

Intercultural and Diversity Training Offerings

International Student Retention Team – Faculty of International Education

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Our Global Campus: International Education at VIU

INVIU Description

All employees, new and returning, are welcome to attend to increase their knowledge of international education at VIU.

By participating in this workshop Faculty and Staff will have the opportunity to:

- Learn more about who our international students at VIU are and what services are available to support international students and their instructors.
- Find out about the “international experience @ home”. For example; World VIU Days, Internationalization Grants, Education Abroad, International Development Week, Internationalizing the Curriculum.
- Gain awareness of cultural differences that arise in academic settings and that stem from underlying cultural values and priorities.
- Reflect on our own culturally conditioned identities.
- Take away and/or contribute to resources on Intercultural Competence Development.

Learning Objectives: See above

Duration: 2 hours

Session Structure: This session is a mix of interactive exercises and subsequent debriefs and also includes a “guest lecture” from a current international student.

Between Worlds: Belonging in a New Culture

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INVIU Description

What is culture shock and why do we experience it?

When a person leaves one culture and enters another they often experience culture shock as they move between worlds. Many descriptions of culture shock (also known as transition stress) emphasize the symptoms of culture shock (the What) without focusing on the causes of this stress (the Why) and the emotional expression of this stress.

This interactive workshop will explore the Why of culture shock with the goal of increasing empathy for students who may be experiencing culture shock and whose behaviour may be effected by their experience of culture shock.

This workshop is appropriate for anyone. Whether you expect to move across cultures in the future or whether you are in contact with students, peers, or colleagues who may experience culture shock.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn a model of culture shock
- Understand 5 key changes people face when moving abroad
- Understand the impact these changes may have on stress and satisfaction
- Develop strategies to work with students who are experiencing the stress of transition.

Duration: 60 minutes

Session Structure: Participants will be shown 2 complimentary models of culture shock. They will then be able to hear a student's story about experiencing culture shock and what VIU employees did that helped them to be successful despite experiencing the additional stress of culture shock.

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INVIU Description

Culture is inherently complex. To be able to make meaning of intercultural interactions we need language and concepts that allows us to articulate the values and beliefs that are manifested in the behaviour we see. Based on the work of Geert Hofstede, Hans Trompenaars and Edward.T Hall this session will provide knowledge on Culture General Frameworks with special emphasis on frameworks that have the greatest potential to lead to cross-cultural misunderstanding.

This workshop is 2 one hour lunchtime sessions.

- Part One: We will explore culture general frameworks that can help us better understand the perspectives of students from cultural backgrounds that are different to our own.
- Part Two: We will focus on strategies we can use to improve intercultural cultural communication and to be more effective in working with students from multiple cultural backgrounds.

Learning Objectives:

- Be able to describe culture in a multi-dimensional way
- Increase knowledge of Culture General Frameworks
- Increase awareness of own culturally conditioned values
- Practice strategies to improve intercultural communication

Duration: One 2 hour session or two concurrent 1 hour sessions.

Session Structure: Participants will begin with an exercise that allows them to better understand the often ambiguous concept of “culture”. We will then build on this understanding of culture to introduce some culture general frameworks. Once this awareness is established we will explore strategies to communicate across cultures.

What is Culture? Exploring Beyond The Iceberg*

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INVIU Description

“Multicultural” “Diversity” “Cross-Cultural” these buzzwords are increasingly becoming a part of the day-to-day lexicon of Canadians. But what is culture, really, and how does it affect us in our everyday lives? This session offers a deeper look at culture by exploring multiple metaphors for the concept and uncover where culture is “hiding” in our day to day lives. This session will also touch on the difference between stereotypes and generalization, Culture General Frameworks and set the foundation for gaining Culture Specific knowledge.

****This session is a prerequisite for the Country Insights Series***

Learning Objectives:

- Describe culture and its influence on us in a creative, multidimensional way
- Better understand how culture influences each of us on a day to day basis
- Develop cultural self-awareness

Duration: 2 - 4 hours

Session Structure: Participants will begin with an exercise that allows them to better understand the often ambiguous concept of “culture”. We will then build on this understanding of culture to introduce some culture general frameworks. Once this awareness is established we will explore strategies to communicate across cultures.

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INVIU Description

Imagine travelling to another part of the world without having to buy a plane ticket! This is a series of 3 sessions that will provide an opportunity to gain some culture general and culture specific knowledge about one or more nationalities represented at VIU. The 3 sessions include:

1. What is Culture? Exploring Beyond the Iceberg
2. Cultural Panel – Guest Speakers and Debrief
3. Understanding “ *insert country name here*”

National cultures profiled will include: China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Nigeria, India

Take a trip around the world without buying a plane ticket and gain useful insights into the lives and cultures of students studying here at VIU! Students from China, Japan and Nigeria will act as our cultural informants and help us to better understand the values and beliefs they grew up with and how they have had to adapt to be successful students here in Canada.

This is an opportunity to listen and learn and also to ask questions you have always wanted to know about another culture, but not been sure of who or how to ask.

Learning Objectives:

- Be able to describe culture in a multi-dimensional way
- Increase knowledge of Culture General Frameworks
- Increase awareness of own culturally conditioned values
- Practice strategies to improve intercultural communication
- Describe culture and its influence on us in a creative, multidimensional way
- Better understand how culture influences each of us on a day to day basis
- Develop cultural self-awareness

Duration: Three 1.5 hour sessions or one ½ day

Session Structure: A mix of experiential exercises, mini lectures, guest panels, group discussions on opportunities for reflection.

“I Feel Silly!” Using Improv to be More Effective Across Cultures

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INVIU Description:

Creativity, empathy, flexibility, awareness, risk-taking and courage are all skills that are recognized as critical to being cross-culturally effective. They are skills that must be practiced, muscles that must be exercised. Fortunately, we can get an intercultural skills work out while learning and practicing the principles of improv; even if we think we are terrible actors or don't feel especially funny. Applied improv is all about building trust, developing our ability to be creative and spontaneous and increasing our range of behavior in ambiguous situations. Belly laugh guaranteed.

Learning Objectives:

- Exercise empathy and awareness
- Celebrate risk-taking to expand people's ability to innovate, deal with change, and step into new roles
- Unleash creative genius so your people can solve problems and design solutions quickly and effectively
- Build collaborative momentum by supporting others, building trust and maximizing your influence

Duration: 90 minutes to 3 hours

Session Structure: The session will be 1 part theory, 2 parts improv and 3 parts laughter.

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“Diversity is a reality. Inclusion is a choice.” Gardenswartz and Rowe.

Unacknowledged bias, preconceived notions, and emotions such as fear can block communication and the ability to leverage diversity. To achieve inclusion in the classroom, to “make the mix work”, instructors must have the tools and confidence to engage students and colleagues in dialogues about difficult topics like racism, ableism, power and privilege. This interactive workshop will offer tools to guide participants through self-awareness exercises and challenging dialogues about real-life cross-cultural issues.

Learning Objectives:

- Introduce to communication strategies for emotionally charged situations
- Increase self-awareness
- Gain confidence in engaging students and/or colleagues in difficult dialogues

Duration: 90 minutes

Session Structure: Using interactive activities, case studies, and discussion participants will explore the concepts of power and privilege, prejudice, and implicit bias. Participants will use tools grounded in the theories of Contact Theory, Emotional Intelligence, and communication models, to engage in courageous conversations.

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“I Am Canadian”

INVIU Description

Like all nationalities “Canadian” can conjure up stereotypical images that contain little more than a grain of truth about the people they are meant to describe. As most of us know, being Canadian does not guarantee a love for hockey or a regular coffee date at Tim Hortons. Interestingly though, it is often easier to say what we are not, rather be able to articulate what we are. In this session we take an honest look at dominant culture in Canada. We also explore the power and privilege that dominant culture Canadians benefit from and consider the challenges that non-dominant culture Canadians experience. Finally we consider what we can do to enact social justice in our lives.

Learning Objectives:

- Increase cultural self-awareness
- Explore stereotypes and how they are created
- Understand what unearned power and privilege can play out in our day to day lives
- Explore opportunities to enact social justice in our own lives

Duration: 4 hours minimum

Session Structure: This session asks participants to come with a spirit of curiosity. This session will not be done in a time frame less than 4 hours. A large amount of time will be spent developing trust and relationship within the group of participants. This is necessary so that we explore the often scary concepts of power and privilege from a place of curiosity and learning rather than a place of fear, shame and guilt. The session will involve experiential exercises along with debriefs and opportunities for reflection.

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Building Bridges: 5 simple activities to prepare students for cross-cultural interaction

INVIU Description

According to Milton Bennett (1993) interacting constructively with those who are different from ourselves is not a natural behaviour for humans. Bennett asserted that for people from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively, they must first be prepared for their interactions. This idea is further supported by Gordon Allport's (1954) Contact Hypothesis which stated that particular conditions must exist in order to reduce prejudice between members of different groups.

In today's classroom there is greater diversity than ever before. For students to thrive and learn in the multicultural classroom instructors must prepare students to interact with each other. One way to do this is to help students discover the commonalities that bind them together and help them to see themselves in the "other".

Learning Objectives:

- Provide instructors with tools they can use to build bridges between students from different "groups"
- Understand the importance of bridge building exercises from the perspective of a non-dominant group member
- Set a tone for deep discussions on identity and cultural values
- Increase cultural self-awareness

Duration: 90 minutes

Session Structure: This session will provide participants with 5 interactive activities they can use in their classrooms to allow students to explore what makes them the same as well as come to a deeper understanding of an appreciation for their different perspectives.

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The Intercultural Conflict Styles Inventory (ICSI)

How we solve difficult problems, how we argue and how we "make up" are learned in the groups in which we live during our formative years and modified based on specific experiences we have during our lifetime. Recognizing patterns in our own problem solving/conflict resolution style helps us improve our personal relationships with others because it increases understanding. In this session participants will complete the Intercultural Conflict Styles Inventory and explore different responses to conflict while acknowledging cultural differences.

Note: There is a cost of \$12 USD associated with the ICSI

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

The IDI is a tool that looks at how individuals and groups respond to cultural commonality and difference. It is a cross-culturally valid measure of intercultural competence adapted from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Dr. Milton Bennett). It is an interesting tool for those curious about how their own culture can influence their worldview and how culture is a factor in reaching personal, professional, or institutional goals. This session requires the completion of a 20-30 minute questionnaire prior to a group workshop. A one hour debrief and coaching session will also be scheduled individually.

Note: There is a cost of \$12 USD associated with the IDI

The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES)

The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) assessment survey evaluates competencies critical for effective interaction with people who are different from yourself. These differences can originate from country culture or from ethnic, generational, religious, and other areas. The IES is designed more for lower level managers or employees in profit and not-for-profit organizations as well as for students in university programs. Participants will be required to complete a 15-20 minute questionnaire before the group workshop. An additional one hour debrief and coaching session will be scheduled individually.

Note: There is a cost of \$12 USD associated with the IES

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The Global Competencies Inventory (GCI)

The Global Competencies Inventory (GCI) measures leadership effectiveness competencies of corporate managers and global leaders in areas critical to interacting and working effectively with people of different cultures. It is designed for faculty and graduate students in universities as well as technical personnel, and middle and top management personnel in international corporations. Participants will be required to complete a 40-60 minute questionnaire before the group workshop. An additional one hour debrief and coaching session will be scheduled individually.

Note: There is a cost of \$130 USD associated with the GCI

Building Bridges: 5 simple activities to prepare students for cross-cultural interaction

According to Milton Bennett (1993) interacting constructively with those who are different from ourselves is not a natural behaviour for humans. Bennett asserted that for people from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively, they must first be prepared for their interactions. This idea is further supported by Gordon Allport's (1954) Contact Hypothesis which stated that particular conditions must exist in order to reduce prejudice between members of different groups. In today's classroom there is greater diversity than ever before. For students to thrive and learn in the multicultural classroom instructors must prepare students to interact with each other.

One way to do this is to help students discover the commonalities that bind them together and help them to see themselves in the "other". This session will provide participants with 5 interactive activities they can use in their classrooms to allow students to explore what makes them the same as well as come to a deeper understanding of an appreciation for their different perspectives.

Learning Objectives:

- Provide instructors with tools they can use to build bridges between students from different "groups"
- Understand the importance of bridge building exercises from the perspective of a non-dominant group member
- Set a tone for deep discussions on identity and cultural values
- Increase cultural self-awareness

Duration: 90 minutes

Session Structure: Participants will work through the 5 activities in order to experience the effect of each activity on a group. Participants will leave having experienced each activity from beginning to end. Participants will also leave with printed instructions that cover activity set-up, managing the activity, and debriefing the activity.

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What Just Happened? Making Meaning of Critical Moments Abroad

This session will explore how integrating debriefing into experiential education activities in an overseas setting can help to manage group dynamics and support intercultural learning.

Leading a group of students overseas can be exciting and inspiring. Education Abroad can be a mechanism for truly transformational learning and bring out the best in students. At the same time, the additional stress of being away from home, living in close quarters with peers and not having access to familiar social supports it can also create a group dynamics nightmare, polarized views of the host culture and many missed learning opportunities. This session will explore integrating debriefing into experiential education activities to manage group dynamics and support intercultural learning.

Exploring Cultural Identity

In this session participants will explore the concept of cultural identity and how it influences how we see the world and how perspectives based on our cultural identity lead us into making specific interpretations of what we see in the world. Interactive activities, some stories and culture general knowledge will be used to flesh this out.

Learning Objectives:

1. Introduce the idea of cultural identity and Improve cultural self-awareness
2. Explore the concept of culture and increase student understands of greater cultural context & influence.
3. Leave students with a greater sensitivity to themes of identity and culture in the books they will be reading over the semester.
4. Revisit the idea of cultural identity and Improve cultural self-awareness
5. Explore the concept of culture and increase student understands of greater cultural context & influence.
6. Leave students with a greater sensitivity to themes of identity and culture in the literature they are exposed to over a semester.

Using the Arts to Transform Cross-Cultural Conflict

According to Michelle Lebaron, ...Conflicts are connected to fundamental, unconscious ways of knowing and being in the world, they cannot be solved using problem solving or communication skills alone. “The need to summon creativity and exercise the choice to cooperate has never been more urgent”. So how can we find ways to be together that acknowledge each of our systems of meaning and our identities?