

CIEP 360: INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP: CULTURE AND IDENTITY
****SATISFIES THE CPSY 342 REQUIREMENT**
**** APPROVED ELECTIVE**

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INTRODUCTION:

The world is fast becoming so interdependent that the smooth functioning of governments, businesses, and most particularly—schools, demand that individuals have awareness, knowledge, and the skill to interact effectively with others whose cultures may be quite different from their own. Our society in the United States is becoming increasingly diverse and today’s classroom diversity reflects a major demographic shift. The greatest wave of immigration since the turn of the century, combined with escalating birth rates, is creating a society with no distinct majority, but rather, one characterized by great diversity. Educators are called upon to provide an educational environment that values all aspects of diversity: ethnicity, race, linguistic differences, social, economic, geographic differences, age, gender, family structure, sexual orientation, and differences related to exceptionality and ability.

This course uses the historic sites in Rome as the “classroom” to discover the complex nature of pluralism and many of the critical aspects of cultural identity. Seeing issues of diversity objectified in the sites of Rome provides the basis for structured experiences designed to increase one’s awareness, knowledge and skill in intercultural understanding and interaction. Through cultural immersion in the Eternal City, students will develop a more culturally -sensitive approach to their interactions with others, and ultimately a more authentic approach to teaching and learning.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to discover in Rome the fundamental concepts of identity and pluralism and from that to plan activities for effective instruction directed toward a community of diverse students learners within learning environments which promote respect for individual differences of ethnicity, race, language, gender, and ability. Specifically, students will:

1. Visit important locations in Rome which display critical concepts of identity and pluralism.. Scheduled sites include:

The Colosseum	The Jewish Ghetto
The Roman Forum	St. Peter’s Square and Basilica
Palatine Hill	Campidoglio
Piazza Navona	Tiber Island
Piazza Minerva	The Spanish Steps
The Pantheon	The Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel
Villa Borghese	Trevi Fountain

2. Reflect upon the sites and intercultural immersion to examine:
 - basic content related to the concept of culture and the development of self.
 - attributes of cultural identity including: ethnicity/nationality, social class, gender, age, geographic region, religion, social status, language, ability/disability, and race.

- the role of formal (schools) and informal socializing agent in transmitting cultural knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.
3. Reflect on current critical issues in education as presented in the book: *Critical Issues in Education: Dialogues and Dialectics*, (2007) For Example,
- Is it ever necessary to create schools or classroom settings that separate students by gender?
 - Should schools emphasize America's cultural diversity or the shared aspects of American culture?
 - Which and whose values should public schools teach the young and why?
 - When and why should selected children be provided inclusive or special treatment in schools?
 - Will the standards-based reform movement improve education or discriminate against poor or disadvantaged children?
 - How do schools find a balance between freedom of religious expression and the separation of church and state?
4. Reflect upon real-life case-studies from "Voices of Student Teachers: Cases from the Field" to discover how challenges of diversity are manifest in today's classrooms. Students will respond to classroom-based scenarios by framing problems, interpreting complex situations, and identifying culturally-sensitive plans for action.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Critical Issues in Education: Dialogues and Dialectics (McGraw-Hill , 6th Ed., 2007)

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

Cushner , K. *Human Diversity in Action: Developing Multi-cultural Competencies for the Classroom* (McGraw-Hill College, 2003)

COURSE ACTIVITIES:

Critical Issues: Debates Into Action : Readings selected from the text, *Critical Issues in Education: Dialogues and Dialectics* (2007) will serve as the basis for the reflection of issues of cultural diversity in the schools today. Students in teams of two will be responsible for forwarding the two positions from one of the essays. Follow-up class discussion will focus on problem-solving real- life case studies related to diversity in the classroom, and implications for teaching and learning.

Teach-Us Sessions: Students will work in groups to "teach-us" about student selected sites in Rome. The task, as a group, will be to explore a site for its representation of themes of diversity. Through class discussion and guidance, students will plan the site visit, teach us about the inherent diversity themes, and pose reflective questions for teaching and learning.

Reflective Journal: Students will maintain a personal log, recording and reflecting upon daily Rome based experiences, and the impact of their intercultural experience upon their development as educators.