PSY5120 Social and Cultural Issues in Counseling Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando

Fall Semester 2023 3 credit hours

Instructor

Aimée McKinney

Contact Information

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Class meeting times
Thursdays, 9am-12pm
Office Hours
By appointment

Course Description

This course exposes students to the psychosocial similarities, differences, and adversities that exist among people groups and to encourage the development of (1) a healthy awareness/understanding of people both inside and outside the student's frame of reference, (2) an understanding of his/her own learned and socially prescribed attitudes and beliefs concerning "others," and (3) a multidimensional contextual framework for understanding people and providing counseling services.

Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)

Students will demonstrate comprehension of the follow (CACREP standards in parenthesis):

- CO1. Multicultural characteristics—Multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally. (2.F.2.a, 5.C.2.j)
- CO2. Theories and models of multicultural counseling—Theories and models of multicultural counseling, cultural identity development, and social justice and advocacy. (2.F.2.b, 5.C.2.j)
- CO3. Multicultural counseling competencies. (2.f.2.c, 5.C.2.j)
- CO4. Culture's impact on views of others—The impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others. (2.f.2.d, 5.C.2.j)
- CO5. Power and privilege—The effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients. (2.f.2.e, 5.C.2.j)
- CO6. Help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients. (2.f.2.f, 5.C.2.j)
- CO7. Spirituality—The impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldviews. (2.f.2.g, 5.C.2.j)
- CO8. Barrier elimination—Strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination. (2.f.2.h, 5.C.2.j)

Methods of Instruction

Information will be conveyed to students via lecture, group discussion, guest speakers, and presentations.

Assignments / Course Requirements

A1. Complete assigned reading and Weekly Reading Questionnaire (WRQ).

In order to be fully prepared to most fully engage in class, students are expected to keep up with course reading throughout the semester. Towards this end, students will complete a questionnaire each week that includes prompts for reflection and synthesis of reading and space to generate questions stemming from reading, and time spent completing the WRQ. Questions generated by students may be used in classes to carry dialogue from reading into the classroom. Each week, the professor will post the WRQ prompt on Canvas. Additionally, students will complete a self-report of reading percentage completed each week. **Due**: Reading report and WRQ response are to be turned in on Canvas on Wednesdays by 11:00am.

A2. Participation and Attendance:

This class is experiential and participatory. Towards this end, class time will be designated each week to complete a class reflection. Class reflections will include factual reflections and affective/emotive reflections and should be 2-2.5 pages (APA, Double-Spaced). Students will receive an APA Template for class reflections each week via canvas. Because a course on social and cultural issues often surface numerous and diverse feelings, these reflections will give the professor a means of tracking what each student is experiencing within the context of class. These are considered to be pass/fail. If students display insufficient effort in class reflections, the professor will address this directly by setting up a meeting with the student.

Additionally, students will provide the professor a self-completed assessment of their participation in the course at the end of the semester. This includes a self-report of reading completion. Student's grade in this section will be a composite of their self-assessment and class reflections. **Due**: Wednesday 12/6 by 11:00am

A3. Cross Cultural Interview Project

Guidelines for interviews and write-up:

- A. The purpose is to become acquainted a person from an ethnically/racially different people group.
- B. Avoid cultural matching (i.e., do not interview a person of an ethnic/racial group of your same background. Do not select a person just on the basis that he or she is of the opposite gender of you).
- C. In the interview process:
 - a. Watch your non-verbal communication.
 - b. Be aware of ethical issues (e.g., inform your interviewees and get permission if you will be recording, taking notes, etc.; provide confidentiality if requested; etc.).
 - c. Use discretion in choosing your topics. Avoid topics that are not germane (e.g., sex life), and issues that might be too personal (e.g., divorce). Remember—you are not counseling the person.
 - d. You may find the "Culture-centered Interview Guide" a helpful resource in asking questions to obtain information about such things as the person's social customs, family

life, housing, clothing, food, employment, political patterns, religion and folk beliefs, economics, arts, and value systems. This is available on Canvas.

D. Your write-up must include:

- a. A personal and historical background of the person as a member of a particular people group(s).
- b. The person's experiences in the U.S. of institutional barriers or other special problems/issues resulting from their minority status (e.g., barriers or problems with the education system, resource availability, government, employment, housing, health care, transportation, relations with police, family issues, coworkers in the workplace, etc.). Institutional barriers are policies, procedures, or situations that systematically lead to disadvantage or discrimination (as related to age, ability, national origin, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.). Address how they have responded to this disadvantage or discrimination.
- c. The person's perceptions of his/her own and his/her group's relation to the dominant society.
- d. Your assessment of their degree of assimilation/acceptance/acculturation (Use the identity development scale discussed in class).
- E. Your write-up should be in narrative form. It should not be written with a Q & A transcript format.
- F. Use pseudo names in the write-ups.
- G. This interview needs to be conducted separately from the other assignments.
- H. This write-up should be no less than 5 pages in length.

Due on Canvas Friday 11/17 by 11:59pm.

A4. Cultural Immersion Experience.

Attend a religious service where the high majority of the attendees are ethnically/racially different than you AND their worship style is generally unfamiliar to you. Attending a religious service that is simply a different denomination than your own does not meet the intent of this assignment. You must actually attend a service and not just talk to a religious leader. You can go to this service with no more than one other person you know (i.e., friend, spouse), and it should not be one that you have ever visited. Some religious services can last extended hours (1½-3 hours). The expectation in this assignment is that you will attend the whole service. Do not attend a service spoken in language that you do not speak unless there is an interpreter present. This assignment must be completed during the semester; that is, previous experiences cannot be used to fulfill this requirement. Note: The location must be pre-approved by the professor. Submit your request to the professor through Canvas. Lack of pre-approval will result in a score of "0" points for the assignment. You will present your experience in class and address the following questions:

- A. Describe the physical setting, the service, and the people in attendance.
- B. What was your level of interaction with the people and the activities of the service?
- C. Describe your level of comfort and feelings of acceptance and/or belonging?
- D. What were your emotional reactions to the place, the service, and the people?
- E. What did you learn about this people group? Was it consistent or inconsistent with previous learning?
- F. What did you learn about yourself?

Due on Canvas Wednesday 11/29 at 11:00am (a bulletin or some piece of literature from the religious service that you attended is due at the beginning of class on Thursday 11/30).

A5. Classroom Presentation.

Students will be put into small groups and assigned a specific minority people group to study. Each group will make an in-class presentation reporting their findings. Guidelines for presentations:

- A. In your presentation you *must* cover the following four issues:
 - a. What has been the historical experience of this minority group in the U.S.? Discuss how this history has led to:
 - i. the development of normative behaviors/relational patterns of the group.
 - ii. their immediate social problems and needs.
 - iii. specific issues caused by economic, social, and educational deprivation/disadvantagement.
 - b. What are the core cultural values of the group (e.g., their worldview, the role of family and of religion, concept of time, etc.)?
 - c. How may cultural values/historical experiences affect the group's perception of counseling?
 - d. What approaches, strategies, and techniques have been shown to be effective when working with this people group?
- B. Presentations should be 60 minutes in length.
- C. Within the groups, each student should contribute equally to the development and presentation of the presentation.
- D. You may (but do not have to) use brief video clips or music, but they must be clearly tied to the point you are trying to convey.
- E. DO NOT invite a guest speaker for your presentation.
- F. When presenting statistics, they must be as up-to-date as possible.
- G. Create a PowerPoint presentation for your in-class presentation.
- H. Demonstrate evidence of research outside of class readings.
- I. One group member must submit an electronic copy of your PowerPoint presentation with a bibliography of at least five references to your Canvas account by the date of your presentation.

Due: Presentation groups, topics, and dates will be assigned the first day of class.

A6. Cultural Identity Analysis.

One aspect of becoming a culturally competent counselor is developing an understanding of one's self as a cultural being. This exercise is intended to help you name some unique elements of your cultural/ethnic/racial identity. Reflect on your personal life experiences and relationships and how they have shaped how you define this identity.

A. List 5 aspects of your cultural/ethnic/racial identity (e.g., nationality, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, social class, generation, locality, class, education, profession, family and political attitudes, etc.) that are significant to you.

- B. For each aspect you identify 5 stories/experiences by which you can help others understand the formation and importance of these aspects of your cultural/ethnic/racial identity.
- C. How will these affect your ability to work with others who are not like you on this diversity construct?

Due: Upload your answers to your Canvas account <u>by 11:00am on Wednesday 9/20</u>. You will present your answers to these three questions in class on Thursday 9/21.

Required Course Materials

- M1. Emerson, M. O., & Smith C. (2001). *Divided by faith: Evangelical religion and the problem of race in America*. Oxford University. ISBN: 978-0195147070
- M2. Fessler, P. (2008). What's wrong with multiculturalism: Christian scholars and cultural diversity. *Pro Rega, 36* (3), pp. 1-11.
- M3. Lee, C. (2018). *Multicultural issues in counseling: New approaches to diversity (5th ed.)*. American Counseling Association. ISBN: 978-1556203695
- M4. McNeil, J. D., & Pozzi, C. (2007). Developing multicultural competency. In R. J. Priest & L. N. Alvaro (Eds.), *This side of heaven: Race, ethnicity, and Christian faith* (pp. 81-93). Oxford University.
- M5. Tatum, B. D. (2017) Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race. Basic. ISBN: 978-0465060689
- M6. Keller, T (2020) Secular Justice and Critical Theory. Retrieved from https://quarterly.gospelinlife.com/a-biblical-critique-of-secular-justice-and-critical-theory/?fbclid=lwAR059dlgH10GLO7hveXZMRU9UrMLB2v4FSbp8DYFR5LgAKyQDzP1Nyt-dvI

Suggested Materials

- M6. Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Nassar-McMillan, S., Butler, S. K., & McCullough, J. R. (2016). Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies: Guidelines for the counseling profession. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 44*(1), 28-48.
- M7. Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling. (2009). Spiritual competencies: Competencies for addressing spiritual and religious issues in counseling. Retrieved from http://www.aservic.org/

Policies and Important Information

Note on Course Participation and Discussions. The material discussed in this course is potentially sensitive, controversial, and emotionally charged. You will also be asked, on occasion, to step outside of your comfort zone. In engaging in these activities or in reactions to materials and discussions, you may experience various levels of discomfort. Such reactions are normal and to some extent necessary for learning about identities and differences. It is imperative that classroom discussions are conducted with the utmost respect of others perspectives and experiences. The collective goal for the class is to create a

safe space that is conducive to growth and learning, and students are expected to make an effort to treat others with respect, dignity, and support even when they disagree with the viewpoints expressed by the professor or classmates or readings during the course of the semester.

Class attendance and active participation in class discussions is expected and essential to promoting student learning (yours and your classmates). Keep in mind that participation is culturally influenced; not everyone participates verbally; please be aware of your own participation style and share air time with other students. Also, since this course requires your active participation and is group oriented, please do not arrive late or leave early.

APA Style. All written work must conform to American Psychological Association (APA) style, 7th edition. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online. Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

Disability Accommodation Policy. If you require a special adaptation or accommodation to participate fully in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides MAC students with access to the EBSCOhost Psychology & Behavioral Science Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library, or from your home computer by following the link below and logging in with a username and password to be provided in class. http://search.ebscohost.com/

Submission of work. All assignments will be submitted, graded, and returned via Canvas unless otherwise specified by the instructor.

Late work. All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Points will be deducted for late assignments.

COURSE ASSIGNMENT GRADING

Assignment	% of Grade
Reading/Weekly Reading Questionnaire	15%
Class participation and attendance	15%
Class presentation	25%
Cultural immersion experience	20%
Interview write-up	15%
Cultural identity analysis	10%

Course Process and Schedule (Subject to Change)

Lecture ID	Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments Due	2016 CACREP Standards
L1	8/24	Course Introduction Key Concepts: race, ethnicity, culture, discrimination, prejudice, oppression worldview, racism and other "isms", bias (implicit)	1. Fessler 2. McNeil & Pozzi 3. Lee, Ch. 1	-Class Reflection Entry (due at the end of class)	2.F.2.a, 2.F.2.b, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e
L2	8/31	Multicultural Competence: Self-awareness, Client Worldview, Counseling Relationship, Advocacy, Broaching	1. Emerson & Smith, Ch. 1 2. Tatum, Ch. 1 3. Keller 4. Lee, Ch. 2	-Class Reflection Entry (due at the end of class) - WRQ (due Wed 8/30 at 11:00am)	2.F.2.a, 2.F.2.b, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.h
L3	9/7	Key Concepts: Racial and Cultural Identity Development	1. Emerson & Smith, Ch. 2 2. Tatum, Ch. 2 3. Lee, Ch. 3	-Class Reflection Entry (due at the end of class) - WRQ (due Wed 9/6 at 11:00am)	2.F.2.a, 2.F.2.b, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d
L4	9/14	Addressing Spirituality in Counseling, ASERVIC Competencies, Microaggressions	1. Emerson & Smith, Ch. 3 2. Tatum, Ch. 3	-Class Reflection Entry (due at the end of class) - WRQ (due Wed 9/13 at 11:00am)	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.g
L5	9/21	Key Concepts: Power/Privilege, Multicultural Counseling Cultural identity analysis assignment presentation	1. Emerson & Smith, Ch. 4 2. Lee, Ch. 16 3. Tatum, Ch. 4	-Class Reflection Entry (due at the end of class) - WRQ (due Wed 9/20 at 11:00am) - Cultural Identity Analysis Outline (due Wed 9/20 at 11:00am)	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.e

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L6	9/28	Group One Presentation & Guest Speaker	TBA	Group One PowerPoint due before class	2.F.2.a, 2.F.2.b, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d
L7	10/5	Group Two Presentation & Guest Speaker	TBA	Group Two PowerPoint due before class	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.f, 2.f.2.g, 2.f.2.h
	10/12	NO CLASS-Reading Week			
L8	10/19	Group Three Presentation & Guest Speaker	ТВА	Group Three PowerPoint due before class	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.f, 2.f.2.g, 2.f.2.h
L9	10/26	Group Four Presentation & Guest Speaker	ТВА	Group Four PowerPoint due before class	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.f, 2.f.2.g, 2.f.2.h
L10	11/2	Group Five Presentation & Guest Speaker	ТВА	Group Five PowerPoint due before class	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.f, 2.f.2.g, 2.f.2.h
L11	11/9	Group Six Presentation & Guest Speaker	ТВА	Group Six PowerPoint due before class	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.f, 2.f.2.g, 2.f.2.h
L12	11/16	Group Seven Presentation & Guest Speaker	TBA	Group Seven PowerPoint due before class -Cross-Cultural Interview Write- Up (due 11/17)	2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.e, 2.f.2.f, 2.f.2.g, 2.f.2.h
	11/23	NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING			
L13	11/30	Cultural immersion experience Course Wrap-Up	1. Lee Ch. 19 and 20		2.F.2.a, 2.f.2.c, 2.f.2.d, 2.f.2.g

Student Learning Outcome Table

The table below shows how the objectives of this course will be met, and how they relate to CACREP Standards. Details about specific course objectives, assignments, and evaluation methods can be found in later sections of this syllabus.

CACREP Standard(s)	Course Objective	Material	Lecture	Assignment / Evaluation
2.F.2.a	CO1. Multicultural characteristics—Multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally.	M1. (whole book) M3. (Chs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16)	L1-L13	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation A4. Cultural immersion experience A5. Cross-cultural interview with write-up A6. Cultural identity analysis
2.F.2.b	CO2. Theories and models of multicultural counseling— Theories and models of multicultural counseling, cultural identity development, and social justice and advocacy.	M3. (Chs. 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16) M5. (whole book)	L5-L12	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A5. Cross-cultural interview with write-up
2.f.2.c	CO3. Multicultural counseling competencies.	M3. (Ch. 2) M4. (pp. pp. 81-93)	L1	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation A4. Cultural immersion experience A5. Cross-cultural interview with write-up A6. Cultural identity analysis
2.f.2.d	CO4. Culture's impact on views of others—The impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others.	M1. (whole book) M3. (Chs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16) M4. (pp. pp. 81-93) M5. (whole book)	L3-13	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation A4. Cultural immersion experience A5. Cross-cultural interview with write-up A6. Cultural identity analysis
2.f.2.e	CO5. Power and privilege—The effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients.	M1. (whole book) M3. (Ch. 16) M5. (whole book)	L5	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation
2.f.2.f	CO6. Help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients.	M3. (Chs. 2, 4, 5, 6, 7)	L7-12	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation
2.f.2.g	CO7. Spirituality—The impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldviews.	M1. (whole book) M3. (Chs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16) M4. (pp. pp. 81-93)	L1, 7-13	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation A6. Cultural identity analysis
2.f.2.h	CO8. Barrier elimination— Strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination.	M1. (whole book) M3. (Chs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16) M4. (pp. pp. 81-93) M5. (whole book)	L1, L7- 12	A1. Assigned readings and readings report A2. Attendance and participation report A3. Classroom presentation A4. Cultural immersion experience A5. Cross-cultural interview with write-up A6. Cultural identity analysis

CLASSROOM PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Presentation Requirements

Each of the four issues addressed in the following Classroom Presentation demonstrates the students understanding of the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others, and applies them to clinical practice:

In your presentation you must cover the following four issues:

- a. What has been the historical experience of this minority group in the U.S.? Discuss how this history has led to:
 - i. the development of normative behaviors/relational patterns of the group.
 - ii. their immediate social problems and needs.
 - iii. specific issues caused by economic, social, and educational deprivation/disadvantagement.
- b. What are the core cultural values of the group (e.g., their worldview, the role of family and of religion, etc.)?
- c. How may cultural values/historical experiences affect the group's perception of counseling?
- d. What approaches, strategies, and techniques have been shown to be effective when working with this people group?

Criteria	Points Possible	Course Objective
Historical Experience. What has been the historical	30	CO1,4-8
experience of this minority group in the U.S.? Discuss		
how this history has led to:		
 the development of normative 		
behaviors/relational patterns of the group.		
 their immediate social problems and needs. 		
 specific issues caused by economic, social, and 		
educational deprivation/disadvantagement.		
Core Cultural Values. What are the core cultural	10	CO1,4,6-8
values of the group (e.g., their worldview, the role of		
family and of religion, etc.)		
Perception of Counseling. How may cultural	10	CO1-8
values/historical experiences affect the group's		
perception of counseling?		
Effective Treatment. What approaches, strategies,	10	CO2,3,6
and techniques have been shown to be effective when		
working with this people group?		
Presentation Length	20	CO1-8
Documentation. Documented Proof of Research/APA	20	CO1-8
cited sources (at least 5)		

Course Objectives Related to MAC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: **PSY5120 Social and Cultural Issues in Counseling** Professor: Aimee McKinney

Campus: Orlando Date: Fall 2023

following as the course conti	MAC* Student Learning Outcomes Four the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the Be intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each Foibites to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the Carribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.	Rubric Strong Moderate Minimal None	Mini-Justification
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling, ethical standards of practice, personal career development, advocacy for clients, consultation & collaboration, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling.	Moderate	Knowledge of multicultural issues is needed to be an effective counselor and informs ethics, career development, and advocacy.
Social & Cultural Diversity	Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking counseling and clinical mental health services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.	Strong	This course was designed to be the primary course meeting this student learning outcome.
Human Growth & Development	Understands and applies knowledge of various theories of individual and family development, and factors affecting human development. To include biological, neurological, physiological, systemic, and environmental factors, addiction, and effects of crisis, disasters, and traumas.	Minimal	Knowledge of the impact of multicultural differences on human development is addressed
Career	Understands and applies theories and models of career	Minimal	The impact of racism on career
Development Counseling & Helping Relationships	development, counseling, and decision making. Understands and applies theories and models of counseling, strategies for understanding and practicing consultation, and developing relevant counseling treatment and intervention plans.	Moderate	development is addressed. Culturally competent counseling modalities are addressed during this class.
Group Counseling & Group Work	Understands and applies theories and models of group counseling and group work, dynamics of the group process and development, and therapeutic factors that contribute to group effectiveness.	None	None
Assessment & Testing	Understands and applies clinical knowledge effectively, including various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses. To include diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.	None	None
Research & Program Evaluation	Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research through a biblical worldview and integrate it into counseling practice. Understands the process of program evaluation and its integration into the practice of counseling and clinical mental health counseling.	None	None
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling.	Moderate	Approaches to working with multicultural clients are addressed.
Integration (Biblical/Theologic al)	Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts with counseling practices.	Moderate	Integration of biblical and multicultural concepts is woven throughout the course
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the triune God.	Moderate	Knowledge God's intentional creation of diverse people groups helps students to deepen their love for God and his people.