

**Diversity Training for Field Instructors:
Preliminary Findings From
A Collaborative Approach to Avoidant Behavior**

by

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Since 1968, the Council on Social Work Education has required schools of social work to achieve cultural diversity in enrollment of students, hiring of faculty, and development of curricula (McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992). Similarly, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has recently published standards in cultural competence that oblige social workers to strive to deliver culturally competent services to ever-increasing diverse client populations (NASW, 2001). Indeed, the 2000 United States census shows major demographic shifts relative to race and ethnicity as well as household structures. Numbers of foreign born residents grew from 10 million in 1970 to over 30 million (11% of U.S. population) in 2000 (Long, 2002). Population growth in people of color grew from 20 percent in 1990 to 25% in 2000 (NASW, 2001). Households comprised of unmarried adults increased from 3.2 million persons in 1990 to 5.5 million persons in 2000. Half of these households are presumed to be composed of persons in same-sex relationships (Long, 2002). These massive changes underscore the necessity for social workers to be well equipped in their ability to respond effectively to the challenges of diversity.

Through its curriculum policy statement, CSWE provides a broad mandate for the infusion of multicultural content into academic courses (Carrillo, Holzhalb, & Thyer, 1993; Julia, 2000). It is, however, in the application of knowledge about cultural differences through a supervised internship or work environment that the training in multicultural competencies is integrated (Van Soest, in press). Although the role of field instructor is considered pivotal to student learning in social work (Bogo, 1993; Kadushin, 1991), little practical

information exists on approaches to infuse cultural diversity issues into the supervision process (Arkin, 1999; Cashwell, Looby, & Housley, 1997; Leong & Wagner, 1994).

This article describes a model for diversity training of field instructors. The concept of social and cultural diversity used in this model is inclusive of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, family structure, or mental or physical disability. The training was developed in response to a survey of 52 field instructors that showed gaps in the ability of both students and field instructors to discuss cultural issues directly with each other despite exposure to clients and staff who were different from them (Bain & Garcia, 1999). Evasion or the action of staying away from something was defined as 'avoidance'. Using this definition, the reluctance of field instructors to directly approach issues about diversity with students indicated that the priority in training needed to be on avoidant behaviors over increasing the knowledge base about different cultures or the nature of oppression.

Literature Review

Recent literature on infusing cultural diversity into field supervision has emphasized both the need for active learning to increase self awareness and the capacity for self examination and the enumeration of difficulties in cross cultural supervision. Although this literature helped inform the development of the model, the topics covered were examined and redefined for the training as manifestations of or methods for dealing with avoidance.

Cashwell (1997) and Magnuson (2000), for example, used structured exercises to elicit responses from the supervisee and supervisor that, if not elicited and identified, might contribute to avoidant behavior. Cashwell (1997) increased the supervisee's awareness of cultural diversity by having students give each other feedback from the perspective of ethnically diverse clients. He also used an exercise (Intercultural Sensitizer) in which students selected appropriate explanations for critical incidents reflective of cultural differences and difficulties of the target group, and an Interpersonal Process Recall assignment in which students responded to taped segments of their client interviews by recalling the thoughts or feelings that were occurring for them *at that time* in the session. Magnuson (2000) experimented with raising awareness of internal dialogues by having supervisors-in-training assume a variety of roles (counselor, ethnically diverse client, pro counselor and anti counselor) while they interacted in a group supervision exercise.

Although the literature is scarce on specific techniques, it provides some approaches to using supervisory relationship in the development of multicultural competence. Porter (1994) describes a four stage process model for enhancing cultural responsiveness in supervisees. The stages include 1) increasing awareness of ethnic diversity, 2) understanding the impact of sociocultural factors, specifically oppression, on mental health problems of ethnic minorities, 3) exploring the student's biases, stereotypes, and racism, and 4) encouraging movement from individual client interventions to collective solutions and social action. Helms and Cook (1999) prescribe a

'here-and-now' focus on racial issues that incorporates feelings and events as they occur in the supervisory relationship with a cognitive framework that permits the supervisee to generalize from present circumstances to subsequent interactions. Porter's emphasis on student attitudes and the concentration, by Helms and Cook, on immediate responses to racial issues are significant interventions because they cut short the proclivity of individuals to otherwise avoid seeing their own reactions.

Outside of these examples, literature on cultural diversity in supervision has focused primarily on identifying the difficulties and dilemmas that can arise as a result of cultural differences between the supervisor and supervisee (Cook & Helms, 1988; Helms & Cook, 1999; McRoy, Freeman, Logan, & Blackmon, 1986; Vander Kolk, 1974). McRoy et al. (1986) cited, among other problems, lack of trust, knowledge of cultural differences, and supervisory experience as well as poor communication difficulties and language barriers. Arkin (1999) and Daniels (1999) cautioned that minimizing or magnifying cultural differences between supervisor and supervisee can lead to estrangement and arrogance toward the supervisee. Daniels (1999) and Haj-Yahia (1997) suggested that differences in cultural values, biases, and world views will create differences in both expectations of the student-supervisor relationship and perceptions of the organizations in which students do their field work, and the processes necessary for helping clients. Cook (1994) noted that developmental differences can be regressive when the supervisor, who holds the most power in the relationship, is less advanced in racial identity

attitudes than the supervisee. Although this literature warns of possible dangers in cross cultural supervision due to differences in power, language barriers, lack of information, or how differences are addressed, it may well be that these same problems are exacerbated by the avoidance of discussions that might otherwise provide avenues for resolution. Indeed, McRoy et al. reported that even though cross cultural supervisory dyads listed numerous obstacles to effective communication, supervisors did not address the problems with the supervisees.

Given the potential for problems, the literature calls for effective preparation of supervisors to address issues of diversity in training students (Arkin, 1999; Black, Maki, & Nunn, 1997; Magnuson et al., 2000; Marshack, Hendricks, & Gladstein, 1994). Although models for specifically developing cultural competence are few, effectiveness studies show that generalized training for being a field instructor is useful in both creating expected supervisory behavior (Fortune & Abramson, 1991 as cited in Bogo, 1993) and increasing the overall ability of field instructors to think critically (Rogers & McDonald, 1992). Bogo and Power (1994) advocate for a concrete experiential approach that provides opportunities to focus on personalized experiences, feelings, and issues related to the tasks and issues of field instruction. McChesney and Euster (2000) emphasize the need for an active learning method that includes small and large group discussion, case discussion, role play, peer teaching, minute papers and resource guides. Although these ideas pertain to the broad preparation of field instructors, the emphasis on active learning is particularly significant to

diversity training. Specifically, active learning has the potential to diminish the lethargy that can accompany avoidant behavior.

Several models include training in cultural competence for field instructors. Kaiser and Baretta-Herman (1999) conduct a six-session, monthly training program for field instructors and agency supervisors. Although only one session is devoted to cross cultural supervision, the authors indicate that diversity emerges as a significant theme throughout the training. Kaiser and Baretta-Herman (1999) discuss the need to help field instructors grapple with conflicting professional values while simultaneously being aware of the tendency to stereotype clients based on cultural differences. Walters, Strom-Gottfried, and Sullivan (1998) describe a seven-session, monthly training just for community field instructors and faculty who are paired, based on their social and cultural differences, to co-facilitate field seminars with students. Content of the sessions varies in response to the participants' interests and needs. It has included exercises on the experience of difference and oppression, presentation and discussion on Native American populations and stereotypic beliefs in regard to native peoples, videos on age discrimination and racism, and discussions on addressing challenging situations on diversity in field seminars. Walters, Strom-Gottfried, and Sullivan (1998) maintain that the training is meant to parallel the process used in the field seminars. Consequently, the challenge is to push risk and self-examination, while maintaining the group as a safe place within which to do so.

The model described here draws key principles from the literature: the need

for active learning, development of self awareness and self scrutinization, and examination of blockages to addressing differences between people in the supervisory relationship. Although the dynamic of avoidance is inherent in the literature, it has not been specifically recognized as significant in training field instructors to effectively address diversity issues with students.

Survey

A telephone survey of schools of social work was conducted to ascertain their field teaching methods in the area of cultural competence. There were 12 schools in ten states that were chosen on the basis of their comparable size to the University of Texas at Austin and diverse geographic locations (see Table 1). Additionally, the websites of ten MSW program were randomly selected and reviewed for the training opportunities for field instructors.

All the schools surveyed by telephone both require a course for students in diversity and infuse content on diversity into the curriculum. An additional course is required by 17% of schools. All schools cover diversity issues in field seminars and/or include cultural competence as an objective in field.

Although 11 of the schools offer training in diversity to agency based field instructors, 58% of them incorporate that training into their basic orientation for field instructors. Periodic workshops are offered by 25% of schools and one school gives a seminar. Field instructors are required to attend training on diversity by 17% of schools.

Funding for diversity training of field instructors is mixed. There are 42% of schools that have Title IVE funds available for such training, 25% of schools have no separate funding, and

one school (8%) has a grant and separate funding for a summer lecture series. Information was not available for two schools (17%).

When asked about their needs, all schools indicated that they want more ongoing training in cultural competence as well as support for both field faculty and agency based field instructors. Concern about the lack of commitment to cultural diversity in agencies and the limited resources for or access to training was noted by 17% of schools. There were 33% of schools that highlighted the need to see developing cultural competence as a process, focus on self awareness, and view diversity comprehensively as inclusive of sexual orientation, age, disability, and class as well as race and ethnicity.

When asked about what had worked well in cultural competency training, schools identified a number of factors including an emphasis on self awareness, exposure to others who are different from themselves (peers, clients, instructors), candid discussions that are self revealing, and taking defined stances on issues. Although the model described here follows similar principles, priority was given to establishing and maintaining the support and validation for each person's journey toward change.

Structure of the Training

The diversity training was conducted in six, three-hour sessions, spaced a month apart. Sessions 1 & 2 addressed the self of the field instructor; Sessions 3 & 4 addressed the supervisory relationship; Sessions 5 & 6 addressed the agency milieu. Sessions were linked through the use of reflection questions aimed at increasing awareness of diversity issues. Planning meetings were

held between the sessions to identify avoidant behavior and plan appropriate interventions. Figure 1 diagrams the diversity training and the relationship between sessions, planning meetings, and reflection questions.

A diverse female team of 2 field faculty and 1 classroom faculty member led the sessions. One member was Mexican American, one member was Euro-American, and one member was Jewish. Additionally, the team represented micro and macro practice as well as a varied tenure with the school that ranged from one month to 24 years. Teaching experience was 13 years, 24 years, and 30 years.

Sessions 1 & 2 were held at the school of social work. Participants volunteered their agencies for the remaining sessions in order to expose each other to diverse locations, services, and client populations. There was no training fee and telephone reminders, travel directions, the offering of continuing education units, and treats of ethnic food and music were used to encourage attendance.

Group Composition

The group consisted of 15 field instructors who were hand picked on the basis of their supervisory experience, interest in diversity, heterogeneity, diversity of client population served by their agencies, and status based on their effectiveness as field instructors and commitment to social work field education. Of these, eleven were women and four were men; ten were white, four were Hispanic/Latina, and two were gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender. The mean age of participants was 43 years with a range of 33 to 56 years. The mean length of supervisory experience was 7 years; 77% had supervised students for

under 5 years and 33% had supervised students for over 10 years. The mean number of students per participant was 17; 33% of participants had each supervised over 20 students and 47% had each supervised 10 or less students. Mean years since graduation (MSW) was 10.3 years with a range from 3 to 29 years. Although the group was socially diverse, it lacked representation of ethnic minorities, most especially African American field instructors. Client populations served by participants' agencies included, among others, the homeless, at risk youth, people with physical and mental disabilities, and Latino/Latina clients.

Philosophy of the Training

The goal of the diversity training was to provide field instructors with specific tools to help them recognize and effectively intervene on their own impasses relative to avoidance. The training was conveyed as a learning partnership between facilitators and participants. Facilitators presented themselves as "works in progress" – human beings who confront the never ending struggle to become more culturally competent. Participants were viewed as collaborators whose responses helped establish a 'goodness of fit' between the training and realities of practice. The training also used an open ended planning process based on feedback from participants and shared impressions of the facilitators that allowed relevant and flexible responses to the manifest emergence of participants' needs and avoidant behaviors.

Content of the Training

The diversity training targeted avoidant behaviors as manifested in three

domains: relationship with self, relationship with the supervisee, and relationship with the agency. Since the manifestation of avoidance differed in each of the domains, the training served as a laboratory for the materialization of relevant behaviors as well as a forum for the education of field instructors.

Relationship with Self: Normalizing Discomfort

Sessions 1& 2 focused on enhancing awareness about diversity and articulating concerns about teaching cultural competence in field. In their personal objectives and statements of caution, field instructors revealed that the goal of feeling no discomfort kept them away from addressing issues of difference with others, including students. Participants gradually approached their unacceptable emotions and attitudes through a series of graduated exercises from the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI), Prejudice Awareness Workshop. In one activity, for example, field instructors were asked to risk by sharing their unrehearsed thoughts about different categories of people. Later, they identified their membership in various groups and caucused to pool the stereotypes that oppress them. When asked to incorporate these stereotypes into demands for respect, Hispanic field instructors said, “Don’t assume all Hispanic people speak Spanish and never assume we just ‘pick it up’.” Gay/lesbian field instructors asserted, “It’s not funny when people pretend, joke, or act like they’re gay or effeminate”. Field instructors who identified as fat declared, “People think we don’t care about ourselves. Don’t ask ‘Why don’t you eat less or better. Why don’t you exercise?’” The process of rooting out stereotypic beliefs was

unpleasant and disquieting. Field instructors reported that they ‘froze’ when they tried to retrieve memories and images about their own experiences, were fearful of strong feelings, or judgmental of their negative associations to different groups.

Facilitators used group processing discussions to deconstruct the beliefs that make discomfort something to avoid. For example, the participants were introduced to an evaluative frame of reference that suggests that discomfort in dealing with differences is normative and that their willingness to tolerate it indicates progress rather than a negative and undesirable state. Field instructors were also regularly warned that they needed to rid themselves of the fantasy that there are experts on the subject of diversity who know more than they do, and remember that we are all trying to figure out the diversity puzzle. Since no one has the definitive answer, the true challenge is not perfection but the willingness to enter anxiety-laden territory. Finally, field instructors were challenged to undo the myth that we have a choice about whether or not to approach issues of diversity and tolerate the discomfort that is intrinsic to the work.

The approach used in the group processing discussions was based on the following rationale: naming discomfort helps participants relax. They do not have to spend energy containing and hiding their reactions. Continual referencing of discomfort also alerts and desensitizes participants to their uncomfortable feelings. Using a group format makes explicit the adage that we are all in this struggle together. Challenging the social conditioning that constructs discomfort as an undesirable

state establishes new ways to think about it.

In addition to participating in NCBI exercises and group processing discussions, reflecting questions were also used to increase self awareness. The question, 'Share some of your thoughts and feelings (including your fears and misgivings) about teaching cultural competence in field' further exposed participants' fears and hesitancy to initiate discussions with students. "We wait until issues arise before we address them." "It takes time to build safe relationships." "I will make huge and unaware racist blunders. I will have to point out attitudes that are prejudiced or ignorant and it will be very uncomfortable." "I don't want to offend anyone, be patronizing, or worry that my curiosity will be disrespectful". Facilitators responded to these concerns by reminding participants of the significance of parallel process: students will imitate the field instructor and avoid with clients the material that is avoided in supervision. Facilitators also helped field instructors move past their paralysis by giving the following suggestions: join with students as learners and allies in the diversity struggle, admit mistakes, notify students of the commitment by field instructors to pursue taboo topics with them, and clarify feelings generated by issues of social injustice such as shame, hurt, and anger in order to stop the student's suppression of unacceptable emotions.

Sessions 1 & 2 focused on building self awareness and normalizing discomfort. Planning meetings helped facilitators recognize their own and the participants' human proclivity to avoid topics that produce uneasiness, and the facilitators' need, therefore, to reframe the presence of and tolerance for

discomfort as a measure of growth. Facilitators established safety by modeling their own discomfort and partnering with participants in the learning. A small glass elephant was placed in the middle of the room each time as a symbol of the distance we keep from subjects that make us uncomfortable.

Relationship with the Supervisee: Being Direct and Engaging Personally

Sessions 3 & 4 focused on avoidant behaviors to effectively addressing social and cultural differences in the supervisory or client-worker relationship. Avoidant behaviors included a lack of initiative or indirect communication in addressing differences and distancing relative to personal engagement with supervisees. These behaviors emerged when participants shared their answers to reflecting questions about addressing differences in supervision and had difficulty identifying critical incidents they had experienced as a supervisee or supervisor. For example, the reflecting question 'Which differences between the supervisor and student supervisee are more difficult for you' elicited the following responses: "I haven't had particular difficulties yet but am not sure how *directly* to address differences and when" (italics added). "My recent intern made a lot of sexist comments. I don't know how I could handle that differently because he is black and I am white and I am afraid he would think or say I was being racist." "I felt I sometimes did not push [students] to explore differences enough because I thought they would feel that they were somehow "wrong". I am sure some of this comes from my guilt at being a white person assisting a minority population."

Facilitators identified the failure of field instructors to be direct and personal with supervisees as the target for intervention. Individualized role plays that focused on interpersonal differences were developed to help participants experience the directness, honesty, and quality of connection necessary for exploring diversity in supervision. Participants were assigned to pairs as field instructor and student. Each person was given a brief fact situation that helped structure the interaction. Specifically, those who played students presented their field instructors with client dilemmas that had made them uncomfortable and hesitant. The dilemmas also caused field instructors to retreat because the vignettes purposefully highlighted their own personal issues or targeted real disparities in the role play dyads. The role plays required field instructors to directly address differences 'here and now' in the client-worker relationship as well as the supervisory relationship in order to move students past their tentativeness with the hypothetical clients.

Everyone did the role plays simultaneously. After fifteen minutes, the supervision was interrupted. 'Field instructors' and 'students' met in separate groups to review their individual experiences with each other. 'Field instructors' were offered guidance on how to address the 'student' more directly and personally relative to the supervisory relationship and/or the 'student's' interaction with the client(s). 'Students' were asked to identify the manifestations of their own avoidance and the impact of the field instructor on their ability to be forthcoming. After thirty minutes, the supervisory dyads reconvened and role playing

continued for another fifteen minutes. During this time, 'field instructors' tested their new knowledge with their 'students'.

Afterwards, the full group discussed their individual experiences out of role. 'Students' said, "I just kept being vague," "It was too scary to insist we talk about my ethnicity issues in the supervision," "If I wasn't validated by the field instructor, I didn't bring it up." 'Field instructors' said, "I felt uncomfortable talking about the supervisory relationship but also relieved to address it. "It was the personalizing of issues of diversity and racism that made me look at avoidance." "I saw a flash of the key issue and avoided it. When redirected, it was very powerful." 'Field instructors' also acknowledged that they pushed past their own resistance by being firm about their limits with 'students', maintaining the directness of their focus, and giving themselves no choice but to address the critical issue(s). After this discussion, participants were given a brief lecture and handout that identified common fears that prohibit candidness and authenticity in supervision and detailed the steps in the process that they had just experienced. The handout also detailed how to transfer the experiential learning from the supervision to students' work with clients.

Sessions 3 & 4 focused on the supervisory relationship and the need for directness and personal engagement when tackling issues of social and cultural diversity.

Manifestations of avoidance in supervision emerged in the third session as participants demonstrated their hesitancy to be frank with students. A skill building laboratory used role plays, designed to highlight real differences, to

gave participants practice in being supportively challenging. Movement during the role plays reinforced the use of directness as a constructive and generative tool.

Relationship with the Agency: Challenging Disempowerment

Sessions 5 & 6 focused on the agency milieu relative to social and cultural diversity. Avoidant behaviors were manifested by the participants' propensity to drop out from actively challenging and helping the agency to become more culturally competent. The drop out behaviors were more evident when participants felt overwhelmed, discouraged, or fearful of negative consequences. These behaviors emerged in response to reflecting questions that asked participants to enumerate their efforts to make their agencies receptive to issues of diversity and group exercises that asked participants to assess the cultural competence of their agencies.

Participants were introduced to the Cultural Competence Continuum developed by Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Issacs (1989) and the Cultural Competence Framework developed by Orlandi (1992). These models distinguish different stages in an agency's endeavor to become a more culturally competent organization. Participants formed pairs to evaluate one another's agency and reflect critically on the agency's strengths and limitations. When asked to share the results, they said, "Energy [in the agency] is spent overcoming the barriers rather than promoting the values." "When the agency has more diverse staff...it will be more culturally competent." "The leadership needs to change." "We need outreach." When asked to share their reactions to these problems, participants drew conclusions that dismantled their

resolve and revealed their inclination to drop out. "It's too big. I can't do it all." "I'm not sure where to begin." "I'm afraid we will end up in a major war or I'll lose my job." "There's no administrative support."

Although these comments were honest statements, the facilitators surmised that they served to disqualify the participants from carefully assessing the needs of their agencies and what they might do to help. Moreover, participants' observations about their agencies' shortcomings implied that they believed that people other than themselves had the real power to make change. To challenge their disempowerment, participants were asked to reflect on negative messages they give themselves about being an effective agent of change and how it impairs their ability to respond fully to diversity issues within their agencies. Facilitators suggested to participants that the source of negative messages might be an event from their childhoods or stem from current life. In several instances, participants were able to talk about events from their earlier life that made them feel insecure, incompetent, or wary. Indeed, the self-defeating messages they learned from their earlier experiences became automatic responses when issues about diversity arose at their agencies. In response to these messages, participants were helped to see that the story happened long ago but they were acting as if it was applicable to their current life. A group ritual helped contradict the disempowering messages as participants were told, "Here we are today, and today you are a powerful person."

Giving participants a different perception of their agency also challenged their disempowering beliefs.

Specifically, participants were advised to treat the agency as another “client” struggling to change rather than a powerful authority figure. Participants were invited to apply principles from clinical practice to helping their agencies such as setting realistic goals, developing strategies to reduce resistance, formulating diagnoses, and establishing trust-based relationships. Although the analogy to practice was imperfect, the rationale behind presenting the agency as “client” was to free participants to consider a different relationship with their work setting. Participants were reminded of the adage from Lady Bird Johnson, “Do what you can where you are... You mustn’t feel impotent just because you are not all powerful.”

Sessions 5 & 6 focused on the participants’ relationship to their agencies and the cognitions that undermine the participants’ steadfast attention to diversity issues over time. Manifestations of avoidance emerged as participants demonstrated that feeling overwhelmed interfered with their ability to make change happen. An exercise that targeted negative self-messages gave participants a method to intervene on their drop out behaviors. The proposition that their agencies are also ‘clients’ reframed the participants’ understanding of their task in ways that could empower them to make change.

At the end of the last session, participants were asked to complete an “Agreement with Self” in which they listed their goals for working on diversity issues in relationship to themselves, their supervision with students, and their agencies. The agreements were turned into the facilitators and sent back to the participants six months later as a

reminder of the commitments they had made.

Evaluation of Training

Participants evaluated the diversity training by anonymously answering five reflecting questions before Session 6. Table 2 lists the questions and selected responses from the participants’ answers. Participants found the sessions on the supervisory relationship to be particularly helpful. They also noted their discomfort acknowledging what they considered to be their own unacceptable biases and beliefs. In addition, the absence of African American and Southeast Asian field instructors lessened the value of the experience for some members. In their group evaluation, participants noted the benefits of being in a group with colleagues who are struggling with similar problems. “At first I was a little leary but I soon felt very safe and confident that this was going to be a truly *educational* experience rather than just an experience.” “People came and shared the depths of their hearts and I think a lot of that is due to the modeling of the facilitators and their dedication to this project.” Participants also valued the ratio of facilitators to participants. “I thought the group size was just right and the sharing of facilitation was smooth and balanced with different cultural perspectives.”

Evaluation

The hypothesis of the study was that field instructors would report fewer avoidant behaviors from Time 1 to Time 3 (6 months after the training). A single group repeated measures design was used to evaluate change in the avoidant behavior of participants over time. Participants completed a questionnaire at

three points (pre-training, post-training, and 6 month follow-up) to estimate change in avoidant behavior over time. The findings of this study represent the responses of 11 out of 15 participants. There was 1 participant who did not attend the first session and 3 participants who did not complete the training due to scheduling conflicts. All participants gave their consent to participate in the diversity training and the evaluation research.

Measurement

The first author developed a self-administered questionnaire. Participants answered thirteen items on a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores (very high, regularly and no discomfort) were assigned a value of 5 and lower scores (very low, never, and extreme discomfort) were assigned a value of 1. The thirteen items address three dimensions: comfort with diversity; attention to issues of power and control and interpersonal conflict; and knowledge about 'oppressed' groups (see Table 3).

Results

Within-subjects, repeated-measures ANOVA was used to evaluate change in scores at 3 points in time on 11 participants. Table 4 displays Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 group means and standard deviations. The multivariate test indicated a significant time effect, $Wilks \Lambda = .45$ $F(2,9) = 5.4$, $p = .02$, multivariate $\eta^2 = .55$. Follow-up pairwise contrasts showed significant change from postgroup (Time 2) to follow up (Time 3), $t(10) = -3.165$, $p = .01$. Wilks Lambda revealed a power of .70 for this study.

Several items on the questionnaire (#s 1, 5, 6,) tap into comfort with diversity. For example, 100% of participants felt no or some discomfort teaching about

client diversity issues with students at Time 3 compared to 82% of participants at Time 1. In contrast, only 64% of participants addressed their own social and cultural differences with students often or occasionally at Time 3 compared to 82% of participants at Time 1. However, 91% of participants addressed social and cultural differences between students and their clients rarely or never at Time 1 compared to 64% of participants at Time 3. Collectively, responses to the three items indicate that participants felt greater comfort dealing with issues of diversity over time but that they were more comfortable with attending to differences between students and their clients than between themselves and their students.

Several items (#s,3,4,7) focus on participants' attention to issues of power, control, and interpersonal conflict. These items were included since field instructors' capacity to handle the tension generated by power and control issues suggests they will be less avoidant of the tension associated with addressing social inequities and interpersonal differences in power based relationships with students. In response to these items, 73% of participants at Time 1 indicated they occasionally or often address issues of power and control between themselves and their students compared to 55% of participants at Time 3. Likewise, 73% of participants stated that they addressed conflict between themselves and students regularly, often, or occasionally at Time 1 compared to 64% of participants at Time 3. While the frequency of addressing conflict and power and control issues dropped between Time 1 and 3, 82% of participants at Time 3 reported no or some discomfort with addressing issues of power and control compared to 64%

of participants at Time 1. One reason for the disparity may be that as comfort with power and control issues increased, participants may have been less reactive to circumstances they might otherwise experience as tension or conflict.

Participants reported increases in their knowledge of several 'oppressed groups'. For example, 73% of participants felt they had high or moderate knowledge about the Native American population at Time 1 compared to 91% at Time 3. Likewise, 37% of participants felt they had very high or high knowledge about the gay/lesbian population at Time 1 compared to 55% at Time 3. Moreover, 37% of participants felt they had very low knowledge about the Southeast Asian population at Time 1 compared to none of the participants at Time 3. Since the training did not give participants specific knowledge about oppressed groups, the increase in knowledge may be due to factors external to the training. It is also possible, however, that the training increased their awareness of their ignorance and they responded by being more available to or learning about these particular groups.

Discussion

This exploratory pilot study is just a first attempt to develop and test a diversity training model for field instructors that focuses on avoidance. It has a number of limitations that need to be considered in evaluating the preliminary findings. Besides a using a small, non randomized sample (n=11), the most important limitation was the lack of a control group, which makes it obviously impossible to conclusively attribute the change in participants' total scores between Time 2 and Time 3 to the training itself. Moreover, it is likely

that participants' self reports reflect a social desirability bias and may not be a true reflection of changes in attitude or behavior. Since responses were measured at three different times, it is possible that familiarity with the instrument enhanced performance at later times. The follow up questionnaire was sent to participants along with the participants' 'Agreement with Self'. Although the 'Agreement with Self' was part of the diversity training, it is not known how strong an influence this one aspect had on the participants in comparison to the rest of the training. Finally, the questionnaire that was used to evaluate the training is a self report measure and, therefore, may not provide an accurate account of attitudinal or behavioral change. Since the questionnaire has not been psychometrically tested, its reliability and validity are also unknown.

Follow-up pairwise contrasts show that the significant change in participants' total scores occurred between the end of the training and six months later. Indeed there was a slight drop in the mean scores between Time 1 (m=40.7) and Time 2 (m=40.3). The drop in mean scores between Time 1 and Time 2 may be due to several factors. First, since the diversity training took place toward the end of the academic year, participants may have been reluctant to try out new behaviors with students at the time of their agency terminations. Second, as participants gained awareness of patterns of avoidance, they may have given a more realistic self appraisal at Time 2 than at Time 1. The increase in mean scores between Time 2 (40.3) and Time 3 (47.0) may reflect that fact that participants put the diversity training into practice when they received new

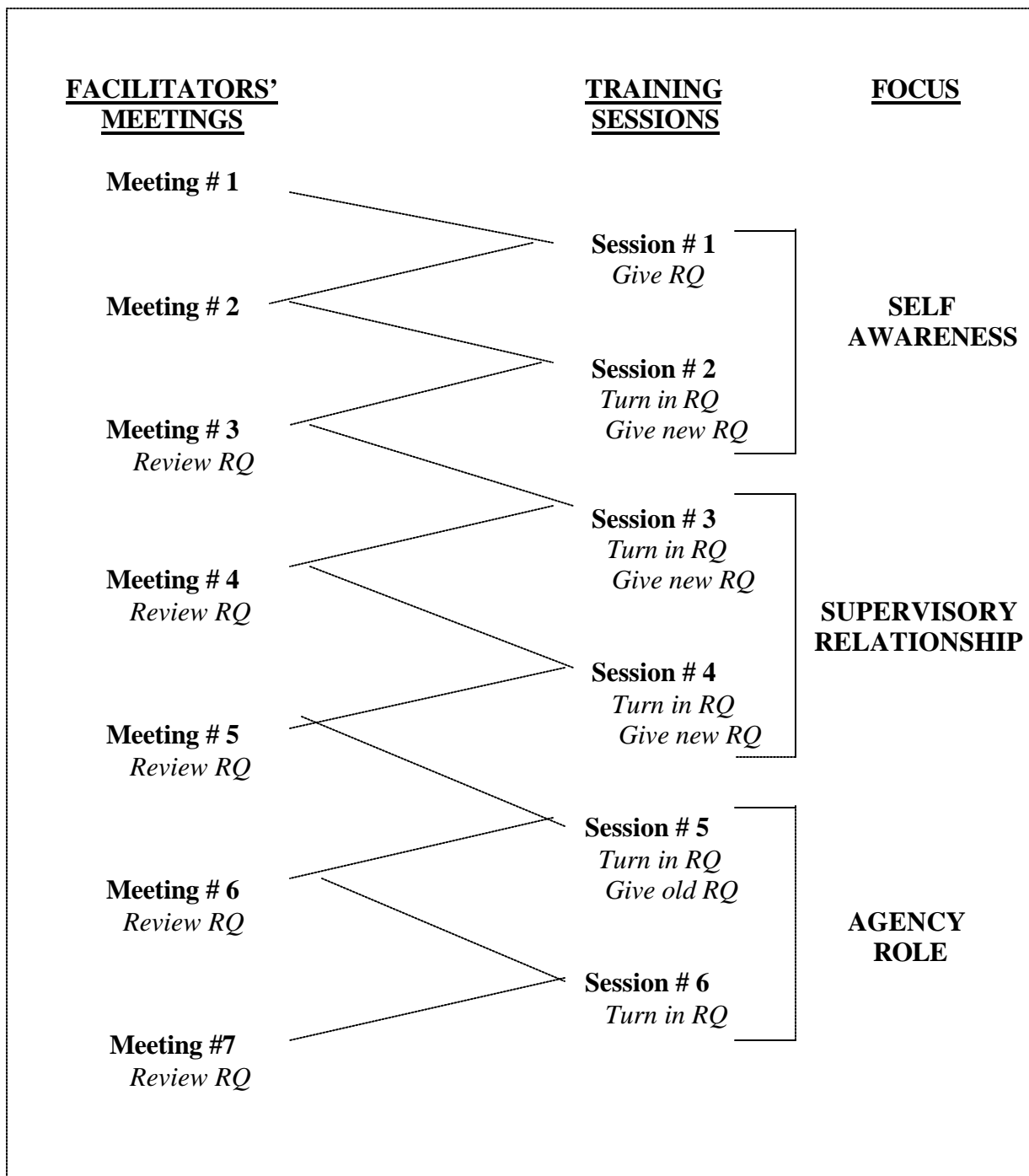
students at the beginning of the next academic year.

This model of diversity training needs to be replicated at other schools of social work using larger and more diverse samples. The use of a control group would strengthen understanding of the causal effects of the model. The questionnaire shows promise as a tool for measuring attitudes and behavior. With further development, psychometric testing could then establish its initial reliability and validity. The impact of the training on students' work with clients could be better assessed if the questionnaire was administered to both field instructors and their students.

Although development of self awareness, knowledge, and skills for effective practice with diverse

populations is considered a high priority for students in schools of social work, the cultural competence of field instructors has been assumed. The model described here is unique because it derived from field instructors' stated lack of readiness and desire to address diversity issues and it specifically targeted manifestations of avoidance relative to diversity issues. The results from this study suggest that accenting avoidance in relationship to diversity issues may be an effective way to train field instructors. Field instructors bear the responsibility for integrating theory and practice and, therefore, the investment of time in their training can have a major return if their students are the recipients and are better equipped to help diverse client populations.

Figure 1: Structure of Diversity Training for Field Instructors:



RQ = Reflection Questions

Table 1. Survey of Schools of Social Work (N=12)

Schools of Social Work	Courses in Diversity	Diversity Training for Agency Field Inst.(FI)	Funding for Diversity Training
School # 1- Southwest	Required course/ infusion	Required day-long & periodic workshops	Yes-Title IVE
School # 2 - Midwest	Required course/ infusion	Seminar	No
School # 3 - South	Required course/ infusion	Incorporated in training orientation of FI	No
School #4 – East Coast	Required course/ infusion	Incorporated in training orientation of FI	na ^a
School # 5 - East	2 Required courses/ infusion/ Anti-racism project	Incorporated in training orientation of FI	Yes
School # 6 - West Coast	Required course/ infusion	Required course in diversity	Yes-Title IVE
School # 7 – Upper Midwest	2 Required courses/ infusion	Periodic workshop	Yes-Title IVE
School # 8 – Upper Midwest	Day-long workshop/ infusion	Incorporated in workshops for FI ^b	Yes-Title IVE
School # 9 - South	Required course/ infusion	Incorporated in training orientation of FI	No
School # 10 – Upper Midwest	Required course/ infusion	No	na
School # 11 - Northwest	Required course/ infusion	Incorporated in training orientation of FI ^c	Yes-Title IVE
School # 12 – East Coast	Required course/ infusion	Incorporated in training orientation of FI ^c	No

^aNot available ^b Biennium workshop on diversity ^c Students from different cultures workshop

Table 2: Selected Answers to Evaluation Questions

1. Identify several highlights in the diversity training.

- A highlight was listening to two men talk about being southern white men and ways they felt hurt and separated by stereotypes
- It finally clicked during the 4th session. I saw that this could be applied to supervision just by coming out and addressing the issue.

2. What experiences were enjoyable? What did you find most disturbing or uncomfortable?

- I felt uncomfortable discussing African Americans with no African Americans present. Ditto for Southeast Asians.
- It was difficult to acknowledge deeply embedded preferences/avoidances which affect my professional behavior.

3. What idea or skill will you use to enhance your supervision with students?

- Definitely it is the skill and knowledge about being more direct in supervision.
- It may be difficult to discuss personal styles in supervision but it is linked to professional capability it can enhance the learning experience enormously.

4. Briefly discuss how these discoveries will contribute to your effectiveness as a supervisor.

- I feel more empowered to be the “first” to break the ice with the agency, the student or the client system to promote a more effective understanding of the value of cultural competency.
- Being able to address issue will make for a much better supervisor-supervisee relationship.

5. What realistic commitment can you make to increase the cultural competence of your agency?

- I can hire minorities and bilingual workers. I can continue to advocate for diversity in our staff.
 - I can think about ways to get past my fear of addressing homophobia on the part of my co-workers.
-

Table 3. Questionnaire Responses (N=11)

Item#	5	4	3	2	1
1. What is your level of comfort with teaching about client diversity issues with students?					
Time 1	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%		
Time 2	18.2%	72.7%	9.1%		
Time 3	45.5%	54.5%			
2. Rate your knowledge about 'oppressed' groups					
a) African American					
Time 1		27.3%	54.5%	18.2%	
Time 2		9.1%	90.9%		
Time 3		27.3%	72.7%		
b) Hispanic					
Time 1	27.3%	36.3%	36.3%		
Time 2		72.7%	27.3%		
Time 3	9.1%	63.6%	27.3%		
c) Southeast Asian					
Time 1			18.2%	45.5%	36.3%
Time 2			27.3%	63.6%	9.1%
Time 3		9.1%	27.3%	63.6%	
d) Native American					
Time 1		18.2%	54.5%	18.2%	9.1%
Time 2		9.1%	54.5%	36.3%	
Time 3		18.2%	72.7%		9.1%
e) Gay/Lesbian					
Time 1	27.3%	9.1%	54.5%	9.1%	
Time 2 ¹		36.3%	27.3%	18.2%	
Time 3 ²	27.3%	27.3%	36.3%		
f) With Disabilities					
Time 1	18.2%	18.2%	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%
Time 2	18.2%	18.2%	27.3%	36.3%	
Time 3	18.2%	18.2%	45.5%	9.1%	9.1%

Table 3. Questionnaire Responses (con't)

Item#	5	4	3	2	1
g) Women					
Time 1	27.3%	54.5%	18.2%		
Time 2 ³	36.3%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%	
Time 3 ⁴	72.7%	9.1%	9.1%		
3. How often do you address issues of power & control between you and student(s)?					
Time 1		9.1%	63.6%	27.3%	
Time 2		27.3%	45.5%	18.2%	9.1%
Time 3		9.1%	45.5%	45.5%	
4. What is your level of comfort with addressing issues of power & control between you and student(s)?					
Time 1	9.1%	54.5%	27.3%	9.1%	
Time 2	18.2%	54.5%	27.3%		
Time 3	36.3%	45.5%	18.2%		
5. How often do you address with students the differences between you, e.g. age, religion, SES, race/ethnicity?					
Time 1		18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	
Time 2			81.8%	18.2%	
Time 3		18.2%	45.5%	36.3%	
6. How often do you address with students the differences between them and their clients, e.g. age, religion, SES, race/ethnicity?					
Time 1			9.1%	63.6%	27.3%
Time 2			27.3%	63.6%	9.1%
Time 3	9.1%		27.3%	54.5%	9.1%

Table 3. Questionnaire Responses (*con't*)

Item#	5	4	3	2	1
7. How often do you directly address conflict between you and the student(s) you supervise?					
Time 1	9.1%	36.3%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%
Time 2		36.3%	45.5%	9.1%	9.1%
Time 3		18.2%	45.5%	36.3%	

¹ N = 9 ² N = 10 ³ N = 10 ⁴ N = 10

**Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations of Total Scores (N=11)
Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3**

	M	SD
Time 1	40.7	3.3
Time 2	40.3	3.0
Time 3	47.0	2.6

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Abstract

A survey of field instructors revealed gaps in their ability to directly address cultural concerns with student supervisees. A transferable model of diversity training was developed and tested which targeted field instructors' avoidant behavior as manifested in three areas—relationship with self, the supervisee, and the agency. Results from a questionnaire administered at three different points (pre-training, post-training, and 6 month follow-up) revealed fewer avoidant behaviors with students over time.