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# A Training Framework and Follow-Up Observations for Multiculturally Inclusive Teaching: Is Believing That We are Emphasizing Diversity Enough?

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## **A Training Framework and Follow-up Observations for Multiculturally Inclusive Teaching: Is Believing That We Are Emphasizing Diversity Enough?**

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The authors present a theoretically and empirically grounded training for multiculturally inclusive teaching for new instructors. After implementing this training, qualitative data were gathered from instructors to identify their experience of the training and concerns related to incorporating issues of diversity into their classrooms (Study 1). At the end of the semester immediately following the training, quantitative data were gathered from instructors and their students to examine the interaction between students' and instructors' perceived diversity emphasis (Study 2). When allowed to choose the extent to which they incorporated issues of diversity in their classes, the instructors differentially reported emphasizing diversity in class. In addition, results from multi-level linear modeling analyses demonstrated that instructors' reported emphasis on diversity in the classroom did not predict students' perceptions of the inclusion of issues of diversity. The authors discuss implications for the development of multiculturally supportive programs of learning at universities.

Keywords:

teacher training, multiculturally inclusive teaching, Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward experiential learning model (1999), multilevel linear modeling

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The origins of the multicultural education movement can be traced to the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court* decision in 1954. This decision proclaimed education as the foundation of good citizenship and preparation for occupational success (Waks, 2005). This court decision attempted to "... ensure that marginalized students have educational opportunities that are equal in quality to those of individuals in mainstream society" (Gay, 2004, p. 198). Nevertheless, more than 50 years after this legal declaration of equal education, many teachers continue to teach from an ethnocentric perspective, thereby working against equal education.

Ethnocentric teaching may misrepresent the content of a discipline, as some phenomena are emic (i.e., culture-specific), and others are etic (i.e., universal phenomena with the same basic processes—although these processes may have different manifestations across cultures; Goldstein, 1995; Triandis, 2000; Von Glinow, Drost, & Teagarden, 2002). When teachers use an ethnocentric perspective, emic concepts are presented as if they are etic (Berry, 1969). Teachers' attempts to overcome ethnocentrism by including emic content may backfire if the behavior of an underrepresented group is contrasted with that of the majority group and thereby presented as pathological (Higbee & Barajas, 2007; Kowalski, 2000). We posit that this misrepresentation of content and treatment of marginalized groups as pathological actively creates a situation where underrepresented groups have less access to education, even if they are sitting in the same classrooms as their mainstream, majority group counterparts.

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the American College Personnel Association's (ACPA; Keeling, 2004) recent report on student learning advocated for the design of postsecondary curricula that takes into account students' identities and experiences. Consistent with Gay's (2004) suggestion that attending to multicultural issues in the classroom serves as a tool of instructional desegregation (i.e.,

inclusion of examples from students' lived experiences helps make abstract concepts meaningful for all students), we posit that such designs can help equalize education for marginalized groups and improve the achievement of all groups. These designs actively incorporate student consideration of the influence of membership in various racial, ethnic, religious, gender, sexual orientation and age groups ( American Psychological Association [APA], 2003; Banks, 1998; Gay, 2004; Pang, 2006; Wingfield, 2006).

Multicultural education is relevant to a number of disciplines in higher education (e.g., anthropology, composition and science; Lewis, 1990; Moriarty, 2007), but it is especially relevant to the humanities and social sciences ( Moremen, 1997). In fact, the APA (2003) expressly called for such curricular reform; this call was the impetus for our transformation of an introductory psychology course and development of a diversity training program for its instructors, graduate teaching assistants (GTAs).

Incorporating diversity into the pedagogy of psychology is an issue of scientific validity, as well as of teaching effectiveness and social justice ( APA, 2003; Simoni, Sexton-Radek, Yescavage, Richard, & Lundquist, 1999; Trimble, Stevenson, & Worrell, 2003). Indeed, Molden and Dweck (2006) argued that presenting the perspectives, research questions, and findings of the dominant culture as reflective of universal behavior without consideration of multicultural issues is often inaccurate and inadequate, and others (e.g., Goldstein, 1995; McCarthy & Willis, 1995; Simoni et al., 1999; Trimble et al., 2003) suggested that expanding teaching strategies to include dialogue and active consideration of multiple cultural perspectives is necessary. In addition to more accurately conveying the psychology of human behavior, incorporating multiculturalism into teaching can enhance the personal relevance of course content to the increasingly diverse student body ( Iijima-Hall, 1997) and thereby lead to improved

comprehension due to activation and elaboration of preexisting, related knowledge structures ( Klein & Loftus, 1988; Symons & Johnson, 1997).

As Goldstein (1995) discussed, truly addressing issues of diversity requires not only including relevant material and facilitating deep thinking, but also effective methods of presenting the material and creating a classroom environment in which diversity is valued. Higbee and Barajas (2007) noted that integration of multiculturalism is often ad hoc and intuitive rather than research-based and carefully planned. In contrast, we followed Banks' (1998) multilevel model of curricular integration and targeted the third level, a transformation that facilitates students' deep consideration of concepts from the perspective of diverse groups. The transformation approach is based on substantive changes in a course, including addressing controversial topics, and goes beyond superficially mentioning contributions (level 1) that underrepresented groups have "given" to society and adding (level 2) uncontroversial content and themes. Accordingly, we employed sound pedagogical principles and guidelines (e.g., APA, 2003; Banks, 1998; Bronstein & Quina, 2003; Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999) to comprehensively transform an introductory psychology course curriculum by: (a) infusing multicultural information, activities and critical questions, (b) training new GTAs in effective multicultural pedagogy, and (c) helping GTAs confront their own beliefs about diversity to encourage an attitude of openness to the importance of multicultural inclusiveness.

An effective multicultural transformation hinges upon the intersection of instructors' conveyance of information and students' responses to this information. Accordingly, we examined both instructor and student perceptions and considered how students' individual differences may play a role. The purpose of the present assessment, therefore, is twofold: (1) to outline a framework for training multiculturally inclusive teaching strategies to new instructors

and highlight some initial qualitative reactions to this training, and (2) to provide an empirical assessment of the extent to which instructors chose to emphasize issues of diversity in their classes and the extent to which students perceived this emphasis.

### **Study 1: Overview of the GTA Training and Initial Qualitative Feedback**

College faculty are often introduced to teaching as GTAs. Teacher training programs for graduate students, however, vary considerably. For example, within psychology, Meyers and Prieto (2000) demonstrated that 32% of graduate students did not receive formal training to prepare them for their teaching responsibilities. This lack of training is particularly problematic given that the barriers to incorporating multiculturalism in teaching are likely heightened for new instructors. Simoni et al. (1999) demonstrated that 27% of 703 members of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology perceived diversity to be irrelevant for their courses. These authors proposed that instructors may resist incorporating issues of diversity into their classrooms because they are unaware of the importance of doing so or because they feel ill-prepared to teach such topics. This reluctance underscores the need to provide training in issues of diversity to help eliminate such resistance and encourage multiculturally inclusive teaching. It is, therefore, important that instructors view the inclusion of diversity as a potential learning tool rather than a threat ( Swenson, 1982), know how to weave multiculturalism into a course, and feel prepared to manage emotionally laden classroom discussions ( APA, 2003). In alignment with the APA's directives and the NASPA and ACPA's ( Keeling, 2004) calls for creating multiculturally inclusive classroom learning environments, we redesigned the course curriculum and GTA training seminar to more effectively address issues of diversity and then qualitatively examined GTAs' experience of the training.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Nineteen new GTA instructors from the Psychology Department at a Midwestern university completed the training and 12 provided qualitative feedback. The GTAs consisted of first-year doctoral students in Industrial/Organizational and Counseling Psychology. Demographic information was not collected from the GTAs to maintain their anonymity.

The first author of this article is an assistant professor within the Industrial/Organizational Psychology program and course coordinator for the introduction to psychology course. She is the primary facilitator of the GTA training. At the time of the training and data collection, the second author was a more advanced graduate student in the Counseling Psychology PhD program. The first and second authors (both of whom are female and whose primary ethnic identity is European American) collaborated to redesign the existing GTA training to be more explicitly attentive to multiculturalism.

### **Overview of the Training**

#### **Theoretical Foundation**

The new GTA training is based on a theoretical model of learning composed of teaching methods that simultaneously address several directives detailed in the APA's (2003) guidelines. Specifically, the Brooks-Harris and Stock-Ward (1999) model served as the foundation for training. These authors theorized that learning is most effective when students experience all four stages of experiential learning: reflection, assimilation, experimentation, and planning for application. Although we are not aware of any direct empirical assessments of their model, basic psychological research supports the effectiveness of each learning method espoused in the model (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1981; Goldstein & Ford, 2002; Klein & Loftus, 1988; Symons &

Johnson, 1997). Utilizing more than one method for learning allows concepts to be covered multiple times in different ways, thereby facilitating more frequent and deeper information processing and more complex, well-developed schemas (see Table 1).

### **Instructional Materials for the Introduction to Psychology Course**

Techniques for infusing multiculturalism throughout the course (e.g., examples of psychological phenomena in different cultures, discussion questions and activities designed to raise awareness of cultural influences) were compiled from several sources (e.g., APA, 1998; Bolt, 2003; Leal-Muniz, Lee, & Smith, 2003; Ware & Johnson, 2000). A sampling of the techniques appears in Table 2.

These techniques were woven throughout the GTAs' standardized class design notes, which summarized learning objectives and key concepts for each learning module as well as relevant activities and demonstrations. A variety of techniques to incorporate issues of diversity in the classroom were included in the notes so the instructors could permeate multiculturalism throughout their classes. This inclusion specifically supports cognitive changes in the students' learning experiences, a hallmark characteristic of Banks' (1998) transformational level of integration. Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002) suggested that exposure to different cultural information can create disequilibrium that stimulates cognitive growth, as students search to reconcile this information and determine how it fits within preexisting schema. Because of the increased opportunity for personal relevance and the development of more sophisticated schema, multicultural education facilitates learning for all students ( Bruch, Jehangir, Jacobs, & Here, 2004; Higbee & Barajas, 2007; Milner, 2005).



## **Teaching Seminar**

An intensive 5-week teaching seminar that met three times weekly was used to prepare new instructors for their teaching responsibilities. Upon completion of the seminar, GTAs assumed full responsibility for teaching the course. During the seminar, GTA trainees discussed teaching theory and research and practiced teaching various modules to their colleagues using the Brooks-Harris and Stock-Ward (1999) model. In addition, during this 5-week period the new instructors observed the first author teach an entire introduction to psychology course, during which she modeled many of the techniques included in the course materials and discussed in the teaching seminar. In total, this included 60 hours of new teacher training.

Throughout the training, attention was devoted to issues of diversity (See Table 3) For example, the instructors discussed situations arising in the introduction to psychology class that they observed (e.g., how to handle culturally insensitive comments made by students during class). Further, based on Nelson's (1996) findings that structured, student-to-student group work resulted in a significant decrease in the number of Black students who earned a D or F in a calculus class (dropping from 60% previously to 4%), this technique for inclusive learning was taught and modeled throughout the seminar.

During the teaching seminar, the first two authors facilitated a 2-hr class meeting devoted to the topic of diversity issues in teaching. First, the GTA trainees experienced Thiagarajan's (2004) "chatter exercise" (slightly modified to highlight the importance of multiculturalism in teaching), which was chosen as a method to decrease bias by increasing awareness ( Devine, Plant, & Buswell, 2000). In this exercise, the trainees shared the experience of being different and encountering others who are different, and then reflected on this experience. Because automatic biases can be controlled with motivation and information ( Fiske, 1998), we had the

trainees assimilate the information from this new experience by discussing their reactions along with the definition of diversity and why it is important to acknowledge and incorporate diversity in the classroom. In addition, we facilitated a discussion of readings focused on multiculturally inclusive teaching (e.g., Fencl, 2001; McKeachie, 2002; Nelson, 1996).

Next, the second author asked the trainees to reflect upon and identify at least one element of their identity that may represent one axis of diversity (an activity included within the instructional materials). She then used her own experience of implementing this activity in one of her classes as a springboard for encouraging the trainees to consider potential challenges that may arise related to including activities such as this one in the classroom. In conjunction with these exercises, the trainees practiced using this new information by brainstorming strategies to handle challenging classroom situations that required respect for diverse perspectives.

Finally, the trainees discussed how to apply this information in the classroom using the diversity examples woven throughout the class design notes. They also discussed the benefits of incorporating issues of diversity, including mutual respect, the call for justice and equity among people (APA, 2003; Iijima-Hall, 1997), and raising awareness of the influence of culture on thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Matsumoto, 2000). To increase the likelihood of successful transfer, they also discussed potential challenges. Finally, the trainees were asked to reflect upon their own privileges by responding to questions designed to encourage them to consider their own experiences and biases.

## **Procedure**

At the end of the diversity module, GTA trainees provided anonymous open-ended responses about their thoughts on incorporating issues of diversity into their classes by responding to the following questions: “With regard to respecting and appreciating diversity in the classroom: (1)

What questions do you have? (2) What hesitations do you have? (3) How can we support you in using these methods in the classroom?” Given that these responses were intended only to provide insight into GTAs’ experience of the training, no formal qualitative data analytic technique was used. The responses were, however, coded by the second author to identify themes (which Patton (1991) has described as a meaningful way to assess the thought processes of a group of participants).

### **Results: Qualitative Assessment of the Training**

For analysis purposes, responses to the first two questions were combined. The following themes emerged from the data: (a) concerns about balance related to overemphasizing diversity as well as to building a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, (b) concerns about how students will perceive the emphasis on issues of diversity and whether students will benefit from it, (c) concerns about discomfort (both at a personal level for the new teacher who is concerned about student perceptions of her/him as well as a concern that resistance from students may arise) when issues of diversity are brought up in the classroom, and (d) concerns related to potentially offending students or singling students out (See Table 4). Responses to the third question included: a desire for support throughout the semester (i.e., availability to answer questions and get advice for handling specific situations), learning from others who have experience incorporating issues of diversity into their classrooms, and requests for future discussions related to incorporating issues of diversity in the classroom.

### **Study 2: Perceived Diversity Emphasis in the Classroom**

As mentioned previously, the second purpose of this article is to provide empirical observations from two stakeholder groups (GTAs and their students) who experienced the structure set in place with the new training and course material. Although not intended to be a rigorous

evaluation of the effectiveness of the new teacher training, we believe that the data offer useful perspectives regarding the interaction of student and instructor perceptions of diversity emphasis.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants were 430 undergraduate students and their 19 GTA instructors recruited from introduction to psychology classes at a Midwestern University. The current study was embedded in a large data collection effort that encompassed various levels of the introduction to psychology program including the instructor training component, instructor classroom behavior and beliefs, and student perceptions. Study 2 examines students' and instructors' perceived diversity emphasis in the classroom. Of these 430 students, 16 were removed from the analyses because of their self-report of having more than 5 absences during the semester, leaving 414 student participants (42% men, 58% women). Participants ranged in age from 15 to 64 years ( $M = 21.09$ ,  $SD = 6.10$ ). Eighty percent identified as European Americans, 11% as African American, 2.7% as Biracial/Mixed, 1.9% as Asian American, 1.4% as "Other," 1% as International students, and less than 1% identified as Hispanic or Native American. In terms of socioeconomic status, 4% self identified as belonging to the lower class, 13% as lower middle class, 57% as middle class, 23.4% as upper-middle class, and 1.2% as upper class. Most students (96%) self-reported as heterosexual or mostly heterosexual and 3.6% students identified as homosexual, mostly homosexual, or bisexual. Ninety-nine percent of students surveyed reported that they expected to pass the class.

## **Measures**

### *Independent variable: Instructor diversity emphasis*

GTAs responded to five items developed for the purposes of the present study regarding the extent to which they believed they emphasized diversity in their class lessons and examples (see Table 5). Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *a great deal*) on each item. These items were averaged to create an overall scale score and yielded an internal consistency estimate of .92.

### *Dependent variable: Student diversity emphasis*

We used a 5-item scale developed for the purposes of this project to assess the extent to which students perceived that diversity was emphasized in the classroom (see Table 6). This measure paralleled the instructor measure. The student participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *a great deal*). Internal consistency reliability for this 5-item scale was .88.

### *Demographic and control variables*

Undergraduate students reported their age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation as well as the number of absences in the class and their expected grade.

## **Procedure**

Instructors completed the teaching seminar during the 5-week summer session prior to the beginning of the fall semester during which GTAs taught their first course and data collection occurred. GTAs were free to determine the extent to which they incorporated the instructional materials provided during the seminar. Students and GTAs completed surveys during the 13th week of a 15-week semester. GTAs did not know before this time that they would be asked about the extent to which they included issues of diversity in their classes. To promote honest and

accurate responses, all participants completed the surveys anonymously. We did, however, code the surveys to enable matching of student and instructor responses within each class.

## **Results: Empirical Observations From GTAs and Their Students**

### **Instructor Diversity Emphasis**

The extent to which GTA instructors chose to emphasize issues of diversity was assessed by examining the standard deviation and variance for instructors' reported emphasis on diversity. As is evident in Table 4, the mean level of reported emphasis was 3.30 ( $SD = .83$ ). By looking at means that hovered just above an endorsement of "somewhat" and standard deviations close to 1.0, it is clear that some instructors believed they emphasized diversity to a great extent and others only slightly. To aid with interpretation, 95% confidence intervals were constructed around these variance terms (Hays, 1994). The intervals ranged from roughly a half of a point (on a 5 point scale) to two and a half points (see Table 4). Since we do not have a specific point estimate for the expected variance, we cannot directly glean statistical significance from these intervals. We view these confidence intervals as simply providing some boundaries for the standard deviations, which is particularly important given the small sample size. Based on this information, we interpret the variances as meaningfully representing variability in instructors' reported emphasis of diversity in their course.

### **Student Perceptions of Diversity Inclusion**

The extent to which students perceived issues of diversity being emphasized in class was assessed by examining descriptive statistics (see Table 6). The mean level of perceived emphasis was 3.20 ( $SD = .74$ ). Like the instructor mean of reported emphasis, the students' mean is just above an endorsement of "somewhat," and indicates differences in perceptions of the inclusion of issues of diversity among students.

## **Relation of Student Perceptions to Instructor Emphasis**

Finding differences in instructors' reported emphasis on diversity and students' perceptions of diversity inclusion allowed us to examine whether the differences across instructors were related to differences in student perceptions of diversity emphasis in the class. Students were not randomly assigned to instructors and were therefore nested within classes. Because nested data violates the assumptions of the general linear model (GLM, Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006), a multilevel linear modeling (MLM) approach was used. With the GLM approach, a between-class effect on diversity perceptions could be due to a disproportionate clustering of students in particular classes (e.g., nontraditionally aged students or students from other underrepresented groups could be clustered in the same class because of the time during which class meets or to students intentionally choosing to register for the same class as their friends). With MLM, these potential confounding effects can be explicitly modeled.

Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) provided a comprehensive comparison of traditional regression and analysis of variance approaches to MLM. We followed their guidelines and adopted their terminology and notation in our presentation of the results. MLM is not a single analysis; rather, it is a model building technique that requires multiple analyses. To determine whether instructors' reported diversity emphasis was related to students' perceived diversity emphasis in our sample, therefore, several prerequisite conditions needed to first be tested.

*Prerequisite condition #1: Demonstrate differences in student perceptions of diversity emphasis across classes*

An intercepts-only (or unconditional) model was conducted to evaluate whether there were different mean levels of student perceptions of diversity across classes. In this intercepts-only MLM model, students' perceptions of diversity are modeled with only the class average diversity

perception as a predictor. In an analysis of variance (ANOVA), the group effect is evaluated with an  $F$  test of between-subjects variance; for the MLM analysis, this is a Wald  $z$  test of the  $\tau_{00}$  coefficient, which tests the variance in group intercepts. No variables are modeled as predictors of between-groups differences in the level 2 equation for this model. As shown in Table 7, there was significant variance in the class averages of the dependent variable ( $\tau_{00}$ ), which indicates that the classes had significantly different levels of perceived emphasis on diversity.

*Prerequisite condition #2: Determine which control variables are independently related to class differences in perceptions of diversity emphasis*

Because we could not randomly assign students to classes, variables that could create unintentional clustering on our dependent variable were tested as possible covariates. An MLM analysis was conducted separately for each of the seven variables that could have created unwanted nested effects on our data. In each of these analyses, the control variable was entered as a level 1 predictor. Significance of the  $\gamma$  coefficient, i.e. (the overall relationship between the student perception of diversity and the  $X_{ij}$  predictor variable) would indicate that the control variable is significantly related to students' perception of diversity emphasis. In these models, no between-groups variance in this relationship was modeled.

The significance of the  $\gamma$  coefficients indicated that race/ethnicity and expected grade were the only potential control variables that significantly predicted students' perceptions of diversity emphasis (see Table 7). When race/ethnicity and expected grade were both added as predictors in a model (*Multiple Control Variable Model*; see Table 6), only expected grade had a significant  $\gamma$  coefficient, indicating that race does not predict above and beyond expected grade. Thus, the *Final Control Model* (see Table 6) includes only expected grade as a predictor.



*Prerequisite condition #3: Demonstrate differences in student perceptions of diversity across classes after partialing out relevant control variables*

As shown in Table 6, the significant  $\tau_{00}$  coefficient for the *Final Control Model* indicates that there was remaining variance in class level perceptions of diversity emphasis after controlling for expected grade. Hence, we could test whether instructor reported diversity emphasis predicted the remaining variance in student perceptions of diversity emphasis.

### **Analysis of Final Prediction Model**

To determine whether instructor reported diversity emphasis is predictive of student perceptions of diversity across classes above and beyond the differences that are due to the relevant control variables, a final model was tested. Instructor perception of diversity emphasis ( $W_j$ ) was treated as a level 2 predictor of student diversity perception ( $Y_{ij}$ ) and was added to the *Final Control Model* (see *Final Prediction Model* section).

### **Final Prediction Model**

Level 1 Equation:

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \text{Expected Grade}_{ij} + e_{ij}$$

Level 2 Equation:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} W_j + \mu_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

The nonsignificant  $\gamma$  coefficient for instructor diversity, see Table 7, indicated that student perceptions of diversity emphasis were unrelated to instructors' reported diversity emphasis after controlling for class differences in expected grade. Of note, the class differences in perceptions

of diversity emphasis ( $\tau_{00}$ ) were still significant after controlling for expected grade and instructor emphasis, indicating that something other than the observed clustering variable for classes (expected grade) or instructor diversity emphasis is responsible for differences in perceived emphasis on diversity.

## **Discussion**

The NASPA and ACPA (Keeling, 2004), and APA (2003) called for the removal of barriers to integrating diversity issues into the educational experience of all students, which mirrored the calls of others (e.g., Banks, 1998; Gay, 2004; Goldstein, 1995; Kowalski, 2000; Trimble et al., 2003) for multicultural inclusivity for education. In an effort to work toward this goal, we designed and implemented training for new instructors of undergraduate courses and examined the impact of this training by assessing qualitative and quantitative data from two stakeholder groups, GTA instructors and their students. We drew from a variety of sources (e.g., the APA directives, theory, empirical research) to design a theory-based and empirically grounded training seminar and provided curricular support to GTAs to facilitate multiculturally inclusive teaching.

The GTAs responded positively to the training overall and appeared to value the pedagogical techniques presented throughout their lecture materials. Consistent with Simoni et al.'s (1999) suggestions, the themes that emerged from GTAs' open-ended responses of their training experience highlight the importance of attending to potential discomfort stemming from incorporating issues of diversity and finding a balance between focusing on issues of diversity and getting through the course content.

Unfortunately, we found that most new GTAs who received diversity training did not choose to fully integrate diversity as a core aspect of the class. Specifically, when permitted to

choose the extent to which they incorporated diversity into their class, GTAs, on average, reported emphasizing diversity only “somewhat.” Although GTA trainees experienced techniques intended to build strong scaffolding upon which they could lean to incorporate diversity into their classrooms, these data demonstrate that not all GTAs were suitably inspired to do so. We did not observe a relationship between instructors’ reported diversity emphasis and students’ experience of diversity emphasis. Regardless of the fact that some GTAs believed they emphasized multiculturalism to a greater extent than others, the students did not perceive this.

Notably, students’ perceptions of the extent to which instructors emphasized diversity differed across classes. Some of this variability was due to a clustering effect of race and expected grade, which were independently related to students’ perceptions of diversity emphasis. Specifically, those students who did not identify as European American in this sample were more likely to perceive less diversity emphasis in class. In addition, students expecting to receive higher grades perceived more diversity emphasis in class. Taken together, these findings suggest that students may perceive the same course content differently depending upon personal characteristics and experiences that they bring with them into the classroom. This finding offers empirical support for Ocampo and colleagues’ (2003) suggestion that future researchers focus on ways in which individuals from diverse backgrounds internalize and respond to the presentation of issues of diversity in classroom settings.

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

Our research leaves some questions unanswered. Foremost, it is unclear why some instructors incorporated diversity to a greater or lesser extent than others. Perhaps instructors differed in their previous multicultural training, their privileges and biases, their attitudes related to multiculturalism and identity development, or their self-efficacy for teaching about diversity

issues (e.g., Gay, 2004; Maruyama, Moreno, Gudeman, & Marin, 2000). Instructors' standing on such variables would likely impact the degree and manner in which they chose to integrate issues of diversity into the classroom. For example, prospective teachers who possess favorable racial attitudes may be more likely to be sensitive to the needs of diverse learners and more responsive to diversity training, given that teachers' attitudes serve as "filters for subsequent learning" (Garmon, 2004, p. 202). Relatedly, although our data do not permit us to assess this empirically, it is possible that instructors belonging to underrepresented cultural groups emphasized diversity or were perceived to emphasize diversity more than instructors from majority groups (e.g., Scisney-Matlock & Matlock, 2001). Future research is therefore needed to assess (a) the interplay between student and instructor cultural experiences and (b) the relation between instructors' own multicultural experiences and values and their incorporation of issues of diversity into their teaching.

In addition, we did not measure the extent to which each instructor actually incorporated diversity in his or her class; instead, we relied on self-reports. Future research should strive to more objectively measure the degree to which instructors include multicultural examples and questions in their classes. It is also important to emphasize that our findings are based on a specific sample of new GTAs rather than a sample comprised of full-time college or university instructors. Different results from a similar training method may be obtained with more experienced faculty.

Finally, follow-up research should investigate the training itself. Although we solicited reactions from GTAs throughout the training and asked them to provide anonymous feedback related to their experiences of the training, we did not directly assess the effectiveness of the training using a pre- and posttest design. Consistent with literature (e.g., Sinacore & Boatwright,

2005) suggesting that the intersection of demographic characteristics of trainers and educators with those of the trainees and students may influence the experiences of trainees and students, it is important to consider the potential impact of the course supervisor and graduate student cofacilitator involved in this training. We therefore suggest that researchers and educators attend to the intersection of trainer-trainee and teacher-student identities when examining the effectiveness of multicultural training and education.

### **Implications**

Our findings have implications for the development of multiculturally inclusive university programs of learning. We developed the new teacher training and course materials based on theoretical and empirical grounds (e.g., Banks, 1998; Bronstein & Quina, 2003; Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999), and best practices highlighted in the APA guidelines on multicultural education and training. We infused the semester-long curriculum with examples and demonstrations illustrating the influence of diversity on the psychological experience ( Banks, 1998). Despite the solid foundation for the training, it did not appear to result in the desired effects for the instructors or students, which suggests that more comprehensive changes are necessary.

Given the pivotal role that instructors play in creating environments to foster student learning, it is critical that future teacher training effectively motivate trainees to understand the importance of creating multiculturally inclusive learning environments. Based on our findings, we reiterate Simoni et al.'s (1999) contention that “addressing attitudinal resistance among instructors is more complicated than supplying useful books and sponsoring workshops” (p. 93). We encourage the development of models of instructor multicultural training that identify other means to more effectively motivate instructors to actively acknowledge issues of diversity in

their teaching. Indeed, our findings demonstrating that students' personal characteristics factor into their experience of diversity content in the classroom highlight the need to build a solid course foundation based in multiculturalism. Specifically, the integration of examples, demonstrations, and discussion questions throughout a class—overlaid on top of an existing template—is not enough to achieve a transformational curricular change. In a similar vein, although we suggest that instructors pay specific attention to their textbook selections and the knowledge that they consider to be academic benchmarks for their students (e.g., topics of required course papers, homework and exam questions), we posit that merely attending to these components will also be insufficient. Students may need a more saturated class experience where the content and structure are built around a multiculturalism theme to allow for deeper integration of issues of diversity and multiculturalism.

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Table 1  
*Theory-Based Design of Teaching Seminar and How It Heeds the American Psychological Association's (APA's) Call to Address Diversity Goals*

Experiential learning model	Research support	New teacher diversity module	Accordance with APA (2003) directives
<i>Reflect on experience:</i> Activate relevant schemas and focus attention	Self-relevant information is better recalled because of elaborative and organized processing (Klein & Loftus, 1988; Symons & Johnson, 1997).	Thiagi's (2004) Chatter: a personal experience to reflect upon	Guideline 1: Recognize that we hold attitudes that can detrimentally influence our perceptions of individuals who are different from us.
<i>Assimilate and conceptualize:</i> Learners compare new information to pre-existing knowledge	Piaget's schema development: people learn by integrating new information into preexisting conceptualizations (Carmichael & Hayes, 2001).	Discuss what diversity means and why it is important	Learn (a) what diversity and multiculturalism mean, (b) why it is important, and (c) how to include diverse perspectives.
<i>Experimenting and practicing:</i> Actively use new knowledge and practice skills in a safe environment with feedback	Practice with feedback is critical in skill acquisition and maintaining goal-directed behavior (Anderson, 1987; Carver & Scheier, 1981; Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979).	Discuss ways to handle challenging situations and get feedback on solutions	Know course content, ensure safe learning environment, manage emotions, facilitate respectful discussion and disagreement.
<i>Planning for application:</i> Prepare to use new information and transfer learning	Increase transfer by providing tools, and identifying and addressing barriers to use (Goldstein & Ford, 2002; Marx, 1982).	Provide activities and discussion questions in class design notes. Discuss benefits and challenges	Guideline 3: Address cultural differences in psychological education. Overcome barriers (emotions, reluctance to engage).

Table 2  
*Sampling of Multiculturally Inclusive Activities for Introduction to Psychology Course*

Description of activity	Source
Have students write a paragraph about the social influence of race, gender, and culture on the development of the self. Ask students to share their experiences with the class.	Adapted from Ware & Johnson (2000)
Share Martin Rochlin's Heterosexuality Questionnaire, which reverses questions that are commonly asked of individuals who identify as homosexual. This highlights assumptions about homosexuality, thereby illustrating heterosexism.	Rochlin (n.d.)
Have students consider that the basic process of sensation is the same across groups, yet the resulting perception can differ dramatically. Ask "what are some influences of culture on the perceptual process?" Some examples to highlight these differences include: (a) some sounds are regarded as music in one culture and may be regarded as an annoying noise in another, (b) the oblique effect activity from Bolt (2003), where most students experience that they are better able to perceive horizontal and vertical lines than oblique lines from a distance, and (c) discussion of how the Muller-Lyer illusion occurs more often in cultures with rectangular buildings.	Bolt (2003), Coren, Ward, & Enns (1999), Myers (2001)
Similarities and differences: Have students stand up for a moment when a statement applies to them. Statements include "Who is an only child? Who is the oldest child in the family? Who is married? Who has a job?" Have students discuss the similarities and differences they noticed. This allows students to consider within as well as between group differences (highlight that many categories cross ethnic, race, gender, religious, and social class lines).	Dietz (as cited in Leal-Muniz, Lee, & Smith, 2003)

Table 3  
*Inclusion of Diversity Throughout Teaching Seminar*

Seminar modules	Inherent diversity elements
Observe experienced faculty teach entire course	Know course content, including multicultural aspects. See a model who respects and includes diverse populations and integrates issues of diversity in the course.
Effective lectures and discussions	Get all students involved in the conversation, which requires creating an atmosphere of inclusion and respect for diverse perspectives.
Active engagement and classroom assessment	Solicit feedback from students through classroom assessment to identify their level of understanding. This is particularly important given that individual students' perspectives may diverge from the instructor's and other students' perspectives due to different cultural backgrounds and experiences.
Facilitating experiential learning	Highlight that this framework helps everyone learn, addresses different learning preferences, and offers all students multiple ways to process information and make connections necessary for deep learning.
Diversity issues	Define diversity and why it is an important aspect of teaching, discuss related issues, challenges, and how to handle them. Discuss the benefits of incorporating a multicultural perspective in teaching.
Ethical issues in teaching	Stress that facilitating the learning of all students is an ethical obligation and that considering different student circumstances, some of which vary within and between cultural groups (e.g., race, SES, life circumstances), is important in treating students fairly.
Challenging classroom situations	Ensure a safe learning environment. Manage emotions and facilitate respectful discussion and disagreement.

Table 4  
*Themes and Corresponding Responses From Graduate Teaching Assistants' (GTAs') Qualitative Feedback*

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Theme A. Balance (8)

*Concerns about over-emphasis*

I'm concerned about focusing on diversity too much (2)

How much is too much? I'm afraid that students will be thinking "get off your soapbox!"

When is diversity emphasized too much?

It is hard to be aware of all issues and still focus on the material.

*Building safe/respectful environment*

How do you find balance between stepping in to help a student without crossing boundaries and also being respectful of individual differences?

How do you respect/address all views?

How can I regain control if disrespectful comments are made?

Theme B. Student perceptions of diversity emphasis (6)

Is it possible to get diversity across to all students?

How can I get my students to respect diversity?

What if students don't get anything out of it?

What are some good ways to get students to appreciate diversity?

Do students recognize the importance of diversity? How will I know if they do?

I'm concerned about effectively infusing diversity in a way that students will respond to.

Theme C. Discomfort (5)

*Student perceptions of me*

I'm concerned that it will be too difficult to discuss diversity when I am a minority (i.e., I'm concerned about students' perceptions of me).

I'm concerned that I may feel attacked because of my minority status.

*Potential resistance from students*

I'm worried that there may be resistance to diversity issues.

I'm concerned about how some students will react to discussions and that things will become too heated.

I'm afraid that things will get out of hand.

Theme D. Singling out/offending students (4)

I'm concerned that focusing on diversity may make some students feel uncomfortable (for example, Black students when talking about race, students with disabilities).

I'm concerned about singling out diverse/nontraditional students.

I have hesitations about not addressing situations that present themselves in my classroom.

I'm afraid that I might offend someone.

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*Note.* Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of GTA responses.

Table 5  
*Instructor-Reported Diversity Emphasis Items*

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	Mean	SD	$\sigma^2$	95% confidence interval
How well do you feel you addressed issues of diversity in your class?	3.42	.90	.81	.48–1.70
To what extent were examples from different cultures given in lectures?	3.63	.80	.64	.38–1.33
To what extent did you ask students to think about experiences in different cultures?	3.37	1.12	1.25	.73–2.62
To what extent did you present questions that made students consider people from other backgrounds?	3.37	1.12	1.25	.73–2.62
To what extent were questions about different cultures included in class assignments and tests?	2.63	.96	.91	.53–1.90
Instructor Diversity Emphasis Scale ( $\alpha = .92$ )	3.30	.83	.69	.40–1.43

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*Note.*  $N = 19$ . Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *a great deal*). *SD* = standard deviation;  $\sigma^2$  = variance.

Table 6  
*Student-Perceived Diversity Emphasis Items*

	Mean	SD	$\sigma^2$	95% confidence interval
How well do you feel this course addressed issues of diversity?	3.27	.89	.79	.68–.90
To what extent were examples from different cultures given in lectures?	3.30	.87	.76	.67–.81
To what extent were you asked to think about experiences in different cultures?	3.09	.90	.81	.72–.95
To what extent did your instructor present questions that made you consider people from other backgrounds?	3.40	.91	.83	.72–.95
To what extent were questions about different cultures included in class assignments and tests?	2.93	.91	.83	.73–.96
Student Diversity Emphasis Scale ( $\alpha = .88$ )	3.20	.74	.55	.47–.62

Note.  $N = 414$ . Items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *a great deal*). SD = standard deviation;  $\sigma^2$  = variance.

Table 7  
*Multilevel Linear Modeling Results*

	Dependent Variable: Student perception of diversity emphasis in classroom		
Intercepts-only model			
Is there an overall class effect?	$\tau_{00}$	Wald $z$	Result?
Class	.04	1.98*	Yes
Single control variable models			
Does a potential control variable relate to the DV?	$\gamma$	$t$	
Race <sup>a</sup>	-.19	-2.19*	Yes
Sex <sup>b</sup>	.01	.172	
Age	.01	1.76	
Socioeconomic status <sup>c</sup>	.01	.30	
Sexual orientation <sup>d</sup>	.01	.15	
Expected grade <sup>e</sup>	.18	4.13***	Yes
Absences	-.01	-.14	
Multiple control variable model			
Are the potential control variables uniquely predictive?	$\gamma$	$t$	
Race	-.12	-1.30	No
Expected grade	.17	3.74***	
Final control model			
Is there still a class effect?	$\tau_{00}$	Wald $z$	Result?
Class controlling for expected grade	.04	2.03*	Yes
Final prediction model			
Is there an instructor effect?	$\gamma$	$t$	
Expected grade	.18	4.10***	No
Instructor-reported diversity emphasis	-.10	-1.50	
Is there a remaining class effect?	$\tau_{00}$	Wald $z$	Result?
Class effect controlling for expected grade and instructor-reported emphasis	.04	1.98*	Yes

Note.  $N = 414$ .

<sup>a</sup> 0 = *European American*; 1 = *non-European American*. <sup>b</sup> 0 = *male*; 1 = *female*. <sup>c</sup> 1 = *lower class*; 5 = *upper class*. <sup>d</sup> 1 = *exclusively homosexual*; 5 = *exclusively heterosexual*. <sup>e</sup> 1 = "F"; 5 = "A."

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .