

## STAGES OF RESPONDING TO HUMAN DIVERSITY

*Adapted From Antibias Curriculum (A Class at Pacific Oaks College)*

*It is impossible to move through each of these in one semester.*

1. **DOMINANT CULTURE CENTERED.** The dominant culture is promoted to the exclusion of all other cultures, because it is the ideal standard. People with this view often unconsciously assume that the dominant culture's norms and values are right and normal – the “only way.” For example, everybody must speak only English regardless of his or her native tongue. Dominant culture is civilization - higher, better than anything else. People of other cultures are “deprived.” The aim, whether conscious or unconscious, is to eliminate other cultures.
2. **DENIAL OF DIFFERENCES.** In an attempt to not be bigoted people in this stage promote the idea that we are all alike. They claim to be colorblind. “People are people—I don't notice if they are red, yellow or blue,” is a typical remark of a person in this stage. They believe that noticing differences shows prejudices. A person in this stage still believes in and promotes only the dominant culture, whether consciously or unconsciously.
3. **“TOURIST” APPROACH.** In this stage people accept and promote differences in a noble attempt to increase understanding and acceptance of differences. But it is very difficult to learn about or teach someone else's culture and the effects are: to create an exotic aura around ethnicity; to over generalize and create more stereotypes; to teach specific aspects of culture out of context which trivializes it into bits and pieces of art, artifacts, history, customs, or holidays. The tourist approach is an “add on” to education rather than being truly integrated into the curriculum. The tourist approach does not address issues of bias, injustice, privilege, prejudice, or equity.
4. **IMAGES OF DIVERSITY.** In this stage, in an attempt to dispel differences, the concept is promoted that we are all ethnic and cultural beings. Culture is life and studies of it are organized around common, everyday themes such as “we all have needs and how we meet those needs varies.” Differences are viewed in the context of our common humanity. One culture or way of doing things is not valued over another.
5. **ANTI-BIAS/MULTICULTURAL.** The theme of this stage is respect and dignity resulting in true integration and equity. This stage begins with the understanding that there are different realities and none is right or wrong. It is not enough to be introduced to diversity, but we must learn to be sensitive to realities different from our own as well as think critically about injustice. We must recognize that each American has the right to become bicultural - to maintain and grow in one's mother culture while, at the same time, gaining a second. A key word in the anti-bias stage is empowerment, which can be very threatening as members of the dominant culture come to realize that for there to be true equity (i.e. social justice) minorities and indeed all people must have access to power. The clearest way, at this point, for them to get it is for the dominant culture to share its power. Anti-bias is not just a cognitive approach, it includes feelings and actions too. A full anti-bias approach includes promoting equity for all aspects of human diversity—culture, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and age. Now that you have read the STAGES OF RESPONDING TO HUMAN DIVERSITY here are your Journal Questions.

Due Week 2

### FIRST RESPONSE

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Write approximately 2 - 4 sentences on each question. Write each on your write up.