

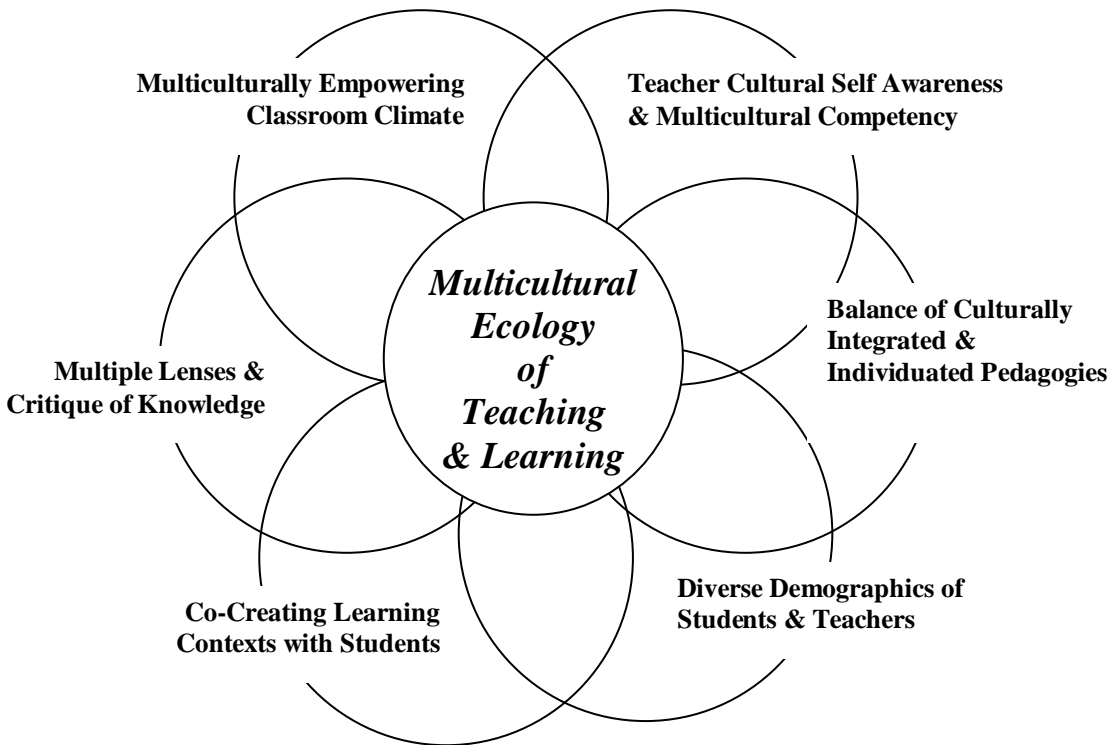
# Teaching and Learning Across Cultural Strengths in College

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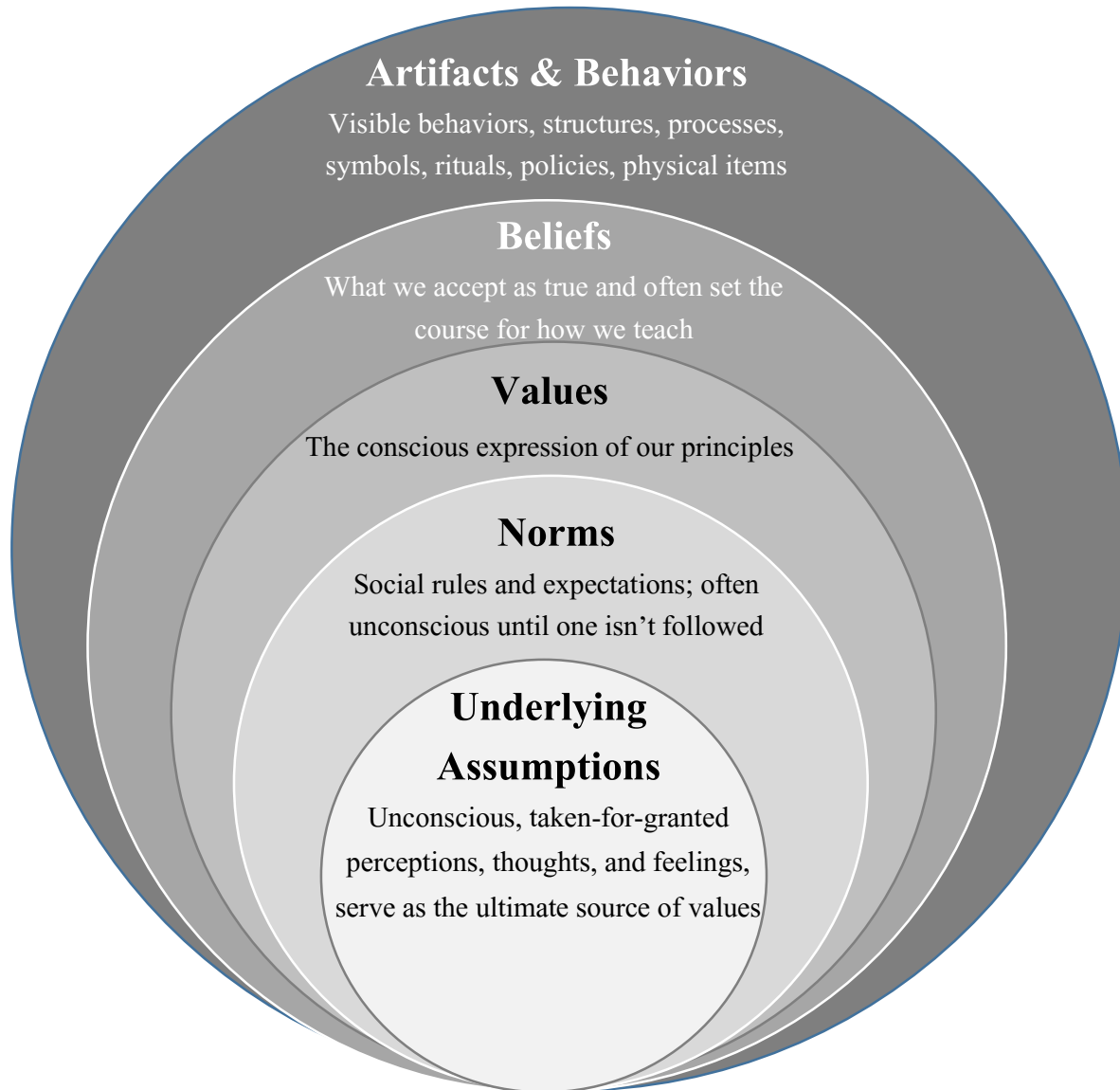
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From: Chávez, A. F. (2011). *Toward a multicultural ecology of teaching and learning: A critical review of theory & research*. *Journal of Excellence in College Teaching*, 21 (4), 49-74.

## Elements of Culture



### *Multicultural Ecology of Teaching and Learning in College*

From: Chávez, A. F. & Longerbeam, S. D. (2016). *Teaching Across Cultural Strengths: A Guide to Balancing Integrated and Individuated Cultural Frameworks in College Teaching*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

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## Cultural Frameworks

*Individuated ----- Integrated*




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Developed by Alicia Fedelina Chávez for Ke & Chávez, *Web Based Teaching and Learning across Culture and Age*. Springer, 2013.

## Tips on Teaching through Natural Cultural Strengths

*Hispano/Latino, Native, Northern European, and African American College Students*

Though all students learn most effectively through a multiplicity of pedagogies across integrated and individuated cultural frameworks; some elements are especially important to learning naturally among specific populations because of the ways they are taught in their early lives.

**Hispano/Latino College Students** are more likely to learn naturally when the following are part of the learning process:

- Learning by doing (application first, theory second)
- Comparing and contrasting with peers, learning from peers & peer work
- Starting with storytelling, examples, cases (the larger picture & the context)
- Feeling cared about by the professor
- When content is connected to their lives, families, cultures

**Northern European College Students** are more likely to learn naturally when the following are part of the learning process:

- Learning by Reading and Lecture (theory first)
- Linear Presentation of Content
- Learning Objectives & Outcomes
- Definitions & Classifications
- Clear Expectations & Goals, Rubrics
- Homework/Problem Sets
- Exams and Papers
- When content is connected to their lives

**African American College Students** are more likely to learn naturally when the following are part of the learning process:


- Use of visual symbols, metaphor, story, rhythm, music
- Time to make sense of things through discussion
- Application to self, family, community, culture
- Theory integrated with examples and application
- Friendly competition, debate, humor
- Very clear expectations, directions, communication
- Rationale based in future goals and professions

**Native American College Students** are more likely to learn naturally when the following are part of the learning process:

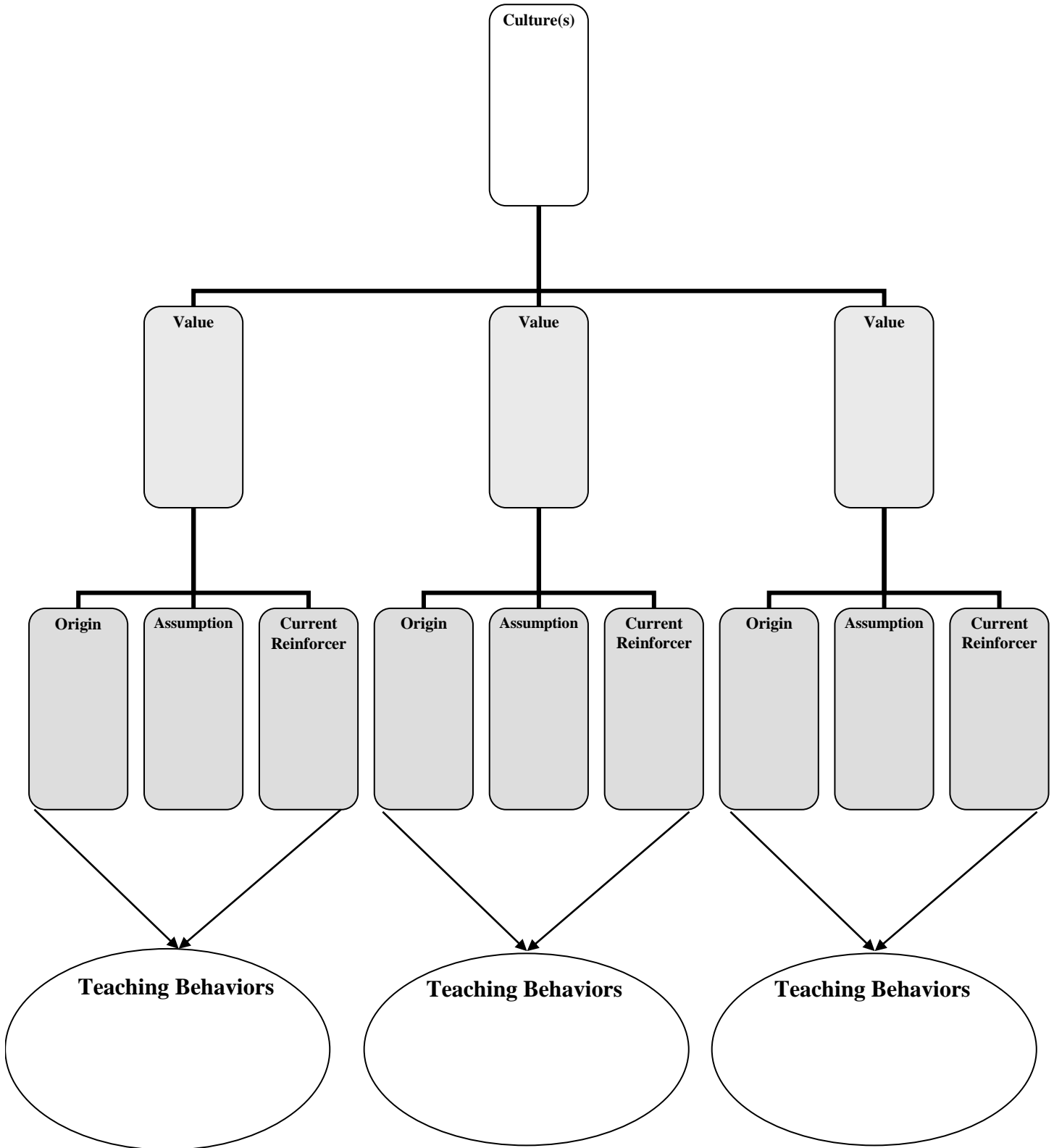
- Use of visual models, symbols, metaphor, drawings,
- Time to make sense of things through visual or reflective means
- Application to self, family, tribe
- Time for reflection before discussion
- Learning by Doing
- Ongoing access to past learning materials (oral history)

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<b>Cultural Frameworks in Teaching and Learning</b>		
<b>Individuated</b> <i>In a culturally <u>individuated</u> framework, a private compartmentalized, linear, contextually independent conception of the world is common, assumed, and valued.</i>		<b>Integrated</b> <i>In a culturally <u>integrated</u> framework, an interconnected, mutual, reflective cyclical, contextually dependent conception of the world is common, assumed, and valued</i>
Knowledge, individual competence, to move forward toward goals and the betterment of humanity	<b>Purpose of Learning</b>	Wisdom, betterment of the lives of those with whom we are connected - family, tribe, and community
Mind as primary, best, or only funnel of knowledge	<b>Ways of Taking in and Processing Knowledge</b>	Mind, Body, Spirit/Intuition, Reflection, Emotions, Relationships as important aspects and conduits of knowledge
Compartmentalized and separate; belief that understanding how the parts work separately, abstractly, and in isolation will lead to the greatest understanding	<b>Interconnectedness of What is Being Learned</b>	Contextualized and connected, belief that understanding how things affect each other within the whole, and within family and community will facilitate understanding
Learning is a private, individual activity; responsible for one's own learning so that family and others are not burdened	<b>Responsibility for Learning</b>	Learning is a collective, shared activity, Responsible for one's own as well as others' learning
Linear, task oriented, can be measured and used, to be on time shows respect	<b>Time</b>	Circular, seasonal, process oriented, dependent on relationships, to allow for enough time shows respect
Provider and Evaluator of Knowledge -- best perspectives and ways of learning, predetermined bounded learning; communication primarily between teacher and students	<b>Role of the Teacher, Control</b>	Facilitator of Learning Experiences -- multiple perspectives and ways of learning, emergent constructivist; wide variety of interactions between students, and between teacher and students
Others' perspectives are optional for learning. Primarily rely on verbal messages; individuals are paramount, predominantly verbal in both written and oral communications	<b>Student Interactions</b>	Others' perspectives and interpretations are important, even essential to learning. High use of nonverbals, collective as paramount, and multiple streams of communication
Learning by mastering abstract theory first, followed by testing. Unlikely to include application, experience, or doing in real life	<b>Sequencing</b>	Learning by doing, listening to others' experiences, imagining or experiencing first, then drawing out abstract theory
<b>Chávez &amp; Longerbeam</b> (Stylus, 2016). The earliest version of this model was presented in a paper at the 2009 ASHE Conference and we then developed this model from a later version of in Ke & Chávez (2013).		

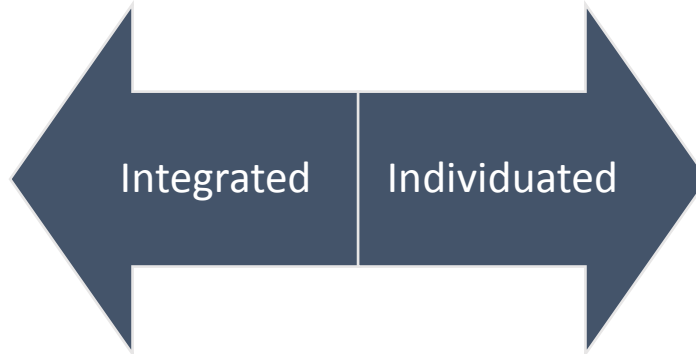
## Culture & Teaching Worksheet



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## Balancing Course Design and Facilitation Across Cultural Frameworks



<b>Design or Facilitation Aspect</b>	
<b>Ways to cultivate, bring out our own strengths toward balancing across cultural frameworks</b>	
<b>Ways to start the course</b>	
<b>Ways to show care</b>	
<b>Ways to cultivate, bring out, engage student strengths</b>	
<b>Readings/Learning Materials</b>	
<b>Assignments</b>	
<b>Evaluations/Assessments</b>	
<b>Learning Activities</b>	

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## **Overarching Principles, Practices, and Messages in Teaching Across Cultures**

### **Tell students messages to build their confidence**

- I KNOW you can do this!
- I believe in you.
- My job is YOUR learning.
- I will be with you along the way.
- Half-formed thoughts are good!
- Assist each other to learn!

### **Partner with students by asking**

- When you really need to learn something, what do you do?
- How can I assist you within your natural ways of learning?
- What has worked for you in other classes?
- What would you suggest to assist you and future students?

### **Situate learning in their lives**

- Look for and ask them to generate current examples and applications from their worlds.
- Help students process emotions – especially for common fears in the academic discipline ...
- Ask students to share how they feel about the subject of the class.
- It is often enough just to know we are not alone in our concerns and that there is a way through emotions to learning and success
- Offer them strategies for dealing with/negotiating emotions
- Offer tips and ask them to share tips with each other
- Remind them you will be with them along the way

### **Design assignments so students have to figure things out and teach each other**

- Teach and you will learn
- Facilitate students going inward (self-reflection) and going outward (to learn from others in and out of the class)
- We as teachers need to be the most flexible with our assignments, deadlines, activities etc. as we learn more about individual and group needs and ways of learning
- Because students learn in many ways and have varied responsibilities and realities influencing their learning

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## **Top Twelve Things Faculty Can Do to Teach Across Cultures**

### Self-Reflect Culturally

Modify One Cultural Construct in Your Next Class Session

Talk with Three Students from Different Cultural Origins  
about How They Learn

Choose One Negative Assumption you have about Students  
and Reevaluate Culturally then modify your Teaching

Have students evaluate their own ways of learning using the Cultural Frameworks  
Model – then ask them for suggestions in teaching based in their ways of learning

Share with Students the Value of Complex, Balanced Learning

Develop a New Way to Connect Subject Matter to Student Lives

### Partner with Students

Make a Personal Connection with a Student

Develop an Innovative Way to Assess Student Learning

Consider the Rewards of Teaching Across Cultures

Collaborate Deeply Across Cultures with another Professor

**Some *Ways of Being* we find helpful  
to cross-cultural collaborations with colleagues and students**

Focus on the learning benefits of balancing across cultural strengths

Remain willing to be uncomfortable

Process & Stay Fiercely PRESENT with each other (discussions, e-mail reflections)

Abandon Defensiveness

Offer the benefit of the doubt immediately

Develop trust in each other over time

Reengage, Reengage, Reengage...dedicate ourselves to each other, the work  
together

Ask – Would you help me to understand why do you do it that way?

Engage both of our strengths to get through ‘trauma triggers’ and other challenges

Encourage risk taking in each other...and support it in each other especially when it  
doesn’t work out so well or feels uncomfortable, or leads to misunderstandings

Use metaphor, visuals to ‘capture’ and share what we mean

Balance work, rest, reflection and play

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