Navigating Difference

Cultural Competency Training

OVERVIEW
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Navigating Difference

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— OVERVIEW —

Washington State University and WSU Extension are committed to being an inclusive organization that seeks and promotes diversity in our workforce, program participants, educational partners, and program content. As a means of achieving the Extension vision, we strive to serve the diverse residents of Washington with culturally competent and linguistically appropriate programming and services. In support of this goal, Navigating Difference: Cultural Competency Training has been designed and is conducted statewide for all WSU personnel and interested community partners.

Navigating Difference (ND) is designed to assist participants expand their skills in working with diverse audiences. The overarching goals for the training are to assist participants to:

- Become more aware of their own personal and organizational cultures;
- Examine how their personal and organizational cultures affect their ability to work across difference in both negative and positive ways;
- Build skills using conceptual and theoretical models to increase competencies in working with others who are different.

The training is based on the WSU Cultural Competencies (https://www.diversity.wsu.edu/navigating-difference-training/cultural-competencies/) and is designed using key adult education theory and practices that create a safe and welcoming environment for all learners. The learning activities respect and support individual learning styles, and the participants’ life experiences are viewed as an important source of knowledge. The intent of the program is to gain knowledge and skills that can be used when engaging in a new situation/culture, rather than focusing on specific cultural knowledge.

Training Format

Modules have been designed, implemented and evaluated for each of the five competencies, listed below. Four of the modules are three hours each and one module (Cultural Interaction) is four and a half hours. Including time for introductions and wrap-up, the total training is about 18 hours.

All modules are currently designed to be delivered face-to-face, and it is highly recommended that all modules be taught in this format at this point. Conducting the training via distance technology is being explored. Plans are underway to create additional modules focusing on culturally competent program planning and evaluation and culturally competent leadership.
Training Modules

Module One—Competency: Cultural Awareness

Skill Set:
- Explore personal and cultural values, biases, prejudices, and views.
- Identify ways in which culture shapes beliefs, practices, and values.
- Identify similarities and differences among cultures.
- Recognize our own culture(s), including organizational culture.

Module Two—Competency: Cultural Understanding

Skill Set:
- Understand the developmental nature of cultural competencies.
- Describe issues and concerns which arise when values, beliefs, and practices differ from those of the dominant culture.
- Recognize ways culture affects participation in organizational programs and services.

Module Three—Competency: Cultural Knowledge

Skill Set:
- Develop familiarity with specific cultures, with an emphasis on the diverse audiences in your geographic area.
- Identify appropriate cultural guides and build productive relationships with them.

Module Four—Competency: Cultural Interaction

Skill Set:
- Recognize factors impacting successful intercultural communication.
- Use concepts and theories of intercultural communication.
- Manage intercultural conflicts effectively.
- Interact productively with, and seek input and guidance from, cultural partners.
- Form new programmatic partnerships across intercultural differences.

Module Five—Competency: Cultural Sensitivity

Skill Set:
- Identify historical and sociological influences on specific cultural interactions.
- Recognize the impact of privilege, inequality and oppression in daily contexts.
Intended Outcomes

Culturally competent professionals are able to:

- engage in culturally diverse settings, initiatives, and programs;
- integrate cultural competencies in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programming; and
- practice strategies for successful intercultural communication in professional settings.

Training Offerings

In Washington State, the complete set of modules was first presented in a workshop with a small pilot group in 2006. Module One (Cultural Awareness) was presented four times as a stand-alone workshop (or seminar) to all county-based Extension educators and WSU staff in 2007. As of September 2019, the complete 18-hr program has been conducted 29 times to more than 870 WSU staff across Washington State and nationally to teams across the country. In addition, more than 30 Navigating Difference 4-hr Cultural Awareness Modules have been conducted for WSU faculty, staff, and graduate students as of 2019.

Outreach professionals have participated in WSU Navigating Difference in more than 12 states across the country, including California, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oregon, South Carolina, Utah and Washington at state agencies, in school districts, for social service agencies, and others.

As of December 2019, 20 WSU Navigating Difference Train-the-Trainer (T-3) Workshops have been conducted for staff who have completed the general 18-hr WSU Navigating Difference Training to certify them to present the WSU Navigating Difference modules. WSU Navigating Difference Training Policies apply.
Implementation of *Navigating Difference: Cultural Competency Training*

**Assumptions**

Organizations will want:

- a skills-based training approach to improve outreach to diverse audiences;
- a sustainable diversity training system; and
- to build internal training capacity in their organization.

In an effort to address these assumptions, a *Train–the-Trainer* program (or curriculum) has been designed. Potential trainers will be expected to:

- participate in all five modules of the *Navigating Difference* Training;
- participate in a three-day intensive Train-the-Trainer retreat; and
- agree to follow the training policies determined by WSU Extension.

For further information or questions, please contact:

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