

Use of Intercultural Education Strategies in Improving Student Access and Learning Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

This paper generalizes from years of teaching experiences with first-generation college students from multicultural and multi-ethnic backgrounds.

Included in discussion are ten major approaches or strategies: Multicultural orientation, international perspectives, comparative methods, interdisciplinary approach, focus on fundamental skills, inspiration from the real world, application to everyday life, service learning in the community, outcome assessment, and cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning, for example, suits students well from low-income families who oftentimes feel intimidated by the establishment of the knowledge enterprise and need external support to access the higher education system. In implementation, students are treated as partners. They are encouraged and motivated to involve in class discussion and to express themselves in front of an audience. Most important, a cooperative learning atmosphere is fostered by which students feel they have made to the point of understanding something important on their own. This comment by a student is illustrative: "Even if your verbal answer is incorrect, the professor does not make you feel inferior, he wants you to expand and think about the answer you just gave."