Integrated Multicultural Instructional Design (IMID)

IMID focuses on authentic integration of multicultural content and diverse teaching, learning support, and assessment strategies in postsecondary curricula, programs, and courses. Visually the IMID model is presented as a pyramid. The base of the pyramid is composed of a community of postsecondary learners, scholars, and practitioners whose commitment to diversity and multiculturalism serve as the foundation for institutionalized articulation of how this commitment is expressed both theoretically and pragmatically. The members of this community see themselves as part of a larger global community of engaged learners and educators; they understand that for true transformation to take place, their individual commitment must be matched by structural and systemic changes at the institutional, national, and international levels. The students, administrators, faculty, and staff contributing to this community effort are committed to developing and maintaining open pathways for communication to flow in all directions. They collaborate to foster trust and mutual respect in order to ensure the creation of teaching and learning environments in which all students feel welcome and supported.

From the perspectives of first the learner and then the educator, the four sides of the IMID pyramid represent (a) “how we learn / how we teach”, (b) “what we learn / what we teach”, (c) “how we access academic support services / how we support learning”, and (d) “how we demonstrate what we have learned / how we assess learning.” The apex of the IMID pyramid represents self-actualization for all members of the educational community. Both educators and students benefit from the true integration of multiculturalism in the educational process.

How We Teach
IMID guidelines for pedagogy—for how we teach—include the following:
- Promote understanding of how knowledge and personal experiences are shaped by the contexts (e.g., cultural, social, political, economic, historical) in which we live and work.
- Work collaboratively to construct knowledge.
- Understand that learning is a complex process that involves many layers of reflection.
- Identify what skills must be developed in order to achieve mastery without excluding students on the basis of nonessential skills.
- Integrate skill development with the acquisition of content knowledge.
- Establish and communicate clear expectations in terms of (a) learning objectives, (b) engagement in the teaching and learning process, and (c) evaluation measures for teaching and learning.
- Use teaching methods that consider diverse learning styles, abilities, ways of knowing, and previous experience and background knowledge.

What We Teach
IMID guidelines for content—what we teach—include:
- Determine what content mastery is essential for each course and for the program or curriculum as a whole.
- Establish course objectives that reflect essential course components and do not exclude students on the basis of gaps in prior knowledge.
- Meet or exceed professional standards for excellence in content mastery within an environment of inclusion.
- Integrate multicultural perspectives within course content.
- Relate course content to historical trends, current events, and future directions.
- Consider global perspectives.

How We Support Learning
Guidelines for academic support include:
- Maintain the delicate balance between challenge and support (Sanford, 1967).
- Support students outside as well as within the classroom.
- Support growth in skill development as well as content knowledge acquisition.
- Address both cognitive and affective aspects of learning.
- Respond to students’ needs related to day-to-day living, such as housing, employment, and financial planning.

**How We Assess Learning**

Guiding principles for assessment—the fourth side of the IMID pyramid—include:
- Develop multiple ways for students to demonstrate knowledge.
- Encourage students to use creative and critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the process of demonstrating knowledge.
- Establish a clear link between course or program objectives and the content knowledge and skill acquisition being assessed.
- Ensure the absence of bias in the assessment of student learning.
- Use both formative and summative assessment measures.
- Impose time limits only when relevant to the task or needed as scaffolding for future assessments (e.g., providing timed tests as preparation for standardized credentialing examinations).

**Bibliography**


Higbee, J. L., & Goff, E. (in press). Widening participation through integrated multicultural instructional design. In J. Shaw & I. Reid (Eds.), *Student diversity and inclusion in higher education*.

