

Dr. AnaLouise Keating to Provide 2009 MCTI Keynote Address

AnaLouise Keating, professor of women's studies at Texas Woman's University, will provide the keynote address at the 2009 Multicultural Curricular Transformation Institute. The address, scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, from 9:00 - 2:30, is open to the public. Those interested in attending should check the Multicultural Curriculum Transformation [website](#) for details.



Dr. Keating has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in women's studies, composition, and literature. Her **books** include *Teaching Transformation: Transcultural Classroom Dialogues*; *EntreMundos/Among Worlds: New Perspectives on Gloria Anzaldúa*; and *this bridge we call home: radical visions for transformation*. She has worked with and written extensively on Gloria Anzaldúa and has published articles on critical race theory, queer theory, Latina writers, African-American women writers, and pedagogy.

In a presentation titled "Transformational Multiculturalism, Transcultural Dialogues, and Social Change," Professor Keating argues that both students and teachers can be changed through their explorations of multicultural issues and themes. She will explore what she calls transformational multiculturalism – a holistic approach that addresses multiple, interrelated differences among people (such as ability/health, economic status, ethnicity/"race," gender, nationality, region, religion, and sexuality) and will discuss some of the strategies and tactics she has developed. These include a pedagogy of invitation, listening with raw openness, relational reading, and (de)racialized teaching. She will offer participants concrete suggestions, drawn from her own teaching experiences, designed to invite student transformation.

The 2009 Multicultural Curricular Transformation Institute runs from May 11 - 15 in the Holmes Student Center. Some sessions will be open to the public. Questions regarding the institute should be directed to graduate assistant Charles Stapleton at mcti@niu.edu or 753-8557.

Know Your Multicultural Goal

As we make the decision to incorporate multicultural content and strategies in our courses, a critical first step is to make explicit the intended outcome – the **multicultural goal**. Is it to

- support diverse students' acquisition of traditional subject matter knowledge and skills?
- help students acquire a more accurate or comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter?
- encourage students to accept themselves and others?
- understand the history, traditions, and perspectives of specific groups?
- help students value diversity and equity?
- equip all students to work actively toward a more democratic society?

How we answer this question or prioritize intended outcomes has implications for how we approach curriculum change.

–Margie K. Kitano
from *Multicultural Course
Transformation in Higher
Education*

Fifteen Common Misconceptions About Multicultural Education

The Multiculturalist *is pleased to reprint, with permission, the following article as a running feature. Read the entire [article](#) online now, or stay tuned for future installments.*

The movement toward multicultural education has gained momentum over the past 20 years. Guidelines from professional organizations have been in place for some time. While many elementary educators support multicultural development and genuinely try to incorporate diverse cultural issues into the curriculum, some widespread misconceptions about what multicultural education is and how it should be implemented hinder the process. Specifically, at least 15 common misconceptions should be addressed:

1. People from the same nation or geographic region, or those who speak the same language, share a common culture. At least seven distinct dialects and cultures can be found in the Southern United States alone (Cross & Aldridge, 1989). Most Latinos share a common language, but they cannot be considered as one ethnic group sharing a similar culture. Tremendous historical, racial, and cultural differences must be acknowledged (Banks & Banks, 1997). The cultures of Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Argentina are distinctly different from one another, even though they share the same language. In Canada, the language (French Canadian) and culture vary dramatically from that of Alberta and other provinces.

Numerous similar examples in Asia can also be found. In Indonesia, for example, many people speak Bahasa Indonesian. The country is actually home to hundreds of different languages and dialects and numerous diverse cultures. One can find Sundanese, Bataks, Minang, Javanese, Balinese, Dayak, Toraja, and the many tribal languages and cultures of Irian Jaya. In Malaysia, there are Malays, Chinese, East Indians, and the tribal groups of Sarawak. To view regions or nations as if they were monocultural is erroneous, and it may inhibit students' construction of the fact that many parts contribute to the whole.

2. Families from the same culture share the same values. This notion is especially false for nondominant cultures living in the United States. Lynch and Hanson (1998) reported at least four ways individuals and families from other countries "live out" their culture in the United States. These include "1) mainstreamers, 2) bicultural individuals, 3) culturally different individuals, and 4) culturally marginal individuals" (p. 19). In reality, a continuum of cultural identity exists and the entire range often can be found within the same family. For example, grandparents may maintain their original culture, while their grandchildren may be bicultural or mainstreamers.

References

- Banks, J., & Banks, C. (Eds.). (1997). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Cross, K., & Aldridge, J. (1989). Introducing Southern dialects to children through literature. *Reading Improvement, 26*(1), 29-32.
- Lynch, E., & Hanson, M. (Eds.). (1998). *Developing cross-cultural competence: A guide for working*

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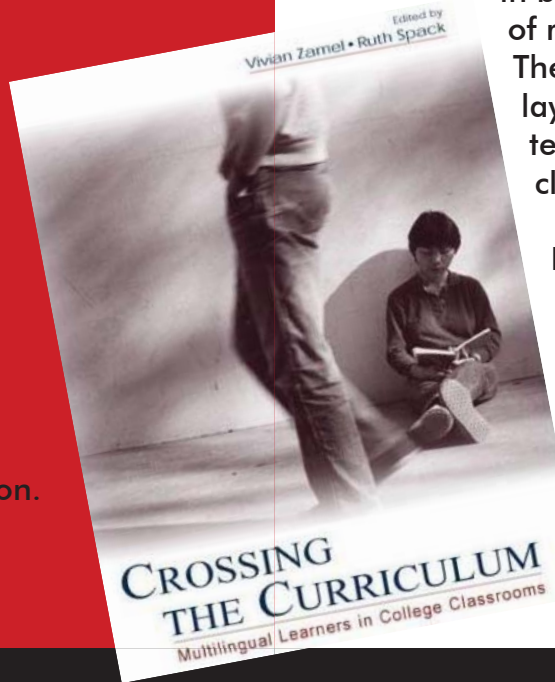
Fifteen Misconceptions (continued)

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Credits

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Crossing the Curriculum:

Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms

Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms by Vivian Zamel (Editor) and Ruth Spack (Editor). As college classrooms have become more linguistically diverse, ESOL professionals and faculty across the disciplines are trying to meet the challenge of teaching students of differing linguistic backgrounds. *Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms* responds to these issues and concerns by capturing the complex and content-specific nature of students' and teachers' experiences and providing a nuanced understanding of how multilingual students' learning can be fostered and sustained. It is unique in bringing together the perspectives of researchers, students, and teachers. These multiple lenses allow for a richly layered picture of how students and teachers actually experience college classrooms.

Editorial Reviews

A great merit of this book is the inclusion of full-length reflective essays from students: these essays provide critical insight about particularity, life trajectories, and moral nuances in second language acquisitions.

—*Composition Studies*

Crossing the Curriculum offers some fascinating observations and insights into linguistically diverse college classrooms. The book is... a must for all self-reflecting educators who constantly ask themselves, I wonder how students feel about learning in my class.

—*TESL-EJ*

A common thread running through the book is that pedagogical practices which are good for ESOL learners are good for all learners....the value of this book extends far beyond an audience interested in the ESOL student experience; it contains important lessons for all those who research, learn and teach at the post-secondary level.

—*The Linguist List*

Published twice yearly, **THE MULTICULTURALIST** is brought to you by the **Office of the Provost**. All members of the NIU community are invited to submit their multicultural methodology or success story to editor-in-chief **Donna Askins**. For all questions related to the Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute, contact mcti@niu.edu or call 815.753.8557.

Multicultural Pavilion Offers Several Curricular Transformation Resources

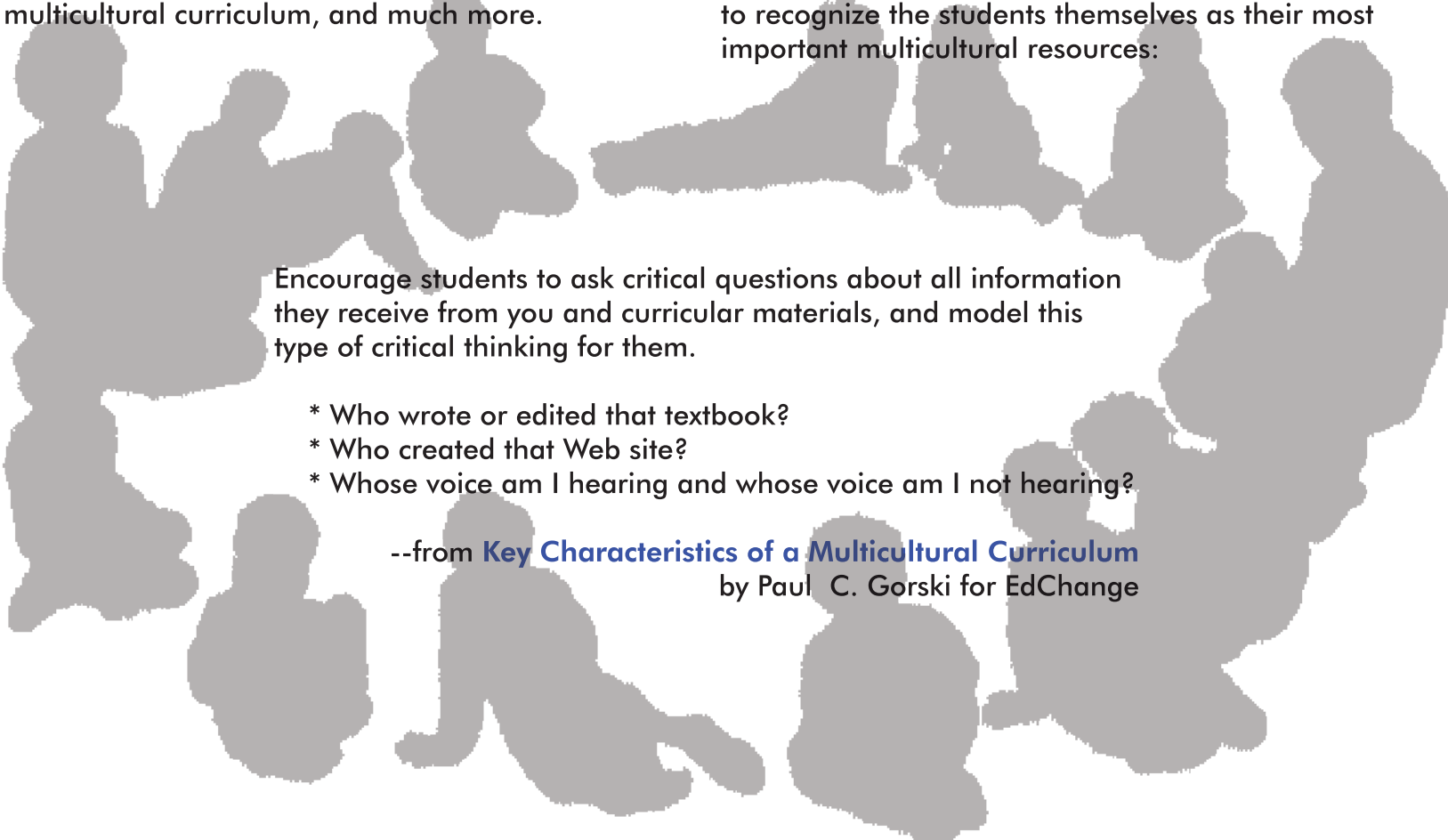


Dr. Gorski is an Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary and Integrative Studies at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

Founded by **Paul C. Gorski** and **EdChange**, the **Multicultural Pavilion** offers educators a wide range of continually updated multicultural education resources. In particular, the **Curriculum Reform** section includes concrete **steps** toward multicultural curriculum transformation, **key characteristics** of a multicultural curriculum, and much more.

Materials posted include pedagogical strategies such as suggestions for classroom discussions that are designed to “facilitate experiences in which students learn from each other’s experiences and perspectives.”

For example, Dr. Gorski encourages faculty to recognize the students themselves as their most important multicultural resources:



Encourage students to ask critical questions about all information they receive from you and curricular materials, and model this type of critical thinking for them.

- * Who wrote or edited that textbook?
- * Who created that Web site?
- * Whose voice am I hearing and whose voice am I not hearing?

--from **Key Characteristics of a Multicultural Curriculum**
by Paul C. Gorski for EdChange