

CULTURAL EQUITY IN DRIVER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

A Culturally Equitable Driver Education and Training Program integrates principles of multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching while using a State's demographic information to address reduction in traffic crashes, fatalities and injuries for all regardless of culture, ethnicity, race, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, social class, belief system, economic status, environment, digital literacy or disability (Larke & Saint, In Press, 2021).

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- ❖ Uses cultural characteristics, geographic experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits of teaching (*Cultural Competence*).
- ❖ Helps students develop a broader perspective of the sociopolitical consciousness, the tools to critically analyze societal relationships (*Critical Consciousness*) -- How does driving work in the society?
- ❖ Improves academic achievement and skills of ethnically diverse students by teaching them through their own cultural and experimental filters, such as traffic safety behavior (*Academic/Driving Success*). (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2000)



Rapidly changing demographic across the United States clearly reveals a necessity for cultural equity in education and training methodology. Demographic changes in the United States from 2020 to 2030 are projected to include an increase in:

- The overall United States population (14% immigration)
- Individuals under 18 years of age (slight increase), 18 to 64 years of age (slight increase), and 65 plus years of age (25%)
- The female population, while there will be a decrease in the male population
- People of color, while there will be a decrease in the white population
- Urban populations, while there will be a decrease in rural populations (US Census Projections)
- The gender fluid population (Kacie, et al., 2021)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data indicates that among all unintentional injuries, motor vehicle crashes are among the top leading causes of death for all ages, genders, and races (CDC, 2021).



Rapidly changing demographics in the United States combined with CDC fatality data indicates that heightened culturally equitable educational practices are needed in driver education and training to meet the evolving needs of ALL learners and achieve a reduction in motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities among all ages, genders, and races.

Solutions for Multicultural Driver Education and Training

Teachers/instructors should implement the following:

Be Aware	Students are different – no two students are alike. Each one is different with sameness. <u>Difference is not a deficit.</u>
Know Others	<u>Educate yourself</u> on more than food and fashion. Ask questions about life experiences.
Have High Expectations	Have expectations with real meanings. <u>All students can learn.</u> Deliver instruction with confidence that all individuals have an opportunity to pass the course.
Value	Value all languages by learning another language. <u>When the language is valued, the student feels valued.</u>
Accept and Respect	Tolerance is not acceptance. <u>Build respect</u> – gain information about students and use it when giving examples.
Apply Sensitive Actions	Demonstrate with words and actions. Derogatory words are never acceptable. <u>Use kind words and sensitive actions.</u> (Larke & Saint, 2013)

Course Transformation Needs Checklist

(Use this checklist to evaluate your course content and teaching delivery)

Principles	Course Transformation (Examples)	Revision Yes/No
Invisibility	ALL students should see themselves in the curriculum materials. Include: all student cultures/race/demographics/exception ability/socioeconomics; both female and male genders; in all modes of transportation and roadway users (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, large commercial vehicles); and multiple types of neighborhoods/traffic environments.	
Stereotyping	Remove any words that indicate stereotyping to one specific gender, race, religion or country.	
Selectivity and Imbalance	Describe all types of vehicles, all drivers (all genders, races, ages, etc.), neighborhoods, and traffic environments so that one does not have more importance than another.	
Fragmentation and Isolation	Include many cultures and religious groups. Remove any description or illustrations that may imply superiority or inferiority to one specific group.	
Improper Linguistic	Use proper linguistics to describe people, places and things with proper terms and not slang. Also, remove all sexist and racist tenants.	
Loaded Words	Remove loaded words from the materials that could dehumanize groups. Utilize words such as law enforcement officer, police officer, mail carrier, fire fighter, etc.	
Activity Bias	Use images and illustrations that do not convey one culture or gender is the authority figure.	
Visual Representation/Tokenism/Authentic Images	Use images and descriptions that accurately portray the culture. Illustrate people in genuine situations, accurate to their environment.	
Visual Representation/Role of Women	Illustrate women in roles of law enforcement, maintenance workers, truck drivers, fire fighters, drivers, construction workers, etc.	
Communication	Translate important terms/concepts into student’s language. Use illustrations, pictures, or graphics.	
Digital Literacy	Use of technology applications in the classroom (e.g., smart boards, virtual /digital platforms or smart phones).	
Disability	Meet the needs of students with disabilities. ADA Compliance.	

(Larke & Saint, 2013)

Driver education curricula, programs and teachers/instructors can achieve cultural equity in education and training methodology by:

- helping students to look at critical knowledge and the driving task from various perspectives,
- realizing that values and cultures are different and should be shared intentionally,
- finding ways to promote risk-reduction among ALL groups,
- eliminating all discriminatory practices,
- learning how to think and behave in ways to ensure fairness,
- realizing teaching is an ongoing and dynamic process that includes transformative processes to think in multiple ways that leads to action (Neito, 1992), and
- meeting the ongoing needs of the changing learner.



References

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