

## Meet the Committee on Multicultural Curriculum Transformation

The Committee on Multicultural Curriculum Transformation reports to the executive vice-president and provost and is responsible for promoting multicultural curriculum transformation at Northern Illinois University. The committee membership includes the Directors of the [Center for Black Studies](#), the [Center for Latino and Latin American Studies](#), and [Women's Studies](#); the Director of [Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center](#); the Vice Provost for [Academic Planning and Development](#); one faculty member from each college, one supportive professional staff member, and one curricular dean.

Faculty and staff members will serve three-year staggered terms beginning in the fall semester, not to exceed two consecutive terms. The chair of the committee will rotate every two years among the directors of the Center for Black Studies, the Center for Latino and Latin American Studies, and Women's Studies.

The committee will fulfill four the following duties:

1. Promote multicultural curricular transformation on campus
2. Coordinate the annual multicultural curriculum transformation institute and related programs
3. Advise the provost and university bodies on multicultural curriculum transformation issues
4. Submit an annual report on activities of the committee to the provost

The committee meets on the third Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is November 20, 2007.

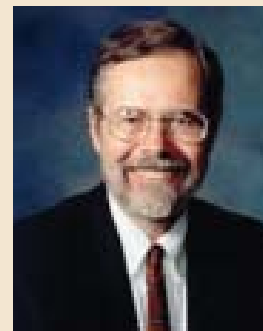
Contact [mcti@niu.edu](mailto:mcti@niu.edu) or call 815.753.8557 for additional information.



Dr. Laverne Gyantt,  
Director of the  
Center for Black  
Studies



Dr. Amy Levin,  
Director of  
Women's Studies



Dr. Michael  
Gonzales, Director  
of the Center for  
Latino and Latin  
American Studies

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## Multicultural FAQ

What is multicultural curricular transformation? What is its purpose?

"Multicultural course change refers to the modification of a given course to appropriately incorporate multicultural content, perspectives, and strategies. Such change has as its objectives the following: provide a more comprehensive, accurate, intellectually honest view of reality; prepare all students to function in a multicultural society; and better meet the learning needs of all students, including those who are diverse.

"...A transformed course's objectives of presenting new knowledge, helping students value diversity, and accommodating a range of learning strategies will better prepare all students for world citizenship."

M. Kitano,  
Multicultural Course  
Transformation in  
Higher Education: A  
Broader Truth

## Featured Methodology: Celebrating Diversity



**Dr. Lisa Finkelstein**, Associate Professor of Psychology, recently discussed one method of transforming the classroom into a multicultural experience. "An instructor plays a huge role in setting the tone of the class and needs to do that from the first minute to the last," she said.

"I have found that being open, telling personal stories, can help students feel more comfortable."

For example, she points out that not everyone in her classroom is a "38 year old heterosexual white female only child from a middle class suburban Boston background adopted by parents who didn't graduate college but reinforced higher education as the most important thing that no one could ever take away from you. In fact," she tells the class, "I bet I'm the only one." Finkelstein then encourages students' introductions around the room, not just by name, but by mentioning something about themselves that no one would otherwise guess.

"Don't assume that just because someone looks like you that they see things just like you do," is the point. "Also don't assume that if they look nothing like you that you don't have shared experiences. Ask and listen, share, and learn."

## Resources at NIU

Northern Illinois University offers multiple diversity resources, just a few of which are:

- [Center for Access-Ability Resources](#)
- [Center for Black Studies](#)
- [Center for Latino and Latin American Studies](#)
- [Center for South East Asian Studies](#)
- [Women's Studies Program](#)
- [LGBT Resources](#)

[Click here](#) for several more!

## Dates & Deadlines

- Oct. 15 - Registration deadline for the 17th annual [National Association for Multicultural Education Conference](#). Primarily useful for teacher educators, this conference is open to all educators and advocates of multicultural education.
- Nov. 20 - Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Committee meeting. Contact: [mcti@niu.edu](mailto:mcti@niu.edu) or call 815.753.8557.
- February, 2008 - Deadline to apply for 2008 Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute.
- May 12-16, 2008 - Multicultural Curriculum Institute.

## Peer Experience: Dr. Sherry Fang



Dr. Sherry Fang, Associate Professor of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences, attended the first ever Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute in 1994. "What a huge difference to meet fellow faculty with a similar commitment." She described the Institute as a powerful resource for networking as well as personal and professional development.

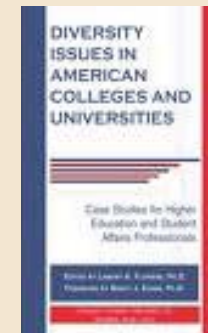
Dr. Fang has presented at the Institute several times, and offers the following thoughts for faculty and staff who are interested in learning more about multicultural curricular transformation:

- One reason a multicultural curriculum is important is because an institution of higher education prepares students for life in the real world, including the workforce. Graduates must be able to work with people different from them.
- Professional transformation cannot occur without personal transformation. Develop an awareness of oneself, and become conscious about one's teaching activities and interactions with colleagues.
- Transformation doesn't happen overnight. Take small steps. Curricular transformation is an ongoing process.

## Contact Us

Published twice yearly, **THE MULTICULTURALIST** is brought to you by the [Office of the Provost](#). We'd love to hear from you! Send in your multicultural methodology or success story to editor-in-chief [Donna Askins](#). Interviews can be arranged. For all questions related to the Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute, contact [mcti@niu.edu](mailto:mcti@niu.edu) or call 815.753.8557.

## Featured Book



*Diversity Issues in American Colleges and Universities: Case Studies for Higher Education and Student Affairs Professionals* (2004) by Dr. Lamont A. Flowers of Clemson University. This book

includes case studies on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues; race and ethnicity; religion; and students with disabilities. The ERIC database indicates, "The primary objective of this book is to help higher education graduate students and professionals practice skills needed to resolve diversity-related issues on college campuses.... each case study is designed to help readers recognize and develop multicultural awareness and become competent users of multicultural knowledge and related skills." Dr. John McFadden of the University of South Carolina adds: "The case studies are practical in focus and simultaneously reflect the complexities of diversity challenges affecting post-secondary education. The depth of the discussion questions should stimulate high quality debate in any course of study."