

The Dean's Council on Diversity presents

DIVERSE MEANINGS: COE GRAD STUDENTS' CONVERSATIONS ABOUT DIVERSITY MARCH 1, 2012 - ROOM 135 - RIVER'S CROSSING

Voices from this brown bag lunch seminar represent an ongoing exchange of ideas related to understanding, defining, and embracing diversity in schools including K-12 and higher education students, practitioners, and researchers. This panel is a part of our qualitative educational process and reports on part of our results from one year of group discussions on diversity in the classroom.

Lauren Moret, Ph.D. Student in Educational Administration & Policy
Dissertation focus: Cultural competency practices of K-12 instructional supervisors. DCOD talks over the past year have helped me to recognize and articulate my interest in how adults in the school building use cultural competencies to enhance or detract from the students' learning process. These discussions have helped me to connect a personal interest with a limited area of writing, leading to confirmation of my dissertation topic. It is my job as an educational leader to help others acknowledge and use diversity to support instructional practices for students and adults.

Ann E. Blankenship, Ph.D. Student in Educational Administration & Policy
Dissertation focus: Changes in K-12 teacher tenure legislation and policy from 2009 to present. My studies focus in part on the impact of diversity, or lack thereof, in schools. The DCOD has provided me with a forum to explore and expand my understanding of diversity through readings and discussion. It has challenged me to reconceive how I define diversity, both personally and professionally.

Casie M. Nauman, Ph.D. Student in Educational Administration & Policy
Dissertation focus: Disproportionality in school discipline. Throughout my participation in DCOD discussions, I have been reminded of the importance of diversity awareness and multicultural competencies in the field of education. As an educational leader, I believe it is my responsibility to foster an increased awareness around diversity and multicultural competencies so that students may have equitable opportunities in school.

Edward Joaquin, Ph.D. Student – Department of Lifelong Education, Administration & Policy
Dissertation Focus: The Filipino American Diaspora
As a California native, having to overcome stereotypes regarding my race and ethnicity challenges me to intellectualize my positionality as a Filipino American as I stand in the intersection of race and class in the South. Asian Americans recognized as one homogenous group problematizes diversity by silencing voices and taking space from invisible or forgotten Asian cultures. By deconstructing stereotypes and assumptions of other cultures will pave a way to better understanding and embracing diversity.

Mike Smith, MAT Student in English Education
Working with the DCOD has given me new avenues of discourse regarding diversity in education as well as other educational policies. It has provided me an outlet to discuss not only the challenges of student teaching in a diverse classroom, but also as a support group for the complexities of graduate school life. I joined the DCOD on my second week of graduate school. I consider it just as much a part of my education as any of my coursework.

Ain A. Grooms, Ph.D. Student in Educational Administration & Policy
Dissertation focus: How the policy implementation of voluntary interdistrict desegregation programs affects long-term student achievement. The DCOD meetings have stimulated discussions where members have challenged each other over what is needed in public education, and how academic professionals, educators and policymakers can work together to improve the entire public school system for all students, not just in schools in a select areas. Diversity in the personal backgrounds and in the educational experiences among DCOD members reinforces the idea that there is no singular answer to any question.