

July 27, 2012

Dear Faculty,

What is **ADIE** and the document below on **Transformative Education (TE)**?

As a counterpart to the ILTE in focusing on professional development and instructional support of faculty, the diversity academy was officially named this summer the Academy of Diversity and Inclusive Education (**ADIE**) in its mission to enrich faculty interested in the areas of diversity and inclusiveness. We've already begun this work, as you may remember in reading our e-magazine *Transformations*.

But our latest effort is to provide you the following introduction to a recent and richly evolving concept known as **Transformative Education (TE)**. Its author and researcher is Jessica Sarver, alum of our School of Education and an August 2012 graduate of the U of L master's program in Higher Education Administration. She conducted this study for ADIE as part of her master's internship, which I was pleased to sponsor.

How is **TE** significant to faculty?

You may be used to associating diversity with concepts like *multiculturalism* and *curriculum transformation*. The first has a long history and means a lot of things to different people. The second is fairly new but perhaps unhelpfully vague. I was so confused that I began to research the matter last spring, through which I discovered **TE**. Since then, Dr. Seonmin Huh and I have proposed and submitted to the *Journal of Transformative Education* a phenomenological approach that blends parts of several of the approaches available.

When Jessica considered topics for her study and I mentioned it, she was excited to find that it could apply broadly to curricular areas, including math and science and the arts; thus, it also relates well to teaching prospective professionals in business, education, and nursing.

If you would like to expand your curricular or instructional development through TE or by other means, please contact ADIE Director Diane Reid at [dreid@ius.edu](mailto:dreid@ius.edu). Meanwhile, we invite you to read about **TE** as Jessica has laid it out for you.

Sincerely,

*Annette*

## What is Transformative Education?

Transformative Education is the process by which individuals, groups, or larger social entities engage in deep learning that goes beyond content knowledge acquisition. It is a process that contributes to fundamentally new ways of seeing and understanding our experiences (Dirkx, 1998, p. 9) that may lead to profound shifts in one's awareness or consciousness of being in the world (Dirkx, 2006, p. 19). Transformative learning results in changes in a learner's individual perspectives and worldview and includes active engagement and questioning of how we know what we know (TLT Website). Although transformative education theory has since been expanded to address the learning needs of all college-aged students, it was originally developed as a theory of adult learning.

The IU Southeast Adult Student Center describes *adult learners* as those students that "...are 24 years or older, have been out of school for a while, work full or part time, and are married and/or have children." Adult learners, sometimes referred to as non-traditional students, are typically thought of as being problem-centered, results-oriented, and self-directed learners that bring more life experiences to learning situations as compared to traditional-age college students.

Approximately 34% of the undergraduate enrollment at IUS is composed of adult learners (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System); therefore, it is essential for IU Southeast faculty members to include teaching strategies and theories, such as Transformative Learning Theory, that address the needs of our adult learners.

Read the full document, [Transformative Education...](#)