



**THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY AND
PROMOTION OF RACE AND CULTURE**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The 17th Annual Diversity Challenge

Race, Culture, and Criminal Justice throughout the Lifespan

Sponsored by the Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture
Boston College

OCTOBER 13-14, 2017

Proposal Submission Deadline: [April 21, 2017](#)

The Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture at Boston College invites you to join us for the Institute's 17th annual national conference in the suburbs of Boston, a city known for its struggles and efforts to address issues of racial and ethnic cultural diversity in U.S. society. The Institute was founded in 2000 at Boston College, under the direction of Dr. Janet E. Helms, to promote the assets and address the societal conflicts associated with race and culture in theory and research, mental health practice, education, business, and society at large. The Institute solicits, designs, and distributes effective interventions with a proactive, practical focus. Each year the Institute addresses a racial or cultural issue that could benefit from a pragmatic, scholarly, or grassroots focus through its Diversity Challenge conference.

The theme of Diversity Challenge 2017 is Race, Culture, and Criminal Justice throughout the Lifespan

Areas of Emphasis:

Mental Health
Discrimination
Education

Racism
Mass Incarceration
Law and Social Policy

School Discipline
Criminal Justice
Racial Profiling

Recidivism
School-to-Prison Pipeline
Child & Family Adjustment

Conference Focus

Race, Culture, and Criminal Justice throughout the Lifespan

How does it happen that the United States has more people in prison or the criminal justice system than anywhere else in the world, including China, which has an overall population approximately four times that of the US? Of the people in the criminal justice system, a disproportionate number are people of Color and/or hold immigrant status, and their captivity is consistently high across the lifespan. Society's direct or indirect criminalizing practices and institutions guide people into the criminal justice system beginning early in life when, for example, preschool children of Color are disproportionately expelled for their behavior and learn that they are bad people.

Direct practices and institutions include zero tolerance policies by which suspensions and expulsions occur in response to minor student infractions. They also include incarceration sites, such as juvenile detention centers where children and adolescents are warehoused; immigrant detention centers where undocumented families and children are confined; over-populated state and federal prisons where prisoners receive lengthy sentences for crimes against themselves; and local jails where people serve time for their inability to pay unjust fines. Indirect practices include reliance on racial and cultural stereotypes to decide what constitutes crimes worthy of punishment as well as who deserves to be punished by whom and in what manner.

An overcriminalized society contributes to pathological systems as well as mental health issues for the victims, their families, and the perpetrators of injustice. Examples of systemic illness range from under-resourced schools to sanctioned police violence against people of Color in communities and inhumane conditions in correctional facilities. Additional examples include immigrant detention facilities, operating with little to no outside monitoring, which makes them ripe environments for inhumane and unhealthy conditions. Mental health and physical health issues for those who are incarcerated include disproportionate rates of undiagnosed mental illnesses, substance misuse, stress-related illnesses, and infectious diseases. While they were incarcerated, many former inmates experienced physical or emotional trauma and re-enter society with untreated trauma-related mental health difficulties.

Moreover, the mental health effects of criminalization of children and adolescents themselves are rarely examined, although it is reasonable to expect symptoms related to poor self-esteem, depression, and anxiety. When adults are imprisoned or detained, families are disrupted and, as a result, children often are placed in the child welfare system, many are stigmatized by peers and schools, and most lose parental/familial structure and stability. More information is needed about the mental health effects of imprisonment in detention centers on the detainees, including adults, children, and their families.

Social movements, such as "Black Lives Matter," have arisen to increase awareness of society's pathology. Trauma-informed schools address issues related to the effects of family stressors on students' academic performance, but not necessarily the effects of being criminalized themselves. Academics, mental health professionals, and activists have vigorously worked to create and use interventions, services, and treatments that assist former prisoners with successful reintegration into communities post release and decrease the risk of recidivism. In addition, many academics and activists involved in political justice movements are working to create social, policy, and legal changes. At a micro level, researchers and activists have shown that intentional and unintentional perpetrators of injustices in correctional facilities and policy development often use racial/ethnic cultural stereotypes that contribute to biases in policing, sentencing, jury decision making, immigration policy, and teacher discipline, each of which further supports racial and ethnic cultural disparities in the criminal justice system. Consequently, there are obvious needs for mental health treatment, educational interventions, and related research and policy that focus explicitly on racial and/or ethnic cultural disparities in the criminal justice system, as broadly defined.

Suggestions for Proposals

We invite proposals from educators, practitioners, researchers, and community activists in any discipline who are currently addressing criminal justice issues in any phase of the lifespan, as well as those who have theory and ideas about how to improve and reduce the need for criminal justice systems. We envision an interdisciplinary forum in which researchers, practitioners, educators, law enforcement personnel, and social activists explore a variety of perspectives and issues and interact with each other while addressing mutual concerns related to race, ethnic culture, and criminal justice defined in various ways. Potential areas of interest are mass incarceration, the school-to-prison pipeline, any aspect of the prison industrial complex or immigrant detention, and racial bias in policing and sentencing. Proposals should address the role of racial and/or ethnic cultural dynamics as criminalizing factors in society generally or in whatever aspect of the lifespan that is the focus of your proposal.

Presentations should focus on developments in research, professional practice, education, community activities, or activism pertaining to race or ethnic culture and the criminal justice system. Our goal is to stimulate dialogue and action with respect to racial or ethnic cultural factors. Creative conceptual papers and models are encouraged. We will give strongest consideration to proposals that focus directly on the 2017 Diversity Challenge theme, 'Race, Culture, and Criminal Justice throughout the Lifespan.' Specific topics might include, but are not limited to:

- The mental health impacts of racial and ethnic discrimination in policing and the prison system, education, and the community
- Racial and cultural bias in school suspensions/expulsions and involvement in the criminal justice system
- Community-based interventions addressing the effects of mass incarceration on families, neighborhoods, and/or individuals
- Creative interventions to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and recidivism, such as art therapy and political activism
- Exploring the connection between school racial makeup and use of "Zero Tolerance" policies
- Criminalization of behavior at different developmental stages
- Experiences of immigrants and refugees in relation to the law, detention, and deportation
- Research approaches for assessing the influence of racial and cultural bias in sentencing and jury decision making and forensic psychology
- Psychosocial costs of school discipline and legal involvement on children, adolescents, and families
- Benefits and costs to communities of Color of government criminal justice policies
- Racially and culturally sensitive law enforcement training and programs that address disparities in marginalized communities

Conference Program Formats

Workshop (90 minutes) - An intensive presentation intended to share specific research, educational practices, social policy, or mental health experiences and/or skills, or empirically based knowledge about racial and cultural factors in treatment, research, and policy with an interactive and experiential focus.

Symposium Panel (90 minutes) - Three to five participants present individual papers with a shared racial and cultural theme from different perspectives. Symposium proposals typically have a chair and discussant.

Individual Presentation (15 to 30 minutes) - Formal presentation of theoretical, practical, policy issues, or research related to program development, mental health issues, community and school initiatives, and overcoming systemic barriers as experienced by individuals of all ages. Papers may be grouped together around similar themes by the conference organizers. Typically, 3-4 presentations will share a 90 minute block.

Structured Discussion (45 minutes) - Conveners present a theme relating to some aspect of racial or cultural factors and facilitate group discussions intended to generate new ideas and solve related problems. Structured Discussions (SD) may be paired with another SD with a similar theme and share the 90 minute block.

Poster - Presenters display information with a racial or ethnic cultural focus intended to share information, interventions or research skills, or other experiences relevant to racial or cultural dynamics.

- For queries, including submission questions, registration and other administrative issues, please email isprc@bc.edu
- For up-to-date information about the Challenge, visit our website www.bc.edu/isprc
- Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Institute-for-the-Study-and-Promotion-of-Race-and-Culture/109955092653>



Boston College
Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture
17th Annual Diversity Challenge
October 13-14, 2017

General Submission Requirements

You may submit up to two proposals as the first author.

In order to ensure anonymity during the review process, please identify presenters and institutions only on the proposal cover sheet.

1. Proposal Cover Sheet - See presentation format specific guidelines for cover sheet.
Please include the name and email address for EACH presenter who will be attending the conference. Names should not be included on the proposal document or abstracts in order to ensure an anonymous review.
2. Proposal – A 500-word overview or summary that includes:
 - Title
 - Program format
 - Purpose, goals, and objectives
 - Methodology, conclusions, and/or questions raised
 - Structure of presentation
3. Program Abstract - A 50-word synopsis to appear in the program
4. Conference Proceedings Abstract - A 120-word APA style abstract to be published in the official conference proceedings

Note: Proposals will only be considered once all materials are received.

Submission Options

Option 1. (Most common method) - Use the online proposal submission form found on our website. www.bc.edu/isprc.
Please Note: You will be asked to attach your proposal document and abstracts to the submission form. **Only the Primary Presenter will be notified via email upon receipt and after proposal review.**

Option 2. Download the proposal submission form from our website: www.bc.edu/isprc. Email completed form with proposal document and abstracts to our email address: isprc@bc.edu.

Proposals should be submitted by April 21, 2017

Proposal Review and Selection Process

An anonymous review of conference proposals will be conducted by a minimum of two reviewers. Notification of acceptance or non-acceptance will be sent in late June, 2017 via email to the Primary Presenter. **You must submit your email address with your proposal.** Proposals will be reviewed on the basis of quality and contribution to the study of race and culture with particular consideration given to proposals focusing on this year's theme: Race, Culture, and Criminal Justice throughout the Lifespan.