

# **CULTURAL DIVERSITY & HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT**

## **Department of Counselor Education**

### **The College of New Jersey**

Twenty-first century counselors recognize the impact of white supremacy culture and colonization in creating and maintaining systems of privilege and oppression, which affect all aspects of human life, including mental health and wellness. To best serve the needs of our students and clients, we believe the counseling profession, counselor educators, practicing counselors, and counselors-in-training must develop a complex and nuanced understanding of human diversity and the conditions that impact human rights. Toward this end, the Department of Counselor Education faculty is committed to facilitating honest and respectful discussions to prepare students to become social justice advocates and agents of change.

Consistent with the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics, the Department of Counselor Education requires that its students commit themselves to endeavor to understand all people's lived experiences and promote their well-being. The Department of Counselor Education at The College of New Jersey fully endorses the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development's (AMCD) Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies. We expect students to commit themselves to an ongoing learning process to:

1. Increase their self-awareness, particularly regarding personal privilege/marginalization, biases, and assumptions;
2. Develop the knowledge and skills to understand their client's worldview deeply;
3. Cultivate the knowledge, skills, and advocacy interventions necessary to work with clients across the spectrum of human diversity;
4. Expand their understanding of how privilege and power impact the counseling relationship.

When students accept admission into the counselor education programs at The College of

New Jersey, they agree to commit themselves to this ongoing learning process related to cultural diversity and human rights. In support of our student's commitment to this position, faculty in the department will create and nurture an inclusive learning community, and commit to:

1. Fostering the holistic development of all students, not just their academic adjustment;
2. Developing lines of scholarship and supporting student research and professional development on multiculturalism (e.g., dismantling systems of oppression; racial identity development);
3. Infusing multicultural and social justice issues into all courses, not just our course on multicultural counseling;
4. Genuinely sharing with all students our own experiences of cultural exploration and development, while supporting the multicultural journeys of our students;
5. Creating classroom environments where students can be both brave and vulnerable, with an understanding that insensitive and/or harmful comments and behaviors must be addressed;
6. Supporting and encouraging students' exploration of biases, preconceived notions, and personal strengths and/or limitations, while attempting to understand the worldview of his/her/their culturally different clients.

The faculty believes that this commitment by students and faculty alike will help to create and support an inclusive learning community within our department, the School of Education, and the College and will support the development of counselors who are culturally competent practitioners.