

## Introduction to CAS Cultural Competency Framework

The Child and Adolescent Studies (CAS) department takes a department-wide approach to promoting cultural competency among CAS students. Two student learning objectives (SLOs) specifically address this focus on cultural competency:

- 1c. Describe biological, psychological, cultural and environmental influences on development
- 1d: Identify and describe key components of cultural competence

The Diversity in Development (DiD) Committee works diligently to coordinate instructional efforts specific to the role of diversity-related factors across development. In 2016, the Committee developed a Cultural Competency Framework (CCF); in 2023 it revised the CCF for currency. The CCF will continue to be updated, as needed. The DiD Committee will soon begin working on developing Frameworks related to neurodiversity, disability/ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

On page 1, the CCF describes

- a definition for cultural competence
- 6 points related to key knowledge and dispositions of culturally competent individuals
- 4 points related to the practice and ongoing activities that culturally competent individuals engage in

On pages 2 – 5, the Key Ideas and Curricular Topics of the CCF outlines

- 7 key ideas that are to be interwoven across various CAS courses, these include:
  - Theoretical Perspectives
  - Cultural Understandings
  - Assumptions about Culture
  - Conceptualizing Cross-Cultural Differences and Validity
  - Immigration and Acculturation
  - Bias, Stereotypes, and Discrimination
  - Privilege and Inclusivity
- a description of each key idea, along with suggested specific topics and relevant culturally competent practices

Course-specific learning goals incorporate many of the key ideas and specific topics. Faculty should review the CC course curriculum map (available on CAS Canvas page) to ensure they are introducing, developing or helping students master key ideas that are relevant for each course. Please note that faculty are not expected to cover *all* of the specific topics listed below each key idea. The Committee encourages CAS faculty to visit and utilize the Cultural Competency Resources they have posted on the CAS Canvas page. Resources include links to brief videos, scientific articles, lecture slides, and sample assignments that faculty may incorporate into their courses.

If you have questions about the CCF and/or how to best incorporate the key ideas and corresponding topics into your course, email the course coordinator or DiD Committee Chair, Lupita Espinoza ([guadespinoza@fullerton.edu](mailto:guadespinoza@fullerton.edu)).

## KEY COMPONENTS OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY

### CAS Learning Objectives

- a. Describe biological, psychological, cultural and environmental influences on development
- b. Identify and describe key components of cultural competence

**Definition of cultural competence:** Cultural competence is characterized by a set of skills, behaviors, perspectives, and principles that together indicate an ongoing understanding of cultural diversity. Culturally competent individuals work effectively within and across cultural contexts by integrating and applying knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific practices and attitudes that are responsive to the needs of culturally diverse populations. Cultural humility, a related concept, extends cultural competency as a life-long and non-linear practice that requires engagement in self-reflection. The development of cultural competence and humility are critical in order to recognize social injustices and engage in socially just practice to combat oppression.

### Knowledge and Dispositions

Culturally competent individuals:

1. Have a set of values and principles, behaviors, and attitudes that enable them to work effectively within and across cultures.
2. Understand that different cultural groups are associated with goals, values, attitudes, identities, and traditions (i.e., a cultural framework) that may differ from that of their own cultural group and/or the U.S. dominant cultural group (i.e., European American).
3. Know that cultural frameworks are complex and affect the behaviors, choices, and decisions of individuals and communities.
4. Are mindful that imposing the cultural framework of one group onto a different group may result in oppression, ineffective practice, mistrust, and/or misunderstanding.
5. Realize that practitioners, and the institutions of which they are a part, might experience differing levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills related to cultural competence.
6. Are aware that becoming culturally competent requires critical engagement in self-reflection and a recognition of social injustices.

### Practice

Culturally competent individuals who practice cultural humility engage in these ongoing activities:

1. Reflect on the ways in which their own identity, biases and socio-historical positionality may influence their practice, beliefs, and interactions with people from different cultures.
2. Examine their own cultural framework in relation to the target cultural framework and acquire new information on the target framework to work effectively with individuals and communities.
3. Systematically involve the family, children, and the communities they serve not only to understand their cultural framework, but also to set the goals for the services provided.
4. Take action to address and challenge power and privilege imbalances that perpetuate social injustices.

## KEY IDEAS AND CURRICULAR TOPICS

### Theoretical Perspectives

- Developmental theories place varying degrees of emphasis on the role of culture.
- Many widely accepted developmental theories were developed and tested on samples of White, Western, male, educated, and/or high-income individuals and may not be generalizable to the majority of the world's population or to specific subgroups.
- Some developmental theories minimize or ignore culture and/or perpetuate oppressive or discriminatory approaches to minoritized populations.
- Other developmental theories prioritize cultures and/or center the experiences of historically marginalized individuals.

### Specific Topics:

- Integrative Model for the Study of Developmental Competencies in Minority Children (García-Coll et al., 1996)
- Historical and ongoing bias in psychology that privilege Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) populations (Henrich et al., 2010)
- A Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST; Beal Spencer et al., 1997)
- Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005)
- Funds of Knowledge (Moll et al., 2005)
- Revision to Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory (Velez-Agosto et al., 2017)
- Critical Race Theory of Education (Ladson-Billings, 2021)

### Culturally Competent Practices:

- Examine historical biases in developmental and psychological research (i.e., in sampling, in developing theories) and implications for the understanding of human development.
- Assess to what extent developmental theories address culture and/or can be generalized to other populations.
- Challenge deficit-oriented conceptualizations and language.

### Cultural Understandings

- There are explicit (e.g., rules, behaviors, music) and implicit (e.g., eye contact, gestures, physical space) dimensions of cultural groups.
- Norms, values, expectations, and traditions may be socialized in explicit (e.g., verbal, formal instruction) or implicit (e.g., nonverbal, informal instruction) ways.
- There are implications of differing cultural norms, values, expectations, and traditions on motivation, communication style, development, family relationships, etc.
- Familiarity with national and local statistics is relevant in understanding diversity.

### Specific Topics:

- Individualism vs. collectivism.
- Demographic information (population numbers/relative sizes for major pan-ethnic groups, English language learners, LGBT youth, children without documentation, etc.).
- Global majority (African, Asian, Latin American and Arab descent people comprise ~80% of the world).

### Culturally Competent Practices:

- Do not simplify the dimensions of culture to only the expressive or explicit aspects.
- Seek ongoing knowledge and awareness of cultural norms, values, expectations, and traditions of the dominant group and other groups.

### **Assumptions about Culture**

- Problematic assumptions are often made about cultures and cultural groups, including:
  - Assuming everyone who belongs to a particular cultural group is the same or has the same attitudes, values, interests, needs, etc.
    - In fact, there are differences within cultural groups.
    - Some of those differences occur because of *intersectionality* (e.g., considering race and gender simultaneously).
    - There are subcultures (e.g., gangs) that may be operating within cultural groups.
  - Assuming cultures are static rather than changing and dynamic.
    - Over time, setting, and circumstance, cultural values, norms, and traditions change.
    - Current events and environmental conditions (e.g., war, climate change, globalization) lead to changes in the beliefs and values to which people adhere.
    - Risk of intergenerational trauma from changing social, cultural, and structural factors can lead to disparities (e.g., health, education, socioemotional).

### Specific Topics:

- Intersectionality (i.e., how systems of oppression intersect—e.g., undocumented and LGBT).
- Intergenerational trauma (i.e., emotional/psychological wounding transmitted across generations, including epigenesis).

### Culturally Competent Practices:

- Use caution when generalizing findings from one sample to an entire cultural group.
- Understand what pan-ethnic categories (e.g., Asian American, Latine/x) reveal and obscure.
- Seek information and knowledge of cultural practices and values to work effectively within cultural groups.

### **Conceptualizing Cross-Cultural Differences and Validity**

- Incorporate conceptualizations of culture that center cultural strengths rather than deficits.
- Attend to etic (top-down, outsider, deductive) and emic (ground-up, insider, inductive) perspectives to studying culture and cultural differences.

### Specific Topics:

- Parenting values and practices
- Sociocultural theories
  - Transmission of culture (Vygotsky)
  - Apprenticeship in thinking (Rogoff); Learning by Observing and Pitching In (LOPI)

### Culturally Competent Practices:

- Assess who or what was considered the “norm” when measures, policies or laws were developed and whether they are applicable and meaningful across groups.
- Challenge cultural deficit thinking and build on cultural strengths.

## **Immigration and Acculturation**

- Acculturation occurs when individuals and groups of people immigrate to a new context/country.
- There are different strategies by which individuals acculturate, depending on various factors (e.g., context of reception, size of ethnic community) and personal characteristics.
- There are generational differences and adjustment outcomes based on acculturation strategy adopted (e.g., immigrant paradox).
- There are different ways to measure acculturation (e.g., identity, behaviors, language use).
- Acculturation Stress may be experienced by first- and second-generation youth.
- Ethnic identity development and socialization can mediate or buffer against the detrimental effects of discrimination.

### Specific Topics:

- Acculturation theories (e.g., Berry).
- Culture and linguistic brokers.
- Ethnic/Racial identity development (ERI) (e.g., Phinney, Umaña-Taylor).
- Ethnic/Racial socialization (e.g., Hughes).

### Culturally Competence Practices:

- Avoid simplifying cultural groups into broad “immigrant” or “non-immigrant” categories.
- Identify and address the systemic barriers (e.g., prejudices, digital inequity) that immigrant families face when engaging with certain institutions (e.g., schools, healthcare centers).  
Recognize the importance of a strong ethnic identity and the impacts of such on multiple child and adolescent outcomes.

## **Bias, Stereotypes, and Discrimination**

- Everyone has explicit and implicit biases.
- There is a difference between discrimination and stigma.
- There are potential effects of not addressing inequities and not being culturally competent.
- Examine institutional and structural level factors that favor certain groups over others and have the effect of restricting opportunities for other groups.

### Specific Topics:

- Teacher expectations/Rosenthal Effect, stereotype threat.
- Implicit biases and microaggressions.
- Differences in median incomes, percent living in poverty, and child poverty.
- Inequities among cultural groups in academic readiness, educational outcomes, and other well-being indicators.

### Culturally Competent Practices:

- Engage in critical self-reflection of own biases.
- Intentionally monitor one’s own attitudes about and behaviors toward individuals and cultural groups.
- Advocate for systemic change that benefits children and families (e.g., family policies).

## **Privilege and Inclusivity**

- Everyone has a culture, but individuals will differ in their awareness and identification with a cultural group.
- Our experiences of privilege (or lack of privilege) position us in ways that can be perceived as hostile to others.
- Words are powerful and can be perceived as alienating or oppressive to individuals and groups.

### Specific Topics:

- Dimensions of privilege (e.g., racial/ethnic, color, ability) and cultural dominance (e.g., ethnocentrism).
- Colorism and other forms of privilege and racism within cultural groups.
- Anti-bias language, especially when addressing individual characteristics (e.g., racial and ethnic identity, socioeconomic status, intersectionality).
- Cultural humility as a lifelong and non-linear practice.

### Culturally Competent Practices:

- Be aware of institutionalized power and privilege (or lack thereof) associated with different cultural and social groups.
- Understand the components of culturally relevant programming (e.g., high-quality translated materials, appropriate literacy levels, etc.) and program cultural adaptations.
- Engage in intentional critical self-reflection of one's own privilege(s) and membership to privileged groups (or lack thereof).
- Use inclusive language that does not discriminate or stigmatize cultures or subcultures (e.g., partner vs. husband or wife, undocumented vs. illegal).
- Understand the difference between ethnic minority status, numerical minorities, and underrepresented minorities.
- Do not treat the dominant European American group as the "normal" or "right".