
Introduction

We are delighted that you have chosen our book as a means for enhancing your professional development. Whether you call yourself a professor, a trainer, or an instructor, it is important that you understand (1) who you are and what you think about yourself, and (2) who the learners are and what you think about them. In this book, we invite you to reflect on how you influence what goes on in your classroom and how you engage with your colleagues as a community of learners.

In our first book, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* (Lindsey, Nuri-Robins, & Terrell, 1999), we addressed educational leaders, suggesting that they could make significant changes in their schools and communities by integrating Cultural Proficiency into their core organizational values. In this book, we have expanded our audience. This book invites you to reflect on your craft and praxis as an instructor and to critically examine not only what you do but also the attitudes you bring to your work. We offer this book as your companion as you create a professional learning community with your colleagues.

In an environment where the amount of knowledge, the diversity of learners, and the varieties of learning contexts grow exponentially, we understand that professional development is essential. With this book we seek to add to the resources available to instructors to respond to this formidable task with hope, confidence, and excellence. In the second edition, we sought to share some of the nuances of Cultural Proficiency that we had learned, adding terms to the glossary, explaining more fully some of the ideas we present, and sharing what we have learned from you. We also addressed, more directly, the relationship of Cultural Proficiency to instructional standards.

In this third edition, we have again updated the case story and references, and shared with you our ever deepening understanding what it means to become a culturally proficient educator. We have changed some of the language in the definitions of Cultural Proficiency, and added a chart that serves as a conceptual framework—showing the relationship of the tools to one another (see Table 1.1). The previous chapter on culturally competent praxis has been incorporated into the principles

chapter. That chapter has been expanded with discussions of the principles found in the second edition and by adding principles that were in the original monograph by Terry Cross (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989).

In Chapter 3, we updated our discussion of standards and standards-based education. In Chapter 5, we have expanded our discussion of barriers, adding Derald Wing Sue's concept of microaggressions and providing additional language that we have found helpful in distinguishing dominant cultural groups from others. In the past, the term *subcultures* was often used. We, as authors, found this term offensive, as did many of our clients. In this edition we speak of *dominant and oppressed, marginalized cultures*. You will find adaptations of the activities that were in the previous editions, and a few new ones as well. Additionally, as more and more people are writing about culture, and culturally responsive education, our references are updated to include the latest works in this field.

As you read this book, we want you to reflect on the way you teach, the instructional environment you create, and the way that learners respond to you and to one another. Personal reflection is one step in the process that will lead you to becoming a culturally proficient instructor. As such, you will continue to learn more about yourself and about how you affect learners. You also will develop skills for creating a culturally proficient learning community among your colleagues and for your students.