said:

> My assumptions about families that take their families to nursing homes are lazy are still true…I don't understand why people want to have someone live in an 8 x 10 box, it is just immoral to me.

Both the student and the researcher rated the experience as a two on the Transformational Rating.

- Focused on objectification of humans and visited a strip club. He said:

> I struggle with how people look at each other as objects and not as people…I find it creepy and disgusting…with this in mind I decided to go right into the heart of all that, a strip club.

The student's project involved sitting and observing in a male and female strip club for a few hours. Following the project, he said the project "did not change how I feel about how we treat each other as human beings." The student rated himself as a two and the researcher rated the transformation as a one on the Transformational Rating.

Why students chose their project (Research Question 1b). Students were asked to describe reasons they chose their projects. After reading the essays for a third time, two themes were inductively developed as to students' choices and the reasons. The most prevalent reason was students had bias (27) with the second reason students wanting the opportunity to learn/understand a perspective of others (24). One student did not respond. Figure 8 shows reason for choice by percentage.

Reason For Choice

- Bias - 52%
- Opportunity to Understand Others' Perspective - 46%
- No Response - 2%
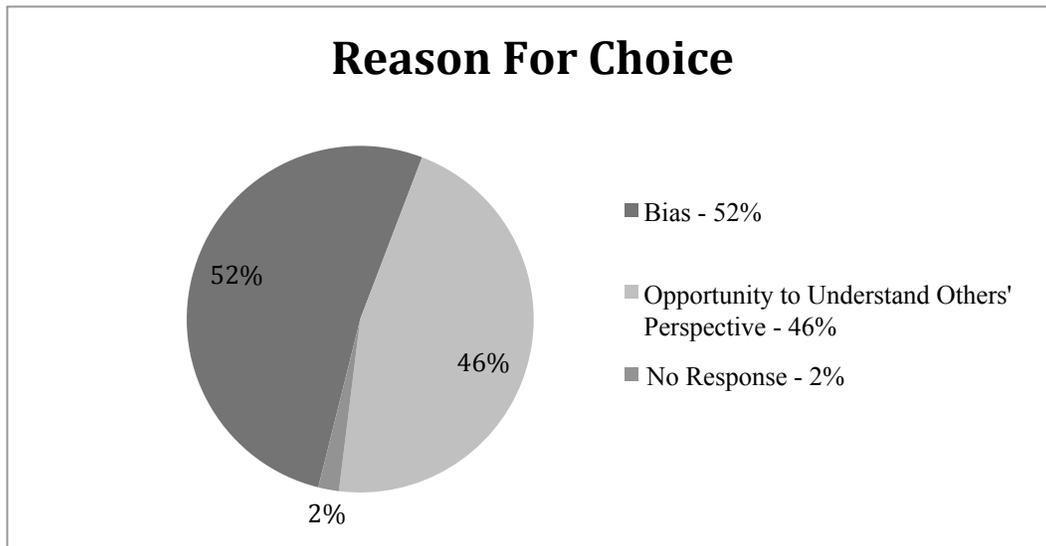
Figure 8. Reason for choice. Shows student reason for selection in percentages.

How student beliefs developed (Research Question 1c). Students were asked to identify *How did you develop these thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments? Who or what may have impacted these?* After reading the essays, three themes were inductively identified regarding how students developed their beliefs to include: upbringing (18), media (11), negative experiences (8), other (6), no response (9); see Figure 9.

Origin of Beliefs

- Upbringing - 35%
- Negative Experiences - 15%
- Media - 21%
- Other - 12%
- No Response - 17%
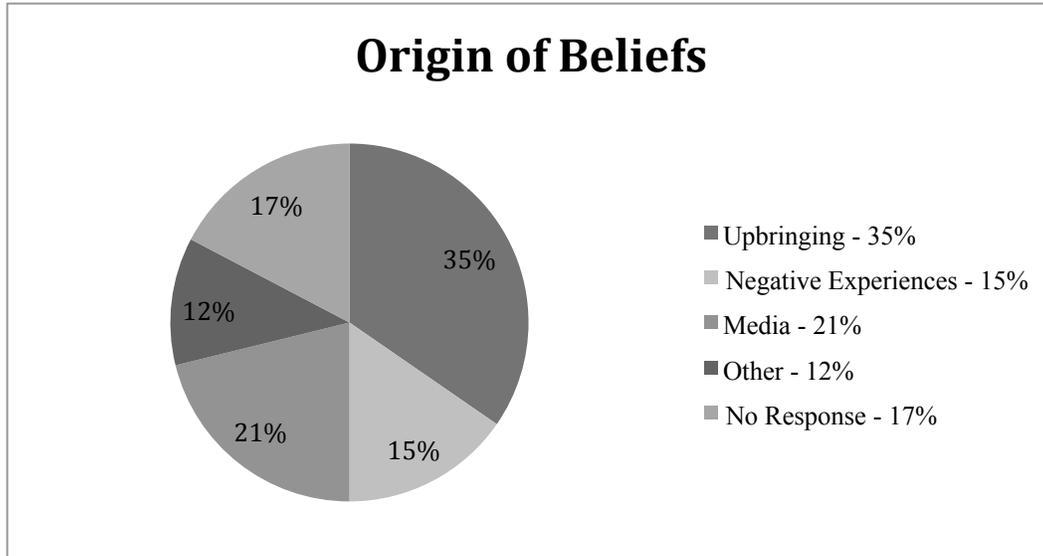
Figure 9. Origin of beliefs. Shows student responses regarding origin of beliefs in percentages.

Impacts of Presentation (Research Question 3a and 3b)

Following the presentations to their peers of the Intercultural Exploration, 52 students responded to two questions anonymously with some students providing more than one answer leading to a response rate higher than the number of students who responded.

Surveys answers were analyzed for commonalities. The themes that emerged for *What do you feel was the impact on you of sharing your Intercultural Exploration project with your peers?* question one were: insight to others (18 students), liked sharing experience (12), helped me articulate my beliefs (11), nervous/uncomfortable (7), help relate to my peers (6), did not feel impacted (3).

The most common responses were in the theme of giving insight to others (18). One such comment was "I hope that any bias they had toward my subject prior to my sharing my

project was impacted in a way that they now feel more tolerant and willing to further educate themselves." It would seem that students believe that sharing their experiences impacts others.

The second most common theme that emerged was that students liked sharing (12). When students enjoy the process of sharing learning experiences with their peers, this may have a positive impact on their learning. The third most common theme was helping articulate beliefs (11). One student commented "Teaching what I learned from the Intercultural Exploration really helped me formulate my beliefs because I had to articulate them. It helped me realize exactly what I thought was important and therefore strengthened my own beliefs. This was one I had not previously considered and it reinforced the idea in my mind that the process of preparing to present their project had merit.

The theme of feeling nervous/uncomfortable was identified (7). It was not clear if the feelings of being nervous/uncomfortable was because of general discomfort with presenting or because of the topic and I would like to explore this item further with students to explore why they felt this way and determine if there needs to be modifications to the project to assist students who might feel nervous/uncomfortable about presenting. I reflected that the project did encourage students to step out of their comfort zone with the project and I also encouraged students to consider being "comfortable with being uncomfortable" for this project so students may have felt it important to specifically point this out.

Students felt their peers got to know them better (6). The fact that students identified this as an impact caused me to wonder if the classroom climate and focus on getting to know one another throughout the course had caused them to become more aware of the importance of this happening. Finally, students (3) said they did not feel impacted.

The themes that emerged for *What do you feel was the impact of listening to your peers share their Intercultural Exploration Project?* question two were: learned (22 students), liked (20), closer connection to peers (8), many religious themed (4), other (1).

Sharing seemed to be an important component of the project. The most common theme was that students learned (22). One comment was "Listening to their projects was the best. One, it showed all these other worlds that I wasn't able to explore or hadn't considered. Two, it allowed me to see into my peers worlds because based on what they selected to explore told me a lot about them personally too." The project provided the opportunity for students to learn while experiencing their project and listening to the experiences of others. As in the first question, students expressed the theme of enjoying sharing (20) their project. Another theme common in responses to both the first and second question was the theme of feeling closer to classmates (8). A comment was "We were able to share our struggles with the group and then talk about what we did to overcome this struggle and understand the other side." And "I was extremely impacted by the diversity of subjects ranging from Guns to the Beef Industry to skate parks to polygamy. I was impressed with the change in the presenter's bias." This consistency in responses to both survey questions in the theme of connecting with peers makes me wonder if the classroom climate before the project had an impact on what they saw as important in the Intercultural Exploration. Finally, students mentioned that there were many religious (4) projects. One student whose comment did not fall into any of the themes said "I felt like I was insulting people with my beliefs and that was not my intention."

As 31 percent of the projects had a religious theme, it makes sense that students would comment on this. I was interested in the high number of religious themed projects and wondered what could explain this, however, the data collected did not answer this question.

The findings of the survey indicated the students felt positive impacts from sharing their projects with their peers and listening to their peers share their projects.

Researcher Reflections and Interpretation of Findings

As an instructor it is important to be aware of my biases to allow for students to be fully able to identify and grow in their unique and self-selected ways. It is important that I do not place more value on working through one kind of bias than another. The intention of the project is for students to develop awareness of and challenges to their biases as a general practice. When a student submitted a plan to visit the local recreation center and engage in rock climbing saying this would take her out of her comfort zone, I questioned the project. I interpreted it as ridiculous that someone would have strong biases that could be challenged through a recreation center and rock climbing experience. Upon reading her essay, it was clear that she had a bias about people who are athletic. This view was in fact a very strong presence in her life. She said "I have worked with the poor, the old, the homeless, and the disabled. None of those groups bothered me like athletic people and go-hard-rock-climbers." The recreation center and the rock climbing experience represented the ultimate in the athletic lifestyle to her, an experience where she knew she would feel uncomfortable and challenged in her biases. Following the project she reflected:

> When I am a teacher, I will have more respect for athletic students and their parents…If I don't understand it or know much about it, then I guess that I will have to step out of my comfort zone and try it out for myself. The possibilities are endless.

Interestingly, this project, which I had a reacted against completely, encompassed the intent of the project and her statements indicate that it will have a positive effect on her and her teaching relationships long term. I became aware that the directions for the project are what I must use to

evaluate the appropriateness of projects rather than allowing my personal assumptions or judgments to impact my reaction. In this case, the student's activity choice fulfilled the expectation that involves people who are culturally different from them.

Another project that initially seemed out of the typical confines of the project was *Collaborative Art Project- Women in Distress*. She created a project in which she and two other participants worked to create a triptych, three pieces that each participant creates all combined into one piece. She explained:

> I came to the realization that addressing my fears of group work, judgment and taking charge in a situation would be the most beneficial experience…Knowing that I am becoming a future teachers, all of these fears are things I am going to have to face every day.

She reflected after the project:

> a lot of things happened in this project that I had not realize would happen, nor assumed…I learned to appreciate everyone's work and dedication to the project. We each had very different styles but that was what made it unique, and the end result was very beautiful because of this.

She followed her essay with an email saying:

> Thank you for the experience of this project. It was a very unique one, and will serve as something very important in my life. It was an amazing learning experience for me!

As an instructor, I have the responsibility of determining the grade for each student based on fulfillment of the project requirements. For this project, students receive credit if they complete the three components of the project. There is no variance in the number of points awarded based on evaluation of quality for each component. I want students to feel free to be creative, inquisitive, and immersed in their project with the focus on the experience, not on the grade.

The community and climate that is built in the classroom may be important to the outcomes of the Intercultural Exploration. Students were asked to respond in their journals to the question "What kind of community or climate issues within the classroom might impact the Intercultural Exploration, especially for instructors hoping to use the project in their classes?" Student responses seemed to indicate that a climate of trust in the classroom is important. They indicated feeling comfortable choosing a project and sharing their project with the class. One student said:

> The atmosphere of the class I think definitely helped with the sharing in our multicultural projects. More than any class I've ever taken, this class is open to thoughts and discussion with a non-judgmental atmosphere present in the classroom. I personally felt like I could say anything in this project.

Another component in the class that students indicated was important was a belief that the most important part of the project was the actual learning and not the grade. One student reflected:

> I trust that you as my (instructor) professor would put the experience above a grade. You just seem very accessible and that this class's focus is what we get out of it, not just the letter grade.

Another student shared:

> I think the fact that you were excited about this and eager to hear our findings is very important. You also made it clear that our previous feelings/beliefs/perceptions would not affect our grades. You were open and receptive to our beliefs. All these combined made it easy to share.

Students identified that the course readings and discussions along with activities that took place previous to the Intercultural Exploration gave them ideas and awareness of how to focus their project. Before the project was assigned, students brainstormed possible topics in journals, small groups, and as a whole class. I also shared with the students an example of an Intercultural

Exploration project I had done involving spending the day with a group of Mormons. A student explained:

> I think the fact that you introduced the activity by having us list out all the cultures we feel we belong to and then writing all those we feel biased against really widened the lens prior to thinking about the project. I also think the fact that you participated and showed us a class your own sense of belonging/biases would help us be more comfortable explaining our feelings. Sometimes teachers don't seem like real people but by doing the activities and participating yourself you make it clear we're all having the human experience.

Summary

The research questions were answered by the data collected and analyzed. The data led to additional questions that could be answered by future studies. What are the explanations for one third of the students focusing on religion in their projects? Would better explanation of the Transformational Rating to students result in a closer match to the researcher's ratings? Is the Transformational Rating the best tool to use? Given that this was an action research project with multiple cycles, the action researcher in me wants to do another cycle to improve the project, ask new research questions, and collect different data.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reviews the study findings and connects the findings to the literature discussed in chapter two and to additional literature to support the findings. Recommendations for inclusion of Intercultural Exploration activities in preservice teacher training will be discussed and recommendations for future studies will conclude the chapter.

The findings indicate that the Intercultural Exploration in *Schooling in the United States* (EDUC 275) had an impact on transformation in students' beliefs and their predictions of personal and professional behaviors. For the majority of participants, there is evidence of an increase in understanding of a group they identified as having biases towards (n = 27) or for which they previously lacked information (n = 24). The findings support inclusion of activities such as the Intercultural Exploration in teacher training courses.

The findings regarding research question one --the *impacts of an Intercultural Exploration on transformation in beliefs, feelings or predictions of future actions among preservice teachers enrolled in Schooling in the United States-- s*howed a positive impact in the areas of beliefs and in the areas of predictions of future personal and professional behaviors. The themes identified after reading all essays were religion such as Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist (16); behaviors, for example, pro-life protesting and art collaboration (10); mental or physical status such as alcohol or drug addiction and special needs child daycare (8); socioeconomic status including adult and youth homelessness and thrift store (5); social group/organization such as Planned Parenthood and hipsters (3); sexual orientation each with a focus on GLBTQ communities (3); careers including military and police (3); current issues such as gun regulation (2); and ethnicity/culture (2).

With almost one-third of students engaging in an Intercultural Exploration that focused on religion may indicate a need for a greater inclusion of religion in preservice teacher courses focusing on diversity. Studies report that religious diversity may be an important component to be considered when training future teachers and developing an understanding of multiculturalism that improves equity in teaching practices (James, 2011; Subedi, 2006). James (2011) affirmed that while there has been an increase over the last few decades on helping teachers to understand their identities and how those identities may impact their classroom teaching, "religion consistently escapes our collective attention as an aspect of identity worth examination" (p. 32).

In a study conducted in a teacher training program at a large university over a two year period, the religious beliefs and practices of 50 preservice teachers were examined. Based on findings, Subedi (2006) agrees that teacher education programs emphasize religious diversity discussions noting that their future students will bring diverse religious backgrounds to the classroom. While preservice teachers had difficulty admitting they had or may discriminate based on religion, they in fact had done so (Subedi, 2006). When training preservice teachers in multicultural issues religion must be considered as part of the diverse understanding that should be developed.

While the focus on religious bias was remarkable, the remaining student selections were varied among eight other themes. With student selected projects ranging from an experience with a family who practices polygamy to spending time at a GLBTQ bar to seeking to understand a family who has a high school student with severe allergies, it seems that preservice teachers are seeking experiences across a wide range. Allowing students to develop their plans for increasing personal knowledge about diversity is preferable to prescribed assignments that narrowly define diversity (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000; Nieto, 1998). These findings are supported by

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Rhoads' (1998) suggestion that learning about multiculturalism should include courses and experiences that focus on a wide range of cultures and worldviews. Anderson and Davis (2012) declare a broad definition of culture beyond that of the often focused upon issues of race and ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status. Following a study in which preservice teachers engaged in a case study assignment spending five to ten hours with a family to understand a typical day, Lyon (2009) contended that preservice teachers must learn a broad definition of diversity that includes race, ethnicity/nationality, social class, sex/gender, health, age, geographic region, sexuality, religion, social status, language, and ability/disability.

The findings regarding why students chose their projects indicates that students chose their topic because they recognized a bias (27) or expressed wanting the opportunity to learn/understand a perspective of others (24). This self reported data seems to indicate that students are able to identify areas of their understanding or misunderstanding of diversity and select and design projects that help them address the issues. The development of new ways of thinking and doing can be effective by involving participants who examine, enhance, and convert their own realities (Gravett, S., 2004). In training preservice teachers on multiculturalism and diversity, instructors and program designers should consider offering experiences that help students self reflect and identify their areas for learning whether they lack understanding or have biases. Providing opportunity for self-reflection of their cultural experiences and attitudes regarding diversity is essential to the development of teachers who successfully educate students of diverse backgrounds (Cooper and He, 2011; Howrey & Whelan-Kim, 2009; Irvine, 2003; Nieto, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002;Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998 as cited in Tanase & Wang, 2010).

Students reported sources of their beliefs prior to the Intercultural Exploration. The sources fit three themes: upbringing (18), media (11), and negative experiences (8). When training preservice teachers in multiculturalism and diversity, it is important to aid students in developing an awareness of how their perspectives developed. Awareness of their existing points of view can lead to willingness to learn new frames of reference and transforming points of view (Mezirow, 2000). A willingness to assess the reasons for their beliefs (King & Kitchner, as cited in Mezirow, 2000, p. 27) is a step in the transformative process. It is recommended that teacher training programs consider teachers' epistemological beliefs and their origins when designing programs (Tanase &Wang, 2010).

Students' responses to the essay question regarding future personal and professional behaviors showed that most students predicted an impact on their personal and professional future behaviors as a result of the Intercultural Exploration. One student who engaged in a project involving meditation explained how meditation would be used in his future classroom to help students synthesize information and to provide calming strategies for ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) or ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyper-Activity Disorder) identified students. Personally, he predicted he would use meditation after a stressful day at work. Another student, who focused on a mental/physical themed project and volunteered in a special needs daycare, predicted that she would no longer be nervous or anxious when working with special needs students as a teacher.

As an instructor of preservice teachers, it was this researcher's greatest hope that the courses I teach have positive long term impacts on their views of diversity including being willing to continually self-reflect and address their biases and to seek opportunities to learn about

their students' diverse backgrounds. Rarely is there an opportunity to know if there is a long-term impact on the students I teach either personally or professionally.

According to Rhoads (1998), philosophical positions in higher learning tend toward conservative multiculturalism that examines diverse cultures through a Western perspective; mainstream multiculturalism that focuses on tolerance and not a transformation of perspective; and critical multiculturalism that encourages a liberatory examination of how social, political and economic forces impact themselves and others. Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue that personal examination of attitudes and dispositions may lead to preservice teachers having more positive expectations of their students. Students who experience transformation may be inspired by their insights and become active agents of cultural change (Mezirow, 2000, p. 30).

Student responses to essay questions asking for *thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group before and after engaging in the activity* provided powerful evidence of change in feelings after engaging in the Intercultural Exploration. Ratings on the Transformation Rating averaged 3.71 (researcher and student ratings averaged) indicating students had a change in two to three areas of beliefs and predicted personal or professional action. With 48 of 51 students' self ratings between a 2.0 and 5.0 on the Transformational Rating and 48 of 52 rated by the researcher between 2.0 and 5.0 the majority of students experienced some transformation. This supports the incorporation of an Intercultural Exploration in preservice teacher training to enhance multicultural competence.

Four students rated themselves as having no transformation using the Transformation Rating and the researcher rated four as having no transformation. The results of student and researcher Transformational Rating of the Fall 2012 pilot study were similar to the Spring 2013

results with the majority of students having some level of transformation in beliefs and predicted personal and professional behaviors. The average rating given by the instructor in the Fall 2012 pilot study was 3.59 compared to the 3.71 average given by the instructor/researcher in the Spring 2013 study. The average rating given by the student was in the Fall 2012 was 3.05 with a similar average of 3.1 in the Spring 2013 study. It is important to recognize "candidates differ in their readiness and willingness to develop such dispositions and practices" (Mueller & Hardin, p. 159). Self-examination in the area of diversity is sometimes uncomfortable for students and there may be some resistance to engage in this process (Ukpokodu, 2002). Banks (2011) notes the process of becoming culturally responsive or to gain multicultural competence is an ongoing and personal process. While conceptual change may be possible during short-term interventions, there is research that declares long term interventions may be more impactful (Tanase & Wang, 2010). As discussed by Bennett (1993), the *Developmental Model of Intercultural Development* includes stages of denial, defense and minimization, which could take multiple experiences and time to move to the stages of acceptance, integration, and adaptation. Instructors of preservice teachers must offer opportunities for multicultural development while being aware that not all students will progress toward the same level of cultural competence in the same way or at the same pace.

Students indicated that the *impact of sharing their project with their peers*: gave insight/informed others (18), liked sharing (12), helped articulate beliefs (11), was uncomfortable (7), got to know peers better (6), and was not of benefit (3). Students shared that the *impact of listening to their peers included*: learned (22), enjoyed (20), closer connection to peers (8), surprised by high number of projects with religious focus (4), other (1). Preservice teachers should be offered opportunities to examine their ideas independently and in collaboration with

others (Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998 as cited in Tanase & Wang, 2010). Revans (1982) discusses that reframing of beliefs occurs as a result of insight from someone else's experience. Opportunities to share personal backgrounds and experiences with peers help preservice teachers develop open-mindedness and engage in an examination of their own beliefs when aware of the beliefs of peers (Dilg, 2003). *Developing Critical Cultural Competence: A Guide for 21st-Century Educators* (Cooper, J. E., He, Y., 2011), recommends that private and public opportunities for self-reflection help teachers recognize personal biases and assumptions and understand why they exist. Projects focusing on developing multicultural competence should include components of sharing with peers, as there is evidence that this increases the positive impacts (Dilg, 2003; Revans, 1982; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998 as cited in Tanase &Wang, 2010).

Teachers, counselors, administrators, and other people associated with schools who hope to improve circumstances, are often overwhelmed with what is already expected of them, thus creating a situation in which they may resist embarking on an action research project. Mertler and Charles (2008) recognize additional concerns (i.e., that action research is still relatively unknown, there is a burden to practice and research at the same time, and there are some who view it as a less valid form of research compared to more traditional forms). Mertler and Charles (2008) point out some of the benefits of action research are that the issues one is focusing on directly impact them, it is possible to start immediately, results are received quickly, and it provides the opportunity to examine and improve one's own educational practices. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Miretzky (2010) declare that studies in which the researcher serves in the instructor role offer opportunities for readers to "imagine their own uses and applications" for their own classroom. Additionally, it is suggested action research promotes a high level of

professional growth, gives educators a voice in their profession, and improves teachers' problem solving abilities, attitudes toward professional development and school change, self-confidence, and professional self esteem (Johnson, 2008; Schmuck, 1997). Teachers who desire to improve their classroom practice through action research may find this study helpful.

Summary

The findings indicate the Intercultural Exploration had an impact on the majority of students and transformed their beliefs and predicted future personal and professional behaviors. Teacher candidates with considerable intercultural experiences are more likely to develop positive attitudes and beliefs about diversity than those with little or no experience (Garmon, 2005, p. 280). Experiences that offer students opportunities to explore their own biases and interact with other cultures are important to develop multicultural competence and to demonstrate acceptance of various forms of diversity in their lives (Ambe, 2006; Causey et al., 2000; Mills & Ballantyne, 2010).

Some literature implies that a series of courses and field opportunities are needed across time to ensure that preservice teachers meet the needs of a variety of diverse learners (Ambe, 2006, Helms, 1992, Ladson-Billings, 2009). "Teacher preparation programs need to be holistically transformed to reflect multicultural awareness and appreciation" (Amber, 2006, p.697). "Based on our research, we would argue that one stand-alone course within a teacher preparation program (sic) is not sufficient if we have expectations of changing the dispositions of our pre- service teachers" (Mills & Ballantyne, 2010, p. 454). The research findings regarding the Intercultural Exploration show that a majority of students were positively impacted. A one time short-term experience may transform learning in the area of multicultural competence long term; however, it seems that multiple experiences across time could have an even greater impact.

It is recommended that instructors integrate projects similar to the Intercultural Exploration while advocating for a teacher-training program that offers an integration of multicultural content and experiences across courses and the program. When developing preservice teachers' understanding of multiculturalism, it is important to have a broad definition of diversity that is inclusive of language, ethnicity, race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ideology, exceptionality, and other themes that may hinder understanding of future students (Anderson & Davis, 2012; Rhoads, 1998). When choosing their projects, students should be encouraged to consider what is different from themselves, what areas exist that little is known about, or what strong feelings are held regarding a group, issue, or behavior. Students should be encouraged to examine their identity and place in society when developing their project (Hogan, 2006). Providing students with opportunities to develop intercultural competence may lead to a greater potential that they will develop the ability to relate in a variety of cultural contexts (Bennett & Bennett, 2004).

Training preservice teachers in multicultural competence needs additional research. For studies that focus on a single intervention, the Intercultural Exploration could be assigned and the Transformational Rating used with modifications. Possible modifications could be broadening the Transformational Rating to measure strength of beliefs before and after with a Likert scale (agreement levels from 1 to 10) to identify more specific beliefs and predicted future personal and professional behaviors with ratings for each. The Intercultural Exploration project could be modified to include experiences focusing multiple cycles of the student's chosen theme or multiple cycles done focusing on different themes.

Studies could investigate the impact of putting students in dyads for joint experiences. Added insight would come from follow up with participants when they are teaching in their own

classrooms to determine the possible long-term impacts of the Intercultural Exploration (Bondy

et al, 2007).

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APPENDIX A: SPRING 2013 COURSE SYLLABUS (abridged version)

Colorado State University

School of Teacher Education and Principal Preparation (STEPP)

Course Syllabus for EDUC 275 Schooling in the United States

Spring 2013 Credit Hours: 3

The mission and goal of the Colorado State University Teacher Licensure Program are to teach and model best educational practices to prepare emerging teachers as learners, collaborators, and leaders.

The mission and goal are captured in the following theme*:*

"Teachers as learners, collaborators, and leaders facilitating student success."

Instructor: Christine Aguilar

Prerequisites: Completion of 30 credit hours.

Course Umbrella Questions:

1. **What was, is, and should be the purpose of schooling in the United States?**
2. **What is your role as a future teacher in fulfilling that purpose?**
3. **How does schooling continue the existing order?**
4. **How can schooling transform the existing order?**
                                   (order= cultural, political, social, economic, environmental order)

Course Catalog Description:

Social, political, historical, and economic forces that shape the U.S. system of public schooling (P-12).

Required Course Texts:

- Huerta, G. (2012). *Educational Foundations: Diverse Histories, Diverse Perspectives 7th edition.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
  - The 2009 edition is acceptable.

- Spring, J. (2010). *Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality: A Brief History of the Education of Dominated Cultures in the United States, 6th edition* (paperback). McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages; ISBN-978-0-07-337873-2
- Other course readings will be made available on RamCT or are accessible on the Internet.

Course Description

What is the purpose of schooling and what is your role as a teacher in fulfilling that purpose? How does schooling continue the existing order? How can schooling transform the existing order? These core philosophical, sociological, and practical questions will guide exploration in this course. The topics examined in this course include the following: (a) history, philosophy, and cultural foundations of schooling in the U.S.; (b) public purposes of schooling, **including development of civic and democratic virtues** and of preparation for the nation's workforce; (c) multicultural, diversity, and peace education (d) current issues critical to today's schools, federal and state education policy, the standards and assessment movement**,** school and teacher accountability, and home and school relationships; and (d) hot topics related to becoming a teacher in the state of Colorado, the United States, and in a global world.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. understand and explain social, political, historical, cultural, and economic influences on curricula & teaching in public schools, educational governance, and accountability;
2. analyze future trends and needs related to schools including career paths in education;
3. demonstrate **technological competence**: word-processing; email for communication; PowerPoint development and presentation use; RamCT as an on-line learning interface; and the use of the world wide web to explore resources and seek information related to schooling;
4. demonstrate increased scholarly **writing competence** by providing personal, reflective, and research-based answers to the four course umbrella questions.
5. exhibit increased **multicultural awareness and cross-cultural competence** as applied to school settings.
   a) Explain what culturally responsive teaching and culturally inclusive curricula mean.
   b) Explain the concepts of marginalization, oppression, and privilege. Articulate how and why schools provide advantages to some and disadvantages to others.
   c) Act as a reflective practitioner who habitually reflects on how one's own cultural background may influence how she/he teaches and what knowledge she/he values.

   Related long term objectives (not necessarily in this course):
   d) Model approaches in teaching that demonstrate equality and equity.
   e) Model teaching in a culturally responsive way and choose/develop culturally inclusive curricula.
   f) Act as a social change agent to promote the creation of culturally inclusive classrooms and school climates

Knowledge Base:

The course content focuses on: democratic principles as they relate to schooling (J. Dewey, J. Goodlad, R. Soder, G. Fenstermacher); issues of equity, access, and moral obligations of teachers (J.Goodlad & P. Keating, J. Kozol, N. Noddings, D. Ravitch, C. Sleeter, J. Banks, L.

Darling-Hammond); trends and needs related to schooling and preparation for the future (Inclusion: Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Leal, Matropieri and Scruggs; Standards and assessment: Marzano & Kendall, National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, Colorado Department of Education); and those studying school-to-career and life-long learning issues (Carneval, Boyer, Daggett, Hirsch, Hull).

Instructional Methodology:

This course is designed to be a guided construction of new knowledge rather than a teacher-centered lecture course. Emphasis is on interactive and participatory learning experiences with much student-led discussion and peer sharing of assignments, research, and thinking. Instructor will focus on demonstration of various teaching techniques.

Course Rationale:

The existence of this course is firmly established through a number of local, state, and national standards and beliefs for teacher education. Candidates should note the careful alignment of our unit's beliefs for teacher education with the Colorado State Department of Education Performance-based Teacher Education Standards, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education Performance Indicators, the INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) standards, and the TEAC (Teacher Education Accreditation Council) standards. This course addresses, in detail, a portion of the State's eight Performance-based Teacher Education standards and the specific 45 standard elements contained within, while also encompassing other state and national standards and beliefs. Beyond standards, this course provides a broad-based experience in the foundations of education in/for a democratic, pluralistic U.S. society and global world. The course aims to foster social change agents committed to social justice; understood here as fair and just institutional/structural arrangements and personal/social/professional relationships that provide access, opportunity, and inclusion of historically marginalized or otherwise oppressed individuals and/or groups of people.

Core Objectives/Performance-based Teacher Education Standards Addressed in this Course:

Standard 8: Democracy, Educational Governance, and Careers in Teaching:
The teacher recognizes the school's role in teaching and perpetuating our democratic system.
The teacher knows the relationships among the various governmental entities that create laws, rules, regulations and policies that determine educational practices.
The teacher has demonstrated the ability to:
8.1—Model and articulate the democratic ideal to students, including:
- The school's role in developing productive citizens.
- The school's role in teaching and perpetuating the principles of a democratic society.

8.2—Develop, on the part of the students, positive behavior and respect for the rights of others, and those moral standards necessary for personal, family, and community well-being.
8.3—Understand and respond to influences on educational practice including:
- Federal and state constitutional provisions.
- Federal executive, legislative, and legal influences.
- State roles of the governor, legislature, and State Board of Education.

- Local school districts, boards of education, and boards of cooperative educational services.
- Non-traditional and non-public schools, including: charter schools, religious schools, and home schooling.
- Public sector input from business, advocacy groups, and the public.

8.4—Promote teaching as a worthy career and describe the various career paths in education, including local, state, national; and international options, higher education, and public and private education.

8.5—Evaluate his/her own performance and access the professional development options necessary to improve that performance.

Additional Objectives/Performance-based Teacher Education Standards Addressed in this Course:

1.4—Support reading through oral and written language development including
- Development of oral English proficiency in students.
- Development of sound writing practices in students including language usage, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and spelling.
- The relationships among reading, writing, and oral language.
- The structure of standard English.

2.1—Develop in students an understanding and use of:
- Number systems and number sense
- Statistics and probability

3.1—Ensure that instruction is consistent with school district priorities and goals, the Colorado Model Content Standards, and the 1999 Colorado Accreditation Program.

7.3—Utilize technology to manage and communicate information.

Field Experiences/Experiential Learning:

Students will spend half day (4 hours) in a setting of their choosing to explore and deepen their understanding of intercultural awareness and interaction in a formal or non-formal context with members of a cultural group different than their own.

Standard 8.2 Develop, on the part of the students, positive behavior and respect for the rights of others, and those moral standards necessary for personal, family, and community well-being.

Students will spend a half day (4 hours) observing in a public, private, or charter school classroom.

Standard 8.35 Understand and respond to influences on educational practice including: Non-traditional and non-public schools, including charter schools, religious schools.

Assessment

Students will complete written papers, read materials for each class, create lessons for leading discussions, lead discussions, participate in a group presentation to peers, and actively participate in classroom discussion, activities, and in online learning opportunities.

	Point	Percent of Grade

Purposes of Schooling (Standard 8.1.1)   35   16%

This is both the first assignment and the final exam for the course.

Students will answer the course umbrella questions in a succinct manner.

What begins as a 1 page narrative regarding your opinion about the course umbrella

questions will become a 4-6 page, double-spaced scholarly paper after its final revisions.

APA Citations and reference page required.

Education Autobiography (Standard 8.2)   30   12%

Students will produce a reflective analysis of past schooling experiences,

past diversity experiences, and they will also analyze core principles

integral to their own emergent educational philosophy. A 4 page scholarly

narrative will be written – Citations not required, but welcome if applicable.

Online Discussions and Quizzes   30   12%

Quizzes and online activity pertaining to course material

Intercultural Exploration Assignment Project   30   12%
(Standards 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5)

This assignment seeks to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of

personal/social/professional relationships that provide access, opportunity, and inclusion of

historically marginalized or otherwise oppressed individuals and/or groups of people.

Classroom Observation Paper – Field Experience
(Standards 8.3, 8.2 8.4, 8.5)   30   12%

Students will observe in a school (4 hours) and interview the observed teacher.

Connections to course content as well as personal connections will be made as

results are synthesized.

A 4 page scholarly paper will be written, citations required. APA format.

Hot Topics   30   12%

(Standards 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5)

This is a group assignment. Students will research a current hot topic in education.

Multiple sources of information will be gathered.

The student will interactively teach fellow students about the topic.

Reading Reactions (Standards 1.4,7.3, 8.3)   **30**   **12%**

Reading reactions will be turned in the day the reading is due. Worth 2 points each.

Journal Entries Standards (Standards 8.2, 8.3, 8.5)   **30**   **12%**

Journal entries will be completed. Worth 2 points each.

Total Points*   **245 points***   **100%**

*The instructor reserves the right to add assignments and readings (points) if needed or appropriate.

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Grading Scale:

</div>

A = 90—100%   B = 80—89%   C = 70—79%   D = 60—69%

F = 0—59%

Schooling in the United States

The instructor reserves the right to change class readings, schedule, and assignments.

Part	Topic	Daily Plan	Homework Due	Homework Assigned
Part 1: Construction of Schooling				Homework is listed on the day it is assigned and then due the following class period unless otherwise stated.
Week 2 January 28, Monday	Introduction to course	Syllabus and course overview Major course assignments *Assign Educational Autobiography Due February 25 * Classroom Observation Due April 22 Get to know you and Pictures Reflective Journaling: FYI: What do I need to know about you? What personal experience might you share that relates to education? Reading Reactions	none	• Please bring something to class that you can talk about, that will tell us something about you, (ie. photo, artifact, symbol, ornament, jewelry, etc.) • Personal Narrative pre-write- bring hard copy- Answer 4 Umbrella questions from syllabus. • Huerta ch. 1 –History * Bring reading reaction (See template on Ram Ct) • Fernandez-Balboa & Marshall *Dialogical pedagogy in teacher education: Toward an education for democracy (*Ram CT * Bring reading reaction
Week 3 February 4, Monday	What is culture? How do we use it to construct our classroom environment?	Ch 1 History of schooling/Huerta reading reaction Reflective Journaling Intercultural Brainstorm	Cultural Artifact Umbrella Questions Huerta ch. 1 –History * Bring reading reaction Fernandez-Balboa & Marshall *Dialogical pedagogy in teacher education: Toward an education for*	Huerta ch. 2 – Educational Philosophy (half class) Huerta ch. 8- Teaching Practice (half class) • Bring reading reaction (2 pts) Take the Multiple Intelligence Inventory found on Ram CT "Assignments" and bring results. Take the Free RHETI Sampler at http://www.enneagraminstitute.com/Tes

Part	Topic	Daily Plan	Homework Due	Homework Assigned
			democracy (Ram CT * Bring reading reaction	ts_Battery.asp#FreeShortTests Take Meyers-Briggs test http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp VAK test http://www.vaknlp.com/vak.htm **Bring results**
Week 4 February 11, Monday	Who are the students? What is our job in knowing them?	FYI: Shauna, Belle Discuss Ch 2 Educational Philosophy and Ch 8 Teaching Practice in pairs Teacher vs Student Centered MI, AVK, Myers Briggs Discuss Diversity Project Due March 3/11 or 3/13	Huerta ch. 2 – Educational Philosophy or Huerta ch. 8 – Teaching Practice * Bring reading reaction 2 pts MI, AVK, Enneargram, Myers Briggs Scores	Huerta ch 4 – *Equity and Education* * Bring reading reaction Banks, (Reading Packet) *Approaches to multicultural reform* Schofield *Colorblind perspective* **Education Autobiography Assignment due 30 points February 25**

Part	Topic	Daily Plan	Homework Due	Homework Assigned
Week 5 February 18, Monday		Teaching Practice Cooperative Learning 5 E's Multicultural Reform STAR Teachers and teacher selection tools	Huerta ch. 4 – Teaching Practice* Bring reading reaction Banks, Ram CT *Approaches to multicultural reform or* Schofield *Colorblind perspective*	Read Spring, chapters 1-4 – Submit Quiz found on Ram CT in Assignment Box via drop box

| Week 6 February 25, Monday | How do *I* work? What choices / training do I have/need to do this well? | FYI: Crystal, Sam F

Race the Power of Illusion DVD

McIntosh: *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*

What is Multicultural Education? | Zoe Burkholder *Because race can't be ignored or* Johnson, Ram CT *Privilege, power, difference*

* Bring reading reaction

Education Autobiography Assignment due 30 points | Choice of one reading:

1. Chapman, *Gender bias in education* 2. Sadker, *Gender bias from Colonial America to today's classroom* 3. Kovalik, *Gender differences in student engagement* 4. AAUW *How schools shortchange girls* 5. *Baby X*

1. *Beyond pink and blue 2. Gender as a social structure 3. Multiple genders among North American Indians 4. The trouble with testosterone 5. What it means to be gendered me*

and

Choice of one reading: 1. *GLSEN Climate* survey

2. PFLAG 3. Part I and II *Diversity in public high schools: A look at the experience of gay and lesbian students* http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~rlsmith/gayandlesbianadolescents.html |

Part 2: De-construction of Schooling	Topic	Daily Plan	Homework Due	Homework Assigned
Week 7 March 4, Monday	Gender and GLBTQ issues	Gender and GLBTQ issues		Spring Quizzes Due March 11
Week 8 March 11, Monday	Intercultural Exploration Project Presentations			
Week 9 March 18-22	Spring Break			
Week 10 March 25, Monday Monday	Heart of Education and STAR Teachers	Emotional Intelligence Visit http://www.queendom.com/ and take the Emotional Intelligence Test. Bring your results.	Discuss articles Kessler and Dalai Lama Choice of two articles- Bring reading reactions	*Choice of one:* 1. Gorski, *Classism the myth of poverty* 2. Anyon, *Social class and the hidden curriculum* 3. Gorski, *The question of class* 4. Kozal, *Shame of the nation* *Choice of one:* 1. Goleman *Stop that bully* and 2. *Making America's schools safer* 3. *Understanding school violence fact sheet* 4. Ladson-Billings, *Yes, But how do we do it? 5.* Lantieri 5. Lantieri & Patti, *Waging peace in our schools*
Week 11 April 1, Monday	Heart of Education and STAR		Discuss articles Kessler and Dalai Lama	*Choice of one:* 1. Gorski, *Classism the myth of poverty* 2. Anyon, *Social class and the hidden curriculum* 3. Gorski, *The question of class* 4. Kozal, *Shame of the nation*

Week 12, April 8 Monday	Poverty, ESL, Bullying, School Violence		Discuss articles-Bring reading reaction	
Week 13, -Week 16	Hot Topics Presentations			**Classroom Observation Due April 22**

Week 17, May 13, Monday	Finals week Class will not be held during finals week May 13-17	**Final "Purposes of Schooling" paper due May 13, 4 pm**		**Final "Purposes of Schooling" paper due May 13, 4 pm – NO EXTENSIONS**

Diversity Project Description Summer 2012

30 points, 15% of total grade.

The course aims to **foster social change agents committed to social justice:** understood here as fair and just institutional/structural arrangements and personal/social/professional relationships that provide **access, opportunity, and inclusion** of historically **marginalized or oppressed individuals** and/or groups of people. *Colorado Standards (8.1,8.2, 8.3, 8.5)*

Assignment Objective

This assignment seeks to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of personal/social/professional relationships that provide access, opportunity, and inclusion of historically marginalized or otherwise oppressed individuals and/or groups of people.

Assignment Description

The assignment consists of three main components.
1. Creation of something or action that meets one of the assignment options.
2. Written response to the assignment explanation.
3. Presentation to class.

Component One: Create something that addresses one or more of the below options.

1. To demonstrate a deeper understanding/commitment to incorporating diversity in your future in your classroom or personal life.

2. To demonstrate your transformation and incorporation of diversity personally and/or professionally.

3. To show your ability to facilitate the diversity experience in your classroom/meeting the needs of all learners.

4. To show an understanding of a diverse perspective.

**Examples of the item to be created to be brainstormed in class.

Component Two: Written Response

Submit a written document that answers these question in relation to your creation.

- In regards to your creation, which assignment option is your primary focus? (2 pts)
- How does your creation show mastery of the above listed assignment option? Provide details to explain what you thought when you created the item or to explain symbols.(5 pts)
- How does your creation relate to you personally or professionally?(4 pts)

Component Three: Class presentation

Prepare a five minute or less presentation to the class of your creation/activity and its meaning.
Ask a journal question related to your topic. (Presentations will be timed)

Diversity Project Rubric

Please follow the guidelines above and below to meet criteria for this assignment.

10 points   _____   Item creation/Activity Participation

15 points   _____   Written Document: Written Document

5 points   _____   In class presentation (5 minutes-timed)

Total: _____   30 points

Intercultural Exploration Description: Fall 2012

The course aims to **foster social change agents committed to social justice:** understood here as fair and just institutional/structural arrangements and personal/social/professional relationships that provide **access, opportunity, and inclusion** of historically **marginalized or oppressed individuals** and/or groups of people. *Colorado Standards (8.1,8.2, 8.3, 8.5)*

Assignment Objective

This assignment seeks to provide students with an opportunity to explore and deepen their understanding of intercultural awareness and interaction through participating and observing in a formal or non-formal context for four hours with members of a cultural group different than your own.

Assignment Description

The assignment consists of three main components.
> **Component 1**: **Engage in an activity** (approximately 4 hours) that is culturally (language, ethnicity, race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ideology, exceptionality, etc) different from you. **Activity must be approved by instructor.**

> **Component 2**: **Essay.**

> **Component 3: Presentation to class.**

Component 1: **Engage in an activity**

When selecting an activity consider:

- personal experience or lack of experience regarding individuals/groups that are marginalized, oppressed, feared, misunderstood, judged, ignored, despised, overlooked or forgotten.
- doing something out of your comfort zone.
- creativity.
- trying to think like a cultural insider- position take and show empathy from insider's perspective rather than your own cultural lens.
- a belief or way of life, hard for you to understand.

Component 2: **Essay.**
1. Title.

2. Describe the activity you chose including time, place, and physical characteristics.

3. Describe what you experienced.

4. Why did you choose the activity?

5. What were your own thoughts, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group before engaging in the activity?

6. What were your own thoughts, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group after engaging in the activity?

7. How will having completed this activity impact you personally?

8. How will having completed this activity impact you professionally?

Component 3: Presentation to class.

Prepare a three-minute or less presentation to the class which shares the information from your essay. (No power points please.)

Diversity Activity Rubric

4 points   _____   Activity

16 points   _____   Essay (2 points per item.)

10 points   _____   In class presentation (3 minute-timed)

Total: _____   30 points

Fall 2012 Intercultural Exploration Follow Up Survey

Name_____

Please answer the questions with as much detail as possible. Answers will not impact your grade!!

1. Please rate your transformational level.
2. Approximately how many hours did you spend on your project? How could the instructor have helped/supported you more in your project?
3. How could the project be improved in the future?
4. What 2-3 specific presentations might impact you in your personal or professional life in the future? Please explain.

APPENDIX C: SPRING 2013 INTERCULTURAL EXPLORATION DESCRIPTION

The course aims to **foster social change agents committed to social justice:** understood here as fair and just institutional/structural arrangements and personal/social/professional relationships that provide **access, opportunity, and inclusion** of historically **marginalized or oppressed individuals** and/or groups of people. *Colorado Standards (8.1,8.2, 8.3, 8.5)*

Assignment Objective

This assignment seeks to provide students with an opportunity to explore and deepen their understanding of intercultural awareness and interaction through participating and observing in a formal or non-formal context for four hours with members of a cultural group different than your own.

Assignment Description

Component 1: **Engage in an activity** (approximately 4 hours) (see details below) that is culturally (language, ethnicity, race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ideology, exceptionality, etc) different from you.

> *** Due Feb 18:** Written proposal detailing:

- the activity you plan to engage in (include as many details as possible)
- why you are choosing the activity
- what were are your thoughts, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group before engaging in the activity?

Component 2: Essay (see details below)
> *Due March 11/13

Component 3: Presentation to class (see details below)
> *Due March 11/13

Component 1: **Engage in an activity**

When selecting an activity consider:

- your personal experience or lack of experience regarding individuals/groups that are marginalized, oppressed, feared, misunderstood, judged, ignored, despised, overlooked or forgotten.
- doing something out of your own comfort zone.
- creativity.
- trying to think like a cultural insider- position take and show empathy from insider's perspective rather than your own cultural lens.
- a belief or way of life that is hard for you to understand.

Component 2: **Essay**

1. Title.

2. Describe the activity you chose including time, place, and physical characteristics.

3. Describe what you experienced.

4. Why did you choose the activity?

5. What were your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group before engaging in the activity?

6. How did you develop these thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments? Who or what may have impacted these?

7. What are your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, fears, misunderstandings, judgments, of the individual/group after engaging in the activity?

8. How will having completed this activity impact you personally?

9. How will having completed this activity impact you professionally?

Component 3: Presentation to class

Prepare a three-minute or less presentation to the class which shares the information from your essay. (No power points please.) Focus on what you did, why you did it and how it impacted you.

Intercultural Exploration Rubric

4 points   _____   Written Proposal Due Feb 18

16 points   _____   Essay (2 points per item.)

10 points   _____   In class presentation (3 minute-timed)

Total: _____   30 points

APPENDIX D: TRANSFORMATIONAL RATING

Name_____

Please read the below 5 point scale and place the number that best describes your transformation in regards to the Intercultural Exploration Project. Then provide a brief reason for rating yourself the way you did. Your rating will not impact your grade in any way.

Transformational Rating

1   no transformation in beliefs, predictions of personal or professional action

2   transformation in one area: beliefs, predictions of personal or professional action

3   transformation in two areas: beliefs, predictions of personal or professional action

4   transformation in all three areas: beliefs, predictions of personal or professional action

5   transformation in all three areas: beliefs, predictions of personal or professional action and plan for next immediate action

My rating is_____

My reason for the rating is:

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE SURVEY

This is a survey for research purposes only related to the Intercultural Exploration Project (IEP) you completed for class. If you agree to participate, the survey will take approximately ten minutes. The survey is anonymous. You may choose to complete or not complete the survey. This will not impact your grade for the IEP in any way.

Please answer the questions with as much detail as possible. Answers will not impact your grade!!

1. What do you feel was the impact on you of sharing your Intercultural Exploration project with their peers?

2. What do you feel was the impact of listening to your peers share their Intercultural Exploration project?

APPENDIX F: CONSENT LETTER

![Colorado State University logo](Colorado State University)

Date: March, 2013

Dear Participant,

My name is Christine Aguilar and I am a researcher from Colorado State University in the Education Department. As part of my doctoral studies, I am conducting a research study on *The Impacts of an Intercultural Exploration Project on Transformation in Beliefs, Feelings and Perceptions of Future Personal and Professional Behaviors Among Preservice Teachers* . This is also the title of the project. The purpose of this study is (a.) to understand how the Intercultural Exploration Project impacts (you) students in the EDUC 275 Schooling in the United States course in terms of transformation of beliefs, feelings, and perceptions of future personal and professional behaviors and (b.) to improve the project as an assignment in the course. The Principal Investigator is my advisor, William Timpson, Ph.D., Professor, School of Education, and I am the Co-Principal Investigator.

I would like you to agree to allow Christine Aguilar to analyze information from you in the form of an essay as described in the project guidelines and an anonymous survey following the presentation of the projects to the course peers.

The 3 components of the Intercultural Exploration Project (IEP) are a required course assignment that will be graded. You can opt in or out of having your Intercultural Exploration Project (IEP) Components 1,2,3 analyzed as apart of the research project. This will not impact your grade in any way.

A survey for research purposes only will be administered in class by a third party on March 11 or March 13. If you agree to participate, the survey will take approximately ten minutes. The survey is anonymous. You may choose to complete or not complete the survey. This will not impact your grade for the IEP in any way.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

No student names will be used in the dissemination of findings. Your name will be assigned a pseudonym during the data analyzing process. Pseudonyms will be used in the writing or publishing of any data. While there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge on how preservice teachers can be provided opportunities for transformation of beliefs, feelings, and perceptions of future personal and professional behaviors within the EDUC

275 Schooling in the United States course. There are no known risks to you from participating in this research.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Aguilar at Christine.aguilar2@gmail.com or 970 215 6012 or Dr. Bill Timpson at William.Timpson@colostate.edu 970-491-7630. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator, at 970-491-1655.

Christine Aguilar   Dr. Bill Timpson
Ph.D. Student/Researcher   Faculty Advisor, Colorado State University

APPENDIX G: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD EXEMPT STATUS

DATE: March 5, 2013
TO: Bill Timpson, Education
    Christine Aguilar, Education
FROM: Janell Barker, IRB Coordinator Research Integrity & Compliance Review Office
TITLE: The Impacts of an Intercultural Exploration Project on Transformation in Beliefs, Feelings, and Perceptions of Future Personal and Professional Behaviors among Preservice Teachers
IRB ID: 036-14H   **Review Date:** March 5, 2013

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) Coordinator has reviewed this project and has declared the study exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1): Research conducted in established or commonly accepted education settings, involving normal education practices, such as a) research on regular and special education strategies, or 2) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. The IRB determination of exemption means that:

You do not need to submit an application for annual continuing review.

You must carry out the research as proposed in the Exempt application, including obtaining and documenting (signed) informed consent if stated in your application or if required by the IRB.

Any modification of this research should be submitted to the IRB through an email to the IRB Coordinator, prior to implementing any changes, to determine if the project still meets the Federal criteria for exemption. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, then an IRB proposal will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.

Please notify the IRB Coordinator if any problems or complaints of the research occur. Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review by the IRB.

Only the IRB may make the determination of exemption, even if you conduct a similar study in the future.

Research Integrity & Compliance Review Office Office of Vice President for Research Fort Collins, CO 80523-2011 (970) 491-1553 FAX (970) 491-2293