

Diverse City Retreat

Mission Statement

The short-term goal of the Diversity Retreat is to expose students to various types of diversity, challenging them to interact with individuals different from themselves by race, ethnicity, religion, and ability. The retreat will assist students in moving to a deeper understanding of others' worldviews and life experiences. It will also provide them with a safe environment to process their reactions. The long-term goal of the retreat is to remove various barriers in order to help students build relationships with others from diverse backgrounds.

Itinerary

Orientation Meeting: Wednesday before the trip (pre-assessment handed out)

Friday

- 4pm** **Leave campus for Downtown Los Angeles**
- Students are introduced to their host family (2 students will stay at each home) from Living Gospel Church (a predominantly African-American church)
- 6pm** **Dinner at Ambala Dahaba Indian Restaurant**
- Pre-arranged dinner conversation with the owner's oldest son, Sampath.
 - Questions for discussion attached.
- 7-9pm** **Diversity Players Theater group**
- Watch a play focused on non-traditional multi-cultural casting designed to celebrate diversity.
- 10-11pm** **Debrief Diversity Players Experience**

Saturday

- Morning** **Breakfast with host family**
- 10-11am** **Exceptional Children's Foundation**
- ("serves to provide the highest quality service for children and adults who are challenged with developmental, learning, and emotional disabilities")
 - Assist in classroom and recreational activities interacting with students and discussion time with parents.
- 12-1pm** **Debrief ECF Experience**
- 1-5pm** **Focused Free time in Chinatown**
- 2 Tasks:
 - Find their way to the Kim Hung Chinese Bakery. Purchase a dessert for the host family dinner that evening.
 - Find the ingredients or the substitutes for the recipe to make their own favorite food.
- 5pm** **Return to Host Family**
- Dinner and hangout time with their host family.

Sunday

- 9am-1pm** **Church with Host Family**
- 1pm-??** **Lunch in the Park and Final Debrief**

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Pre-Trip Assessment

Please circle the appropriate number based on your experiences

5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Unsure, Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree

1) My family's discussions of other cultures were generally positive.

1 2 3 4 5

2) Most of my friends look like me.

1 2 3 4 5

3) I have lots to learn about others that are different from me.

1 2 3 4 5

4) The way I was raised to view others who were different from me was beneficial.

1 2 3 4 5

5) I feel guilty about my able bodied-ness when I am around those that are disabled.

1 2 3 4 5

6) I feel comfortable having conversation about race.

1 2 3 4 5

7) Our campus is diverse.

1 2 3 4 5

8) I am generally open to new experiences.

1 2 3 4 5

9) Minority groups are portrayed in a positive light in the media.

1 2 3 4 5

I chose to go on this retreat because...

Curry and Questions

Purpose: For students to have a purposeful interaction with someone from a culture other than their own and grow in appreciation and understanding of that culture.

Learning Outcomes:

- For students to grow in their understanding of a culture other than their own.
- Students will develop an appreciation of the challenges of immigrating.
- Students will develop an understanding of the significance that food plays in a different culture.

Prep Materials:

- Establish relationship with Restaurant owner.
- Make reservations and plan menu items to order.
- Find out if there are any food allergies with the students.

Directions/ Guidelines:

- Eat the meal and discuss the initial thoughts on the meal and the environment.
- Discuss the developed questions but allow room for student initiated questions.
 - Possible Questions for Sampath:
 - What do you love the most about Indian cuisine?
 - What is your favorite dish to make and why?
 - What is the most expensive ingredient to buy?
 - What is the hardest ingredient to buy in the United States?
 - What do you miss the most from India?
 - How long has your family owned this restaurant?
 - What has been the biggest challenge your family has had to overcome since owning this restaurant?
 - What do you wish non-Indians knew about your culture?
 - How much of your religious heritage is connected to the food that you eat? Is there any connection?
 - How supportive has your family been in running this restaurant?

Theoretical Basis:

We look to the Helms Theory of White Identity Development when we plan programs that are related to ethnic development, particularly in this case as we have assumed that 8 of the 12 students on the retreat are white. Other theories will be integrated as we consider the development of the other students as well.

This dinner will allow the white students to move in Phase I (with three stages). This dinner conversation will allow students to have “contact” with someone different from himself or herself. There maybe some anxiety that comes with this initial interaction, a normal part of this process. We hope this experience will pave the way for more development in this area.

Also we reference Sue and Sue in regards to the students who are bringing with them a different racial or cultural background. We hope that students will begin to see the value in this non-white culture. So even though these students are not white we hope that they will move away from a white-centric worldview through their interactions with Sampath.

Diversity Players

Purpose:

- To expose, entertain, and enlighten students on the role of ethnicity in casting choices.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify how non-traditional casting influenced their experience of the dramatic performance.
- Students will be able to assess their current experience of ethnicity in the casting choices of movies, plays, and television shows, pointing out examples of traditional and non-traditional casting and analyzing the pros and cons thereof.
- Students will be able to demonstrate a consciousness of their own ethnicity and how it affects the lens through which they see casting choices.

Debrief Questions:

- What did you think of the performance?
- Did you notice anything that stood out in the casting choices?
- How did non-traditional casting influence your time here tonight?
- What has been your past experience of casting choices, particularly the ethnicity of the actor, in movies, plays, and television shows?
- What are some pros and cons of traditional casting?
- What are some pros and cons of non-traditional casting?
- How did your own ethnicity influence the way you saw the performance tonight?
- How has your ethnicity influenced the way you have seen casting choices in the past?

Theoretical Basis:

- Students of color – Sue & Sue Stage 2: Dissonance Stage = A gradual process/realization that racism does exist. Certain aspects of the minority culture begin to have appeal. There comes awareness that all cultural values of the dominant group are not beneficial.
- White students – Helms: Phase One Status Two = Conscious acknowledgement of whiteness and the associated moral dilemmas. Recognition of and discomfort with incongruence of social correctness and social realities.

Exceptional Children's Foundation

Purpose: To expose students to the needs of children with disabilities and provide them with an understanding of methods to aid children in their development by assisting the Exceptional Children's Foundation with their in-center Early-Start day program.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will develop competency in facilitating activities to help children improve language skills, gross and fine motor skills, as well as art, music, and cognitive exercises, as they assist program coordinators in doing so.
- Students will leave with an understanding of the developmental struggles of disabled children.
- Students will gain an appreciation for the profession and ministry of working with handicapped children.
- Students will develop an understanding of the difficulty families (specifically parents) of children with disabilities face through a designated time of interaction with the parents.

Debrief Questions:

- How did you feel upon arrival to your classroom and your initial interaction with the children?
- If you felt any discomfort, how did you overcome that?
- What was your favorite activity with the children?
- Did anything surprise you about the children or any part of your experience?
- What did you learn from your discussion with the children's parents?
- Have any of your previous perceptions about disabled individuals been challenged by this experience?

Theoretical Basis:

Kolb's Cycle of Learning: Begins with the concrete experience (full and unbiased involvement in learning experiences), moves to reflective observation (contemplation of one's experiences from various perspectives), then to abstract conceptualization (idea formulation and integration), and finally to active experimentation (incorporation of new ideas into action), which brings the student back to concrete experience.

The idea behind Kolb's theory is that learning takes place as a result of a transformational experience, which is the goal of the students' experience at the Exceptional Children's Foundation. This series of steps is continuous, and is not a set of developmental stages, so our hope is that each experience during our Diversity Retreat Weekend is a continual cycle of moving our students through Kolb's Cycle of Learning.

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Debrief: Chinatown, Home Stay, and Church Experience

- Did you find the search in Chinatown frustrating or enjoyable?
- What was your experience with your host family?
- What did you think of your church experience?

Final Debrief Questions

- What role did diversity play in your life prior to this weekend?
- Has your view of diversity changed?
- What was the most difficult part of this weekend for you?
- What have you learned from this trip?
- Do you feel more comfortable in environments with people of differing race, ethnicity, religion, or physical and mental ability?
- How do you think this trip will affect you once you return to campus?
- What steps will you take to remember what you have learned?

Post-Trip Assessment

Please circle the appropriate number based on your experiences

5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Unsure, Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree

1) I am more aware of ethnicity and race in media as a result of this trip.

1 2 3 4 5

2) I feel more aware of my own racial identity and the diversity (or lack of) in my daily environment.

1 2 3 4 5

3) I have a better understanding of child development, and more specifically, the struggles children with disabilities face.

1 2 3 4 5

4) I think I will feel more comfortable interacting with disabled individuals as a result of my experience at the Exceptional Children's Foundation.

1 2 3 4 5

5) I have a deeper respect for religious experiences other than my own.

1 2 3 4 5

6) I am still struggling to understand and process what I have experienced this weekend.

1 2 3 4 5

7) I am ready to return to campus and tell others about what I have learned.

1 2 3 4 5

8) I would go on this trip again.

1 2 3 4 5

9) I would recommend this Diversity Retreat to others.

1 2 3 4 5

Additional Comments (what would you change, what is essential for us to do again, etc.):