Respect Your New Campus Community

Materials:
Facilitation Notes

Objectives:
Discussion what respect means to various people and how respect will now be part of their new college life.

Instructions:
Ask everyone to find someone in the room who they do not know. Instruct them to introduce themselves to that person, and spend five to ten minutes talking about respect. What does it mean for you to show respect, and what does it mean for you to be shown respect especially in your new college community. After the allotted time, ask the participants to return to their seats, and open the discussion.

Common responses include the "Golden Rule," looking somebody in the eyes, being honest, and appreciating somebody's ideas even when you do not agree with them. It is important to mention that respect is a crucial ingredient in any discussion, but especially in a discussion of often-controversial issues regarding multicultural issues. The point is to learn from our differences--to understand each other's understanding. The point is NOT to agree. Another important part of respect is knowing each other's names, and how to pronounce them. Also, respect includes keeping the conversation in the group. This type of community building--and the safety which people feel with it--can make or break an attempt to facilitate discussions on multicultural issues.

This activity touches many bases.

First, it starts the crucial path toward building a community of respect. This is the first step in maintaining a constructive exchange regarding issues such as racism, sexism, etc. At the most basic level, participants meet someone they did not know, and exchange ideas with that person.

Second, the community is built through an understanding of how the group perceives respect, and how they negotiate its meaning.

Third, the similarities and differences in participants' ideas about respect begin to show the first signs of similarities and differences within the group on a larger level.
Fourth, living in a new community and respecting campus grounds by avoiding littering, taking responsibility for belongings and learning how to live with a new person. This can be the start of discussion relating to ideas for respecting the campus and those we live with.

Debriefing:

What were the best ideas? Make a list of the suggestions on the board.