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To cite this article: Sandra Collins & Nancy Arthur (2010) Culture-infused counselling: A model for developing multicultural competence, *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 23:2, 217-233, DOI: [10.1080/09515071003798212](https://doi.org/10.1080/09515071003798212)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515071003798212>



Published online: 09 Jun 2010.



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Culture-infused counselling: A model for developing multicultural competence

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(Final version received 3 January 2007)

Cultural, personal, contextual, and universal factors integrate to form the personal cultural identities of both the counsellor and the client. These personal cultural identities may have a dramatic impact on the success of the counselling process and must be taken into account in both theory and practice. The culture-infused counselling model builds on the concept of personal cultural identity to form a conceptual framework for enhancing the multicultural competence of practitioners and for optimizing therapeutic outcomes with a wide range of clientele. The specific attitudes, knowledge, and skills required for multicultural competence are described, expanding upon and enhancing earlier theoretical conceptualizations of multicultural counselling competencies. This detailed elaboration of specific multicultural counselling competencies provides a foundation for counsellor education and continued professional development.

Keywords: cultural counseling; personal cultural identity; multicultural competence; counselling process

Introduction

The challenge of developing multicultural counselling competence has occupied a prominent place in the literature over the past 30 years. In spite of the complexity of opinion on the topic, many now argue that this is not an optional endeavor but a foundation for effective and ethical professional practice (Arredondo & Toporek, 2004, Marsella & Pedersen, 2004). Each of us faces the challenge of identifying our current level of multicultural competence and identifying the attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills that we require to work with clients who are culturally different from ourselves. To make the goal of infusing culture effectively into counselling practice more manageable, counsellors require a starting place from which to review their current professional practices. Codes of ethics provide an overarching view of counselling practices with culturally diverse clients (Pettifor, 2005). However, the details of how to improve standards of practice are not covered in most professional codes of ethics. What have emerged in the counselling literature are collections of competencies for multicultural counselling practice, organized according to various conceptual models (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992; Sue et al., 1982; Sue et al., 1998). These models assist counsellors to move forward on

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their journey of developing multicultural competence and to incorporate new learning into professional practice as they acquire more experience working with their clients. However, for a somewhat different perspective see for example Alladin (1993, 2009), Laungani (1997) and Moodley, Rai, & Alladin (2010) with models more consistent with our culture-infused model.

We have developed a conceptual model for infusing culture into practice with all clients and compiled a comprehensive template of multicultural competencies for professional practice based on a review of current literature. In another paper in this issue of the journal (Collins & Arthur, 2010b) we provided a rationale for our revised conceptual framework.

In this current paper, however, we introduce our conceptual model for *culture-infused counselling* and provide a detailed description of the attitudes, knowledge, and skills identified as central to the development of *culture-infused counselling competence*. We begin by exploring the concept of personal cultural identity as a foundation for infusing culture into practice with all clients. We then present our model of culture-infused counselling and the culture-infused counselling competencies it encompasses. A detailed elaboration of specific multicultural counselling competencies provides the foundation for counsellor education and continued professional development.

Personal cultural identity

Awareness of one's own personal culture and awareness of client culture is consistently identified as foundational to multicultural counselling competence (American Psychological Association [APA], 2002). We have argued elsewhere that multicultural counselling competencies must be based on a broad definition of culture (Arthur & Collins, 2005b, 2010; Collins & Arthur (2010b, this issue). Conceptualizations of personal and cultural identity vary (Arredondo et al., 1996; Arredondo & Glauner, 1992; Ho, 1995; Ivey et al., 2002; Sue, 2001). We have amalgamated a number of these models to posit the following factors as central to *personal cultural identity*. These apply to both the counsellor and the client in any counselling interaction.

Cultural factors represent the group affiliations held by individuals, including age, gender, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, religion, language, and social class. The focus at this level is on between-group or intercultural differences (Ho, 1995). These factors are often identified for protection under various forms of equity and diversity legislation. Many now emphasize the importance of cultural competencies that incorporate attention to all of these factors (Arredondo & Perez, 2006; Mollen et al., 2003). *Personal identity factors* include idiosyncratic experiences, genetic make-up, developmental paths, socialization, and so on (Dana, 1998). We include in this dimension factors such as education, marital status, and work experience that are unique to the particular individual. At this level, attention is focused on within-group or intracultural differences (Ho, 1995). *Contextual factors* refer to the historical, social, political, environmental, or economic contexts in which individuals live. These factors can have a significant impact on personal experiences, worldview, and values. Widespread social or institutionalized oppression based on one or more cultural identity factors would be recognized here (Arredondo & Glauner, 1992). *Universal factors* include those elements of experience that are

common to everyone and, to some degree, set human beings apart from other forms of life, including self-awareness, ability to use symbols, and psychological or biological similarities (Sue, 2001). At this level we are reminded that “all individuals are, in some respects, like all other individuals” (Sue, 2001, p. 793), our common shared humanity.

For both the counsellor and the client, these factors are fluid, dynamic, and interactive. Human beings are all active participants in the shaping of personal and collective culture (Ho, 1995). Sue (2001) points out that the primary foci of psychology have traditionally been on the personal identity factors and the universal factors. In the development of theoretical models and counselling processes, the cultural and contextual factors have largely been ignored. The experiences, norms, values, and practices of particular cultural groups may dramatically impact the nature of service required to meet their needs. Recognition of the resulting under-representation and under-servicing of nondominant populations has played a central role in the growth in theoretical and practical resource material for multicultural counselling over the past few decades (Arthur & Collins, 2005b).

It is also critical, however, to acknowledge the complexity of individual and group identity. Critics of earlier conceptual models point to the underlying premise that group-specific interventions are required, noting that the focus has been placed primarily on group ethnic identities (Weinrach & Thomas, 2002). However, cultural identity may be expressed differently by individuals from similar groups because of the interaction with other identity factors. Each individual internalizes various elements of culture from the four factors to form their own internalized culture (Ho, 1995; Collins & Arthur, 2005). It is the internalized culture of the individual that becomes significant at the psychological level (Ho, 1995; Popadiuk & Arthur, 2004). Attention has also been paid to the intersection of cultural dimensions such as ethnicity and gender, recognizing that many clients hold multiple and sometimes conflicting cultural identities that impact their worldviews (Pope-Davis & Coleman, 2000). Because of the interaction of all of these factors, within-group differences may sometimes be as significant as between-group differences. Each client is unique and the salience of cultural and personal identity factors must be constantly assessed.

The other dimension of personal cultural identity that has often been ignored in psychology is the contextual factors that impact on both dominant and nondominant groups in society (Sue, 2001). How individuals perceive and define themselves is dependent on the interpersonal and systemic factors present at a particular time and in a particular context. Taking all these components of personal identity into account clearly supports the assertion that all interactions between counselling and client are multicultural (Pedersen, 2001).

The culture-infused counselling model

One of the criticisms of early frameworks of multicultural counselling competencies was that, although Arredondo and colleagues (1996) presented the *dimensions of personal identity* model, the competencies themselves did not reflect this multi-dimensional conceptualization of personal cultural identity (Weinrach & Thomas, 2002). We have attempted in our presentation of *culture-infused counselling competencies*, to address this concern and to identify attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are foundation to working effectively with clients with a wide range of

complex personal cultural identities. Our *culture-infused counselling model* is organized according to three core competency domains:

- Cultural awareness – Self: Active awareness of personal assumptions, values, and biases;
- Cultural awareness – Other: Understanding of the worldview of the client; and
- Culturally sensitive working alliance.

See Collins and Arthur (2010, this issue) for a detailed rationale for our conceptual framework and for using the working alliance as the foundation of the third core competency domain.

Figure 1 illustrates how the core competencies in this model interact with the personal cultural identities of the counsellor and the client. The competencies that we see as core to professional practice with all clients fall into the centre of the model, in each of the three competency domains. Within the intersection of competency domains, areas of practice and cultural affiliations are specific multicultural competencies, which are defined at this more micro level according to the dimensions of attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills. Personal or contextual identity factors are then used as means of assessing the salience of these factors to a particular client.

For example, in working with a female recent immigrant from Southern Asia, the counsellor would begin with the overarching competencies in each domain, which we

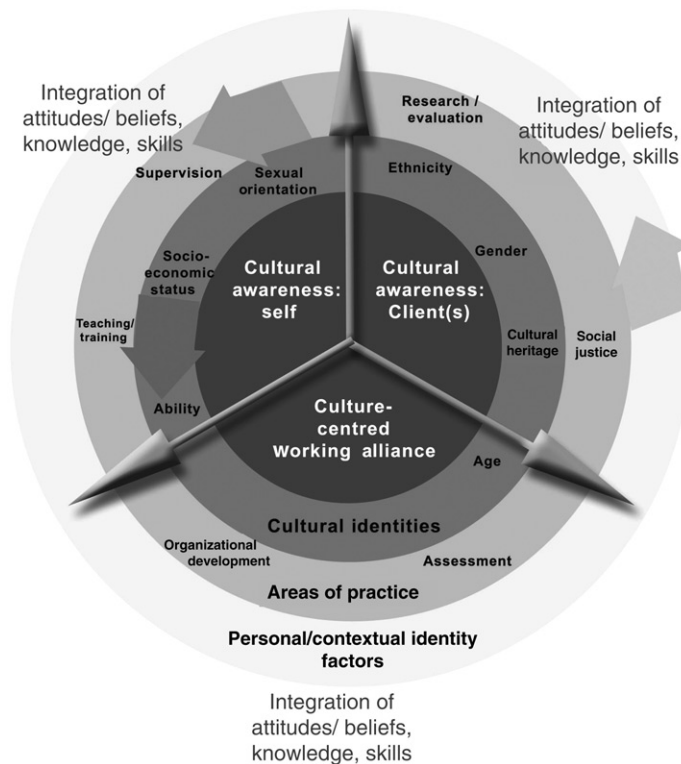


Figure 1. Culture-infused counselling model.

describe in the next section of this paper. These core competencies provide the foundation for building an effective working alliance and engaging a process of cultural inquiry to assess the role of personal cultural identity in the client's presenting concerns. Gender or ethnicity may or may not play out as salient features of a culturally sensitive counselling process, depending on the nature of the presenting concern, the context in which the individual finds herself, and other personal identity factors (like education and English language skills). The specific competencies required would also depend on the nature of the professional interaction: supervision, individual counselling, consultation, and so on.

Although others have presented three-dimensional organizational structures for identifying competencies (Toporek & Reza, 2001), intended to highlight the interaction across multiple dimensions, defining competencies in all the potential areas of intersection is, we believe, a not likely a feasible or value-added exercise. Our framework allows for those competencies that are foundational (located at the center of the model) to be articulated, then additional competencies may be added for specific cultural groups or areas of practice. See Arthur and Collins (2005a) for examples of how these additional competencies may be generated. It is the foundational competencies for applied practice that are articulated below.

Culture-infused counselling competencies

The influence of the multicultural counselling competencies has been widespread, and they have provided an important starting point for enhancing the competence of future and current practitioners. Based on earlier criticisms about the difficulty in applying the competencies to practice and to education and training, attempts have been made to address the lack of specificity (APA, 2002; Pope-Davis & Coleman, 1997; Sue et al., 1998) and to operationalize the competencies (Arredondo et al., 1996; Roysicar, 2003). What appears to be lacking in the literature is a parallel modification of the competencies themselves. An attempt has been made in the model presented in Table 1 to make the multicultural competencies (a) more comprehensive, drawing on the range of current literature, (b) more inclusive, in response to the expanded view of cultural identities above, and (c) more specific and operational, wording each as a distinct learning objective.

The framework presented in Table 1 is an attempt to build on the foundational work of earlier authors, while addressing some of the challenges described above and in other writings (Collins & Arthur, 2005, 2010a, 2010b). We have also drawn on the competency guidelines related to specific nondominant populations (APA, 1998, 2003; Bowman & King, 2003) and the work of Hansen and colleagues (2000), who integrated a focus on other nondominant groups.

The competencies are described *as if* the counsellor is a member of the dominant population (white, male, heterosexual, able-bodied). We have done this simply because this is often the case and because using a more generic wording tends to downplay the power differences among cultural populations. The purpose of this table is to provide counsellors with an up-to-date template to assess their current level of multicultural counselling competence and to identify areas where further professional development may be required. We encourage students in our graduate classes to work through the table and highlight items for further professional development. Readers are invited to do the same.

Table 1. A framework for culture-infused counselling competencies.

<p>Domain 1: Cultural Awareness – Self: Active awareness of personal assumptions, values, and biases.</p> <p><i>Core Competency 1: Demonstrate awareness of your own cultural identities.</i></p> <p>Attitudes & Beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See yourself as a cultural being. • Be able and willing to self-reflect. • Value awareness of your own cultural identity or identities. • Acknowledge both positive and negative aspects of your own cultural group(s). • Acknowledge your tendency to view the world through your own cultural lens. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsellor identity development (e.g., white, male, heterosexual) • Cultural identity • Cultural schemata
<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define race, ethnicity, culture, and diversity. • Describe your own cultural identities. • Recognizes the factors that influence personal identity formation: personal factors (e.g., genetics, family, personality); cultural factors (e.g., gender, social class, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion); and contextual factors (e.g., historical context, environment). • Explain the impact of these factors on your identity development. • List common phases of cultural identity development. • Identify your level of cultural identity development. • Describe the impact your identity development may have on the counselling process. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture • Diversity • Ethnicity • Internalized culture • Personal culture • Privilege • Race • Values
<p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively pursue deeper cultural self-awareness. • Analyze cultural factors affecting self and others. • Actively support nonoppressive practices. 		
<p><i>Core Competency 2: Demonstrate awareness of differences between your own cultural identities and those of individuals from other dominant or nondominant groups.</i></p> <p>Attitudes & Beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize how your cultural identity affects your beliefs, values, and assumptions about members of nondominant populations. • Be nonjudgmental about differences between you and those of different heritage, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and age. • Acknowledge personal discomfort or biases related to cultural differences. • Assume responsibility for modifying your own attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, or skills. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural mosaic • Cultural reciprocity • Culture shock (counsellor) • Difference versus deviance • Dominant and nondominant groups • Imposition of values and standards
<p>Knowledge</p>		

- Multicultural policy
- Multiculturalism
- Professional codes of conduct

- Define multiculturalism.
- Identify relevant professional and political guidelines.
- Explain the benefits and limitations of multiculturalism policies.
- Explain differences in culture and worldview between dominant and nondominant groups in society.
- Identify historical, socio-economic, political, and other contextual factors that impact these differences.
- Explain the relationship between your own cultural group and other dominant or nondominant groups in society.
- Identify the potential impact of your cultural values and biases on clients from nondominant groups.
- Self-monitor negative emotional reactions, biases, or value judgments.
- Actively challenge negative emotional reactions, biases, or value judgments.
- Identify signs of personal culture shock.
- Avoid withdrawing from engagement with clients or blaming clients for your emotional reactions.

Skills

Core Competency 3: Demonstrate awareness of the impact of culture on the theory and practice of counselling/psychology.

- Acknowledge that counselling and psychology are culture-bound.
- Recognize that a monocultural perspective does not fit for all clients.
- Be open to alternative perspectives on health and healing.
- Describe the historical and contextual factors that shape the theory and practice of counselling and psychology.
- List the cultural tenets underlying Western theories of counselling.
- Identify the impact of multicultural, feminist, and other diversity-sensitive movements on current theory and practice.
- Describe Eastern psychological and healing practices.
- Explain how your cultural identities affect your views of human nature, healthy functioning, and the change process.
- Analyze the underlying values and assumptions in your own personal theory of counselling.
- Maintain theoretical flexibility.
- Adapt Western theories and practices.
- Incorporate nonWestern theories and practices.

Knowledge

- Cultural blindness
- Cultural consciousness
- Cultural encapsulation
- Cultural malpractice
- Ethnocentrism
- Feminist counselling
- Gay-affirmative counselling
- Monoculturalism
- Multicultural counselling
- Unintentional oppression
- Western worldview

Skills

(continued)

Table 1. Continued.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze cultural biases in psychological literature and research. Engage in culture-infused research practices. Contribute to the knowledge base for working effectively with nondominant populations. 	
<i>Core Competency 4: Demonstrate awareness of the personal and professional impact of the discrepancy between dominant and nondominant cultural groups in North America.</i>		
Attitudes & Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect the dignity and equal worth of all cultural groups. Uphold social justice and equity for all members of society. Acknowledge your own racist, sexist, elitist, heterosexist, ableist, and ageist attitudes and beliefs. Be willing to work through any defensiveness or guilt. Describe how oppression, discrimination, and stereotyping affect you personally and in your work. Explain the nature of privilege. Describe how you may have benefited directly or indirectly by societal oppression of members of nondominant groups. Discuss the impact of power differences on the counselling process. Identify means of minimizing power differences. Identify ways to promote social change. Analyze overt and covert means of cultural oppression within your familial, social, work, community, and professional contexts. Demonstrate nonracist, nonsexist, nonclassist, nonheterosexist, nonableist, and nonageist practices. Engage in professional and personal activities to promote social justice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural baggage Cultural counter-transference Empowerment Individual, institutional, cultural oppression Overgeneralization/stereotypes Power Prejudice/discrimination Privilege Racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, elitism Unintentional racism
Knowledge		
Skills		
<i>Core Competency 5: Demonstrate awareness of your level of multicultural competence.</i>		
Attitudes & Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View all encounters between counsellor and client as multicultural. View multicultural competence as necessary for competent practice. Value authenticity. Demonstrate congruence between personal and professional roles. Commit to continued development of multicultural counselling competence. Define culture-infused counselling. Define multicultural counselling competence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued competency Cultural reflection Culture-infused counselling Ethical practice Multicultural Case conceptualization Multicultural competence
Knowledge		

- Multicultural counselling competencies

- Identify specific competencies required for competent practice.
- Identify potential ethics dilemmas involved in multicultural counselling.
- Identify relevant standards and codes of ethics.
- Explain the cultural limitations these guidelines.
- Infuse cultural inquiry into all dimensions of professional practice.
- Assess your level of multicultural competence.
- Identify the limits of your multicultural competence.
- Implement a culturally sensitive model of ethical decision-making.
- Implement strategies to manage situations beyond your level of multicultural competence.
- Map out a process of continued professional development.

Skills

Domain II: Cultural Awareness – Other: Understanding the worldview of the client.
Core Competency I: Demonstrate awareness of the cultural identities of your clients.

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Value cultural diversity.
- Be tolerant of ambiguity.
- See worldviews as neither right nor wrong, good nor evil.
- Acknowledge both healthy and unhealthy aspects of all cultural systems.
- Believe that sensitivity to client cultural identities is necessary for competent practice.

Knowledge

- Explain how cultural identities are shaped through historical, social, and cultural experiences and contexts.
- Describe the basic tenets of the world's dominant religions.
- Describe the cultural groups in your region.
- List the cultural affiliations of your clients.
- Identify the factors that influence client identity formation: personal factors (e.g., genetics, family, personality); cultural factors (e.g., gender, social class, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability); and contextual factors (e.g., historical context, environment).
- Explain how these factors influence the internalized culture of your client – values, beliefs, and worldview.
- Recognize that within-group differences are sometimes as large as between-group differences.

- Cognitive complexity
- Collective identity
- Cultural hypotheses
- Cultural identity factors
- Cultural relativism
- Cultural schemata
- Gender identity
- Individualistic identity
- Salience of cultural identity
- Sexual identity
- Sexual orientation
- Worldview

(continued)

Table 1. Continued.

Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to increase your basic cultural knowledge. • Assess the unique cultural identities of your clients. • Assess the potential influences of cultural identity on counselling issues and interventions. • Hold tentatively to cultural hypotheses. • Avoid using general cultural knowledge in stereotypical ways. • Adjust your cultural lens in response to new information. 	
<i>Core Competency 2: Demonstrate awareness of the relationship of personal culture to health and wellbeing.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View culture as critical to fully understanding any individual or group. • Acknowledge the impact of cultural factors on healthy functioning, development and conceptualization of problems, and expressions of distress. • Respect the roles of family, community, social hierarchies, and religious or spiritual affiliations. 	
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe in the interrelationship of all aspects of human nature and experience. • Explain how cultural heritage, gender, social class, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and age may impact wellbeing. • Identify the psychosocial health problems that commonly affect various nondominant populations. • Explain how various nondominant populations manage health issues. • Describe models of cultural identity development. • Explain the impact of culture shock on clients. • Define acculturation. • Explain the impact of different acculturation patterns on personal and social adjustment. • Describe the benefits of adopting a bicultural or hybrid identity. • Explain the potential impact of client identity development on the counselling process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acculturation • Assimilation • Bicultural identity • Cross-cultural transition • Cultural blindness • Cultural consciousness • Cultural identity development models (nondominant and dominant populations) • Cultural value conflicts • Culture shock (client) • Economic, psychological, social adaptation • Hybrid identity • Intergenerational conflicts • Multiple and intersecting identities • Situational ethnicity • Third space
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe supportive resources available within cultural communities. • Assess your clients' assumptions and beliefs about healthy functioning and the change process. • Balance attention to culture with attention to factors unrelated to culture. • Differentiate between salient and nonsalient aspects of culture. 	

- Assess individual, family, or community barriers to seeking professional help.
 - Develop consultation and referral relationships with community members.
- Core Competency 3: Demonstrate awareness of the socio-political influences that impinge on the lives of nondominant populations.*
- Attitudes & Beliefs**
- Oppose social, economic, and political oppression of members of nondominant populations.
 - Be nondefensive about the historical oppression of nondominant populations by your own cultural group.
 - Demonstrate commitment to change in social injustices.
 - Identify government policies and legislation on multiculturalism and equality.
 - Describe the social, economic, and political oppression of nondominant populations.
 - Explain the psychological impact of oppression, prejudice, and discrimination.
 - Identify facilitative factors that mediate against the effects of oppression.
 - Identify discriminatory practices at the organizational, community, and regional levels that may impact the psychological welfare of your clients.
- Skills**
- Facilitate client expression of negative reactions to social oppression, including oppression by your own cultural group.
 - Assess the impact of socio-political oppression.
 - Assess the internalization of negative stereotypes and biases.
 - Assess barriers to service at the personal, familial, institutional, and social levels.

Domain III: Culturally Sensitive Working Alliance.

Core Competency 1: Establish trusting and respectful relationships with clients that take into account cultural identities.

- Attitudes & Beliefs**
- Demonstrate genuine interest in learning about your clients' cultures.
 - Recognize the potential impact of your emotional reactions toward clients from nondominant groups on your working alliance.
 - Be sensitive to issues of oppression, sexism, heterosexism, elitism, ageism, religious discrimination, ableism, and racism.
 - Respect language differences.
 - Be open to refer clients to a member of their own cultural group.

(continued)

Table 1. Continued.

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that counselling skills, styles, and approaches may be culture-bound. • Explain how counselling styles and approaches may be modified to match client preferences and communication styles. • Recognize cultural norms embedded in office setting, appointment time, and other Western counselling conventions. • Identify cultural norms for both counsellor and client roles. • Discuss common challenges in establishing an effective working alliance across cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monolingualism • Power • Systemic barriers • Underutilization of mental health services • Verbal and nonverbal counselling skills
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish credibility with your clients. • Adapt your helping style to fit the particular client. • Engage in cultural inquiry to understand client perspectives. • Validate the cultural strengths of clients. • Use verbal and nonverbal skills to communicate empathy in culturally appropriate ways. • Tailor your relationship-building strategies to the stage of identity development of the client. • Monitor the impact of your own level of cultural identity development. • Be flexible about the setting, time, and other norms for counselling services. • Assess the impact of counsellor-client language differences. • Teach clients what to expect from the counselling process. • Identify and use appropriate referral services. • Facilitate strategic planning within counselling agencies to identify ways to enhance services for particular cultural groups. • Practice cultural auditing in ongoing work with clients. 	
Attitudes & Beliefs	<p><i>Core Competency 2: Collaborate with clients to establish counselling goals that are responsive to salient dimensions of cultural identity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe in the expertise of clients in their own experience and needs. • Believe in the importance of collaboration in the counselling process. • Acknowledge the strengths of clients from nondominant groups in coping with various forms of oppression. • Value spiritual dimensions of client presenting concerns. • Describe the impact of culture on your understandings of human nature, problem development, and appropriate targets for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acculturation • Acculturative stress • Client-driven • Coping and survival behaviours • Counselling goals • Cultural auditing
Knowledge		

- Cultural reflection
- Emic perspective (culture-specific)
- Etic perspective (universal)
- Identity management/disclosure
- Locus of control
- Locus of responsibility
- Multicultural
- case conceptualization
- Salience of cultural dimensions
- Sex role socialization
- Stages of identity development
- Theoretical orientation

- Explain emic (culture-specific) and etic (universal) perspectives on client presenting concerns.
- Identify the impact of level of cultural identity development on perceptions of problems and target outcomes.
- Identify potential limitations and biases in common assessment practices and instruments.
- Identify culture-specific assessment procedures and tools.
- Describe systemic factors in assessment of client issues.
- Accurately evaluate emic and etic hypotheses about the nature of client presenting concerns.
- Implement a multilevel, multimodal, and multisource approach to assessment to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance.
- Draw on both traditional and culture-specific assessment instruments and procedures.
- Challenge biases and discriminatory practices in assessment and evaluation.
- Assess the client's level of acculturation, experience of culture shock or acculturative stress, and stage of cultural identity development.
- Identify the impact of multiple nondominant identities on clients.
- Assess the salience of various aspects of client cultural identities to the presenting concerns.
- Assess clients' strengths and resources.
- Identify contextual and systemic influences in case conceptualization and intervention planning.
- Where appropriate, adapt your theoretical orientation to fit with clients' perceptions of the presenting concerns.
- Assist clients to avoid inappropriately internalizing systemic oppression.

Skills

Core Competency 3: Collaborate with clients to establish client and counsellor tasks that are responsive to salient dimensions of cultural identity.

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Advocate
- Class-bound
- Common change factors
- Consultation
- Counselling processes
- Cultural appropriation
- Cultural auditing
- Acknowledge the role of the client in identifying appropriate processes for goal attainment.
- Reframe client 'resistance' as evidence of a poor working alliance or a mismatch between counsellor and client in terms of the goals and tasks of counselling.
- Admit that Western practices may be of limited applicability across cultures.
- Respect indigenous perspectives on health and healing practices.
- Value the role of spirituality in the healing process.
- Respect cultural healers and helping networks.

(continued)

Table 1. Continued.

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how professional practices are historically and culturally bound. • Explain how cultural heritage, gender, social class, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and age may affect the appropriateness of counselling approaches. • Describe the limits of your professional expertise. • Explain the ethical considerations of borrowing or using indigenous healing methods. • Recognize the cultural meanings of endings to self and to clients. • Use cultural inquiry as a foundation for intervention planning. • Ensure a culturally responsive match between the goals and processes of counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural reflection • Culturally responsive interventions • Culture-bound • Education • Gender role analysis • Indigenous support and healing systems • Organizational policy • Personal is political • Power analysis • Professional is political • Resistance • Salience of cultural identity • Systemic barriers • Universal healing conditions
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate competence with a broad repertoire of counselling interventions, strategies, and techniques that draw on both Western and culture-specific perspectives. • Design and implement intervention strategies that are free of cultural bias and respectful of client worldviews. • Facilitate indigenous support and healing systems. • Collaborate with professionals from other disciplines. • Make referrals where appropriate. • Recognize and work to eliminate biases, prejudices, and discriminatory intervention practices and contexts. • Implement strategies aimed at prevention of health problems. • Facilitate change at institutional, social, or broader systemic levels. • Engage in consultation, advocacy, education, social action, and facilitation of indigenous healing processes. • Negotiate appropriate timing and ways to end the counselling relationship with clients. 	

Conclusion

The field of multicultural counselling continues to expand, and there are more and more contributions to the literature of areas for professional development in working with a wide range of diverse clientele. We have attempted in this paper to provide a comprehensive summary of the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that have been identified by various authors as critical multicultural counselling competencies. Although, the competency framework may meet with the same criticism as earlier models in failing to provide solid empirical validation for the content (Atkinson & Israel, 2003), we present it as a starting place for further research and development. From a curriculum development and continued professional education perspective, the literature base in multicultural counselling does form a solid starting point for this work. In the third column of Table 1, we have also provided a summary of the core constructs related to each competency area as a guide to curriculum design and research.

As with other models, the usefulness of this particular conceptualization will be born out over time. We consider this model a work in progress and a living document. We welcome the critical review of this work by students, practitioners, educators, and research colleagues. For ideas about how to gain particular competencies listed in this paper, see Collins and Arthur (2007).

Declaration of interest: The authors report no conflicts of interest. The authors alone are responsible for the content and writing of the paper.

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Dr. Sandra Collins is a Professor and the Director of the Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology at Athabasca University. Sandra's teaching and research interests include cultural diversity, counselling women and lesbians, counsellor education, distance and online learning, and career development. Sandra co-edited, with Dr. Nancy Arthur, the book *Culture-Infused Counselling*, which received the Canadian Counselling Association Book Award in 2006.

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