

What is multicultural competence?

How to build  
multicultural competence

# What is multicultural competence?

- Multicultural competence – the ability to work and be effective with individuals who are of a culture different from yours
  - AKA not being a jerk to people who are different from you
- Three principles of multicultural competence
  1. **Awareness** of your own cultural attitudes and biases
  2. **Understanding** other worldviews and experiences
  3. **Developing** culturally appropriate interpersonal skills
- We can **all** improve our multicultural competence



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# How to build multicultural competence

- **Take classes**, attend lectures and workshops on multicultural issues
- **Read** books, watch movies and TV shows on diverse issues
- **Attend** concerts and cultural celebrations
- **Form relationships** with people who are different
- **Join** a cultural organization on campus
- Step outside your comfort zone and **discover**
- Develop **empathy** for others, their experiences and perspectives
- Develop a level of comfort discussing difficult issues – **practice, practice, practice!**
- Say “I don’t know” and **ask questions** – allow others to help you and develop



# Growth and change

- Let's be real – change can be hard
  - But, we are responsible for our behavior
- Take a **growth mindset** toward building multicultural competence
  - Seek out new experiences
  - Practice our skills
  - Reflect on our progress
  - Know it may take time and effort
- Three Bs of reducing bias
  - Be **humble**, be **open**, be **forgiving**
- Find community and support

