

Developing Cultural Competence in Pre-Service Agricultural Education Teachers

Jason Bullock, Dr. Joy Morgan, & Becky Cibulskis - NC State University

Introduction/Need for Innovation

- Developing cultural competence in pre-service teachers helps higher education institutions meet institutional goals of graduating individuals who can navigate a diverse global society.
- With diversity present in all classrooms, teachers should facilitate inclusive learning environments that promote and engage students in dialogue allowing them to learn how to communicate and relate to others from diverse backgrounds (Keengwe, 2010).
- During AEE 326, instructors partnered with NC State Global Training Initiative to offer a Developing Cultural Competence (DCC) certificate program that prepared students to identify their own cultural preferences while providing the tools needed to understand the preferences of others.
- In addition, the DCC program promoted cultural awareness in personal and professional settings and teaches students how to implement strategies for working effectively across cultural differences.
- Prepared students to meet the North Carolina Student Teaching Capacity competency stating *“Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world, and appropriately uses materials or lessons that counteract stereotypes and acknowledges the contributions of all cultures.”*

How it Works

- Agricultural Education pre-service teachers enrolled in AEE 326 completed the Developing Cultural Competence Certificate program through the Global Training Initiative at NC State University.
- Due to impact of COVID-19, one in-person session was held with the remaining two sessions being virtual.
- DCC program facilitators lead students through discussions and activities focused on theoretical frameworks for:
 - Understanding culture.
 - Cultural dimensions
 - Cultural competency
- Participant reflections after each session explained how the DCC lessons and activities personally impacted them and how it could impact their future classroom.
- Participants were recognized through NC State University GTI webpage and received a DCC Program complete certificate.

Cost/Resources Needed

- Free program sponsored by University and open to all students.
- Course instructors provide class time and “homework” time to allow students to complete the various components of the DCC certificate program.

Results/Implications

- DCC Program was launched in 2018 with 49 students.
- 20 pre-service agricultural education teachers completed the program in 2019 and 17 are currently enrolled in the DCC program (2020).
- Overall, 259 students enrolled from NC State University and partner institutions in China, Colombia, and the SKEMA Business School (French).

Being able to better understand the variations in cultures, I will be better able to interpret any issues within my classroom, and create a safe and supportive environment...I am excited to jump in with a diverse group of students and coworkers, while doing the best that I can do.

Future Plans/Advice

- DCC Program will be a part of AEE 326 for future semesters.
- Partnerships with various higher education agencies can maximize efforts to prepare graduates for life in a globally diverse workforce and promote inclusivity.
- Advanced planning can allow for customization of activities and lessons to match course objectives.
- Future partnerships with international institutions to connect pre-service teachers across the globe.

NC STATE
UNIVERSITY