



# Bringing Student Voices to Scholarship and Practice

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“If we have to become part of a new world civilization, if this is our task, then we shall need a philosophy... which teaches us to see the justification for the other's point of view and which makes us doubt our own.”

Hans Georg Gadamer



# Personal significance





# Significance for Higher Education

- Increasingly interdependent world
  - Perspective change is a missing piece
  - Engagement with diversity improves outcomes
  - Lens of community college students
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## Prior Research on Campus Diversity

- ▶ Large scale survey research
  - ▶ Primarily 4-year colleges
  - ▶ Less diverse student populations
  - ▶ More focus on informal interaction with peers; less on diverse perspectives
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# Perspective Change

Questioning prior assumptions and beliefs, engaging with diverse and competing perspectives and revising one's assumptions in the face of new information.

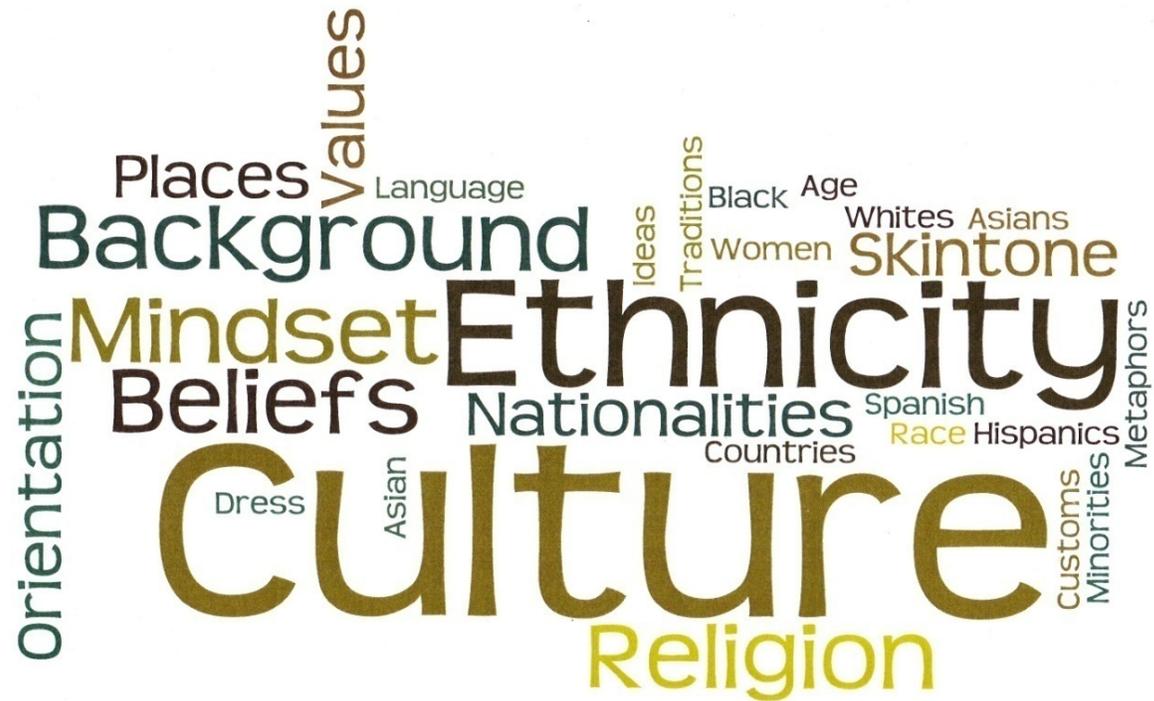


# Using Hermeneutic Inquiry



- Define diversity
- Detailed vignettes
- Transcript review
- Personal reflection
- Focus Group

# What was learned...



# What was learned...

- Students benefit from encounters with diversity but benefit differentially
- Need more attention to students from mono-cultural societies



## What was learned...

- ▶ Encountering diverse perspectives or viewpoints happens in structured settings
  - ▶ Support from a faculty member or student affairs professional was key
  - ▶ Interaction with diversity contributed to perspective change
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# One God...?

“When I meet people from China and India it makes me wonder. Like they believe in God and me too. And how, why and how is my God different than your God? Isn't there supposedly just one God? Just because it's different countries, there's different Gods?”

“It took a while to accept other people's beliefs in one omnipotent God, and how I must take account of their beliefs. Because of this experience I have rethought the definition of God, Gods or nothing.”