

Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers: A Coherent Approach, by Ana María Villegas & Tamara Lucas. Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2002, 246 pp. \$21.95, paperback.
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The central claim in this book is that in order to “facilitate coherence” across coursework and fieldwork, “programs of teacher education need to articulate a vision of the role of schools and of the processes of teaching and learning in a multicultural society” (p. 197). Courses and field experiences can become more successful, the authors argue, only through developing and upholding a strong, guiding, coherent vision among faculty, administrators, and students in any teacher preparation program. “The vision we have proposed is anchored in the belief that a primary role of schools is to promote a more equitable and just society and is informed by constructivist views of teaching and learning” (p. 197). This focus on creating a meaningful vision makes the book equally important for the administrators coordinating programs or departments and the faculty teaching in or affiliated with colleges of education. Given that *Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers: A Coherent Approach* includes attention to facilitating collaborations among and across education faculty, arts and sciences faculty, and school districts, it may also be useful for district-based directors of teacher induction programs. Students enrolled in teacher credential or certification programs may not attach importance to the higher education applications of the text, but students are likely to appreciate some of the 25 useful charts and figures (e.g., demographics related to public school teaching, interview questions for exploring school communities, and recommended culturally responsive teaching practices) as well as the effects of being students in such “coherent” preparation programs.

The authors are professors in the Montclair State University education program and their research has been on promoting equity in secondary and higher education settings. The text sometimes offers successful examples from their university. Overall, the book adds to the knowledge base on designing or re-designing (e.g., for accreditation reviews or strategic planning) university-based teacher training to better reflect the needs and aspirations of the current and projected K-12 student populations. The book begins and ends by referring to the persistent and increasing cultural differences between the teaching force and the student force; this is the primary justification for the authors’ programmatic recommendations. The first chapter describes the “shifting demographic landscape” of the U.S. and its impact in teacher education. Nationwide, as much as 91% of K-12 teachers are White while only 65% of students are White. By 2050 it is predicted that only 44% of students will have Anglo-American backgrounds. The next three chapters present what are called “curriculum strands” meant to direct program planning to respond to this growing gap. A total of six strands comprise the “coherent approach” to preparing new teachers for culturally responsive teaching. These are (a) gaining sociocultural consciousness, (b) developing an affirming attitude toward students from culturally diverse backgrounds, (c) developing the commitment and skills to act as agents of change, (d) embracing the constructivist foundations of culturally responsive teaching, (e) learning about students and their communities, and (f) cultivating the practice of culturally responsive teaching. New teachers should understand and embrace these six areas as they move through their university experiences. A significant seventh strand might have been “modeling culturally responsive research methodologies and dissemination” in addition to teaching practices.

Faculty members of “coherent” teacher preparation programs, although also mostly White, should model culturally responsive teaching. While consistently and convincingly advocating for culturally responsive teaching for the growing cultural diversity among public school students, the authors do not explicitly locate themselves in the demographics of the teacher or teacher educator population. The incorporation of the emotional and experiential aspects of their personal journeys in support of cultural pluralism could further enrich this volume. How do or should faculty and students see and create themselves as *coherent cultural beings* as well as part of a coherent organizational context? What might be the personal motivations for White teacher education