

## SECTION 16. PEDAGOGY AND EDUCATION

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### **ENGAGING DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

Career development is the lifelong process of gaining new skills and knowledge, finding the mission and purpose of work, and advancing a career path. When people are working on building their careers, it is crucial to understand that career development is a complex process influenced by a variety of factors. Career decisions can be limited by socialization, access to guidance, societal and self-stereotypes, isolation from networks, and early schooling experiences (Kerka 2003). Barriers and challenges that individuals might face include financial constraints, lack of mentors, discrimination, and less access to education.

Research on career development sometimes neglects essential factors such as racism, sexism, family background, and opportunity structure (Walsh et al. 2001). Additionally, individuals vary in their readiness to engage in career development activities. Based on the level of readiness, career services providers can develop tailored outreach strategies and unique programming for diverse populations.

An effective strategy for engaging with students who might not be ready for career development activities could be embedding career-related material into the curriculum and inviting guest speakers to share their perspectives and experiences. It might create a unique learning opportunity if guest speakers share similar backgrounds and identities with students. Culturally congruent practices tailored to specific groups are associated with increased career intervention effectiveness (Arthur & Collins, 2011; Byars-Winston & Fouad, 2006; Carter et al., 2003; Fouad & Bingham, 1996; McWhirter et al., 2017).

When creating tailored career programming for diverse student populations, it is vital to consider the intersectionality of identities. Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, gender identity, sexual identity, and disability as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage (Lockwood, 2019). Many diverse populations might be first-generation college students who need more support in career development. Strategies to engage diverse populations in career development might include personalized advising focusing on multicultural counseling, creating tailored events and programming for students, embedding career content into the curriculum, and facilitating student experiential learning opportunities.

Fouad and Bingham (1995) developed the culturally appropriate career counseling model to include cultural factors working with racial/ethnic minorities. The model incorporates cultural background into the career counseling process. The proposed model introduces aspects that impact career development, identity, gender roles, personality, family expectations, cultural values, and structural barriers.

A model for culturally appropriate career development includes the establishment of a culturally appropriate relationship, information gathering, identification of cognitive, social, emotional, environmental, behavioral, and external influences, assessment of cultural, gender, and efficacy variables, career assessments, selection, administration, and interpretation of culturally appropriate instruments, career development practitioners' awareness of their identity, values, and attitudes.

To enhance the value of career counseling work with diverse student populations, it is crucial to develop multicultural competency, reflect on the lens career professionals look through, recognize possible implicit bias career professionals might have, and consider students' intersecting identities. To achieve this goal, it is vital to tailor career interventions to the specific needs of diverse student populations.

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