

## Div Lit Week 11 - Self-Reflexive Process 3: Are you diversity literate?

- **Objectives of class:**

- Acknowledge to students' growth and development
- Discern exactly what it is that students have developed the capacity to do

- **Material:**

- Handout - Definition of Critical Diversity Literacy

- **Method:**

- EXPLAIN "So throughout the course we've been developing this capacity called Critical Diversity Literacy. Everything we have done has in some way contributed to the development of this capacity. Today you're going to assess the extent to which you have developed this capacity. Here is the definition of Critical Diversity Literacy. For each point, I'd like you to:
  - 1) reflect on whether you know what it means
  - 2) reflect on whether you can do this
  - 3) provide an example how you've done this recently."

(NOTE: It is useful to write these 3 points on the board)

- HANDOUT Definition of Critical Diversity Literacy.
- REFLECTION Students work on their own for 10-15 minutes.
- SHARING Ask students to please share their insights with a partner.
- FEEDBACK Once everyone is completed, ask some members of the class to share what they wrote and shared.
- DEBRIEF Ask students why they think they did this exercise. Get their input. Explain the logic of the exercise.

## Critical Diversity Literacy – Definition (*Melissa Steyn, 2007*)

“Critical diversity literacy”<sup>1</sup> can best be described as a “reading practice” – a way of perceiving and responding to the social climate and prevalent structures of oppression. The analytical criteria employed to evaluate the presence of diversity literacy include:

- a. a recognition of the symbolic and material value of hegemonic identities, such as whiteness, masculinity, heterosexuality, ablebodiedness, middleclassness etc;
- b. analytic skill at unpacking how these systems of privilege intersect, interlock co-construct and constitute each other;
- c. the definition of oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and not only historical legacy
- d. an understanding that social identities are learned and an outcome of social practices;
- e. the possession of a diversity grammar and vocabulary that facilitates a discussion of race, racism and antiracism, and the parallel concepts employed in the analysis of other forms of oppression;
- f. the ability to translate (interpret) coded hegemonic practices;
- g. an analysis of the ways in that diversity hierarchies and institutional oppressions are mediated by class inequality and inflected in specific social contexts; and
- h. an engagement with issues of transformation of these oppressive systems towards deepening democracy/social justice in all levels of social organisation. (Steyn, M. 2007)

<sup>1</sup> I am deeply indebted to Frances Winddance Twine, whose concept racial literacy (2004) I have adapted and extended