

EDU 267 - Synthesis Paper

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In our interconnected and rapidly changing world, cultural diversity and human relations have emerged as critical areas of study and practice, and there is no where this is more important than in the classroom. As our world becomes increasingly diverse, it is important to understand and appreciate the different cultures, beliefs, and perspectives that shape our schools. Throughout this course, we have examined the importance of diversity in the school, analyzed the causes and effects of trauma on students, and the educational implications of embracing diversity in the classroom. We engaged in both discussions and real-life case studies that have broadened my understanding and challenged our preconceived notions. I have recognized the value of cultural diversity in order to foster creativity, community, and collective growth. This final paper provides an opportunity to synthesize the knowledge gained throughout the course and dive into four specific aspects that make up cultural diversity and human relations. Along with these four aspects, we also touched on LGBTQIA students, the Universal Design for Learning, and Social-Emotional Well-being throughout the class. Through this paper, I aim to show what I have learned about cultural diversity, trauma, PBS, and human relations. I will also be sharing an artifact for each of the topics, as well as sharing how I plan to incorporate them into my future classroom.

## **Cultural Diversity**

### **Description**

Cultural diversity refers to the presence of multiple cultures, languages, beliefs, genders, sexual orientations, and perspectives within the classroom or school. This also includes students with “exceptionalities,” which is a term applied to students with specialized needs or disabilities. (Great Schools Partnership, 2013) It involves recognizing and valuing both the differences and

similarities that exist among people, and promoting practices that ensure equal opportunities and respect for all. For myself, cultural diversity offers a wealth of opportunities and challenges that shapes my role as an educator. Embracing cultural diversity is crucial as it fosters social cohesion, promotes understanding and tolerance, and contributes to growth. It encourages dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of ideas, leading to innovative solutions and a broader perspective on the world. Cultural diversity also means adapting teaching approaches and strategies to meet the diverse needs of students. It involves recognizing and valuing the different learning styles, languages, and cultural influences that students bring into my classroom. Cultural diversity is important in the classroom because it creates an inclusive learning environment, enriches student's perspectives and knowledge, promotes personal growth, reduces prejudice and stereotyping, and supports student's social and emotional development. Embracing cultural diversity allows me to prepare students for the diverse and interconnected world that they live in, which will soon accept them as adults.

**Artifact:** See Appendix A for a map of where in 1820's North Dakota Native American tribes were once located. I love maps, and would love to have many in my future classroom. This map would be great to use in any North Dakota or U.S. history class. I think this map is especially important to have in my future classroom for a couple of reasons. The first is to recognize and celebrate Native American students' heritage. This can help foster a sense of pride, belonging, and identity, as well as contributing to the preservation and continuation of cultural traditions, practices, and knowledge that have been passed down through generations. The second is for all students to recognize that civilizations in North Dakota predate Manifest Destiny, and we as Americans can be critical of things done in our nation's past.

**How Theme Will be Applied in Your Future Classroom**

In order to have a diverse classroom, there are a few steps that need to be taken. The first is to establish a classroom climate that values and respects diversity. Creating a sense of belonging for all students by promoting open dialogue and celebrating diverse perspectives is important in order to make sure no student feels excluded. I will also select different teaching materials, books, and resources that reflect the diversity of cultures and backgrounds present in the classroom. This is especially important in a history class. I will use sources from different cultures in order to expose my students to a wide range of experiences and views of the world. To add on to this, we will explore different cultural celebrations, traditions, and customs. In any classroom, I think it is important to provide opportunities for students to share their cultural backgrounds, traditions, and experiences. I will encourage my students to discuss and appreciate each other's perspectives. To go along with this, promoting group work and collaboration among students from different cultural backgrounds encourages them to work together, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. This can foster understanding and respect among students. Another important step is to address stereotypes and biases. History is ugly, so it is important for me to engage my students in discussions about stereotypes, biases, and prejudices to promote critical thinking and challenge misconceptions. I will teach students to recognize and appreciate the value of diversity, while understanding the harm that stereotypes can cause.

**Trauma****Description**

Trauma is defined as “an experience that threatens life or physical integrity that overwhelms an individual’s capacity to cope.” Trauma can come from a variety of sources, such as abuse, loss of a loved one, bullying, adverse health situations, or witnessing something traumatic. (Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators, 2008) These can also be known as Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACE’s for short. Through Dr. Krukenberg’s lecture, I learned that trauma is unique to the individual experiencing it, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach that will work to address it. For a teacher, understanding the impact of trauma and ACEs is crucial in recognizing and responding to students who have experienced such adversities. Trauma can have profound and lasting effects on a student's cognitive, emotional, and social development, which can manifest as behavioral challenges, struggles in the classroom, and strained relationships. Teachers can play a vital role in supporting the healing of students, fostering resilience, and creating a safe educational environment that promotes their overall well-being and academic success.

**Artifact:** See Appendix B for my mental health resource about depression. This resource is important to me because it promotes awareness and understanding of depression. Mental illness can be a cause of trauma, or it can exacerbate it. Discussing mental health is especially important for me in the classroom because I have struggled with it at times in my life, and I do not wish for my students to go through what I have gone through. I would like to be a part of my future schools Mental Health Awareness month’s activities, and if there is none, I would want to start some immediately. This resource can be used as a launching point for further conversations with any student about any mental health condition they may be struggling with, as I think that

showing the students that there are other, extremely successful people who also struggle is important for them to see.

### **How Theme Will be Applied in Your Future Classroom**

In order to address trauma in my classroom, I will create a safe and supportive environment for all my students. In order to do this, there are a few steps that I will use in my future classroom in order to address trauma. Firstly, the trauma has to be noticed. That means I will have to be alert and attentive no matter where I am in the school. It could be in my classroom, the lunch room, the football field, or the hallways where I hear or see something that could be traumatic. Another step is regular check-ins with the student. This could be as simple as a “how are you today” or it could be something more formal such as a meeting with the student, myself, and professionals in the building. Collaboration with professionals in the building is a must. Along with that comes communication with the professionals, so I know what steps are being taken to help the student. Another step is to build the students' self-esteem back up. This is important to help them overcome the trauma they may have experienced, and may help them emotionally move past it. This can be easier in cases of bullying or verbal abuse, but isn't as feasible in cases of severe trauma. However, I think the most important aspect is that each student must be approached as a unique individual with a unique situation. Trauma affects each student differently, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach that will work for every student. Understanding and acknowledging the individuality of each student's experiences is the foundation for implementing effective trauma-informed practices in the school.

### **Intervention/PBS/PBIS**

**Description**

PBIS, or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a proactive approach implemented in schools to promote school safety and good behavior. The overall goal of PBIS is prevention of unwanted behaviors, not punishments for those behaviors. It emphasizes the teaching and reinforcement of positive behaviors, rather than relying solely on punishment or disciplinary measures. PBIS typically includes clearly defined expectations for behavior, consistent reinforcement and recognition of positive behavior, and a tiered system of support to address the needs of all students. (Lee, 2018) PBIS creates a school culture that prioritizes respect, responsibility, and cooperation. This contributes to improved student engagement, reduced disruptions, and increased academic achievement. Since PBIS encourages a proactive and preventative approach to behavior management, it reduces the likelihood of negative behaviors happening and fosters a sense of safety and belonging among students. We saw some of the positive impacts of PBIS during the film “Paper Tigers,” in which Lincoln Alternative High School in Walla Walla, Washington used it to great effect in order to help many students graduate high school.

**Artifact:** See Appendix C for my incentives for positive behavior in the classroom. This was inspired by PBISrewards.com and their list. Next to my class attendance list, I would just have little markings each time I saw something that I really liked in class. This list would need a bit of workshopping, but I believe the concept is something that would really work well in a highschool classroom.

**How Theme Will be Applied in Your Future Classroom**

In order for me to effectively use PBIS in my classroom it is important to follow these key steps. First, I will establish a positive and inclusive classroom culture by clearly defining and teaching behavioral expectations to your students. I will regularly reinforce positive behavior by acknowledging and potentially rewarding the students who meet these expectations. Secondly, I will teach students skills such as self-regulation, conflict resolution, and empathy through both instruction and modeling. I also want to provide opportunities for students to practice these skills in real-life situations, and I think that both group work and classroom discussions are a great opportunity for this. By implementing these PBIS strategies in my high school classroom, I can foster a safe and supportive learning environment, enhance student engagement and social-emotional development, and ultimately promote academic success.

## **Human Relations**

### **Description**

Human relations are the fundamental building block in the classroom. Without a positive relationship, how can I expect my students to learn? These relationships are crucial in a classroom for several reasons. Firstly, positive human relations contribute to a supportive and inclusive classroom. When students feel safe and valued, they are more likely to engage in learning, participate in classroom discussions, as well as feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions. This positive classroom atmosphere promotes a sense of belonging and creates a safe space for learning and personal growth. Safety is something that should be felt on day one in the classroom. One of the first things I plan on telling my students is that they should feel safe in this classroom. However, this statement needs to be reinforced. In my classroom, I will not use sarcasm, putdowns, or any illogical consequences to actions that happen. Those are a few easy



ways to make students feel safe. Secondly, effective human relations foster effective communication and collaboration within the classroom. When students develop strong relationships with both their peers and teachers, it becomes easier to communicate, listen, and understand different ideas. Students learn to appreciate diversity and respect different viewpoints, preparing them for future personal and professional interactions.

Furthermore, positive relations contribute to the social-emotional development of students. These positive relationships within the classroom promote empathy, compassion, and emotional well-being. Students feel supported and cared for, which in turn can positively impact their self-esteem, motivation, and resilience.

**Artifact:** See Appendix D for my “In the Field” interview with Mr. Clements, a high school teacher for 23 years. I felt that this was an appropriate artifact because we talked about the relationships he sees day to day as both a teacher and a coach. He gave a great quote about why high school sports, especially football, are great for students. He said that “Football is beautiful because it has uncommon people coming together and working towards a common goal.” This quote fits in perfect with human relations, because even classrooms have goals, and the teacher and students need to come together in order to reach their goal.

### **How Theme Will be Applied in Your Future Classroom**

Human relations in the classroom are everything. Each student that walks into my classroom is a unique individual, with a unique skill set and unique ideas. Do I want my students to learn history in my class? Yes. Do I want them to pass my class? Yes. However, the thing I want to do most is prepare my students to go out and succeed in the world. I want to make my classroom a

family so that when the young people that have had my class go out into the world, they are able to solve problems themselves. I want them to know how to deal with stress, and respect other people. In order to do this, I first need to build a relationship with each student and their families. Establishing these positive relationships with my students will ensure that they will be willing learners in my classroom. I know that I will have to make relationships with all sorts of students who all have unique backgrounds and situations. This is one of the most challenging parts of being a teacher, but also one of the most rewarding. Seeing the smile on students' faces as they walk into the classroom, field, or gym will make me know that all my hard work I've put in building a relationship with them is worth it.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, ensuring the success of all students is the fundamental goal of education, and it requires an approach that addresses the diverse needs, strengths, and circumstances of each student. First, fostering a safe and supportive learning environment is crucial. This classroom family involves creating a safe space where students feel valued, respected, and free from any form of discrimination. My class will embrace diversity and celebrate each students' individual identities and backgrounds. Differentiated instruction strategies will be employed in order to accommodate the different learning styles and abilities, which will allow each student to engage with the curriculum. Secondly, establishing strong teacher-student relationships is key to student success. I want my students to look forward to coming to Mr. Marchant's history class, whether they enjoy history or not. When teachers form positive connections with their students, it creates a learning environment where students feel comfortable taking risks, asking for help, and expressing their ideas. Building relationships involves actively listening to students,

understanding their interests and strengths, and tailoring my instruction to meet their individual needs. By prioritizing inclusivity, individualized support, and positive teacher-student relationships, I can ensure the success of all students and empower them to reach their full potential.

### References

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## Appendix A

# TRIBAL NATIONS OF NORTH DAKOTA

CIRCA 1820

**Nakoda**  
Assiniboine

**Anishinaabeg**  
Ojibwe/Chippewa

**Dakota**  
Sioux

**Hiraacá**  
Hidatsa

**Húnkpapčá**  
Hunkpapa

**Numakaki / Nueta**  
Mandan

**Ihánkthunwan**  
Yanktonai

**Sisíthunwan**  
Sisseton

**Itázipcho**  
Sans Arc

**Sahnish**  
Arikara

**Bdewákanthunwan**  
Mdewakanton

**Lakota**  
Sioux

**Notable Figures and Landmarks:**

- Nakoda man
- Betty Hunter, Nakoda
- Hiraacá
- Little Shell 111, Turtle Mountain Chippewa Chief
- Sitting Bull, Chief of the Hunkpapa Sioux
- Charles Alexander Eastman, Sisseton (Mdewakanton)
- Crow's heart, Mandan
- Arikara earth lodge
- Beats Belly, Arikara

*Aaron R. Carapella*  
AARON CARAPELLA - TRIBAL NATIONS MAPS  
WWW.TRIBALNATIONSMAPS.COM  
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We invite any suggestions that will lead to more accurate information for further printings, and apologize in advance for any inaccuracies.  
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## Appendix B

# YOU ARE NOT ALONE

DEPRESSION IMPACTS ACTORS, ATHLETES, AND MUSICIANS



13X GRAMMY AWARD WINNER LADY GAGA



7X GOLDEN GLOBE WINNER JIM CARREY



NBA CHAMPION KEVIN LOVE

## DEPRESSION

### WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

- DEPRESSION IS MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION CHARACTERIZED BY PERSISTENT FEELINGS OF SADNESS, HOPELESSNESS, OR A LACK OF INTEREST IN ACTIVITIES.
- DEPRESSION CAN AFFECT PEOPLE OF ANY AGE, RACE, GENDER, OR SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS
- IT CAN BE CAUSED BY A VARIETY OF FACTORS
- OVER 29% OF AMERICANS HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES



## DEPRESSION

## PROFESSIONAL REMEDIES MAY INCLUDE:

- Psychological Treatments
- Antidepressant medication
- Lifestyle Changes

## SUICIDE HOTLINE: 1-800-273-8255

- 48,183 AMERICANS DIED FROM SUICIDE LAST YEAR
- 15% OF ALL DEATHS FROM SUICIDE COME FROM AMERICANS AGED 10-24
- 9% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORTED ATTEMPTING SUICIDE IN THE LAST YEAR
- VETERANS, PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE AT GREATER RISK



## DEPRESSION DOES NOT DEFINE YOU

## HOW TO HELP YOURSELF

- Get ample sleep
- Stay connected with friends and family
- Exercise and eat healthy
- Do activities you enjoy
- Go to church
- Laugh

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It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.  
-Confucius

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## SOURCES CITED:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/index.html>
- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20356013>



**Appendix C**

<b>REWARD</b>	<b>POINTS REQUIRED</b>
Mr. Marchant shaves his facial hair	<b>10</b>
Mr. Marchant attempts a TikTok dance	<b>10</b>
Change a short answer question on a test to multiple choice	<b>10</b>
Mr. Marchant will sing Karaoke to a song of the class' choosing	<b>10</b>
Homework assignment reduced by 1/4th	<b>10</b>
Extra day on an assignment	<b>5</b>
Extra credit opportunity	<b>5</b>
Early release to lunch	<b>5</b>
Change chairs with Mr. Marchant for the day	<b>5</b>
Change Mr. Marchant's email signature for a week	<b>5</b>
Mr. Marchant brings you a King Size candy bar of your choosing	<b>3</b>
Mr. Marchant brings you a Gatorade/Powerade of your choosing	<b>3</b>
Pick where to sit for the day	<b>3</b>
Class DJ for the day	<b>3</b>



## Appendix D

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### In the Field Interview

For my interview, I talked with Chris Clements. Mr. Clements, or Clem as he would prefer to be called, has been a high school gym teacher for 23 years. He started working with young adults as a football coach at UMary. In 2000, he left UMary to become a teacher at Bismarck High School. In 2013, he moved from BHS to the new school in town, Legacy High. Clem has been the head football coach at LHS since the school's inception, and became the head track and field coach a year later. Clem has been extremely important to the development of LHS, as he was the one who came up with the "Saber Code", which can be found all around the school. Clem is a man of few words to most. However, I have known him for around 12 years, and was able to get him to open up just a bit. He is one of the main inspirations behind me deciding to become a teacher and coach, as he was my football and track coach in high school. He set a great example of how to be both a teacher and coach, and I could think of no better person to interview.

The first question I asked Clem was, "How do you see diversity every day in school?" In his class, he has a diverse group of students from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Each student brings their unique experiences, perspectives, and identities to the learning environment. He also sees diversity when the entire student body is together during lunch, school events, or in various clubs around the school. Lastly, they have posters, bulletin boards, and displays around the school that celebrate diversity and promote acceptance.

Clem started teaching 23 years ago, but there are still new things to him after all that time. The biggest adjustment he has to make is in regards to students who identify as transgender. This is a new experience for him, and his words of advice to me were simple. "Do as you're told, and treat each student as respectful as possible." Clem does not let his personal opinions into his job, and I believe that is key in order to keep any teaching job.

When I asked him about how diversity relates to football and sports, I got what I believe to be the best answer of the entire interview. Clem said, "football is beautiful because it has uncommon people coming together and working towards a common goal." Team sports, especially football, are wonderful because students of all different ages, races, cultures, and socioeconomic statuses are thrown into the fire, and they need to come together and bond in order to succeed. On a much smaller scale, Clem also sees this in his gym class, where students on the same team work together in order to succeed.

Although brief, my interview with Clem was really enlightening to me. (Clem has state track and field from 5/25-5/27.) I got a great answer about why football is beautiful, and saw how diversity is seen inside Legacy High. I have always wondered how to deal with transgender students, and getting an answer from someone I trust and respect will really help me. I am always happy to talk with Clem, and this time was no different.

## **Appendix E**