PA 6319 - Diversity in Public Sector – Dr. Sabharwal

PA 6319-501
DIVERSITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR
Fall 2012
Tuesdays: 7-9:45 p.m. – FO 2.208

Contact Information

Professor: Dr. Meghna Sabharwal
Office Hours: Tuesdays 6-7 p.m., and by appointment
Office Location: GR 2.238
Phone: 972-883-6473
E-mail: meghna.sabharwal@utdallas.edu

Course Description

In this course we will focus on diversity beyond just race/ethnicity and gender, and examine dimensions of sexual orientation, religion, skill level, physical ability, communication styles, and multi-generations in the workplace. Understanding diversity and learning how to manage its complexity is, perhaps, among the most important challenges public administration schools are facing today. The need to remove barriers and enhance prospects for our graduates to understand the changing nature of the workforce is paramount. To this end, we also will examine the need for cultural competency for public administrators.

The purpose of this class is to provide you with the knowledge and understanding required to meet the challenges presented by our increasingly diverse society. A significant portion of the class will focus on diversity in the workplace. While this is also a standard topic in human resource management courses, this class will go much more into depth to understand many of the more subtle ways in which “nonmainstream” groups can face barriers to full and equal participation in decision-making and opportunities for advancement and growth. We will further examine positive steps that organizations can take to dismantle these barriers and measure success.

Objectives

1. Understand the demographic changes in the U.S., examine multiple dimensions of diversity for one’s self and in places of work.
2. Examine the importance of multiple cultures in public organizations in work teams; challenges that come with multiculturalism
3. Review, discuss, and understand the legalities that surround diversity (affirmative action, legal cases).
4. Critically evaluate the various dimensions of diversity (race and ethnicity, gender, religion, age, ability, sexual orientation, communication styles, personal appearances, and multi-generations in the workplace).
5. Understand the need for cultural competency in public administration
6. Examine the impacts of diversity on organizational outcomes such as job performance, job satisfaction.
7. Review, discuss and evaluate the future of diversity initiatives.

Readings

Journal articles and book chapters as noted in the course outline. All required readings are available on eLearning. We will also view videos when relevant.

How to demonstrate what you learn

This is a seminar style class, and each student should be prepared to participate in each class. Participation requires reading the material before class and being on time for class. Later sections of this syllabus identify the readings for each class meeting. Each student is expected to fully participate in chapter discussions, case discussions, and in-class exercises. In short, your absence will impact your participation grade. In addition, tardiness to class and early departure will also lead to reduced participation grades. If you know that you will not be able to attend class for personal or work related reasons, make sure you inform the professor in advance and submit your assignment. Personal and family circumstances can require class absence. Students should contact the professor about such absences before the class.

1) In-Class Training – 10%

Training is an important part of organizations’ learning and development. You will be responsible to develop a 45 minute training program on any of the topics outlined in the syllabus. This is not an exercise in providing a detailed summary of the readings, but to use movies, TV programs, video clips, role play, stories, or games to communicate the most interesting things you have learnt from the readings. You must clearly discuss how the movies, programs, clips, or stories match the class readings or the theories. Have fun with the topic!

Peer evaluations of your performance will be conducted.

Things to consider:

- “Tell” the class what you like (agree) most and what you dislike (disagree) most about the ideas in the reading material
- You can use visual aids, play video clips, design PowerPoint slides, jokes, games…whatever that you can think of to impress the audience
- Time: about 30 minutes, make sure you leave 10-15 minutes for questions.
- If you will use some materials (e.g. video clips) on the computer or other instruments, please come to the classroom early to set it up and test.
Please note the presentation should NOT be a presentation of the reading, but an interactive exercise that illustrates the theme of the week and guide a follow-up discussion through thoughtful questions.

2) Your Diversity Map—10%

Type a three page personal ethnic history (i.e., ethnicity identity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, ability differences, and communication style). For example, what kind of jokes does your family tell or spurn? What kinds of foods do you eat, especially at certain times of the year? What are your family expectations about education? What is the role of language within your family? Do you have an accent? How does the region of the country you are from affect you? What is your religious affiliation? Please explain how your ethnic characteristics have influenced your experiences, outlook, and approach to your life. These papers will be discussed in class. Due September 4th.

3) Critiques—20%

You are required to write a 2 page critique on any four topics in the assigned readings. Please keep in mind that it is not an exercise in summarizing the readings. Summaries will get a lower grade. Discuss your thoughts on the reading, including general themes, disagreements, and any insights you gleam from the reading that can be applied to current events. I’m not looking for an outline of the reading. The review should address the following questions: What were the major themes? What would you challenge? What are their implications for working in public and nonprofit organizations?

The critiques will be due at the start of the class each week. You must go beyond the readings and include at least 3 assigned readings in your discussion.

4) Book Review and Presentation—25%

Choose any book on the topic of diversity and write a 4-5 page book review. You will present the book reviews in class on October 9th. Those students who are interested in publishing their book reviews can talk to me. Students must submit their book title for approval by September 11th.

5) Final Paper—35%

Literature Review & Presentations (35 points): Investigate and write an 8-10 page literature review on a workplace diversity topic. This review will thoroughly summarize the field of research, identify at least one unanswered question, and explain why answering this question is important to public/nonprofit administration. This literature review will be restricted to research published in approved peer-reviewed journals. Students must submit research questions/topics for approval by September 25th. Due: December 11th.
Note: **LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** except under exceptional documented circumstances at the sole discretion of the instructor. Students who miss class are responsible for all announcements, class discussions, and changes made to the course outline during class meetings. Assignments are due at the start of the class session on their due date. Assignments may be submitted via email (attached file) or fax by prior arrangement with the instructor if the student will not be able to attend class.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing your Diversity</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critiques</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>25% (20 points written and 5 points for presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>35% (25 points written and 5 points for presentation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UTD Policy on Cheating**

Policy on Cheating: Students are expected to be above reproach in all scholastic activities. Students who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the university. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22.

A very useful statement on plagiarism (with good definitions, etc.) is available at [http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm](http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm)

**ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY DISCLAIMERS**

**UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to [http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies](http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies) for these policies.
Detailed Course Schedule

Week 1: August 28
Course and Class Introductions

Week 2: September 4

Diversity in the Workforce

The multiple dimensions of Diversity and Culture – (Mitchelle Rice – Chapter 1)

Initial Steps in Preparing for Diversity in the Workplace (Riccucci – Chapter 3)


Diversity Efforts Should Include White Employees – Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) Report by Rebecca R. Hastings, SPHR

Week 3: September 11

Multiculturalism


Week 4: September 18

Legal Dimension

Understanding Affirmative Action – J. Edward Kellough (Chapters 4, 7, 8)


Cases – Please look at these cases. You can find excellent summaries at: www.oyez.org

United Steelworkers of America v. Weber (1979)
Johnson v. Transportation Agency (1987)
Metro Broadcasting Inc. v. FCC (1990)
Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)
Hopwood v. Texas (2001)

Week 5: September 25

Ethnic and Racial Diversity

Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Management (Riccucci – Chapter 4)


Are young workers actually post-racial? SHRM Report by Bill Leonard
Week 6: October 2

Gender Diversity


Diversity Management and Women in Public Sector Workforces (Ricucci)


Week 7: October 9

Book Review - Presentations

Week 8: October 16

Religious Differences


http://www2.journalnow.com/news/opinion/2012/aug/13/wsopin02-column-rising-above-deadly-ignorance-of-rar-2513526/


**Week 9: October 23**

**Age and Ability Differences**
Slack (2000). Zones of Indifference and the American Workplace: The Case of Persons with HIV/AIDS. *Public Administration Quarterly*

Diversity in Ability (Riccucci)


**Week 10: October 30**

**Sexual Identity and Orientation**


Halloran, L. (2011). With Repeal Of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' An Era Ends. NPR Report

Cromwell, Kim. Somewhere Over the Rainbow: Defining the Future for the LGBT Workforce. SHRM Report
Week 11: November 6

Other Dimensions of Diversity


Managing the Multigenerational Workforce (Ricucci)


Week 12: November 13

Cultural Competency


Week 13: November 27

Impact of Diversity on Organizations (Outcomes)


Week 14: December 4

The Future of Diversity Initiatives


Week 15: December 11

Final Presentations

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.