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Indiana Academy of
Nutrition & Dietetics

Cultural Competency in Nutrition: Bridging Gaps, Breaking Barriers

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Speaker Disclosures

I will be sharing information today grounded in research, some of which may be considered controversial. In the context of our current political climate, certain terms have been labeled as harmful, inappropriate, or unnecessary. If you feel uncomfortable with the material, you are welcome to leave the workshop at any time—no hard feelings. Should you choose to stay, I ask that we all engage with the content and each other with civility and respect.

Thank you!

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Objectives

- 1) Identify how cultural differences and misunderstandings contribute to nutrition-related health disparities.
 - 2) Explore the role of social determinants of health in shaping nutritional outcomes and access to care.
 - 3) Develop actionable strategies to overcome barriers and deliver equitable nutrition care in underserved communities
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Purpose

To increase your knowledge and awareness of...

- Definitions and concepts
- How and why you think the way you do
- Lived experiences other than your own

Join me

- Learning environment
- Key word: Perspective
- Growth mindset
- Tummy-feeling

Thank you

I appreciate this invitation, sharing this time, space, and place together.

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How do you break barriers and build gaps????

It starts with YOU understanding YOU!

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Your Power as the Nutrition Expert:

Knowledge Authority: You possess specialized training and expertise in nutrition science, enabling you to provide evidence-based guidance.

Guidance Facilitator: You have the ability to steer the conversation, introduce new concepts, and recommend actionable steps toward healthier eating habits.

Resource Navigator: You can connect clients with tools, resources, and support systems to assist them in achieving their dietary goals.

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The Client's Power:

Personal Experience: Clients have intimate knowledge of their own eating habits, preferences, and routines, which are crucial for tailoring realistic and sustainable dietary plans.

Cultural and Familial Insights: They bring an understanding of their cultural food traditions and family dynamics, which can significantly influence dietary choices and behaviors.

Decision-Making Authority: Ultimately, clients control the choices they make daily, and their commitment is vital for the successful implementation of any nutritional advice.

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Definitions

Ethnocentrism

The belief that your own culture, values, beliefs, and ways of doing things are superior to those of other cultures.

- It's seeing the world through the lens of your own cultural experiences and using that as the standard to judge others.

Cultural Humility

A lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique, wherein individuals continually assess their own cultural assumptions and biases. It involves recognizing and addressing power imbalances in interpersonal dynamics, fostering mutual respect, and actively learning from others' cultural experiences.

Definitions

Stereotype

A negative **belief** or assumption about individuals based solely on their membership in a group, regardless of their individual characteristics. Typically, overly exaggerated.

Prejudice

A negative **attitude** and feeling toward an individual based solely on one's membership in a particular group

Discrimination

Actions against an individual or group of people.



Cultural Destructiveness	Cultural Incapacity	Cultural Blindness
See the difference; Want to remove it	See the difference; Make it wrong	See the difference; Act like you don't
Rights are for the dominant group Attitudes, behaviors, values are destructive	Lack of skill & knowledge to respond effectively Maintains stereotypes; Excludes those who do not fit	Meeting the needs of the dominant group; Ignoring cultural strengths
If you come to America, you should speak English!	Why do the Amish act that way?	I don't see color. I just treat everyone the same.

Cultural Pre-Competence	Cultural Competence	Cultural Proficiency
See the difference; Respond to it inappropriately	See the difference; Value the difference	See the difference; Respond, Engage, Adapt
Committed to make a change	Has acceptance and respect for differences; Seek advice	Implement changes to improve services and programs based on needs
During Christmas, we also put up a menorah.	It is interesting learning about others' perspectives. Creating a culture of teachable moments.	DEI is embedded throughout every aspect of the organization. Culture change is clear.

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Characteristics	Gen Z (~18%)	Millennials (36%)	Gen X (36%)	Boomers (18%)
Signature product	Apps	Tablet	Personal Computer	Television
Communication preference	Emojis; Social Media; Text Highly connected	Text Social Media Collaborative	Email Text Hub and spoke	Telephone Guarded/Top-Down
Technology	Dependent	Native	Immigrants	Adapters
Outlook towards Employer	A mix...	Are my needs met? Work with - not for	Dedicated to profession	Dedicated to organization
Stereotypes	No loyalty; Cynical	Entitled; Lazy	Cynical; Too Confident	Out of Touch; Disinterested in learning new things
Training	It's life!	Continuous and Expected	Required to keep me	Too much and I'll leave
Feedback	Short & compact	On demand	Periodic	Once a year

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Bias: prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair

Weight Bias

- This involves holding negative attitudes or stereotypes about individuals based on their body weight. Such biases can lead to assumptions about a person's health status, behaviors, or compliance with dietary recommendations. Studies have shown that weight bias among dietitians can result in less effective communication and care. [Today's Dietitian](#)

Cultural Bias

- This bias emerges when one's own cultural norms and values are considered superior, leading to misunderstandings or undervaluation of clients' diverse cultural food practices. Recognizing and respecting cultural differences is essential for providing relevant and respectful nutrition advice. [SELF+1PMC+1](#)

Racial and Ethnic Bias

- Implicit biases related to race or ethnicity can affect clinical judgments and the quality of care provided. Healthcare providers may unintentionally interact less effectively with patients from minority backgrounds, contributing to disparities in health outcomes. [Today's Dietitian](#)

Socioeconomic Bias:

- Assumptions based on a client's socioeconomic status can affect judgments about their dietary habits, access to food, and ability to implement nutrition recommendations.

Bias: prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair

Status Quo Bias:

- This refers to a preference for existing practices or recommendations, potentially leading to resistance against new evidence-based approaches or alternative dietary practices that may better serve diverse populations.

Similarity Bias:

- Also known as affinity bias, this occurs when dietitians favor individuals who share similar characteristics or backgrounds, which can result in unequal attention or rapport with clients from different backgrounds.

Confirmation Bias:

- The tendency to seek out or give more weight to information that confirms pre-existing beliefs, while disregarding information that challenges them. This can hinder objective assessment and personalized care.

Personal Dietary Bias:

- Dietitians' personal dietary preferences or practices may inadvertently influence the recommendations they provide, potentially leading to biased guidance that doesn't align with a client's needs or preferences.

Cultural Norms: Mexican American Community

- Mexican-American culinary traditions are a vibrant fusion of indigenous Mexican practices and influences from Spanish colonization, evolving further through adaptation in the United States. This rich tapestry of flavors and techniques reflects a history of resilience, cultural exchange, and innovation.
- As Mexican communities established themselves in the U.S., particularly in the Southwest, they adapted their traditional recipes to incorporate locally available ingredients and cater to different palates. This led to the emergence of Mexican-American cuisine, characterized by dishes such as chili con carne, fajitas, and the extensive use of yellow cheese. Tex-Mex cuisine, for instance, exemplifies this blend, featuring heavier use of beef, wheat flour, and cheddar cheese compared to its Mexican counterparts

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Cultural Norms: Black Community

Under slavery, African Americans were often provided limited rations, typically consisting of cornmeal, lard, and undesirable cuts of meat. Demonstrating resourcefulness, they transformed these meager provisions into nourishing meals. Dishes like cornbread, fried catfish, and collard greens seasoned with pork became staples. The practice of slow-cooking tough meat cuts and incorporating wild or foraged greens led to the creation of hearty stews and soups, embodying the resilience and creativity of the enslaved community.

Soul food is more than sustenance; it serves as a cultural emblem, representing community, heritage, and identity. Traditional dishes are often central to communal gatherings, celebrations, and religious events within African American communities.

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Cultural Norms: Asian American

- The term "Asian American" encompasses a vast array of cultures, including but not limited to Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Indian, and Thai. Each of these communities brings its unique dietary practices and staple ingredients. For instance, Chinese cuisine emphasizes rice, noodles, and a balance of flavors; Japanese cuisine highlights seafood, rice, and fermented products like miso; while Indian cuisine is renowned for its diverse use of spices, legumes, and grains. This diversity reflects the varied agricultural practices and regional specialties of their countries of origin.

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Cultural Norms: Asian American

- Upon migrating to the U.S., Asian communities adapted their traditional recipes to incorporate locally available ingredients and cater to American palates. This led to the creation of dishes that, while rooted in traditional practices, are uniquely Asian American. For example, Chinese American cuisine saw the emergence of dishes like chop suey and General Tso's chicken, which are not traditionally found in China but became popular in the U.S. Similarly, Japanese sushi underwent transformations, giving rise to rolls like the California roll, which incorporates avocado and imitation crab.

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Cultural Norms: Asian American

- Food plays a central role in Asian American communities, serving as a medium for expressing identity, preserving heritage, and fostering community bonds. Traditional dishes are integral to celebrations, religious ceremonies, and family gatherings. For instance, the Filipino practice of "kamayan," or communal eating with hands, exemplifies the communal and familial aspects of Filipino culture. Such practices not only nourish the body but also reinforce social ties and cultural continuity.

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ACTION

- Take 2 personality assessments
 - Have someone take them as you
- Review the Diversity Wheel
- Review and Reflect on the Continuum
- Take the [Harvard Implicit Bias Test](#)

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Assessments

•Personality assessments

- Myers-Briggs
 - <https://www.16personalities.com/>
- Enneagram
 - <https://www.truity.com/test/enneagram-personality-test>
- DISC
 - <https://discpersonalitytesting.com/free-disc-test/>
- Apology
 - <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/apology-quiz/>
- Love Languages
 - <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/>
- Anger
 - <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/anger-quiz/>
- True Colors
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Understanding Equity vs Equality: <https://www.diversityresources.com/understanding-the-difference-between-equality-and-equity/>

Soul Food: <https://thedo.osteopathic.org/columns/food-from-the-soul-a-history-of-african-american-culture-and-nutrition/>

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How to Address 11 types of Bias in the Workplace: <https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/types-of-bias>