

Universal Design for Learning: Connections to Culturally Responsive Practices



Culturally responsive practices account for and adapt to the broad diversity of race, language and culture in Wisconsin schools and prepare all students for a multicultural world. (*Wisconsin RtI Center*)

Culturally responsive pedagogy and practice facilitates and support the achievement of all students. In culturally responsive classrooms and schools, effective teaching and learning occur in a culturally-supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths of students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement. (*National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems*)

The Universal Design for Learning framework shares several common traits with Culturally Responsive Practices, in fact, many Universal Design for Learning practices are also culturally responsive. Some commonalities include:

- Belief of high expectations for each student
- Emphasis on fluid and equitable relationships between school/home/community
- Encourage each student to draw upon their own knowledge and experiences to sustain engagement
- Use a variety of instructional modalities appropriately aligned for academic success

Sources:

NCCREST (National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems)
<http://www.nccrest.org/index.html>

Wisconsin RtI Center: Culturally Responsive Practices
<http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/administrators/understanding-rti/culturally-responsive-practices.html>

Resources:

Banks, J. B. & Banks, C.A.M. (Eds.). (2003). Handbook of research on multicultural education. New York: Macmillan.

Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, & Practice, 2nd edition*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Howard, G.R. (2006). *We can't teach what we don't know: White teachers, multiracial schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165.

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<http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/>

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<http://glec.education.iupui.edu/equity-resources/>