

Cultural Competence

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The Cultural Competence Initiative (CCI) is a new initiative undertaken by Centro with the support of a one-year grant (view our year [one annual report](#) [2]) from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education ([FIPSE](#) [3])

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The CCI is an important and potentially innovative component of Hunter College's response to the challenge of the leaky education pipeline for Puerto Rican/Latino students. The first year of the Initiative was dedicated to building the infrastructure through:

1. the compiling of [The Centro Cultural Competence Bibliographic Database \(CCCBD\)](#) [4]
2. the creation of annotated bibliographies and research briefs on cultural competence in the areas of [social work](#) [5], [public health](#) [6], [urban affairs and planning](#) [7], and [education](#) [8] based on reviews of the research and clinical literature
3. the review of graduate syllabi, curriculum development
4. the convening of a stakeholders' conference on the status of cultural competence in Hunter College's graduate curriculum at the professional schools and the urban planning department.

The CCI is consistent with Centro's mission of furthering research and education programming relating to the Puerto Rican experience in the continental U.S. The concept of cultural competence is a way of

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looking at our cultural identities as a source of knowledge and strength (norms, values, behavioral patterns) that are critical for successful academic achievement and entrance into professional careers. Cultural competence is also critical for the preparation of all professionals serving Puerto Rican and other Latino communities, whether in education, social work, public health, urban planning, etc., particularly at the graduate level.

The long-term goals of the CCI are, as follows:

Infuse cultural competence in the graduate curriculum in Hunter College's professional Schools of Education, Social Work, and the Health Professions along with the Urban Affairs and Planning Department as well as in field-based professional practice. Build on the knowledge and life experiences of Puerto Rican/Latino students and their communities to impact Hunter College's graduate programs.

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