

Counselor Preparation

Reimagining Counselor Education With Diversity as a Core Value

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To move diversity from the periphery of counselor preparation to its core requires effort beyond the 1 or 2 “special” courses that have been the mainstay of multicultural counselor education (T. E. Midgette & S. S. Meggert, 1991). The authors describe the processes and outcomes of a systemic reimagining of Auburn University’s counselor education doctoral program, as well as community agency and school counseling master’s-degree programs that incorporate diversity as a core value. The development of diversity-supportive department policies and procedures, curricular and cocurricular changes, and environmental considerations are discussed and evaluated.

The last 2 decades of the 20th century have seen a significant paradigm shift in the orientation of counselors to serve a diverse population (Pedersen, 1991). This shift has been reflected in counselor education through calls for the preparation of multiculturally competent counselors. In addition, national accreditation of counselor education programs (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 2001) has moved in the direction of supporting the need for multicultural competence. Despite the inalterable paradigm shift that has taken place in counseling, many counselor education programs have yet to embrace the broad-ranging changes in curriculum policies and cocurricular activities essential to making diversity a core value (Midgette & Meggert, 1991) in the preparation of counselors. In 1994, Ridley, Mendoza, and Kanitz wrote that multicultural counseling is an emerging curriculum. A decade later, multicultural counselor education remains in an emerging state; there has been no report yet of a comprehensive and systemic model that has been implemented and fully integrated into a counseling program (Midgette & Meggert, 1991; Ponterotto & Alexander, 1995; Ridley et al., 1994).

To move diversity from the periphery to the core of counselor preparation requires effort that extends beyond the one or two “special” courses that have been the mainstay of current multicultural

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counselor education (Midgette & Meggert, 1991). It is time for counselor educators to actualize their commitment to diversity by reimagining counselor education through a “programmatically approach involving a concerted faculty and student effort to become culturally aware, knowledgeable and skilled” (Hartung, 1996, p. 11). Programs that do not actualize this commitment risk irrelevance and court potential harm to counseling’s diverse client base.

Various authors have described the elements of what might be entailed in a reimagining process for academic programs. However, to date, we have not found a template for the comprehensive and systemic overhaul of an entire academic department such that diversity is a core value in all policies and practices. D’Andrea and Daniels (1991) presented four stages in the process of moving counselor training programs from cultural encapsulation to a conscientious level. The final stage of development, which describes the goal of the Department of Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology and School Psychology at Auburn University, is typified by the infusion of diversity competence through all aspects of the program. When we began our systemic reimagining, neither Ponterotto and Alexander’s (1995) checklist to guide comprehensive multicultural counseling program development; Rogers, Hoffman, and Wade’s (1998) characteristics of notable multicultural training programs; nor Green’s (1998) guidelines for multicultural transformation were available. All of these systems, however, are clearly reflected in our efforts. In particular, the characteristics of notable programs (Rogers et al., 1998; e.g., critical mass of minority faculty, incorporation of multicultural perspectives in the curriculum, strong institutional support for multicultural initiatives, and recruitment and retention of racial and ethnic minority students) are in keeping with the goals of the department’s change processes. We also addressed issues found in the Ponterotto and Alexander checklist, for example, research considerations, evaluation of student and faculty competency, and the physical environment of the department.

Beginning in 1995, the faculty, students, and staff of Auburn University’s Department of Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology and School Psychology began the process of moving beyond statements of valuing diversity and the one course, one instructor approach to diversity education to operationalize a commitment to diversity as a core value in all of department programs and related activities. The plan was to emerge from this process with a comprehensive and systemic reimagining of all aspects of the department. Rogers et al.’s (1998) definition of multicultural competency as “translating knowledge and self-awareness of multicultural issues into practice” (p. 224) describes the organizing principle for this reimagining.

A central tenet of our process of reimagining was that the efforts be inclusive. Faculty were involved with decisions that called for faculty insight. When information and guidance from students was needed, we conducted a needs assessment survey and student-led needs assessment focus groups. Staff participated in the efforts to

create a diversity-sensitive environment. An ongoing faculty–student diversity committee gathered information that contributed to change efforts and recommended several policies and procedures. It was also important for the reimagining processes to be transparent. Students, faculty, and staff of the department were kept apprised of the efforts of those who were more centrally involved. The dean, provost, director of multicultural affairs, and president were all informed as we engaged in this process and when certain outcomes (e.g., curricular realignment) had been achieved. No additional financial resources were requested to support this effort. Because this process of reimagining was an important goal for the counselor education department, internal resources were reallocated strategically to support the work. All faculty were involved and supportive of the effort.

In this article, we describe the processes and outcomes of reimagining that affected 11 faculty and 75 students in our counselor education doctoral program and community agency and school counseling master’s-degree programs. (Reimagining of our counseling psychology and school psychology programs was undertaken concurrently with the counseling programs, but that process is not reported in this article.) We discuss the systemic change efforts that led to the development of diversity-supportive department policies and procedures, curricular and cocurricular changes, and environmental concerns. We include in our discussion the impact of the changes that have been implemented and any measurable outcomes of the change processes. Finally, we offer conclusions and recommendations. Department documents referred to in this article can be located at <http://www.auburn.edu/coun>.

Department Diversity Policies and Procedures

Over the last decade, there has been an increasing focus on the training of counselors to be culturally knowledgeable, aware, and sensitive (Locke & Kiselica, 1999); however, emphasis has often been on curriculum or course development. Infusion of multicultural content into program curriculum is critical, but it is only one aspect of a comprehensive approach to preparing culturally competent counseling professionals. Chang, Chang, and Ledesma (2005) have suggested that educational programs often rely on the more simplistic approach of reliance on a course without investigating the influence of the environment in which students are trained. The training of multiculturally competent professionals requires a more expansive systemic approach, addressing the very policies, procedures, and environment in which students are trained and in which faculty work. This approach “recognizes the impact of social, political, and environmental factors on human thought, feelings and behavior” (Hill, 2003, p. 43).

The policies of a department can be used to implement, support, and maintain an environment that promotes diversity. Moreover,

policies can, in part, reflect and clarify the values of a department with regard to diversity and tolerance (Cobia & Carney, 2002). The development of such policies can expand student and faculty learning about diversity beyond the classroom. Research has suggested that for many students the most valuable learning experiences about diversity occur outside their classrooms through interactions with peers and faculty (Johnson & Lollar, 2002). This further underscores the need for programs to consider not only curriculum changes but also the philosophy that underlies their efforts related to diversity (Dumas-Hines, Cochran, & Williams, 2001).

Department mission statements or philosophies provide an opportunity to both conceptualize and verbalize the goals and values of a department (Chang et al., 2005). A department mission statement or philosophy can provide the foundation for all policies and practices within a department. Hill (2003) contended that developing a mission statement or philosophy can provide an opportunity to express values related to promoting and respecting diversity and clarify the ways in which this philosophy is systematically implemented in all aspects of the program. A significant outcome of the reimagining process has been using an adapted version of the counseling psychology program's diversity statement as our philosophy statement (Pipes, 1996). This statement explains the importance of diversity competence to the helping professions and the expectations of the department regarding the development of diversity competence. This diversity statement is featured prominently on our Web site and in other counselor education materials. Applicants for our programs and for faculty positions have commented on this and other diversity-related aspects of the department's Web site as a positive motivation for making application.

Another outcome of the reimagining process has been the adoption of policies and procedures for the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and student body. The faculty plan was developed in response to a university-wide initiative and has been implemented successfully in four faculty searches. This plan includes such considerations as a 1st-year reduced teaching load, assignment of senior faculty mentors inside and outside the department, and preparation of a professional development plan with new faculty members. At present, 45% of the department's faculty identify as members of underrepresented groups (compared to the university figure of 11%).

The faculty plan guided the preparation of a similar plan for the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body. Both plans are in keeping with Rogers et al.'s (1998) characteristics of notable multicultural training programs. To facilitate the implementation of this plan, the faculty-student committee examined current program enrollments and student characteristics. This allowed us to examine where programs had been successful as well as where programs were not meeting goals. Dumas-Hines et al. (2001) suggested that this is a key element in developing recruitment and retention policies because it provides a context for understanding

the specific and unique needs and goals of a program. They recommended that current students in a program participate in this process of assessment. Students in our programs completed a needs assessment survey developed by the faculty–student committee, and many participated in student-led focus groups. On the basis of the data from the needs assessment survey, written comments from former students, and a review of the literature on diverse student recruitment and retention, the faculty–student committee developed a student recruitment and retention policy that focused on achieving the following objectives:

1. Form a permanent departmental student recruitment and retention committee. This committee implements the “Plan for the Recruitment of a Diverse Student Body.” Currently, 25% of our students are from underrepresented groups (compared to the campus figure of 9%).
2. Continue to include annual diversity goals in our 5-year plan. The goals change from year to year, depending on feedback from students and faculty.
3. Establish a student social committee in response to feedback from students asking for more opportunities to interact with peers in the department. This group sponsors an event each semester that is well attended by students and faculty; the group also sponsors fund-raisers to support the events. A fall potluck/pool party social for all department students, staff, and faculty begins the new academic year with an emphasis on diversity.

Outcomes of other diversity-supportive departmental policies and procedures have been an examination of an individual’s contribution to the department’s diversity goals in (a) faculty annual reviews of programs, (b) annual reviews of all faculty by the department head, and (c) evaluation of faculty instruction by the department head. These reviews have an impact on faculty merit pay and promotion and tenure decisions. Faculty have taken this aspect of their work seriously, and each has taken significant steps to contribute to the department’s diversity goals.

Culturally Relevant Curriculum

Hartung (1996) identified the promotion of cultural competence as a challenging, multidimensional task, partly because it requires the commitment and effort of both faculty and students. Arredondo and Arciniega (2001) further emphasized this point when describing the importance of a department (learning organization) that requires systematic self-reflection and evaluation of existing practices as a preliminary component of curriculum revision. These are important considerations for programs and departments that wish to increase the multicultural competence of their graduates through a culturally relevant curriculum.

To facilitate such reflection, we relied on Ponterotto and Alexander's (1995) checklist for the development of multicultural counseling training programs. The section of the checklist that addresses curriculum suggests that culturally relevant programs should (a) have a required multicultural counseling course, (b) include one or more required or recommended advanced courses, (c) integrate multicultural issues into all courses, and (d) use varied teaching strategies and assessment methods. To determine whether our current programs met these criteria, a curriculum review was undertaken by the faculty. This review involved an examination of curricular requirements for students in all counselor education programs as well as a review of all individual courses offered by the department. The findings of both reviews and the use of those findings to make program and course revisions are described in the following paragraphs.

All students enrolled in one of the majors offered by the department are required to take at least one course in multicultural counseling. This course has been a long-standing part of the curriculum, often taught according to the "diversity philosophy" of the individual instructors, generally placing the most emphasis on awareness, attitudes, and beliefs. A review of the course, recent student evaluations, and consideration of the multicultural counseling competencies (Arredondo et al., 1996) in the broader context of all curricular offerings led the faculty to propose that the existing course be revised to place more emphasis on knowledge and racial identity. The need for such an emphasis is consistent with the findings of Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999) who found that counselors in their study felt less competent in these areas than they did in awareness and skills. The curriculum review highlighted the absence of a second, more advanced course offering in this area. Consequently, an advanced multicultural course was developed and offered and is recommended for students in all program areas.

A review of all department courses determined the extent to which diversity issues were being integrated into all curricula and courses offered by the department. Hartung (1996) asserted that this is a necessary step for programs determined to be multicultural rather than monocultural. Each faculty member, using Ponterotto and Alexander's (1995) checklist, reviewed his or her syllabi and reported the degree to which the document reflected multicultural content and experiences that were relevant to the course. Persons teaching courses that had no such content revised their syllabi to include culturally relevant material, experiences, and assessments. We acknowledge that there is little attention to multicultural competencies in required courses delivered by other academic departments at the university.

In order to ensure that students are exposed to the cultural implications of material in all courses (Hartung, 1996), a second stage of this review was initiated. Faculty used the multicultural counseling competencies as a framework to identify specific instructional activities within their courses that were used to promote student

competency (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001). Based on information from individual faculty during this stage of the review, a matrix was created that identified the courses in which specific multicultural counseling competencies were addressed and what instructional methods were used. The matrix demonstrated that all competencies were covered at some point in the various curricula. We also learned that experiential activities were used to increase students' awareness of their own beliefs and attitudes (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001). The faculty made the decision to continue to place emphasis on beliefs and attitudes across the curricula to complement the shift in emphasis in the required multicultural counseling course to the acquisition of diversity-related knowledge. The remaining competency area, multicultural counseling skills (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001), was initially identified as problematic because of the aforementioned underemphasis on knowledge and racial identity development. With increased theoretical knowledge to guide practice, students' skills should be enhanced. The expectation of faculty is that the competency level and quality of the skills, practicum, and internship courses will be more effective in the future.

After relevant changes were made, all counseling department courses were put on a schedule to be reviewed during regularly held faculty meetings. During these sessions, course syllabi were reviewed by all faculty members. Instructional and assessment strategies were discussed, and, if needed, suggestions were made for revising these strategies.

To assess the inclusion of diversity content and quality of instruction, three diversity competence items (i.e., "This course helped me to develop as a multiculturally competent professional," "The content of this course reflected perspectives and experiences of a pluralistic society," and "The instructor encouraged effective communication regarding diversity") were appended to the university's evaluation of instruction assessment instrument. We are currently reevaluating the format of the instrument because students do not appear to be completing the assessment form correctly and are not providing usable responses.

Outcomes related to student diversity competence are assessed in (a) each course, (b) faculty members' annual review of students, (c) student portfolios, (d) the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (National Board for Certified Counselors, 2005) that is administered to master's-degree students, and (e) supervisor evaluations of practicum students and interns. To date, these performance measures have documented the increasing multicultural competence of our students. Curricular outcomes also can be seen in the adoption of textbooks that include multicultural content, for example, the *Handbook of Multicultural Assessment* (Suzuki, Ponterotto, & Meller, 2001), which is a required textbook for the course Introduction to Assessment. In addition, service learning (see Hamner, 2002) has been added to the Introduction to Profes-

sional Counseling course to encourage students, early in their training, to interact with individuals in diverse communities. In addition, our colleagues in the clinical psychology doctoral program on campus have now recommended our Counseling Diverse Populations course for their students.

Cocurricular Activities

From our information gathering and needs assessment, both faculty and students highlighted the importance of engaging students in cocurricular activities such as team research, publications, projects, and other activities that support diversity as a core value. Several faculty members have research agendas that address some aspect of diversity, and these faculty provide opportunities for students to gain experience in and an understanding of the many ways that diversity is expressed in the discipline. Student participation in these activities is always voluntary.

One of the department's research teams, established in 1997, sent an open invitation to all master's- and doctoral-level students in the department to participate on the department's multicultural research team (MCRT), which is led by two faculty members. Team members, representing widely diverse backgrounds, are students from all programs in the department. To date, the MCRT has been investigating issues related to (a) racial identity development, (b) multicultural counseling competency among counselors and clinical and counseling psychologists, and (c) trained crisis volunteers. Outcomes of these efforts have been research presentations at international conferences of the American Counseling Association, the American Psychological Association (APA), and other regional and national venues. Reports from the research team are soon to appear as a major contribution in the *Journal of Counseling & Development* and *The Counseling Psychologist*.

Other faculty have involved students individually and in teams in research projects on sexual orientation, international students, and HIV/AIDS. This work has also led to national presentations and publications and an increased number of diversity-focused doctoral dissertations.

Department faculty and students also have been involved in other cocurricular projects and activities that extend beyond the department. For example, the university's College of Education commissioned a study of undergraduate perceptions of diversity in the teacher education curriculum. A department faculty member leads the group undertaking this study, and our students and faculty are contributing members of this team. In addition to being a service to the college, other outcomes include presentations and publications.

Another outcome of our diversity efforts has been that our graduate students are hired as teaching and program assistants across the campus to facilitate service-learning placements for approximately 600 undergraduates each year in culturally diverse sites. One of our students teaches a minority mentoring course for the Office of

Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. Another student developed and teaches an athlete and society course that is tailored to meet a goal established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (n.d.) CHAMPS (Challenging Athletes' Minds for Personal Success) Life Skills program for student athletes. Our undergraduate diversity-focused human relations skills course is required by several undergraduate degree programs for which we teach approximately 125 students a year. Faculty are routinely asked to lead or participate on campus diversity committees, to speak at diversity-oriented events, and to assist during periods of campus intergroup strife. With support from the department and the university's women's studies program, we sponsored multicultural counseling leader Patricia Arredondo as a 2-day scholar in residence. The department has come to be known for its diversity sensitivity and is a resource to the campus and community.

We also emphasize diversity in student admissions interviews and during student orientation, which is held in the fall. Faculty, program coordinators, and the department head take full advantage of these opportunities to underscore the pervasiveness of the departmental diversity mission throughout their experiences in our training programs. It is clear through our cocurricular activities that the expectation of cultural competence goes beyond the classroom.

The Educational Environment

There is clear evidence that diverse educational environments provide opportunities for students and faculty to learn about diversity in a real-world context (Johnson & Lollar, 2002). Furthermore, there is a realization that programs are more likely to recruit and retain students and faculty from diverse backgrounds if they create an environment that respects and supports diversity. With respect to department efforts, our faculty and student recruitment and retention plans focus on ways to create and maintain an environment that reflects and supports diversity.

Systematic and comprehensive efforts at the department level contribute to the creation of a safe environment that encourages both faculty and students to undertake the risks involved in developing multicultural competence. We believe that adopting a philosophy of diversity as a core value underlying all that we do (which is fully explicated in our diversity statement), and seamless implementation of that philosophy through policies, curriculum, and cocurricular activities, affects the department's culture. Research supports the notion that both faculty and students feel safe to explore their own values and beliefs, prejudices, and biases in a supportive and responsive context (Ponterotto & Alexander, 1995; Sue, 1991).

The development of a friendly physical environment for students from different backgrounds (Ponterotto & Alexander, 1995), an active plan of experiences and activities that provide positive multicultural experiences among the students (Arredondo et al.,

1996; Hill, 2003), faculty members' honest self-disclosure, and respectful approaches to validating students' experiences (Rothschild, 2003) are critical to the development of a safe environment.

The department has created a multiculturally friendly physical environment by displaying distinctive artwork such as paintings, posters, and photographs (Ponterotto & Alexander, 1995). Office walls in the department are decorated with paintings, pictures, and posters reflecting diverse cultures. We have received numerous positive comments about the inclusive artwork, particularly from program and faculty applicants who visit for interviews. The department's information display case, located outside the department office in a high-density student traffic area, displays pictures of all faculty members from different ethnic groups; pictures of department social gatherings capture interactions among diverse faculty and students. These images are also reflected on the department's Web site and in the department's brochure. Many of our faculty and graduate assistants exhibit diversity-conscious items on their office doors, and the main office posts a sign indicating that it is a safe haven for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students. Department staff members actively endorse our diversity mission by making the department office a warm and receptive environment for all individuals. Our office and classrooms are accessible, and all students with disabilities are asked to let us know of their need for accommodation and are encouraged to seek service from the Office of Students With Disabilities.

Department faculty also strongly encourage students to involve themselves actively in various campus and community multicultural experiential activities. Our department's "dialogue on diversity" faculty and student group distributes information on diversity-promoting activities (e.g., the diversity film festival and diversity seminars) and cultural events (e.g., Chinese cultural week and the Native American Festival) to faculty and students of the department using our electronic mailing list.

In class, we encourage faculty to serve as role models to provide students with a safe place to openly discuss their experiences, questions, and fears regarding diversity issues by being open and supportive (Rothschild, 2003; Sue, 1991). Self-examination is a cornerstone for the development of students' multicultural competence; however, when students feel threatened, they are often resistant (Carter, 2003; Sue, 1991). Respectful interactions with students wherein their experiences are validated coupled with appropriate and honest self-disclosure by faculty (Rothschild, 2003) can encourage students to engage in critical self-examination.

The best form of evaluation of the environment comes as both positive and negative comments. The negative comments encourage us to continue to learn and grow as professionals. We also are very pleased that there is sufficient diversity of perspectives and an atmosphere of openness that accommodates multiple views even though they might be negative.

Conclusions

By 2004, we had made sufficient progress in our reimagining efforts to engage in a diversity environment assessment. Finding no single instrument that sufficiently met our needs, we modified items from the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (Sodowsky, Kuo-Jackson, Richardson, & Corey, 1998), the Diversity Competence Checklist (Ponterotto & Alexander, 1995), the Multicultural Assessment Instrument (Ducker & Tori, 2001), and the Multicultural Environmental Inventory (Pope-Davis, Liu, Nevitt, & Toporek, 2000) to examine faculty, peers, classes, and climate. Students in all departmental programs completed the inventory, with a 44% response rate. The results indicate that students tended to view their experiences in classes within the department as affirming of the respectful environment for diversity found within the department as a whole. Students also indicated that faculty behavior and attitudes can either contribute to or detract from the department's diversity climate.

At this point in the history of our reimagining, we believe that we have intentionally and systematically moved diversity from the periphery to a core value underlying all that we do in the Department of Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology and School Psychology. We see ourselves at D'Andrea and Daniels's (1991) conscientious level of program development, which is typified by the infusion of diversity competence throughout all aspects of the program. Using Arredondo's (1996) model of organizational multicultural development, we are most likely located at the consolidation/integration and regeneration stages of that process. We have sought to address all of the elements of the Ponterotto and Alexander's (1995) diversity environment checklist and Rogers et al.'s (1998) characteristics of notable programs, including minority representation, curriculum issues, counseling practice and supervision, research considerations, student and faculty competency evaluation, and physical environment.

As with any organizational change, the reimagining process has been slowed by other time-consuming efforts (e.g., CACREP site visit) and hastened by the obvious need to address a current, compelling issue (e.g., student recruitment). The faculty-student committee met regularly during the first several years of the initiative and less often as we have approached the point of consolidation. The committee has provided strong leadership, and the implementation of its recommendations has the fervent support of the department head. Most but not all faculty and students would agree that the reimagining has been implemented successfully. Our various curricula and policies and procedures have been completely overhauled. The faculty and student body are highly representative of many types of diversity. The physical appearance and atmosphere of the department has been changed. Students and faculty are actively engaged in curricular and cocurricular activities related to diversity issues on and off campus. Research, presentations, and dissertations on diversity topics are common practice. Our professional office staff point out

ways in which office procedures can be more inclusive. Graduate teaching and research assistants are held responsible for diversity-sensitive instruction and research.

Accountability has been the most critical component of the change process. Faculty and students are held accountable for the development of diversity competence. Outcomes are assessed and interventions made when needed. Highly congratulatory accreditation site visit reports by CACREP (and APA) attest to our accountability for these outcomes.

There is more yet to reimagine. Our review of instruction methods indicate that there are areas for which faculty need support (e.g., facilitation of contentious discussions). A review of program and student outcomes indicates that there is a need to address more closely issues related to disabilities and immigration. Each of us involved in this reimagining, including current and former faculty and students, is on our own developmental journey toward multicultural competence. The struggle to develop this competence is difficult for both faculty and students, and tensions will arise when individuals at different developmental stages clash. Peers, faculty advisers, and instructors have all been useful resources for students in this process of self-examination. Faculty support each other and seek out colleagues for additional support and guidance.

We urge our colleagues to undertake their own process of reimagining counselor education in ways that respect the achievements and goals they have for their programs. We did not have the luxury of funds to release faculty to redesign their syllabi. However, the entire campus was moving from a quarter to semester schedule, so we used this naturally occurring event to stimulate curricular change. For many programs, the CACREP self-study or regional accreditation preparation could serve as naturally occurring events to operationalize diversity as a core value.

Recommendations: Programs and Research

The most important lesson to be taken from this experience is to involve all departmental constituencies (faculty, students, staff) in a well-organized, comprehensive, systemic effort to bring about change. Rogers et al. (1998) have concluded that notable multicultural training programs also have the strong support of administration. Our efforts included program coordinators and directors of training with the department head chairing the reimagining committee. It might be more difficult to effect departmental systemic change when counseling programs are in competition with other programs in a department or with department programs that do not emphasize diversity as a core value.

Another lesson learned is the critical need for accountability measures. We began to see significant changes when students realized that diversity competency was a critical part of their ongoing evaluations and portfolios. The same change factor held true for faculty as they experienced their contribution to achieving the department's

diversity goals as part of their annual reviews and merit compensation. In another measure of accountability, the diversity committee was careful to seek out existing literature to augment needs assessment data to demonstrate to both faculty and students that our recommendations were professionally grounded. Attention to accountability has also involved “keeping our eye on the prize.” Although the major policy, personnel, curricular, and cocurricular changes have been made, we continue to review our progress and evaluate outcomes, making additional changes when necessary. Patience and persistence are important qualities for those leading the change efforts. It is critical to keep the effort moving, to demonstrate changes, and to be open to criticism.

This kind of comprehensive, systemic approach to change could be used in other areas of professional competence, for example, technology. Technology competence is a likely candidate for infusion into curriculum, policies, and procedures. Our experiences with this diversity process could be instructive for other types of change initiatives in counselor education.

Opportunities abound for research regarding diversity-sensitive systemic change in departments housing counselor education programs. For instance, research questions such as the following would provide useful information to counselor education programs and their departments: (a) What are the differences in student outcomes with respect to systemic versus program-only change efforts? (b) How do counselors measure the multicultural competence of faculty in a valid and reliable manner? or (c) Which elements of Ponterotto and Alexander’s (1995) Diversity Competence Checklist and/or the Rogers et al. (1998) characteristics of notable programs are most strongly associated with student diversity outcomes?

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