

**NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY
ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

Learner: **Steven Diaz**

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED IN

Please Follow These Procedures: If requested by your mentor, use an assignment cover sheet as the first page of the **word processor** file. Use "headers" to indicate your course code, assignment number, and your name on each page of the assignment/homework including this assignment cover sheet. .

Keep a Photocopy or Electronic Copy Of Your Assignments: You may need to re-submit assignments if your mentor has indicated that you may or must do so.

Academic Integrity: All work submitted in each course must be the Learner's own. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by the faculty mentor. The knowing submission of another persons work represented as that of the Learner's without properly citing the source of the work will be considered plagiarism and will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course, and may result in academic dismissal.

ED5003

Dr. Butler Pearson

Philosophy of Education

**Activity 6: Integrative Essay on
Diversity in Education**

Dr. B-P,

I apologize for the late submission but I have been busy preparing for the new school year starting on August 20th. I also apologize that my previous assignment contained more pages than what was specified in the syllabus. For this assignment, I stood within the assignment page limits.

I enjoyed this assignment since it is a topic very close to my personal experiences. I am Hispanic and currently teaching in a very diverse student catholic university.

Faculty Use Only

<Faculty comments here>

<Faculty Name>

<Grade Earned>

<Writing Score>

<Date Graded>

Integrative Essay on Diversity in Education

Steven Diaz

Northcentral University

We live in an exceptional country where there is always the opportunity for progress and success, and where everyone enjoys the freedom to do those things that please us the most. We have inalienable rights that protect us against any harm that other individuals, organizations, or institutions may attempt to do against us. We have the right to choose who will govern us and even to govern the people. Our country has rich and vast resources that we can somehow or somewhat use through hard work and determination. In other words, there is no doubt why so many people from other nations want to come into our country, the United States of America. All immigrants want to enjoy what all Americans enjoy, proudly display to the world, and zealously protect: the freedom and opportunity for a better future. For such reason, the people of our country are so diverse which has caused a movement for multicultural programs in every sector of the American society. According to Gutek (2004), “Multicultural programs encourage a respect for cultural pluralism and diversity in which each racial and ethnic group is seen as having the right to express its distinctive culture and in which this expression is viewed as an enriching contribution to the larger national culture” (p. 168).

However, multiculturalism has not been welcome by many Americans who consider this a threat to their “we-feeling” as Gutek (2004) referred to the sense of national identity. “Some see multiculturalism as the bedrock upon which to build a society of true equality, while others see multiculturalism as a sinkhole that will swallow up the very foundation of American society” (Parillo, 1996, para. 3). There are four main threats that cause many Americans to oppose multiculturalism according to Parillo (1996): immigration, language, culture, and race. Americans will oppose multiculturalism if immigration is going to become a financial hardship, or if English proficiency is not a high priority for immigrants and advocates of multicultural

programs or if perpetuates an alien culture which could lessen the cohesiveness of communities or if increases racial power struggles that already existent in American society. In other words, many Americans will welcome immigrants as long they do not fragment or weaken the American culture. The ultimatum is to assimilate or leave; their allegiance should not be divided half one nationality and half American (e.g. Cuban-American, African-American, Asian-American, etc.). Kimball (2004) criticized how multiculturalism promotes the lack of loyalty to the American culture by many ethnic groups.

A favorite weapon in the armory of multiculturalism is the lowly hyphen. When we speak of an African-American or Mexican-American or Asian-American these days, the aim is not descriptive but deconstructive. There is a polemical edge to it, a provocation. The hyphen does not mean “American, but hailing at some point in the past from someplace else.” It means “only provisionally American: my allegiance is divided at best.” (para. 19)

The rationale of Americans who oppose multiculturalism is that those who come to this country are looking for a better future, and then being an American represents that future.

Many other Americans favor multicultural programs in our society and according to Gutek (2004), “Respecting cultural diversity is now heralded as one of the important behaviors of a good American” (p. 161). Our diversity is one of the strengths of this country and it is what allows us to be a multifaceted society. Multiculturalism does not divide the national identity of Americans; instead it enriches their identity, as Bollinger (2007) stated:

We know that connecting with people very -- or even slightly -- different from ourselves stimulates the imagination; and when we learn to see the world through a multiplicity of eyes, we only make ourselves more nimble in mastering -- and integrating -- the diverse fields of knowledge awaiting us. (para. 8)

The threats that were seen by those who oppose multiculturalism are blessings by those who favor it, as Parrillo (1996) described it using the analogy of a rose and its thorns. Each immigrant group has contributed to the growth of our country somehow or someday; in other words, immigrants have proven to be assets for our nation. The language barriers have allowed Americans to see the importance of becoming bilingual, in particular these times of global economy. When immigrants come to this country, they come to join the American culture in which they have a chance of living better. However, as everything in life that is unfamiliar, it will take time for these immigrants to familiarize, accustom, and integrate to the dominant culture. With the constant flux of immigrants coming into our country, the demographics will change into an even more diverse society increasing tolerance and respect to people of different races.

Education unlocks the doors of opportunity to an individual's life; the opportunity to be the best that one can be in a world that is constantly and quickly changing. American teachers will face a diverse population of students in their classroom who will be significantly different from them. However, teachers teach no matter who they have in their classroom, as Walzer pointed out in the Hillel story about how teachers behave, "If teachers see a likely student, they take him. At least, that is the way legendary, and therefore ideal, teachers behave; they ask none of the conventional questions about wealth and status" (as cited in Cahn, 1997, p. 390). Students have the right to the same education that allows them to become the best they can be as individuals and members of our society. Schools must take advantage of our exceptional diversity to provide our children the opportunity of a better nation and a better life, as Gutmann stated in her essay about Democratic Education:

To reap the benefits of social diversity, children must be exposed to ways of life different from their parents and – in the course of their exposure – must embrace certain values, such as mutual respect among persons, that make social diversity both possible and desirable. (as cited in Cahn, 1997, p. 421)

Multiculturalism enhances what Americans value the most, freedom and opportunity. Bollinger (2007) pointed this out by quoting a Supreme Court Judge who was ruling about affirmative action, "The legal system can open doors and sometimes even knock down walls. But it cannot build bridges. ... We will only attain freedom if we learn to appreciate what is different and muster the courage to discover what is fundamentally the same." Education's mission is to build these bridges.

References

- Bollinger, L.C., (2007). *Why Diversity Matters*. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 53(39), B.20. Retrieved August 5, 2007, from ProQuest Education Journals database. (Document ID: 1292306901).
- Cahn, S. (1997). *Classic and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education*. NY: McGraw Hill.
- Guttek, G. L. (2004). *Philosophical and ideological voices in education* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Kimball, R., (2004). *Institutionalizing our demise: America vs. Multiculturalism*. Retrieved August 13, 2007 from <http://newcriterion.com:81/archive/22/june04/america.htm>.
- Parillo, V.N., (1996). *Is Multiculturalism A Threat?* Retrieved August 11, 2007 from <http://www.wpunj.edu/cohss/sociology/soc399/multi1.htm>.