

Affirming Diversity
By Consuela Ward Pender

This exercise is primarily for freshmen college students. The objective is diversity awareness. There are 5 parts to the exercise. Begin with a discussion of what diversity means to them and end the discussion with a clear definition including one of ideas, ability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, educational background with the list going on. Part I. – Call out the following list of identifiers. Instruct the students to stand if they affiliate with any of these identifiers and the audience will applaud (affirm) them for who they are. **Please note that if a student is not comfortable identifying with some of these categories, they are not required to stand.** Part II. Students are to call out identifiers that they identify the most with. These can include ones that were called as well as ones that were not called earlier. The facilitator should write them all on the board. Part III. Students are now to choose only one of the identifiers listed on the board. It should be the one in which they identify the most and are most passionate. They are to get into like groups or caucuses to discuss and record those things that they are most offended about when people think or say things about their group. Part IV. Groups/caucuses are to present their recording at the front of the room without any interruptions, questions, or debate. When they are finished, the class applauds (affirms) that group. Part V. Debrief - What did you learn? How did you feel? Where do we go from here? Students usually enjoy the up and down of standing and the break up of activity. The seriousness comes into play with the acknowledgement of I am different and I am important, learning what is offensive that may not be so common sense to that individual.

Gender:

Male
Female

Marital Status:

Single
Married
Attached

Parent's education level

High School
Some College
4 yr. College degree
Masters
Doctorate

Ethnic Descent:

African

South Asian (India, Laos, Pakistan, etc...)
Middle Eastern
Pacific Islander
European
British
Central or South American
Native American
Caucasian
Asian American
Hispanic/Latino
Caribbean
Middle Eastern
African American
Bi Racial
Multiracial
Other

Financial Status:

Poor
Less than Enough
Enough
More than Enough

Classification:

Freshman
Sophomore
Junior
Senior
Graduate Student

Sexual Orientation:

Straight
Gay, Lesbian,
Bisexual
Trangender

Political Party

Republican
Democratic
Independent
Other

Region

From the North
South

Southwest
Southeast
Northwest
Northeast
West Coast
International Student

Family Background

Nuclear Family/Two parent household
Blended Family
Single Parent Home
Raised by Someone other than mom or dad

Sibling Order

Oldest Child
Youngest Child
Middle Child
Only Child

Sexual Orientation

Straight
Lesbian
Homosexual
Bisexual
Transgendered

Religious Affiliation

Baptist
Methodist
Lutheran
Catholic
Episcopalian
Bahai
Pentecostal
Presbyterian
Atheist
Agnostic
Jewish
Hindu
Other

Ideas

Pro choice
Pro life
Legalize marijuana
Do not legalize marijuana

For capital punishment
Against capital punishment

Other

Greek

Non-Greek

Athlete

Computer

Artistic (includes dance, theater, music, etc...)

Feminist

Techy

Environmentalist

Honor Student

Non-Traditional Student

Residential Student

Commuter Student

Extrovert

Introvert

1st generation college student

1st generation American