



Kathy L. Guthrie
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Developing Culturally Relevant Leadership Learning



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EDITORS' NOTES

Leadership education focuses on pedagogical practices that center on cultivating organizational, group, and individual capacities to work collaboratively with shared goals in mind (Allen & Roberts, 2011; Dugan & Velázquez, 2015). As such, leadership educators have much to learn from the intersection of culture and leadership, especially when focused on collaboratively working with others across diverse cultures. In discussing this relationship, Chen and Van Velsor (1996) suggested that diversity research brings to leadership the understanding of identity groups, unconscious sociopsychological processes of prejudice, and individual perspectives, whereas leadership research brings to diversity the understanding of attribution theory, leadership prototypes, and behavioral complexity. Leadership educators have the vital responsibility to develop the identity, capacity, and efficacy of diverse individuals to lead and to engage in the leadership process. Bridging diversity and leadership helps leadership educators better understand the contribution of identity to leadership development, the leadership perspectives of individuals from diverse backgrounds, pluralistic engagement, and the programs and practices that are effective in developing future leaders (Guthrie, Bertrand Jones, Osteen, & Hu, 2013). In so doing, we acknowledge how racism, sexism, and religious oppression, as well as heterosexism/cisgenderism and classism, advantage and disadvantage all student lives in myriad ways.

In this volume, we present a model of culturally relevant leadership learning in order to develop all student leaders. Leadership learning includes four areas: education, training, development, and engagement (Guthrie & Osteen, 2012). These four areas expand Roberts and Ullom's (1989) training, education, and development model. *Leadership education*, which occurs both in and out of the classroom, is the broad understanding of leadership knowledge, skills, and values. However, leadership education is a deeper commitment to the teaching and learning of leadership knowledge, skills, and values with a longer duration in mind. *Leadership training* is the acquisition of leadership skills and is often shorter in duration. *Leadership development* is the reflection and integration of leadership knowledge, skills, and values. *Leadership engagement* is the application and practice of leadership knowledge, skills, and values. As a whole, leadership learning provides a context for constant discovery through the interaction between theory and practice (Roberts, 2007).

The notion of culturally relevant leadership learning builds upon the ideas of developing leader identity and leadership capacity of diverse students. It proposes infusing the leadership development process with an understanding of how systemic oppression influences educational contexts and with an engagement in and across cultural differences. Our contexts and differences influence knowledge of self, knowledge of others, knowledge of cultural systems, and ultimately students' knowledge and enactment of leadership. To this end, culturally relevant leadership development programs equip *all* students with the knowledge and skills to navigate diverse settings and lead culturally diverse groups and teams.

With the current climate of our world, it is apparent that more than ever we need diverse leaders who are able to lead diverse groups. In updating our thinking from past writings (Guthrie et al., 2013; Guthrie & Osteen, 2012), we wanted to provide applicable scholarship on students' knowledge of self and others, cultural and systemic contexts and their relevance in the work we do as educators. We were astounded by how emotional this work became for us and how incidents on our campuses, in the United States, and around the world continued to remind us just how important it is not only to engage in this conversation but also to actually take a stand to create spaces for all students to feel welcome in developing their leadership identity and capacity.

Transforming the framework for how leadership programs are designed will result in contextually relevant leadership development programs and an increase in the breadth and depth of a diverse leadership cadre for our society. The societal issues we face cannot be solved by a few, individual leaders or by the narrow, dominant leadership narratives that often inform leadership development programs. It is the collective and pluralistic ability across our diverse perspectives to create shared understanding and responses that is needed to solve our seemingly intractable societal issues.

Kathy L. Guthrie
Tamara Bertrand Jones
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Editors

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I This chapter introduces the critical domains of culturally relevant leadership learning. The model explores how capacity, identity, and efficacy of student leaders interact with dimensions of campus climate.

Critical Domains of Culturally Relevant Leadership Learning: A Call to Transform Leadership Programs

Tamara Bertrand Jones, Kathy L. Guthrie, Laura Osteen

Compelling interests for diversity often include the changing demographics of the United States and the world. A glance at the U.S. census tells the story of the increasing racial and ethnic differences in the country. Progressively, the United States has become a multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual society. These ever-increasing differences, fusions, and intersections of identities were the basis for our previous work (Guthrie, Bertrand Jones, Osteen, & Hu, 2013) where we outlined an argument for developing the leader identity and leadership capacity of diverse students. Leader identity is a student's own conceptualization of themselves as leaders, whereas leadership capacity is the learning and practice of leadership skills and behavior (Guthrie et al., 2013). Understanding how students with different identities define and learn about leadership helps educators appreciate the critical connections of leadership and diversity.

Sara Ahmed (2012) points out that the focus on diversity, largely defined as difference, can be a way of "becoming more advantaged, rather than challenging disadvantage" (p. 78). Diversity as a compelling interest for leadership, and ultimately globalization, reinforces the advantaged idea that leadership is the purview of all. As students are prepared to engage with diversity and more diverse students are prepared for pluralistic leadership, higher education institutions, and thus the country, become better positioned for advantage in many ways. At the same time, challenges to disadvantage are ignored or too often deferred in the name of the "greater good." Unfortunately, conversations on diversity and leadership have rarely

challenged the notion of disadvantage or the ways that power and privilege perpetuate disadvantage for some groups of people. This lack of challenge serves only to reinforce dominant perspectives of leadership and fails to initiate an acceptance of the necessity of diverse people, knowledge, and ideas, thus stagnating social change. The times call for a more complicated, nuanced discussion about marginalized populations, social change, and leadership on college campuses.

The concept of culturally relevant leadership learning (CRL) is a framework for transforming leadership programs to address the advantages and disadvantages difference creates. This new model incorporates efficacy and contextual dimensions of campus climate into our original ideas of individuals' capacity and identity to engage in the leadership process. Together, these ideas embody the critical domains of the CRL model. This model seeks to compel leadership educators to challenge old paradigms of leadership and learning, in order to consider new ways to educate students and develop leaders capable of challenging inequity to create social change.

This chapter provides an overview of the thinking behind our CRL model. First, we explore culturally relevant pedagogy, then discuss the power of language by distinguishing leader, leadership, leader/leadership development, and leadership learning. Finally, we present the model and its corresponding domains.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The CRL model is grounded in Gloria Ladson-Billings' (1995) *culturally relevant pedagogy*. Defining culture as an "amalgamation of human activity, production, thought, and belief systems," Ladson-Billings (2014) transformed teacher education by calling on teachers to adopt an *assets approach* to teaching culturally diverse students (p. 75). This approach is directly linked to Ahmed's warning that diversity can be manipulated to create disadvantage; Ladson-Billings brings attention to the ways the knowledge, skills, and lived experiences of students of color are treated as deficits instead of assets in the classroom. Ladson-Billings (2014) identified three domains that successful teachers operated within their classrooms: academic success, cultural competence, sociopolitical consciousness.

For change to occur in higher education, the interests of institutions, majority students, and underrepresented students must converge. Culturally relevant transformative practice allows educators to attend to the learning experiences of marginalized populations and their experiences of oppression. Specifically, the CRL model considers the primacy of how racism, sexism, and religious oppression, as well as heterosexism/cisgenderism and classism, advantage and disadvantage all student lives in myriad ways and how failure to address these issues ensures complicity in perpetuating oppression. CRL acknowledges power in leadership, specifically, the power of language and the power of the institutional