

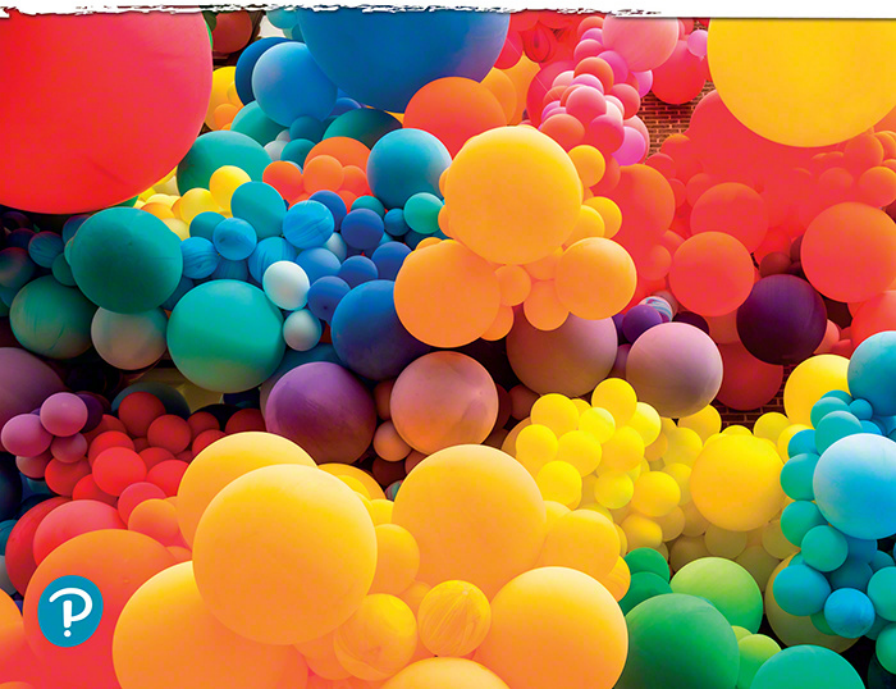
The Merrill Counseling Series

4TH EDITION

# DEVELOPING MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING COMPETENCE

*A Systems Approach*

DANICA G. HAYS    BRADLEY T. ERFORD



Fourth Edition

# DEVELOPING MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING COMPETENCE

A SYSTEMS APPROACH

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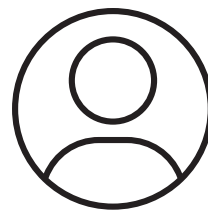
*For those we have lost in the struggle for peace.*

—dgh

*This effort is dedicated to The One: the Giver of energy, passion, and understanding;  
Who makes life worth living and endeavors worth pursuing and accomplishing; the  
Teacher of love and forgiveness.*

—bte

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# PREFACE

Becoming culturally competent is a lifelong process. It is both a personal and professional journey of cultural understanding and systemic advocacy. It is a personal as well as a professional journey in that we are constantly striving for meaning as cultural beings. We define culture in terms of the intersections among our race, ethnicity, nationality, geographic origin, gender, sexual and affectional orientation, education level, family values, language, immigration history, social class, socioeconomic level, ability status, and spirituality, to name only a few ways. At times culture may be visible: our race or gender might be quite apparent to others. However, culture is not always visible; it may be a shared history of kinship, community practices and norms, discrimination, historical and political power, or resilience. Developing multicultural competence is a professional journey in that it involves promoting optimal counseling relationships, processes, and outcomes among individuals of unique cultural identities. This practice may occur in the counseling session and in the larger community.

Many concepts are related to the process of developing multicultural counseling competence: self-awareness; sensitivity to diversity, equity, and inclusion; knowledge of cultural values; and social advocacy. The core of developing multicultural counseling competence is possessing awareness, knowledge, and skills related to each of these concepts. It is also recognizing resilience in our clients as well as in ourselves. Resilience grows from adversity and can be supported through reclaiming cultural ways of knowing and being. Oftentimes, the cultural values and identities we possess are partly a product of our resilience from systemic barriers. We build community by identifying individual and shared social, political, and historical experiences, as well as affirming others' experiences within a multicultural world.

Developing multicultural counseling competence challenges us to do what we ask of our clients: to aspire to greater personal insight about what makes us members of various cultural groups and to examine the ways we are shaped by familial, community, and historical systems. Multicultural counseling competence involves allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and to reflect on our personal wounds, addressing mixed emotions of anger, grief, sadness, guilt, shame, and many others that accompany our privilege and oppression experiences. To this end, developing multicultural counseling competence means acknowledging our resistance to engage in lifelong cultural learning and reveal how our privilege and oppression experiences affect our relationships with others. Only after we engage in self-exploration, experience the consequences, and begin to change because of these consequences, can we be free to understand and counsel others. Social advocacy starts when we connect our personal growth and initiative to change the status quo for those unjustly affected within various social systems by forms of oppression such as structural racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and ageism.

## ORGANIZATION OF TEXT

This text is intended to facilitate the journey of developing multicultural counseling competence. Each of the 18 chapters is infused with several self-development opportunities that foster an increase in awareness, knowledge, and skills for understanding cultural makeup and privilege and oppression experiences, understanding others of diverse identities and experiences, and engaging in facilitative counseling relationships. These opportunities are outlined in boxes inset throughout the text and include case studies, classroom and outside activities,

self-reflection activities, tables, figures, and knowledge-building exercises. In addition, “Voices from the Field” are included throughout the text to highlight student, client, practitioner, and scholar perspectives on various cultural topics.

The text is divided into four sections that build on one another. Foundational aspects of multicultural counselling competence are presented in Section One. Some of the major constructs described in multicultural counseling scholarship over the past several decades are described. The authors of Chapter 1 (Hays & Gay) provide an overview of key multicultural terms, U.S. demographic information and rates of mental illness, and the processes that competent counselors should be aware of as they work toward a systems approach in developing multicultural competence. The unique manifestations in counseling of clients’ cultural experiences are introduced, including the role of communication and contextual variables such as inaccessibility of services, stigma and mistrust, prejudice and discrimination, immigration, acculturation and enculturation, and individual and collective trauma. After presenting an approach to multicultural counseling competence that incorporates individual, family, community, and historical systems, key ethical considerations in multicultural counseling are presented. Cartwright and Hammonds (Chapter 2) integrate some of these foundational aspects of multicultural competence and present several cultural identity development models. These models highlight racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, and spiritual identity development among counselors as well as clients. This chapter specifically highlights that cultural identity can develop only in reflection of one’s social, political, and historical contexts.

With a fundamental knowledge of key multicultural constructs and interpersonal processes relevant to counseling, the reader is presented in Section Two with scholarship of how differential amounts of power, access, advantage, and social status are available to clients based on cultural makeup. Because shared contemporary and historical experiences of privilege and oppression partly guide our personal development and thus cultural values for the cultural groups to which we belong, it is imperative the origins of and rationale for social injustices and subsequently social advocacy are discussed. Specifically, Section Two opens with a discussion of social justice counseling, the fifth force of counseling (Chapter 3, Gnilka et al.) and continues with a focus on racism, White supremacy, and White privilege (Chapter 4, Hays & Shillingford-Butler), gender and sexism (Chapter 5, Singh & Mingo), sexual and affectional orientation and heterosexism (Chapter 6, Chaney & Brubaker), social class and classism (Chapter 7, Clark), and disability, ableism, and ageism (Chapter 8, Berens). Discourse for each newly presented form of privilege and oppression integrates that of previous chapters so the reader can better understand how clients may have unique combinations of privileged and oppressed statuses.

Section Three incorporates various privilege and oppression experiences into the framework of counseling multicultural populations that include individuals and families of African/African American, Arab/Arab American, Asian/Asian American, Latin/Latin American, Native American, European/European American, and multiracial backgrounds. Specifically, common cultural values, support systems, mental health concerns, and culturally specific interventions are presented in Chapters 9 through 16. The authors of Chapter 9 (Bounds et al.) outline Black culture and values that characterize families, couples, children, Black middle-class individuals, males and females, elderly people, and Black LGBTQ+ individuals. Common mental health issues and support systems are presented, and an Afrocentric psychological perspective and Black psychology are described. Nassar and Dari (Chapter 10) provide information about the immigration history, cultural values, role of Islam, discrimination and resilience experiences, and individual differences in acculturation, ethnicity, and gender identity of Arab



Americans. In addition, best practices for working with individuals and families of Arab and Arab American descent are provided.

Luu et al. (Chapter 11) outline heterogeneity among Asian Americans, shared cultural values, individual differences based in differential experiences of immigration, enculturation and acculturation, ethnicity and race, gender roles, and sexual identity. Guidelines for working with individuals and families of Asian and Asian American descent are presented in the context of common mental health concerns and help-seeking and coping behaviors. In articulating multiculturally competent practice with individuals and families of Latin descent, Storlie (Chapter 12) discusses the four major Latin American groups, Latino/a/x values, and individual differences with respect to immigration, generational, and socioeconomic statuses. After articulating mental health issues related specifically to Latin Americans negotiating their cultural identities, counseling considerations across the life span are discussed. The final commonly presented racial/ethnic minority group, Native Americans, is described in Chapter 13 (Turner et al.). Turner et al. present an account of Native American history, common social and political issues, Native American values, and guidelines for counseling Native American clients. McMahon et al. (Chapter 14) offer the reader a conceptualization of the evolution and maintenance of the “White American ethnic,” describing European American history and heterogeneity, experiences of European immigrants, and counseling considerations for European and European American descent individuals and families. McDonald (Chapter 15) provides information on counseling individuals and families of multiracial descent. Definitional, historical, and clinical perspectives for addressing the experiences of this growing population are provided. Section Three closes with a chapter on spiritual diversity (Chapter 16, Cashwell & Giordano). Cashwell and Giordano highlight important cultural dimensions universal to individuals and families of racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

The final section of the text is intended to challenge the reader to think about how multicultural client concerns can be conceptualized. With an understanding of current social and political issues as well as racially and ethnically specific cultural values and counseling practices, it is imperative to consider how cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills manifest in counseling practice. Chapter 17 (La Guardia) connects the concept of worldview and introduces alternative approaches to the development of theory in multicultural counseling. Specifically, applications of counseling theory across cultures are presented. The text concludes in Chapter 18 (Kress et al.) as concerns of misdiagnosis and ethnocentric views on normality and psychopathology are raised to challenge the reader to be cautious when applying a diagnostic label for culturally diverse groups that typically experience social injustices, including racial and ethnic minorities and females. The authors provide some solutions for culturally competent case conceptualization and diagnosis.

## NEW TO THIS EDITION

- **State of the research:** Each chapter now includes a concise review of recent trends in the research associated with the chapter’s topic. In addition to identifying trends and sources for further discussion, these sections also indicate areas within the content that will require further research in the coming years, helping students discover potential research topics and frameworks that can be applied in their own careers.
- **Attention to intersectionality:** We now include an expansive discussion of intersectional considerations so that counselors can readily apply learning regarding identity development and privilege and oppression experiences.



- **New integration of Multicultural and Social Justice Advocacy Counseling Competencies:** Chapters include more in-depth application of the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies, particularly in the counseling implications section of each chapter.
- **New focus on White supremacy:** Beginning with Chapter 4 and continuing throughout the text, we address directly the role of White supremacy on the communities examined. By identifying the effects of a legacy of White supremacy, the text will enable students to see its continued impact on day-to-day life and use an appropriate framework to address it within their practice and throughout their careers.
- **Expansive focus on gender:** We provide a deeper focus on the complexities of gender and gender identity, including highlighting considerations for affirmative counseling trans and nonbinary individuals of intersecting identities.
- **Learning outcomes:** To support comprehension and to identify key concepts, each chapter includes between 4 and 8 Learning Outcomes. Grouped at the beginning of each chapter, they are repeated within the chapter under the heading with the content to which it refers.

## KEY CONTENT UPDATES BY CHAPTER

**Chapter 1:** The chapter includes updated U.S. population demographics by race and ethnicity, nationality, age, socioeconomic status, as well as data regarding intersecting cultural identities (e.g., gender and socioeconomic status). In addition, we include a new table that outlines major mental disorder rates by cultural identity (i.e., gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, age). Furthermore, the chapter opens with a new activity to sharpen reflective, active listening, and self-care skills that can be employed as readers build their multicultural social justice competency.

**Chapter 2:** In addition to a shift in discussion of transgender identity development models to the gender identity development section, we introduce two additional transgender models since the last edition. Additional models related to spiritual identity development as well as sexual identity development are also included in the chapter.

**Chapter 3:** Along with updated media resources and an updated historical timeline of social advocacy in counseling, this chapter includes a new section related to social justice and mental health and presents a greater application of the Multicultural and Social Justice Advocacy Counseling Competencies to social justice advocacy.

**Chapter 4:** In this chapter, White supremacy and its link to White privilege are introduced. Additional new terms are also included in this chapter, such as *anti-racism* and *ally*. Furthermore, we discuss the role of White supremacy and racism in immigration today and update the historical timeline of combatting racism for people of color.

**Chapter 5:** In an effort to broaden the discussion of gender and gender identity, terms such as cisgender and nonbinary individuals are introduced. New sections regarding counseling transgender and nonbinary individuals and examining the role of White colonization in perpetuating sexism are included.

**Chapter 6:** Counseling strategies for working with clients who are LGBTQ+ are expanded, including a focus on LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling. Furthermore, this chapter significantly extends the discussion of how sexual and affectional orientation intersect with race and ethnicity, gender, age, educational status, social class, spirituality, and relationship status.

**Chapter 7:** The construct of social class, and its relationship to socioeconomic status, is introduced in this edition. In addition, advocacy strategies to address poverty are updated to reflect the Multicultural and Social Justice Advocacy Counseling Competencies.

**Chapter 8:** In this chapter, strategies for fostering counselor competency to address the impact of ableism are expanded. Furthermore, intersectional considerations when counseling older adults have been added.

**Chapter 9:** Discussion of the discrimination experiences for Black individuals and families, along with clinical interventions, has been expanded in this edition.

**Chapter 10:** This chapter has been updated to reflect contemporary events affecting individuals and families of Arab and Arab American descent.

**Chapter 11:** In this chapter, there is greater focus on intersectional considerations when counseling individuals and families of Asian and Asian American descent. In addition, media resources about Asian American culture have been updated in this edition.

**Chapter 12:** Updated statistics regarding mental and physical health issues for those of Latin and Latin American descent are provided. Furthermore, new data regarding employment trends are included.

**Chapter 13:** This chapter includes new information regarding intersectional considerations when counseling individuals and families of Native descent. Additional information regarding helping clients to heal from historical trauma is also provided.

**Chapter 14:** Information regarding White supremacy and its development and sustainment among individuals and families of European and European American descent is new to this edition. Additional discussion of multicultural and social justice counseling strategies with White clients is also provided.

**Chapter 15:** In this chapter, scholarship regarding the intersecting influences of sexual orientation and gender for multiracial individuals was added. A new lifespan model of multiracial identity development is also included.

**Chapter 16:** Counseling considerations for integrating spirituality are bolstered in this chapter, with updated case studies to reflect contemporary issues in spiritual identity.

**Chapter 17:** More strategies for using traditional counseling theoretical approaches with culturally diverse clients are included in this edition.

**Chapter 18:** In this chapter, updated information on prevalence data and culturally responsive diagnoses is provided. A new section of referring clients is also included.

## **PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES**

The text has several pedagogical features to extend student learning.

**Activities** provide students the opportunity to apply key chapter content to their lives and careers.

**Reflections** include prompts for students to consider chapter material in a more personal way, such as opportunities to consider their own cultural identities and multicultural and social justice-related experiences.

**Case Studies** illustrate various counseling concerns of actual or hypothetical clients to show how chapter material can be applied to working with them in a multicultural and social just manner.

**Review Questions** are included at the conclusion of each chapter to help students recall, synthesize, and apply learning within a respective chapter.

**Voices from the Field** highlight real perspectives from counseling practitioners and trainees on a variety of multicultural and social justice counseling topics to elucidate how chapter material applies to clients.

## **LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)- COMPATIBLE ASSESSMENT BANK, AND OTHER INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES**

### **LMS-Compatible Assessment Bank**

With this new edition, all assessment types—quizzes, application exercises, and chapter tests—are included in LMS-compatible banks for the following learning management systems: Blackboard (9780137473892), Canvas (9780137473922), D2L (9780137474004), and Moodle (9780137474127). These packaged files allow maximum flexibility to instructors when it comes to importing, assigning, and grading. Assessment types include:

- **Learning Outcome Quizzes** Each chapter learning outcome is the focus of a Learning Outcome Quiz that is available for instructors to assign through their Learning Management System. Learning outcomes identify chapter content that is most important for learners and serve as the organizational framework for each chapter. The higher-order, multiple choice questions in each quiz will measure your understanding of chapter content, guide the expectations for your learning, and inform the accountability and the applications of your new knowledge. When used in the LMS environment, these multiple-choice questions are automatically graded and include feedback for the correct answer and for each distractor to help guide students' learning.
- **Application Exercises** Each chapter provides opportunities to apply what you have learned through Application Exercises. These exercises are usually short-answer format and when used in the LMS environment, a model response written by experts is provided after you submit the exercise. This feedback helps guide your learning and can assist your instructor in grading.
- **Chapter Tests** Suggested test items are provided for each chapter. When used in the LMS environment, multiple-choice questions are automatically graded, and model responses are provided for short answer and essay questions.

**Instructor’s Manual (9780137474141)**

The Instructor’s Manual is provided as a Word document and includes resources to assist professors in planning their course.

**PowerPoint® Slides (9780137474158)**

PowerPoint® slides are provided for each chapter and highlight key concepts and summarize the content of the text to make it more meaningful for students. Often times, these slides also include questions and problems designed to stimulate discussion and to encourage students to elaborate and deepen their understanding of chapter topics. Note: All instructor resources—LMS-compatible assessment bank, instructor’s manual, and PowerPoint slides are available for download at [www.pearsonhighered.com](http://www.pearsonhighered.com). Use one of the following methods:

- From the main page, use the search function to look up the lead author (i.e., Hays), or the title (i.e., *Developing Multicultural Counseling Competence*). Select the desired search result, then access the “Resources” tab to view and download all available resources.
- From the main page, use the search function to look up the ISBN (provided above) of the specific instructor resource you would like to download. When the product page loads, access the “Downloadable Resources” tab.

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# BRIEF CONTENTS

## **SECTION ONE The Foundations of Multicultural Counseling 1**

- Chapter 1** The Culturally Competent Counselor  
■ Danica G. Hays and Jan L. Gay 2
- Chapter 2** Cultural Identity Development  
■ Angie D. Cartwright and Dominique S. Hammonds 46

## **SECTION TWO Social Advocacy 81**

- Chapter 3** Social Justice Counseling  
■ Philip B. Gnilka, Caroline O'Hara, and Catherine Y. Chang 82
- Chapter 4** Racism and White Supremacy  
■ Danica G. Hays and Ann Shillingford-Butler 110
- Chapter 5** Gender and Sexism  
■ Anneliese A. Singh and Taryne M. Mingo 156
- Chapter 6** Sexual and Affectional Orientation and Heterosexism  
■ Michael P. Chaney and Michael D. Brubaker 189
- Chapter 7** Social Class and Classism  
■ Madeline Clark 225
- Chapter 8** Disability, Ableism, and Ageism  
■ Debra E. Berens 267

## **SECTION THREE Counseling Multicultural Populations 301**

- Chapter 9** Individuals and Families of African and African American Descent  
■ Patrice S. Bounds, Ahmad R. Washington, and Malik S. Henfield 302
- Chapter 10** Individuals and Families of Arab and Arab American Descent  
■ Sylvia C. Nassar and Tahani Dari 335
- Chapter 11** Individuals and Families of Asian and Asian American Descent  
■ Linh P. Luu, Arpana G. Inman, and Alvin N. Alvarez 373
- Chapter 12** Individuals and Families of Latin and Latin American Descent  
■ Cassandra A. Storlie 419

- Chapter 13** Counseling Individuals and Families of Native American Descent  
■ Sherri L. Turner, Carolyn A. Berger, Amanda F. Peterson, and Maddy C. Kern 456
- Chapter 14** Individuals and Families of European and European American Descent  
■ H. George McMahon, Pamela O. Paisley, Bogusia Skudrzyk, and Chelsea Scoffone 495
- Chapter 15** Individuals and Families of Multiracial Descent  
■ C. Peeper McDonald 535
- Chapter 16** Spiritual Diversity  
■ Craig S. Cashwell and Amanda L. Giordano 570

## **SECTION FOUR Multicultural Conceptualization 603**

- Chapter 17** Using Counseling Theories in Multicultural Contexts  
■ Amanda C. La Guardia 604
- Chapter 18** Multicultural Diagnosis and Conceptualization  
■ Victoria E. Kress, Laura R. Shannonhouse, and Christina M. Woloch 633

*Appendix Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies 671*

*References 681*

*Index 739*

# CONTENTS

*About the Editors* xxviii

*About the Contributing Authors* xxix

## **SECTION ONE The Foundations of Multicultural Counseling** 1

### **Chapter 1 The Culturally Competent Counselor**

■ **Danica G. Hays and Jan L. Gay** 2

Preview 2

Learning Outcomes 2

The Culturally Competent Counselor 3

Key Terminology of Multicultural Counseling 3

U.S. Demographics 10

    Race and Ethnicity 10

    Nationality 11

    Age 12

    Socioeconomic Status 12

Rates of Mental Illness 13

Mental Health Treatment and Multicultural Populations 16

    Counseling versus Cultural Norms of Diverse Populations 16

    Inaccessibility of Services 17

    Stigma and Mistrust 18

    Prejudice and Discrimination 19

    Immigration 20

    Acculturation and Enculturation 22

    Individual and Collective Trauma 24

The Role of Communication in Multicultural Counseling 25

    Verbal Communication 25

    Nonverbal Communication 26

    Emotional Expression 27

    Communication Patterns of Clients and Counselors 28

Developing Multicultural Counseling Competence 28

    A Systems Approach to Multicultural Counseling Competence 33

Ethical Considerations in Multicultural Counseling 37

State of the Research: Multicultural Counseling Competency 43

*Summary* 44

*Review Questions* 45



<b>Chapter 2 Cultural Identity Development</b>	
■ <b>Angie D. Cartwright and Dominique S. Hammonds</b>	<b>46</b>
Preview	46
Learning Outcomes	47
Racial and Ethnic Identity Development	47
Racial Identity Models	48
Phinney’s Model of Ethnic Identity	53
Biracial and Multiracial Identity Development	56
Addressing Racial and Ethnic Identity in Counseling	60
Gender Identity Development	61
Gender Identity Models	61
Addressing Gender Identity in Counseling	66
Sexual Identity Development	66
Sexual Identity Models	66
Addressing Sexual Identity in Counseling	70
Spiritual and Faith Identity Development	72
Spiritual Identity Models	73
Addressing Spiritual Identity in Counseling	77
State of the Research: Cultural Identity Development	78
<i>Summary</i>	79
<i>Review Questions</i>	80

## **SECTION TWO Social Advocacy 81**

<b>Chapter 3 Social Justice Counseling</b>	
■ <b>Philip B. Gnilka, Caroline O’Hara, and Catherine Y. Chang</b>	<b>82</b>
Preview	82
Learning Outcomes	82
Key Constructs for Understanding Social Advocacy	83
Social Justice and Mental Health	89
Historical Context	90
Counselors as Social Advocates	92
Advocacy in Professional Counseling Standards	92
Three-Tiered Model of Social Advocacy	96
Challenges and Benefits of Social Justice Counseling	103
State of the Research: Social Justice Counseling	107
<i>Summary</i>	108
<i>Review Questions</i>	109

<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Racism and White Supremacy</b>	
	■ <b>Danica G. Hays and Ann Shillingford-Butler</b>	<b>110</b>
	Preview	110
	Learning Outcomes	110
	Race and Racism	111
	Social Construction of Race	113
	Defining Racism	115
	Costs of Racism for People of Color	120
	Cognitive Costs	121
	Affective Costs	122
	Interpersonal Costs	123
	Physical Costs	124
	Efforts to Combat the Costs of Racism	125
	White Supremacy	127
	White Privilege	129
	White People’s Psychological Responses to Racism and White Privilege	132
	White Fragility	132
	Being American	133
	Racial Microaggressions and Macroaggressions	134
	Color-Blind Racial Attitudes	135
	Myth of Meritocracy	135
	Focus on Exceptions	136
	The Costs of Racism for White People	137
	Cognitive Costs	137
	Affective Costs	138
	Interpersonal Costs	138
	State of the Research: Racism, White Supremacy, and White Privilege	139
	Becoming Antiracist	140
	Counselor Self-Awareness	141
	Client Services	144
	Community Collaboration	148
	Addressing Racism Within Other Systems	148
	Taking Action	152
	<i>Summary</i>	154
	<i>Review Questions</i>	155
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Gender and Sexism</b>	
	■ <b>Anneliese A. Singh and Taryne M. Mingo</b>	<b>156</b>
	Preview	156
	Learning Outcomes	156

Understanding Gender and Sexism	157
Gender and Counseling Considerations	161
Counseling Cisgender and Trans Girls and Women	163
Counseling Cisgender and Trans Men	165
Counseling People Who Are Trans and Nonbinary	169
Historical Context of Sexism	173
White Colonization, Enslavement, and Warfare	174
World War II and Women’s Return “Home”	174
Historical Resistance to Sexism: Womanist and Feminist Movements	175
Cultural Intersections of Gender	177
Gender and Sexism for Individuals of African and African American Descent	177
Gender and Sexism for People of Native American Descent	178
Gender and Sexism for Individuals of Asian and Asian American Descent	179
Gender and Sexism for Individuals of Latin and Latin American Descent	179
Gender and Sexism for People of Arab and Arab American Descent	180
Consequences of Sexism	180
Mental Health Consequences of Sexism	180
Physical Consequences of Sexism	182
Social Consequences of Sexism	183
Addressing Sexism in Counseling	184
Men as Feminists	185
Expanding Resilience and Social Justice	186
State of the Research: Gender and Sexism	187
<i>Summary</i>	188
<i>Review Questions</i>	188
<b>Chapter 6 Sexual and Affectional Orientation and Heterosexism</b>	
■ <b>Michael P. Chaney and Michael D. Brubaker</b>	189
Preview	189
Learning Outcomes	189
Key Constructs	190
Heterosexism and Homophobia	191
LGBTQ+ Demography	193
Intersectional Issues for LGBTQ+ Individuals	194
Race and Ethnicity	194
Gender	198
LGBTQ+ Youth	198

Age and Disclosure of Sexual and Affectional Orientation	199
Educational Status	201
Social Class	202
Spirituality	203
LGBTQ+ Relationships	203
Consequences of Heterosexism	204
Mental Health Consequences	205
Physical Consequences	208
Social Consequences	209
State of the Research: Sexual and Affectional Orientation	212
Socially Just, Nonheterosexist Training and Clinical Practice	214
Counselor Attitudes and Beliefs	215
The Counseling Relationship	216
Counseling LGBTQ+ Youth	216
Challenging Sexual Orientation Change Efforts	218
LGBTQ+ Affirmative Counseling	219
Counselor Training	220
Additional Systems Level Advocacy	222
<i>Summary</i>	223
<i>Review Questions</i>	224

## **Chapter 7 Social Class and Classism**

■ Madeline Clark	225
Preview	225
Learning Outcomes	225
Social Class, Socioeconomic Status, and Classism	226
What is Social Class?	229
What Is Socioeconomic Status?	230
What Is Classism?	233
U.S. Class Structure	236
Classism, Racism, and Ethnocentrism	240
Poverty and Mental Health	243
Who Is Poor?	243
Risk Factors and Mental Health Consequences	244
Poverty: Perceptions and Identity	250
State of the Research: Social Class and Classism	252
Addressing Classism in Counseling	253
Awareness	254
Knowledge	256
Skills	257

**Advocacy 261***Summary 265**Review Questions 266***Chapter 8 Disability, Ableism, and Ageism****■ Debra E. Berens 267****Preview 267****Learning Outcomes 267****Disability Defined 268****Types of Disability 270****Disability Statistics 270****Models of Disability 272****Variations on the Social Model of Disability 274****Counseling Individuals with a Disability 275****Disability, Ableism, and the Counseling Process 278****Ableism 278****Awareness 279****Knowledge 280****Skills 283****Disability-Affirmative Counseling and Cultural Intersections 286****Older Adults 287****Ageism and Adultism 289****Age, Ageism, and the Counseling Process 292****Awareness 293****Knowledge 293****Skills 297****State of the Research: Disability, Ableism, and Ageism 298***Summary 299**Review Questions 300***SECTION THREE Counseling Multicultural Populations 301****Chapter 9 Individuals and Families of African and African American Descent****■ Patrice S. Bounds, Ahmad R. Washington, and Malik S. Henfield 302****Preview 302****Learning Outcomes 302****Individuals and Families of African and African American Descent 303****Terminology 304****Demographics 305****Discrimination Experiences 307**

<b>Black Racial Identity and Acculturation</b>	<b>310</b>
<b>Black Culture and Values</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>Black Families</b>	<b>313</b>
<b>Black Couples</b>	<b>315</b>
<b>Interracial Couples</b>	<b>316</b>
<b>Black Children</b>	<b>316</b>
<b>Black Middle-Class Individuals</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>Black Elderly Individuals</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>Black LGBTQ+ Individuals</b>	<b>319</b>
<b>General Mental Health Issues and Counseling Approaches</b>	<b>319</b>
<b>Common Support Systems for Black Individuals</b>	<b>321</b>
<b>Traditional (Eurocentric) Counseling Approaches with Black Clients</b>	<b>321</b>
<b>An Afrocentric Psychological Perspective</b>	<b>327</b>
<b>Black Psychology</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>State of the Research: Black Individuals and Families</b>	<b>329</b>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>333</i>
<i>Review Questions</i>	<i>334</i>

**Chapter 10 Individuals and Families of Arab and Arab American Descent**

■ <b>Sylvia C. Nassar and Tahani Dari</b>	<b>335</b>
<b>Preview</b>	<b>335</b>
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>335</b>
<b>Arab American Heterogeneity</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>Contemporary Social Perceptions and Discrimination Experiences</b>	<b>339</b>
<b>Arab American Culture and Values</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>Collectivism</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>Religion and Faith</b>	<b>342</b>
<b>Education, Work, and Socioeconomic Status</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>Communication Styles</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>Individual Differences and Identities</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>Acculturation</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>348</b>
<b>Gender Identity</b>	<b>352</b>
<b>Risks and Resiliencies: Mental Health Issues among Arab Americans</b>	<b>355</b>
<b>Oppression and Discrimination</b>	<b>356</b>
<b>Acculturative Stress</b>	<b>356</b>
<b>Ethnic and Gender Identity Development</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>Other Psychosocial Issues</b>	<b>358</b>

	<b>State of the Research: Arab and Arab American Individuals and Families</b>	<b>361</b>
	<b>Considerations in Counseling Arab Americans</b>	<b>362</b>
	Approach	363
	Family and Community Involvement	365
	Stigmas and Help-Seeking Behaviors	365
	Case Studies Revisited	366
	Counseling Considerations Endnote	368
	<i>Summary</i>	371
	<i>Review Questions</i>	372
<b>Chapter 11</b>	<b>Individuals and Families of Asian and Asian American Descent</b>	
	■ <b>Linh P. Luu, Arpana G. Inman, and Alvin N. Alvarez</b>	<b>373</b>
	Preview	373
	Learning Outcomes	374
	Asian American History	374
	Contemporary Forms of Discrimination	376
	Asian American Heterogeneity	381
	Asian American Culture and Values	384
	Family	384
	Gender Roles	385
	Interpersonal Relationships	386
	Intimacy and Marriage	386
	Education	387
	Religion	387
	Death and Dying	388
	Individual Differences and Identities	388
	Immigration, Enculturation, and Acculturation	388
	Ethnicity and Race	389
	Gender Roles	390
	Sexuality and Sexual Identity	391
	General Mental Health Issues of Individuals of Asian and Asian American Descent	393
	Psychopathology	395
	Help Seeking and Coping	399
	State of the Research: Asian and Asian American Individuals and Families	402
	Guidelines for Counseling Clients of Asian and Asian American Descent	404
	Counselor Self-Assessment	405
	Counseling Process	405



**Conceptualization of the Problem 406**

**Intervention 408**

**Outreach and Nonclinical Visibility 410**

**Social Advocacy and Social Justice 411**

*Summary 417*

*Review Questions 418*

**Chapter 12 Individuals and Families of Latin and Latin American Descent**

**■ Cassandra A. Storlie 419**

**Preview 419**

**Learning Outcomes 419**

**A Latin American History of Terminology 420**

**Latin American and Latino Heterogeneity 422**

**Mexicans 422**

**Puerto Ricans 423**

**Cubans 424**

**Caribbean Latinx/as/os and Central and South Americans 426**

**Latin American and Latinx/a/o Culture and Values 427**

**“Somos Inmigrantes” (“We Are Immigrants”) 428**

**Language 429**

**Religion and Spirituality 429**

**Resiliency 430**

**Gender Roles 431**

**Families of Latin and Latin American Descent 432**

**Interpersonal Relationships 433**

**Individual Differences and Identities 433**

**Immigration Status 433**

**Generational Status 436**

**Socioeconomic Status 436**

**Mental Health Issues of Individuals of Latin and Latin American  
Descent 437**

**Acculturative Stress 438**

**Grief and Loss 439**

**Experiences with Discrimination 439**

**Additional Concerns 440**

**Guidelines for Counseling Clients of Latin and Latin American Descent 441**

**Counseling Considerations for Children of Latin and Latin American  
Descent 442**

**Counseling Considerations for Adolescents of Latin and Latin American  
Descent 444**

**Counseling Considerations for Adults of Latin and Latin American  
Descent 447**

**State of the Research: Latin and Latin American Individuals and  
Families 453**

*Summary 455*

*Review Questions 455*

**Chapter 13 Counseling Individuals and Families of Native American Descent**

**■ Sherri L. Turner, Carolyn A. Berger, Amanda F. Peterson, and  
Maddy C. Kern 456**

**Preview 456**

**Learning Outcomes 456**

**Understanding Native Americans: Reflections Down by the Riverside 457**

**Who Are Native Americans? 458**

**Tribal Membership and Native American Identity 460**

**Native American History 462**

**Current Social, Economic, and Political Issues 466**

**Native American Sociocultural Characteristics Today 466**

**Cultural Preservation 470**

**Language Preservation 471**

**Gaming 471**

**Tribal Resources 472**

**Sacred Sites and Repatriation 473**

**Stereotypes and Mascot Issues 473**

**Native American Culture and Values 474**

**Overview of Native American Cultural Values and Cultural Identity 475**

**Humility 475**

**Sharing 476**

**Patience 476**

**Time 477**

**Communication Style 477**

**Harmony 477**

**Humor 477**

**Being 478**

**Elders 478**

**Native American Religions and Spirituality 478**

**Lessons of the Eagle Feather 481**

**State of the Research: Individuals and Families of Native American  
Descent 481**

Counseling Native American Clients	483
Examining Bias and Gaps in Knowledge	483
Identity, Family, and Acculturation	484
Healing from Historical Trauma and the Impact of Oppression	485
Drawing on Values	486
Integrating Spirituality	487
Intersectionality Considerations	487
Therapeutic Environment	488
Culturally Specific Interventions	489
Working from a Social Justice and Advocacy Counseling Perspective	490
<i>Summary</i>	494
<i>Review Questions</i>	494

## **Chapter 14 Individuals and Families of European and European American Descent**

■ <b>H. George McMahon, Pamela O. Paisley, Bogusia Skudrzyk, and Chelsea Scoffone</b>	<b>495</b>
Preview	495
Learning Outcomes	495
European American History	496
The Early Colonial Period	497
European Immigration	499
Terminology	501
Development of a White American Ethnic Identity	502
The Melting Pot	503
The American Dream	503
The Creation of an American Heritage	504
Privilege, Oppression, and White Supremacy	505
Who Gets to Be White?	507
The Process of Becoming White	508
European American Heterogeneity	512
Recent European American Immigrants	514
Immigrants, Undocumented Immigrants, and Refugees	514
Immigration Stressors	516
Acculturation and Identity Deconstruction	516
Oppression and Discrimination	518
State of the Research: European and European American Individuals and Families	519
Counseling Considerations for White Individuals	520
Cultural Influences on Mental Health in White Clients	520

<b>White Racial Identity Development</b>	<b>521</b>
<b>Intersectionality</b>	<b>524</b>
<b>Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling with White Clients</b>	<b>524</b>
<i>Summary</i>	533
<i>Review Questions</i>	534

## **Chapter 15 Individuals and Families of Multiracial Descent**

<b>■ C. Peeper McDonald</b>	<b>535</b>
<b>Preview</b>	<b>535</b>
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>535</b>
<b>Terminology</b>	<b>536</b>
<b>Historical Perspectives</b>	<b>539</b>
<b>Interracial Marriages Today</b>	<b>541</b>
<b>Multiracial Identity Development</b>	<b>542</b>
<b>Multiracial Individuals and Intersectionality</b>	<b>545</b>
<b>Contemporary Social Perceptions, Salient Experiences, and Resilience</b>	<b>546</b>
<b>Individuals</b>	<b>546</b>
<b>Microaggressions and Resilience</b>	<b>548</b>
<b>Couples</b>	<b>550</b>
<b>Families</b>	<b>552</b>
<b>Considerations for Counseling Individuals of Multiracial Descent and Families</b>	<b>553</b>
<b>Counselor Self-Awareness</b>	<b>554</b>
<b>Client Worldview</b>	<b>554</b>
<b>Counseling Relationship</b>	<b>556</b>
<b>Counseling and Advocacy Interventions</b>	<b>557</b>
<b>State of the Research: Multiracial Individuals and Families</b>	<b>567</b>
<i>Summary</i>	569
<i>Review Questions</i>	569

## **Chapter 16 Spiritual Diversity**

<b>■ Craig S. Cashwell and Amanda L. Giordano</b>	<b>570</b>
<b>Preview</b>	<b>570</b>
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>570</b>
<b>Religion and Spirituality in America</b>	<b>571</b>
<b>Spirituality and Religion Defined</b>	<b>572</b>
<b>Toward Defining Spirituality</b>	<b>572</b>
<b>Toward Defining Religion</b>	<b>573</b>
<b>Relationships between Religion and Spirituality</b>	<b>573</b>

<b>Overview of Major World Religions</b>	<b>577</b>
Eastern World Religions	577
Western World Religions	582
Experiences of Religious Oppression	587
<b>All is One: Aspects Common to All Religions</b>	<b>587</b>
Tenet 1: Spirit, by Whatever Name, Exists	588
Tenet 2: Spirit Is Found “in Here,” within an Open Heart and Mind	588
Tenet 3: Many/Most Don’t Realize Spirit Within	588
Tenet 4: There Is a Path to Liberation	588
Tenet 5: If This Path Is Followed, the Result Is Rebirth or Enlightenment	589
Tenet 6: Rebirth or Enlightenment Results in the End of Suffering	590
Tenet 7: The End of Suffering Manifests in Social Actions of Mercy and Compassion	590
<b>State of the Research: Spiritual Diversity</b>	<b>590</b>
<b>Special Considerations for Counseling</b>	<b>591</b>
Approaching Client Spiritual Issues	591
Ethical Competence	594
Spiritual Bypass	596
ASERVIC Competencies	598
<i>Summary</i>	600
<i>Review Questions</i>	601

## **SECTION FOUR Multicultural Conceptualization 603**

<b>Chapter 17 Using Counseling Theories in Multicultural Contexts</b>	
■ <b>Amanda C. La Guardia</b>	<b>604</b>
Preview	604
Learning Outcomes	605
<b>Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling Theory</b>	<b>605</b>
Worldview Shaping Counseling	606
Transition from Worldview to Theory	608
Alternative Sources of Theory in Multicultural Counseling	610
<b>Applications of Counseling Theory Across Cultures</b>	<b>613</b>
Traditional Theoretical Frameworks in Counseling	614
Culturally Responsive Use of Traditional Theories	618
Culturally Responsive Counseling Theories	620
<b>Counseling Theory and Approaches Based on Non-Western Worldviews</b>	<b>623</b>
<b>State of the Research: Using Counseling Theories in Multicultural Contexts</b>	<b>630</b>
<i>Summary</i>	631
<i>Review Questions</i>	632

<b>Chapter 18</b>	<b>Multicultural Diagnosis and Conceptualization</b>	
	■ Victoria E. Kress, Laura R. Shannonhouse, and Christina M. Woloch	633
	Preview	633
	Learning Outcomes	633
	The Challenge of Ethical Practice	634
	Cultural Validity in Assessment	637
	Normal versus Abnormal	639
	Overdiagnosis, Underdiagnosis, and Misdiagnosis	642
	Sampling Bias	643
	Culture and Psychopathology	643
	Feminist Challenges	646
	Prevalence Data of Diagnoses by Gender	647
	Developmental Shifts in Prevalence Rates	648
	Sex Bias in Diagnosis	650
	Socialization and Mental Health	652
	Social Conditions	653
	Women’s Trauma Experiences	654
	Toward Solutions	657
	Comprehensive Assessment	657
	Universal and Culturally Specific Diagnoses	659
	Other Culturally Astute Strategies	661
	Feminist Analysis	663
	Function of Symptoms in Context	664
	Referral	666
	<b>State of the Research: Multicultural Diagnosis and Conceptualization</b>	<b>667</b>
	<i>Summary</i>	668
	<i>Review Questions</i>	670
	<i>Appendix Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies</i>	671
	<i>References</i>	681
	<i>Index</i>	739

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*Social Justice Counseling Competencies, Competencies for Counseling Transgender Clients, Competencies for Counseling LGBQQIAA Clients, and the ASGW Multicultural and Social Justice Principles for Group Workers.* She has served as the president of the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC) and the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES).

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**Christina M. Woloch**, PhD, displays a deep commitment for social equality, justice, and health/wellness as an assistant professor at Malone University, as well as in her clinical roles as a licensed professional counselor and a licensed independent chemical dependency counselor in the state of Ohio. She has presented at the local, state, and national level on a variety of counseling topics pertaining to counselor pedagogy, multicultural/social justice/diversity, professional ethics, addictions, and skills/best practices. She is also a published author and counseling research enthusiast.

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**SECTION 1**

# **The Foundations of Multicultural Counseling**

**CHAPTER 1 The Culturally Competent Counselor**

**DANICA G. HAYS AND JAN L. GAY**

**CHAPTER 2 Cultural Identity Development**

**ANGIE D. CARTWRIGHT AND DOMINIQUE S. HAMMONDS**

## CHAPTER

# 1 The Culturally Competent Counselor

Danica G. Hays and Jan L. Gay<sup>1\*</sup>

### PREVIEW

This initial chapter provides essential context for the development of culturally competent counseling. Included in that context are trends in demographic projections for the United States and explanations of the complexities and key concepts of multicultural counseling. The discussion concludes with an introduction to multicultural counseling and social justice competence from a systems approach, and a review of ethical considerations in developing multicultural counseling competency.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this chapter, readers will:

- 1.1** Understand and apply key terms and concepts associated with multicultural counseling.
- 1.2** Gain knowledge of U.S. demographic trends and how they influence counseling process and use.
- 1.3** Articulate prevalence rates for common mental health concerns across multicultural populations.
- 1.4** Identify contextual factors that influence counseling use among multicultural populations.
- 1.5** Describe forms of communication and articulate how they relate to multicultural counseling.
- 1.6** Articulate and apply components of the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competency framework.
- 1.7** Demonstrate knowledge of ethical considerations in multicultural counseling.

<sup>1\*</sup> The authors are grateful to Amy McLeod for her contributions to previous editions of this chapter.

## THE CULTURALLY COMPETENT COUNSELOR

**Learning Outcome 1.1** Understand and apply key terms and concepts associated with multicultural counseling.

Since the inception of the helping professions around the time of Sigmund Freud, counseling and psychotherapy have typically involved one-on-one interventions primarily with White and middle- to upper-class clients who would receive treatment for several years. Approaches and interventions in counseling throughout most of the 20th century assumed that clients were similar in demographics (e.g., White, middle to upper class, heterosexual); thus, techniques could be applied universally. The first three *forces*, as they are called, of counseling (i.e., psychodynamic, behaviorism, and existentialism/humanism) reflected this assumption. But as the U.S. population became increasingly diverse, the counseling profession shifted its focus to attend to the changing demographics of the American client.

These dynamics within counseling theory, practice, and scholarship have sparked two additional forces. Multicultural counseling and social advocacy have been described as the fourth and fifth forces of counseling, respectively (Ratts et al., 2016). As a profession, counseling is attending more to the complexities of both counselors and clients in their cultural makeup, the systems by which they are surrounded, and the impact these two components have on what earlier counselors and psychotherapists viewed as “universal” expressions of mental health. In addition, as counseling professionals, we are challenging one another to address personal biases and assumptions that prevent us from forming an affirming, therapeutic alliance with clients we counsel. These more recent forces of counseling—multiculturalism and social advocacy—are creating space for counselors to focus on cultural diversity, privilege, oppression, and the resilience strategies that clients have.

Despite these recent additional forces in counseling, resistance to the multicultural and social justice movements in the field of counseling is still present today. As this book highlights, there are significant negative outcomes for counselors who are not intentional about becoming culturally competent, no matter their cultural makeup. Racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination are evident within the counseling profession and create barriers to effective practice. Throughout this book you are likely to encounter new material related to cultural diversity, social injustice, and personal privilege and oppression; these experiences can create negative reactions such as anger, denial, sadness, or minimization, especially for those who may have not considered how multiculturalism and social justice relate to them personally and the clients they are trained to serve. Depending on your cultural makeup and typical experiences, you may notice an instinct to want to preserve how you understand the world around you, interpersonal relationships among culturally different individuals, and the counseling profession, in general. Although change can be slow and challenging, building competency related to multiculturalism and social advocacy is a necessary step for strengthening the counseling profession and its outcomes. As you begin this book, review the strategies presented in Activity 1.1 to help mitigate any negative experiences you might have as you build your cultural competency.

## KEY TERMINOLOGY OF MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING

Before discussing how counselors can develop multicultural counseling competence while focusing on systemic influences, it is important to define multicultural counseling and related constructs. **Multicultural counseling** may be defined as counseling that actively considers the influence of the counselor and client’s cultural identities on the counseling

### ACTIVITY 1.1

Becoming a culturally competent counselor is a life-long personal and professional journey. Continual reflection, active listening, and self-care are important practices for counselors building their cultural competency. Here are a few strategies to foster these practices:

- Remember that a wide range of positive and negative emotions and attitudes can be present when discussing multiculturalism and cultural topics, in general. Being able to identify these feelings in yourself and others, and normalizing them as part of counselor development, is a key first step for strengthening personal and professional identities.
- For those who identify as a person of color or another cultural identity traditionally marginalized, reviewing and discussing topics presented in this book can be especially challenging. It is a common mistake to look toward peers of marginalized identities to “speak for” a group, assuming they represent all others of that group. It is important to recognize both collective and individual experiences for those associated with various cultural groups. Throughout the text, we will try to highlight this difference when we discuss collective experiences by identifying individual experiences that illustrate heterogeneity within a respective cultural group or identity.
- Actively and respectfully listen to peers as they discuss their reactions to the text material. If they are willing, provide space without interruption for them to share their personal stories so that you can continue to grow as a culturally competent counselor.
- Before reading each chapter, reflect on any previous knowledge and attitudes you have on the chapter topic(s). Where does this knowledge originate? What feelings arise for you? What personal experiences do you have related to the chapter topic(s)?
- After reading each chapter and/or discussing the chapter material with your peers, journal about your personal reactions to the material and any discussions. To what extent have your knowledge and attitudes changed? What do you believe caused these changes, if applicable? Even for instances when you might disagree with the material or discussions, in what ways can you continue to learn to support a culturally diverse clientele?
- Take breaks as needed from the material in the text, as it can be personally challenging. Talk with someone you trust as you process the material, and/or engage in wellness activities such as exercise, meditation, spirituality, and healthy eating.

relationship, process, and outcome. **Cultural identity**, or the degree to which individuals identify themselves as belonging to subgroups of various cultural groups or categories, is influenced by their experiences with others within and outside of a particular cultural category. Cultural identity is contextual and can be shaped by historical and contemporary experiences with others.

**Culture** consists of the shared values, practices, social norms, and worldviews associated with a particular cultural group or individual. Three overlapping dimensions may be used to broadly define culture. **Universal culture** refers to commonalities shared by all cultures and, in fact, all humankind (e.g., use of language as a method of communication, establishment of social norms, bodily functions, physiological fear responses). **Group culture** involves the characteristics shared by a cultural group or subgroup (e.g., Asian Americans, women, individuals raised in the southern United States, those living in poverty). **Individual culture** consists of those behaviors, attitudes, and cognitions which are unique to specific individuals. Among

these may be behaviors that are outside the norms of the groups to which the individuals belong. Due to individual cultural attributes, it is important to not make assumptions about an individual client belonging to particular cultural groups.

With respect to group culture more specifically, cultural groups may be based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, disability, age, and spirituality, to name a few categories. Within each of these cultural categories, we can most likely articulate subgroup memberships. In addition, individuals are represented by intersecting cultural identities, creating a complex picture of cultural identity for individuals and groups associated with a particular general identity (e.g., Black, woman). For example, one individual might identify as a Latina, heterosexual, able-bodied, young female from a middle-class background while another individual might identify as characteristics such as being White, gay, male, and of lower socioeconomic status in identifying his cultural group memberships. Every individual—counselor and client alike—has a unique combination of cultural group memberships that bring different social, political, biological, and historical experiences to the counseling process. Even for clients with similar group cultural characteristics, there can be significant differences and thus counselors should not make assumptions about clients based on their cultural group memberships. Thus, counselors should view all counseling relationships as cross cultural in some manner. They are to use their evolving cultural competency about cultural group values, behaviors, and experiences as an initial blueprint to guide their work with clients with individual cultural expressions.

Defining multicultural counseling and culture can be complex, and thus engaging in culturally competent practice requires ongoing learning for all counselors. The extent to which a group membership is labeled as “cultural” depends on how broadly individuals define culture. For example, a broad definition might include variables such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, educational status, language, and geographical origin. A narrower definition might label culture as consisting of race and gender only. For example, consider a multiracial male who presents for counseling. A counselor who uses a broader definition of culture may attend to how characteristics such as the client’s race, gender, age, education level, nationality, degree of spirituality, family characteristics, and sexual orientation influence both his presenting symptoms and the counseling relationship. By contrast, a counselor who views this client through a narrower definition of culture may attend only to how his being multiracial and male affects his well-being and the counseling relationship.

In addition to how broadly one defines culture and thus cultural identity, the ability to understand others’ definitions of culture and cultural identity varies. Also referred to as **ethnocentrism**, **cultural encapsulation** is the narrow and rigid view of other cultural groups that ensues when one uses one’s own cultural groups as a reference and standard of normality (Wrenn, 1962). Counselors holding this view could impair a client’s well-being and/or lead to early termination of counseling services, as culturally encapsulated counselors use personally situated cultural views to evaluate what is normal or abnormal. For example, a career counselor who believes that serving in the military or law enforcement is too physically and psychologically strenuous for women can do harm with clients who are exploring careers and evaluating their skills and abilities.

Cultural encapsulation is linked to one’s **worldview**, or conceptualization of one’s relationship with the world. Sue and Sue (1977) described individuals’ worldviews as embedded within two intersecting dimensions—locus of responsibility and locus of control—that individuals and groups use to guide their behaviors. **Locus of responsibility** refers to the system that individuals believe is accountable for things that happen to them. An internal locus of

responsibility (IR) refers to the idea that success (or failure) is viewed as the result of individuals' own doings. An external locus of responsibility (ER) refers to the notion that the social environment is responsible for what happens to individuals. The second dimension, **locus of control**, represents the degree of control that individuals perceive they have over their environment. An internal locus of control (IC) refers to the belief that consequences are dependent on individuals' actions. An external locus of control (EC) refers to the notion that consequences result by chance and are outside individuals' control. There are four combinations of IC and EC. (See Build Your Knowledge 1.1.) Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) theoretical model creates a different definition of *worldview*, using five dimensions. Specifically, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck maintained that individuals have perspectives on (1) the nature of humankind, (2) individuals' relationship to nature, (3) individuals' sense of time, (4) the nature of self-expression (e.g., being vs. doing), and (5) how social relationships are organized (e.g., hierarchical vs. collateral–mutual).

Table 1.1 introduces other terms with which counselors should be familiar; terminology is further discussed and applied to specific populations in the chapters that follow. Further, because counselors have a unique “story” involving these key multicultural concepts that they bring to the counseling relationship, we encourage you to begin creating your own cultural narrative. (See Reflection 1.1.)

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### BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE 1.1

According to Sue and Sue (1977), individuals' worldviews may be conceptualized as one of four combinations of locus of responsibility and locus of control: (a) IR–IC is a common combination among those who hold White middle-class values according to which individuals control and are responsible for their own actions in the world; (b) IR–EC describes individuals who believe they cannot control actions that occur to them and may blame themselves for any negative consequences; (c) ER–IC addresses those who view individual ability to be possible if people are given an opportunity by those in their environment; and (d) ER–EC involves those who believe they have little control over their actions because of oppression and other systemic pressures and who thus see addressing the consequences of this state of affairs as outside their responsibility. On the basis of these four types of worldviews, list at least two situations in which clients may present in counseling with each of the following combinations: IR–IC; IR–EC; ER–IC; and ER–EC.

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**EXAMPLE: IR–IC** *A client visits a career counselor to seek assistance in selecting a college major. The client reports difficulty in the decision-making process. He is interested in a prestigious career that will allow him to be successful, and he wants to select the best college major to obtain this goal. He states that he holds himself accountable for any decision he makes.*

*In addition to the cultural identities that counselors and clients bring to the counseling relationship, “U.S.” or “American” culture is important to attend to, as American values may not always be congruent with values we hold regarding various cultural identities. Activity 1.2 presents some questions to reflect on with respect to U.S. culture and multicultural counseling.*

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### ACTIVITY 1.2

Together with a partner, discuss the following questions about U.S. culture and multicultural counseling:

- What does being an American mean to you?
- What values are associated with being an American?
- What values are associated with not being an American?
- How would you describe U.S. culture to a newcomer to the United States?
- What images come to your mind about U.S. culture as you reflect on media images?
- How might images and descriptions of U.S. culture be beneficial to counseling diverse populations? How might they be a challenge?

**TABLE 1.1** Key Terms Related to Culture and Multicultural Counseling

Terminology	Description
<b>Cultural Humility</b>	A multicultural orientation or the extent to which counselors value the role of culture in individuals' lives and can be open to "otherness" in their work. Cultural humility is a process-oriented and critical stance to cultural learning within self and others (Hook et al., 2016). <i>Example:</i> A counselor, assuming a client is an expert of his own life with invaluable cultural strengths, considers how her own cultural views may be limited.
<b>Disability</b>	As part of the continuum of ability status, a <b>disability</b> is a mental or physical impairment that affects at least one of an individual's daily activities. Individuals with disabilities often face discrimination referred to as <b>ableism</b> . <i>Examples:</i> blindness, developmental delay, spinal cord injury, mental illness.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b> refers to the shared characteristics of culture, religion, and language, to name a few, with which a group may identify. <i>Examples:</i> individuals of Latin or Latin American descent, individuals of Arab or Arab American descent. <b>Nationality</b> , a common component of ethnicity, refers to one's nation of origin, such as France, Kenya, China, or pre-Columbian America. Several racial groups may share the same ethnicity (e.g., White people and Africans share South African heritage). Some racial groups, such as White people, may be unaware of their ethnic group membership.
<b>Etic versus Emic Perspective</b>	An <b>etic</b> perspective focuses on the universal qualities common to all cultures and on aspects of counseling that are generalizable across cultures. A limitation of the etic approach is the failure to account for legitimate cultural variations. <i>Example:</i> Verbal communication as an etic perspective can vary in certain cultural groups whereas nonverbal communication may be equally valued. An <b>emic</b> perspective involves viewing each client as an individual and evaluating the client by using norms from within the client's culture while acknowledging individual expressions of those norms (Thomas et al., 2018). <i>Example:</i> When working with a client who identifies as Christian, asking about what Christianity means to them and how it is expressed in the client's life. Most multicultural counseling literature recommends the emic approach when working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds; this approach helps reduce stereotyping, prejudice, and the tendency to impose a cultural bias.

(Continued)



**TABLE 1.1** Key Terms Related to Culture and Multicultural Counseling (Continued)

Terminology	Description
<b>Gender</b>	Whereas <b>sex</b> refers to the biological distinctions between males and females (e.g., hormonal and anatomical differences), <b>gender</b> is the expression of social identities (i.e., boy, girl, man, woman), or <b>gender roles</b> , that describe behaviors deemed appropriate by a particular culture for boys/men and girls/women. <b>Cisgender</b> refers to the alignment of one's current gender identity and their biological sex of which they were born. Three terms are useful in thinking about gender and gender role expression: masculinity, femininity, and androgyny. <b>Masculinity</b> and <b>femininity</b> are the normative expressions of stereotypical and socially accepted behaviors for men and women, respectively. <b>Androgyny</b> is the blending of masculinity and femininity (Stoller, 2020). Further gender identities such as <b>intersex</b> , <b>transgender people</b> , and <b>gender non-conforming</b> , demonstrate the complexity of gender and gender norms.
<b>Generational Status</b>	<b>Generational status</b> refers to clusters of age groups within a particular social and historical context. Generations typically span a range of 15 to 20 years and represent individuals who share common characteristics due to their experiences in history based on their cohort. <i>Examples:</i> the GI generation ("government issue," 1901–1924); the silent generation (mid-1920s to about 1945); the baby-boomer generation (1946–1960); Generation X (1961–1981); Generation Y, or the Millennial Generation (1982–2000); and Generation Z (those born after 2000). Generational status is an important identity for those who become acculturated to the United States, given that younger generations may have an easier time navigating U.S. culture (Ro et al., 2016; Roth et al., 2019).
<b>Individualism versus Collectivism</b>	<b>Individualism</b> is the notion that our behaviors and attitudes are guided by incentives that promote self-determination or independence (e.g., competitiveness, self-disclosure, agency, self-promotion). <b>Collectivism</b> refers to the idea that decisions, and thus what is deemed important, are based on the betterment of others, such as community or family members. Collectivistic values might include cooperation, "saving face," and interdependence. Individuals may have a combination of individualistic and collectivistic values (Triandis, 2018).
<b>Privilege versus Oppression</b>	<b>Privilege</b> refers to the often unconscious and unearned power, access to resources, advantage, and social position based on cultural group memberships. Privileged cultural groups in U.S. society typically include White people, males, heterosexuals, those with a higher socioeconomic status, the able bodied, and Christians. Because certain individuals have privilege, others within various cultural groups experience <b>oppression:</b> lack of power, inaccessibility of resources, disadvantage, and marginalized social status. Oppressed cultural groups include racial and ethnic minority groups, females, sexual minorities, the less able bodied, those of lower socioeconomic status, and religious minorities (Hays, 2020).
<b>Race</b>	<b>Race</b> , or <b>racial group membership</b> , is the arbitrary, socially constructed classification of individuals and is often based on physical distinctions such as skin color, hair texture, facial form, and shape of the eye. Throughout history, race as a classification system has divided and exploited individuals, and has resulted in both <b>racism</b> and lowered social, political, and psychological well-being. <i>Examples:</i> White, Black, Asian American, and Native American.

(Continued)



**TABLE 1.1** Key Terms Related to Culture and Multicultural Counseling (Continued)

Terminology	Description
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Sexual orientation</b> refers to sexual or affectional attraction to the same or opposite gender, or both. <b>Sexual identity</b> describes the degree of identification with a particular sexual orientation (Singh, 2018). <i>Examples:</i> heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, questioning. There are more than 45 sexual identities that exist, and new identifies continue to emerge (see Healthline, 2021). Sexual identity and sexual orientation overlap in that sexual orientation falls on a continuum, at one end of which an individual of one gender may be attracted solely to another of the opposite gender (i.e., the sexual orientation of the first individual is heterosexual) and at another end of which an individual of one gender may be attracted to another of the same gender (e.g., the sexual orientation of the first individual is gay). Between these points fall various other sexual identities, including bisexual and questioning.
<b>Social Advocacy and Social Justice</b>	<b>Social advocacy</b> refers to the promotion of an idea, policy, or cause that betters the lives of those who experience oppression. <i>Examples:</i> protest of police brutality, policy paper to share with legislators to address mental health laws. <b>Social justice</b> is the realization of a just and equitable world for all individuals. <i>Examples:</i> reproductive justice, gender equity in the workplace.
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>	<b>Socioeconomic status (SES)</b> is typically indicated by household income, education level, occupational status, use of public assistance, and access to health care. Those who belong to lower SES groups (e.g., working class, underclass) often have negative mental health outcomes as a result of detrimental social, educational, and economic experiences. As noted in the U.S. Demographics section below, racial and ethnic minorities and women heads of household disproportionately represent lower SES groups, making the intersection of SES, race, ethnicity, and gender an important component of multicultural counseling.
<b>Spirituality and Religion</b>	<b>Spirituality</b> refers to the connections individuals have with themselves and the universe as a whole. It provides direction, meaning, and purpose, and guides other aspects of cultural identity so that individuals can promote optimal mental functioning. <b>Religion</b> , an organizing construct of spirituality, consists of the behaviors and practices of individuals' faith (Corbett, 2019). <i>Examples:</i> Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Taoism.

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### REFLECTION 1.1

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Construct a narrative or story of your cultural background. Identify your cultural group memberships (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, spirituality, age, ability status) and other characteristics that seem significant to you. In addition, identify cultural groups with which you typically interacted throughout your lifetime, as well as groups you minimally interacted with, if at all. In your narrative, articulate how you or your family immigrated to the United States (if applicable) and how your family and community shape your cultural identity.