

UNESCO Chair on Intercultural Competences

Conference 2025

Pre – Conference Workshops

Monday 29 September

8:30 am - 9:00 am Registration & Arrival

| Time | Venue 1 | Venue 2 |
|---------------|--|--|
| 9:00 - 12:00 | Workshop 1 (Morning) Room: TD301 | Workshop 2 (Morning) Room: TD302 |
| 12:30 - 13:30 | Lunch | Lunch |
| 14:00 - 17:00 | Workshop 1 Continued (Afternoon) Room: TD301 | Workshop 3 (Afternoon) Room: TD303 |
| 18:00 – 20:00 | Workshop 5 (Evening) Room: TD304 | |

Coffee Breaks at 10:30 & 15:30

Workshop 1 – Full Day

Facilitators: Ms Nosipiwo Matiwane & Dr Heidi October

Pan-African Histories: Intercultural Competences, Identities and Young African Voices

Key Terms:

Intercultural Competence, Pan-Africanism, 'Cultures', African Cultures, Identities

Workshop Overview

If Deardorff (2020) defines intercultural competence as the skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to improve interactions across difference, then why and how do we define 'cultures' in African contexts? Well, 'cultures' are dynamic sites of political, social, and economic struggle and work to confront institutional structures. In confronting institutional structures, 'cultures' can help Africans rediscover their histories. Using Pan-Africanism as a theory, which was intended as an oppositional ideology, this workshop will elaborate on the intergenerational nuances that continue to shape the production and consumption of knowledge within the African continent, with the purpose of rendering visible Africanist epistemologies (Peterson, Mkhize, Xaba, 2022:8). The importance of this is to recuperate, preserve, reconfigure, and circulate African intellectual and political histories so that they remain constitutive and significant as a cultural project. Additionally, this workshop will explore identity(ies), leadership identities and the use language "as a site of cultural encounter and ideological struggle" to articulate the diverse perspectives of young

Africans in how they understand intercultural competence (Larkosh, 2011:22).

Workshop Objectives

Through this workshop participants will be able to:

1. Define intercultural competences from varying perspectives so that they can understand its application to Pan-African leadership.
2. Analyse African 'cultures' and histories so that they can negotiate its meanings.
3. Critically engage on the role of African youth in speaking to intercultural competences so that they can apply it to their varying contexts.

Workshop Outcomes

By the end of this session participants will be able to:

1. Understand intercultural competences from varying perspectives so that they can translate it for Pan-African leadership.
2. Explore African 'cultures' and histories emically so that they can understand its meanings.
3. Understand the role of African youth in speaking to intercultural competences so that they can locate its relevance.

Workshop 2 – Half Day

Facilitators: Ms Khairoonisa Foflonker and Dr Jean Farmer

Root or route? The journey to becoming a self-reflexive Intercultural Communication Practitioner

Keywords:

Intercultural communication, intercultural humility, self-reflexivity, ethical intercultural encounters

Workshop Overview

African universities are growing in diversity in cohorts of students and staff, becoming global multi-cultural hubs of engagement. Intercultural communication competence must be understood as moving beyond the notion of mastering intercultural competencies, to acknowledge the limitations of one's own cultural understanding in diverse groups, requiring "self-awareness, understanding of cultural differences, and the ability to deliver appropriate intervention strategies" (Paine et al, 2016). Practitioners should recognise that individuals and societies hold diverse perspectives and that cultures within African societies are not homogenous. Our life experiences affect how we perceive others or how experiences influence our world view (Sears & Cairns 2015, Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006).

Autoethnography is a way that we can learn about who we think we are, our positionality and privilege within society (Farmer, 2021) and shift our commitment to lifelong learning as we live in a world of continuous cultural shifts and global movement across borders. The motivation is thus for the practitioner to become more nuanced in navigating the intercultural encounter, question our own biases and assumptions and to engage in and facilitate ethical intercultural encounters that are both genuine and meaningful and "[make] choices or otherwise [act] upon these new understandings (Mezirow 1991:167). Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (1978) helps us to understand that truly inclusive processes of social change require meaningful interventions that are underpinned by transformative learning.

This interactive workshop is directed at any practitioner who regularly engages in intercultural

communication. The aim is to engage intercultural communication practitioners on their own visual journey of critical self-reflection and grow and build self-reflexivity, taking participants in a process of thinking, drawing and sharing (Farmer, 2021). The practitioner moves from conscious awareness to critical consciousness (Freire, 1993), to critical self-reflection (Nagata, 2004), self-reflexivity (Nagata, 2004) and ultimately steers themselves towards inter/cultural humility. Cultural humility is defined as a “lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique, to redressing the power imbalances in the patient-physician dynamic, and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic” (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998: 123).

The premise of this workshop is that practitioners should view intercultural humility as an extension of intercultural communication competencies that allows them to be more effective, genuine and humble. Intercultural humility is achieved by recognising our own biases, blind spots and assumptions. It involves the following critical dimensions that will be explored during the workshop:

- Self-awareness and self-reflexivity
- Awareness of asymmetrical power relations and privilege
- Lifelong learning and openness to learning
- Respect for diversity and inclusion (social justice)
- Comfort with ambiguity and discomfort (growth zone)

Workshop Outcomes

- Build the skill of self-reflexivity through the vehicle of intercultural humility
- Communicate effectively through awareness of positionality, listening to others first to engage in meaningful conversations across cultures (as practitioners we have the privilege of knowledge and should offer others the opportunity to speak first)
- Communicate effectively across cultures through reflecting on others' perspectives before speaking
- Engage with others the skill of effective communication
- Build cultural humility

Workshop 3 – Half Day

Facilitators: Dr Darla Deardorff & Mr Werner de Wit

UNESCO Story Circles: Train the Trainer

UNESCO Story Circles, developed by Dr. Darla Deardorff for UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), provide a platform for individuals from diverse backgrounds to share their stories, experiences, and perspectives. These circles are not just about storytelling; they are about fostering empathy, understanding, and appreciation for different cultures and identities.

How can intercultural competence be developed in a very concrete way? Join this highly interactive workshop to experience UNESCO Story Circles, an intercultural methodology successfully piloted around the world both in-person and virtually. Story Circles work well in COIL, in orientations, and in classes to bring students together across differences, build community, and to practice key intercultural competencies such as listening for understanding. This is a train-the-trainer workshop so participants will leave with an action plan on how/when/where to use Story Circles. Participants are also invited to bring other intercultural tools they use and time will be given to share these tools with each other.

Workshop 5 – Evening

Facilitators: Fatima Drifi & Dr. Jennice McCafferty

Creating Virtual Exchange: A Workshop for Educators

This interactive workshop supports educators in designing and implementing Virtual Exchanges (VEs) that promote global citizenship and contribute to sustainable futures. It is grounded in the conviction that education must align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions (United Nations, 2015). Yet, in many contexts, this mission is undermined by media narratives and aspects of the global education reform movement that have weakened schools' ability to foster peace and intercultural collaboration. In response, this workshop draws on the work of Moroccan teacher training programs and Missouri State University's College of Education, where virtual exchange has been mainstreamed as a strategy to teach for global understanding and intercultural collaboration in the education sector.

Objectives

Participants will explore how Virtual Exchange (VE) can advance Sustainable Development Goal 16 by promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions. They will engage with foundational frameworks—Contact Hypothesis and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies—to inform inclusive and effective exchange design. Through guided planning and collaboration, participants will begin developing their own VE projects while forming networks for sustained cross-institutional and international partnerships.

Audience

This session is intended for K–12 and higher education educators, teacher educators, international education practitioners, and program coordinators interested in peace education, global learning, and cross-cultural collaboration.

Workshop Description

The workshop begins with an overview of VE as a method for supporting peace and justice through education. Facilitators will share findings and examples from current VE initiatives in Morocco and the U.S., illustrating how VE has been used to counteract the narrowing of civic education and foster mutual understanding. Participants will then be introduced to the theoretical anchors, the Contact Hypothesis and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies, that will guide our work as they begin designing their own VE projects. Through hands-on activities, participants will collaboratively develop key components of a virtual exchange, including goals and objectives, communication methods (synchronous/asynchronous), curriculum structure, timeline, participant roles, support strategies, and evaluation plans.

Expected Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will leave with:

A list of potential VE themes relevant to their teaching contexts

A three-week VE outline including learning goals, activities, and assessment strategies

A draft plan for their first exchange session

Contact information for potential VE partners, establishing a foundation for future collaboration

Core Components to Be Developed During the Workshop

Goals & Objectives – Defining the exchange's purpose

Communication Methods – Structuring cross-border interaction

Curriculum Design – Planning learning content and experiences

Timeline & Schedule – Outlining the flow of activities

Participant Identification – Selecting and preparing exchange groups

Monitoring & Support – Assigning facilitation and logistics roles

Evaluation & Assessment – Measuring impact and refining design