

**A Guide to Planning  
CULTURAL CONNECTIONS<sup>SM</sup>  
Events**

*Cultural Connections* Program Year 2005-2006



Center for Cultural Understanding and Change  
The Field Museum



## Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to serve as a reference as you plan your Cultural Connections Core Event or Parent Field Trip. The development of this program is a constant learning process for all of us and this guide aims to incorporate all that we learn together as we continue to provide these uniquely designed educational programs for the general public of Chicago and especially for our teachers.

**In addition, we try to take into consideration the turn over of staff at our partner institutions. When a new staff member is designated as the Cultural Connections liaison, we hope that this guide will be especially helpful in providing an introduction to the program and partnership, some insight into the rationale for the event format and structure of the planning process as well as a little background and history into the development of the program overall. Previous liaisons are responsible for reviewing this guide with new liaisons.**

This year's timeline has been streamlined by the removal of information about funding and registration (which appears elsewhere), so it focuses on just the steps partners have to take to make their event happen, including deadlines and meeting agendas. **We have also included multiple copies of a tear out sheet for you to remove and share with invited presenters, moderators, or artistic directors.** Entitled *Cultural Connections (CC) Overview and Guidelines: An introduction for guest presenters, moderators, and artistic directors*; it briefly explains the CC program goals and objectives and the structure of core events. Copies of this double sided single sheet are green and at the back of this guide. It is not a substitute for sharing the relevant guide sections with your guest presenters, moderators, or artistic directors; but rather allows you to quickly and conveniently introduce them to the program.



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**Letter of Commitment 2005-2006** (Yellow sheet at back of guide)

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**Cultural Connections (CC) Overview and Guidelines** (Green sheets at back of guide)

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## **Section One: The Cultural Connections Program**

- The Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC)
- Brief History of *Cultural Connections* (CC)
- CC Program Description and Rationale
- CC Program Goals and Objectives
- CC Program Organizational Structure
- CC Program Structure
- The Anthropological Framework: *Common Concerns, Different Responses*



# The Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC)

## **The role of CCUC in The Field Museum**

About a decade ago, the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) was conceptualized as a *bridge* between the Museum's collections and scientific research and the public – helping the Museum to not only better serve Chicago and its neighboring communities, but also to enrich its own knowledge of contemporary urban life – a mutually beneficial endeavor. Part of that bridge-building has included not only forming and sustaining relationships with other cultural institutions, like in the Cultural Connections partnership, but also developing relationships with local communities as well as indigenous communities in different parts of the world towards the efforts of conservation through a process of identifying community-based assets.

CCUC also serves as a bridge internally, helping connect the intellectual and tangible resources within the academic departments and collections to other departments in the Museum to develop community relevant educational programming that is accessible to the general public.

## **The Mission of the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change**

The CCUC at The Field Museum uses problem-solving anthropological research to identify and catalyze strengths and assets of communities in Chicago and beyond. In doing so, CCUC helps communities identify new solutions to critical challenges such as education, housing, health care, environmental conservation, and leadership development. Through research, programs, and access to collections, CCUC reveals the power of cultural difference to transform social life and promote social change.

## A Brief History of *CULTURAL CONNECTIONS* (CC)

The *Cultural Connections* (CC) program was developed after The Nuveen Forum, a series of nine conversations about race, culture and issues related to ethnicity, and identity, took place at The Field Museum through the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) from July of 1995 through June of 1996. This initiative, "A National Conversation on American Pluralism and Identity", was supported by the John Nuveen Company and the National Endowment for the Humanities and framed by the following questions: "What is pluralism in America? What is culture? What is diversity?".

The topics of conversation covered a variety of approaches to dealing with these issues from multiple perspectives and generated valuable insight for the direction that CCUC would take in conceptualizing future programming and initiatives. Conversation titles included "The Packaging of Culture", "The Creation of National Identity", "Building Collaborative Relationships with indigenous People", and "You Don't Look Like Me". One can see that aspects of these conversations continue to help inform Cultural Connections events today.

Simultaneously, CCUC was centrally involved in the development of The Living Together exhibit, which served as a space where the outcomes of these conversations would be reflected – a place where visitors could start thinking about the diversity of human culture and discovering the *reasons* for our differences; a place where dialogue about our thought processes regarding cultural understanding could be facilitated with the public. Subsequently, other key institutions expressed interest in extending that forum...

*Cultural Connections* started out as a Pilot Program in the fall of 1998. There were eight founding partners – Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, The DuSable Museum of African American History, The Field Museum, Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center, Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, The Polish Museum of America, Spertus Museum and Swedish American Museum Center. Each successive year, the partnership grew and continues to grow depending upon financial resources and ethnic representation. In 2005, the partnership includes 23 cultural museums, centers and historical societies and is currently working on increasing its capacity through the formation of a broader alliance of such institutions.

### **The Evolution of Cultural Connections Events**

At the beginning, CC events were less structured. A single partner hosted each event and there was no overall umbrella theme for the series. The registration price at the beginning was \$35 per event and registration numbers were much lower in comparison to today.

CC events have evolved into structured conversations much like those original dialogues that comprised The Nuveen Forum but now they emphasize the use of cross-cultural comparison (having two presenting partners and a dialogue format) as a practical tool for participants to utilize in their everyday lives to better understand and explain cultural differences. We choose an overall theme that links one program to the next in very specific ways furthering the cross-cultural component for participants who attend more than one event. Themes are chosen based on how applicable they may be to the anthropological framework of *common concerns, different responses*, which serves as the foundation for developing dialogue between partners and among participants that will demonstrate how cultural differences can be explained, understood and valued. An anthropologist from CCUC explains this framework at every event within the context of that event's topic.

# CC Program Description and Rationale

## **Cultural Connections offers a new role for museums in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Differences among people have been the source of some of the nation's most wrenching conflicts and misunderstandings. Even today, despite the considerable gains of the civil rights movement and subsequent social movements, structural discrimination persists, as do indicators of prejudice and bigotry. Yet, cultural diversity is often touted as one of the nation's strengths and a source for its powerful creativity. How can people come to place a positive value on diversity? Where can they go to realize its potential and harness it for collective social action? We propose that existing cultural institutions in urban areas are a significant resource that can be used to address contemporary issues, such as the sources of cultural conflict and the positive values of diversity.

Museums have found it necessary to respond to the changing population in the United States by altering programming.<sup>1</sup> Demographics in the United States are shifting. One day in the not too distant future the majority of the population will be made of so-called "minority" groups. Furthermore, the social, economic, and political shifts that have taken place since the 1960s and the age of the internet have created new conditions in which groups across the globe have more direct contact with one another. This increasing diversity and intensified interaction of populations results in more encounters between people of diverse backgrounds and, therefore, people are seeking new ways of negotiating different relationships. Programming offered by the museums provides a forum where people learn and discuss issues with others in an open, neutral atmosphere.

While numerous programs have been developed nationwide to explore issues of community relations, they have often struggled with exactly how to bring people together in an effective way. A weakness identified in these programs is that there has been a tendency to simplify the complexities of intra-cultural variation and essentialize group identity. As Sheldon Hackney, former head of the National Endowment for the Humanities warned, the United States needs to move beyond the "drive-by debate" on ethnic and racial difference.<sup>2</sup> In *A Different Mirror*, Ronald Takaki suggests that one crucial way to understand what our diversity means is for our society's various ethnic groups to develop a greater understanding of each other, including our cultures, histories, and social and economic conditions.<sup>3</sup> In this way, we can **comparatively analyze the experiences of various groups to develop an understanding of the similarities and differences**. Such a broad comparative focus allows us to see how the varied experiences of different racial and ethnic groups occur within shared contexts.

The *Cultural Connections* program addresses the challenges of cultural understanding posed by Sheldon Hackney and Ronald Takaki. Because it calls on partners to answer the question of why they engage in specific practices (identifying common human concerns) and how they came to these practices (explaining different cultural responses to common concerns), Cultural Connections programming avoids becoming simply displays of cultural practices. Having programs be essentially displays would run the risk of reinforcing misconceptions among those in attendance, including reinforcing tendencies to exoticize or condemn the unfamiliar. By using a **comparative framework** derived from anthropological research, programs encourage the exploration of our diversity in a manner that leads to understanding the reasons for cultural differences and underlying similarities among peoples. Participants learn that people have created diverse institutions, practices, and customs as a result of differing circumstances and histories. (For more on the Anthropological Framework, *Common Concerns, Different Responses*, see p.14)

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen D. Lavine, "Audience, Ownership, and Authority: Designing Relations between Museums and Communities." *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*. Edited by Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine. (Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington DC, 1992) pp. 137-157.

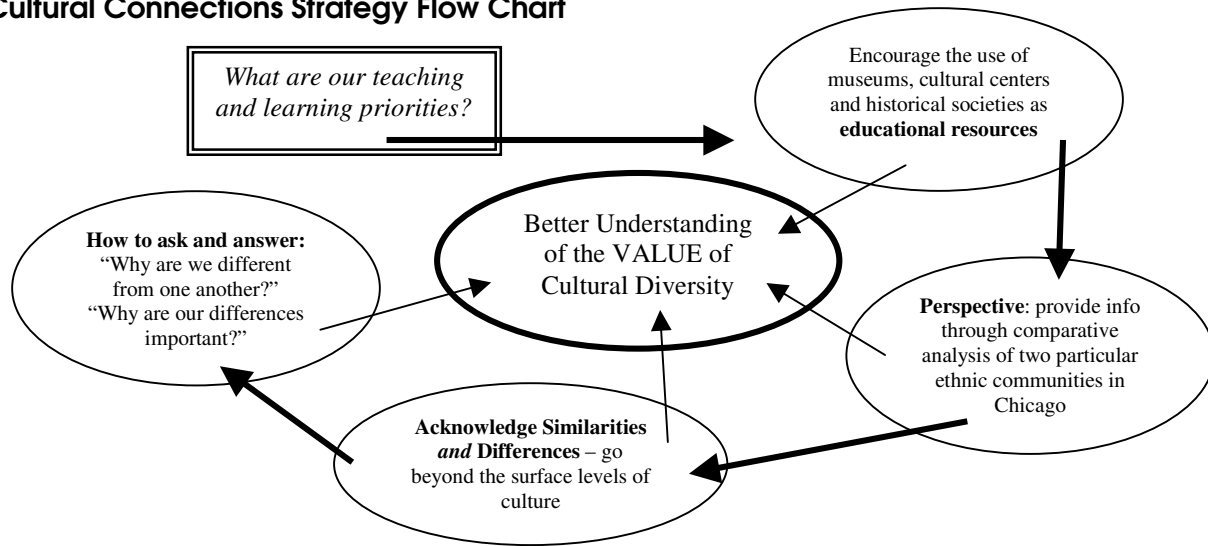
<sup>2</sup> Hackney, Sheldon. 1997 *One America Indivisible*, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington D.C.

<sup>3</sup> Takaki, Ronald. 1993 *A Different Mirror*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

*Cultural Connections* is able to stimulate open conversation among participants by not focusing directly on inter-group relationships, but rather by providing substantive information about cultural practices as reflected in museum collections and community member perspectives. The anthropological approach provides a distinct intellectual and practical framework for exploring cultural diversity because it is based on the premise that the underlying reasons for human social behavior can be explained and that diversity is fundamental to human survival. As program participants explore these themes together, they arrive at new understandings of each other as well as new appreciation for the advantages of diversity. With this knowledge, people are better able to build relationships upon a base of mutual understanding and respect.

*Cultural Connections* depends upon the involvement of each of its constituent components. The museums and cultural centers contribute resources and expertise and benefit from reciprocal relationships and common goals. Culturally specific museums that present and preserve particular ethnic traditions hope to build audiences and publicize the fact that their museums are for the public at large. The Field Museum offers its research and expertise to develop effective avenues for public education and it benefits in that the program enables the Museum to escape the limitations of its collections (made largely at the turn of the century and focused almost exclusively on non-western peoples), build relationships with other museums, and address issues of contemporary American culture. Finally, individual participants contribute their personal experiences and perspective at each event and benefit from a rich comparative cross-cultural experience.

### Cultural Connections Strategy Flow Chart



## CC Goals and Objectives

*Cultural Connections* is a partnership between The Field Museum and ethnic community-based museums and centers that strives towards achieving the following goals and objectives:

### **1) To foster cultural understanding through multicultural civic dialogue**

We achieve this goal by...

- a. Developing educational programs and activities for the public that utilize the anthropological tools of cross-cultural comparison, participant observation and the guiding framework of "common concerns, different responses"
- b. Providing the context to help understand changes in cultural practices over time and space
- c. Targeting educators and parents as key disseminators

### **2) To promote partner institutions as community assets in Chicago**

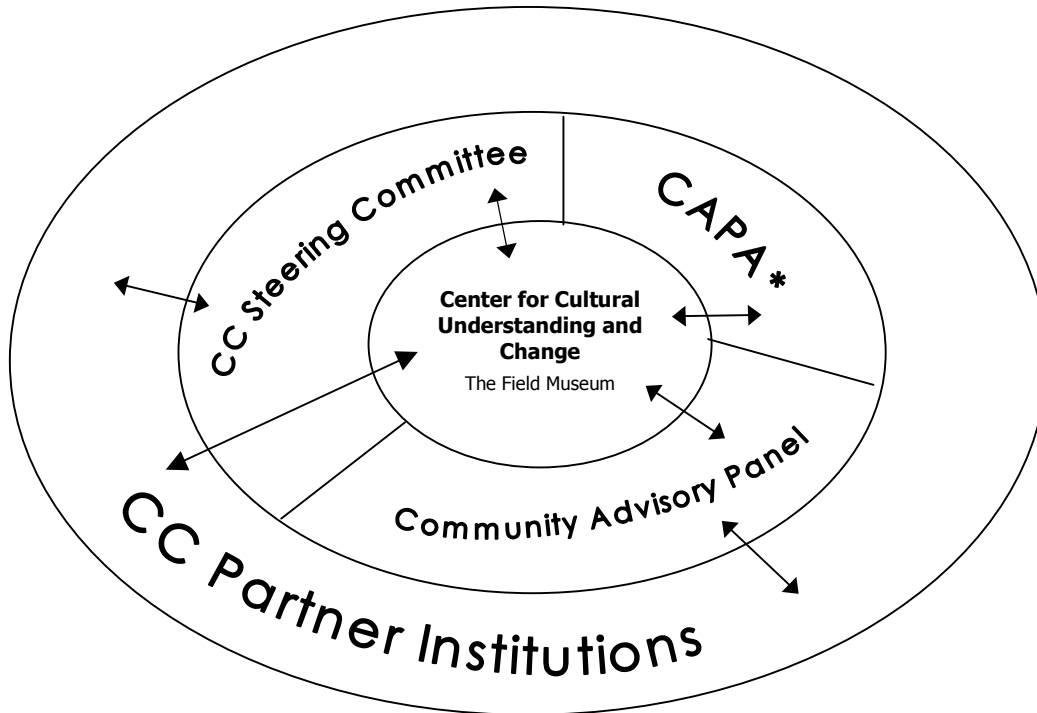
We achieve this goal by...

- a. Coordinating collaborative programs that increase awareness of partner institutions among diverse audiences
- b. Building capacity of partner institutions through facilitating the internal sharing of resources and a dialogue among partners that results in the development of best practices

**In fostering cultural understanding through multicultural civic dialogue, the Cultural Connections program aims to:**

- **Recognize the value of cultural difference and**
- **Learn the reasons *why* difference exists**

## CC Program Organizational Structure



\*CAPA: The Chicago Association for the practice of anthropology

## CC Program Structure

### Fall season

- CC core events (4)
- Teacher's Fall course
  - o Includes 3 in-sessions with CC staff and 3 CC events

### Spring season

- CC core events (4)
- Teacher's Spring course
  - o Includes 3 in-sessions with CC staff and 3 CC events

### Parent Field Trip Series (2-3 series)

- o Includes two visitations to partner institutions, a workshop at school with CC facilitator and a final gathering of all parent groups

# The Anthropological Framework: *Common Concerns, Different Responses*

## What does *Common Concerns, Different Responses* mean?

All people share requirements that must be met as a matter of survival, community renewal, or maintaining individual well being. For example, as individuals or communities we all need to eat, protect ourselves from the elements, reproduce and raise children, make life transitions, resolve conflict, distribute essential resources, respond to misfortune and illness, and form stable relationships. These and all other universal human requirements are what we mean by *Common Concerns* in the anthropological framework.

There are a variety of ways that people respond to any one *Common Concern*. For example some people respond to illness by going to an MD and deploying the technology of the Western medical system. Others turn to ayurvedic medicine, acupuncture, homeopathy, or other medical traditions, many of which draw on herbalism and/or strive for the balancing of forces in the body. Still others look for the root causes of illness or misfortune in social relationships and look to address social tensions to relieve the symptoms of illness. The anthropological framework -*Common Concerns, Different Responses* - expresses this reality that, while all human groups face the same *Common Concerns*, they consistently respond to them in different ways. Taken as a whole, the *Different Responses* of humanity constitute the entire range of what is popularly referred to as cultural diversity.

Human's responses to *common concerns* are shaped by three interconnected factors:

1. environment (available **resources**)
2. history (available **knowledge**, especially knowledge transmitted across generations)
3. creativity (ability to combine resources and knowledge to problem solve)

Cultural diversity comes about because at any given time people have **different resources** and **knowledge** to creatively draw upon to meet their *common concerns*.

## What is the simplest way to remember the meaning of the framework?

Just remember the framework's definitions of culture and cultural diversity:

- 1) Culture is everything we do to meet our common concerns - from taking care of food, clothing and shelter to finding companionship, raising children, and expressing ourselves.
- 2) Cultural diversity is the different responses groups have to their common concerns. Cultural diversity comes about because people have different resources and ideas to creatively draw on to meet their common concerns.

## Why use the *Common Concerns, Different Responses* framework to explain cultural diversity? (In other words: Why does understanding difference matter?)

When we understand why we do the things we do, and the need for human cultural diversity, we become less inclined to project negative meanings onto others' actions that are different from our own.

Using the anthropological framework leads to the realization that a one-size-fits-all approach to "correct" human behavior is unrealistic and unlikely to meet human needs under divergent circumstances. Cultural diversity is as essential to the future survival of human kind as biological variation is to the survival of other species. Without the ability to have *different responses* to *common concerns*, humans could not 1) draw on substitute resources when something considered essential to survival elsewhere is unavailable; and 2) use local resources and ideas in sustainable ways that do not permanently deplete natural resources for future generations.



**Section Two:  
Things to know about the...**

- Core Program
- Teacher's Professional Development Course
- Parent Field Trip Series Initiative



## Things to Know about the...

### CORE PROGRAM

The core program is the heart of all Cultural Connections programming. It was not only the first initiative of CC, but is integrated into the Teachers Professional Development Course as well as the Cultural Connections sponsored anthropology courses offered at Robert Morris College. Before reading any of the “Things to Know about the...” descriptions in this section of the planning guide, partners should **first familiarize themselves with the overview of Cultural Connections in Section One.**

Core programs are all joint presentations of two partner institutions, follow a dialogue format, based on the annual CC theme, usually presented twice, and target educators as key disseminators of their understanding of cultural diversity. The importance of these **core program components** is outlined here in a dialogue format. **Frequently asked questions** about core program participation follow the explanation of key components.

#### A. All Joint Events – WHY?

1. Having two partners present together facilitates an emphasis on the cross-cultural comparison component of the Cultural Connections program, which we explain using the anthropological framework: *Common concerns, different responses*. We know from cultural anthropology that effective cross-cultural comparison is a powerful tool, which enables us to increase cultural understanding by contextualizing our similarities and *differences*. This in turn sheds light on the *value* of our city’s diversity - its significance and meaning to all who participate in the conversation.
2. Collaboration helps foster relationships between partner institutions

#### B. The Dialogue – WHY?

In its broadest sense, the entire Cultural Connections program is based upon the benefits of dialogue - the idea of exchanging points of view and sharing experiences so that we can learn more about each other. Through the process of dialoguing about these diverse worldviews and the use of comparative analysis, we can begin to break down some of the barriers that lead to cultural conflict, misconceptions and stereotypes.

Dialogue takes place at three levels in the Core Program: 1) between partners in planning and staging their events, 2) between presenting partners and guests at the events, and 3) among guests, anthropologists, and community members at tables over food after the main presentation.

Cultural Connections’ utilizes similarities as a safe foundation for starting dialogue, making it possible to move into understanding differences. As a recent CC participant from UIC said during the conversation, “it’s easier for us to point out the similarities between us, but once we do, we’ve established a level of comfort upon which we can start talking about and understanding our differences...” But achieving the goals of increasing inter-group understanding by creating a space where people will listen to viewpoints that differ from their own requires more than the comfort of food and similarities as starting points. Other dialogue practices essential to creating a space of learning include:

1. honoring all experience by not putting down others experience
2. avoiding pejorative language or otherwise sexist, racist, classist, etc. terms
3. avoiding overly provocative language that leaves some people seeing red after exchanges over controversial subjects. For example, by not using the term “sweat shop” in their exhibit on the garment industry, the East Side Tenement Museum in New York was able to bring together for dialogue people with various views on the appropriateness of working conditions inside manufacturing facilities.

4. using the 1<sup>st</sup> voice - this means speaking from your own experience. The converse of letting others speak for their own motives, thoughts, and experience also holds true.

The infusion of the concepts and methods of Dialogue is what makes the Cultural Connections program unique. Many of Chicago's culturally oriented events and festivals focus on the similarities amongst us rather than the differences between us in an effort to bring us together and encourage harmonious relations. This approach, however, often is not enough because it doesn't go any farther than *celebration*. It does not create a forum where we can get to know one another on a deeper and more meaningful level by exploring what lies beyond the *surface* of cultural knowledge, (i.e., dance, food, music, visual art). Cultural Connections programming *goes* below the surface. By conducting dialogue organized around common concerns and the different ways we respond to those concerns, partner institutions present to participants an insider's perspective of their cultural values, beliefs and attitudes. In this way, Cultural Connections introduces participants to the practical use of ethnic museums, cultural centers and historical societies as forums for socially relevant dialogue, safe places for Chicago's residents to explore the process of cultural change and the role of diversity in our city.

C. Common Theme – WHY?

1. Facilitates emphasis on cross-cultural comparison from one event to the next. (Many participants attend more than one event.)
2. In addition, the Teacher's Professional Development course requires that teachers attend at least 3 events during the season – and many teachers take the course twice. Having one overall theme gives them the opportunity to practice their comparative analysis skills in a cohesive, measurable and manageable way.

D. Staging Events Twice – WHY?

1. CC events have been selling out, which means people are interested, however, not all of our institutions can accommodate such large numbers of participants. Holding events twice allows us to accommodate rising interest in the program
2. "Quality versus Quantity" –the dialogue becomes more difficult to facilitate in large numbers. Presenting each event twice maintains attendance at levels that allow comfortable and timely interaction among all participants. To support this effort, CC staff is committed to recruiting and organizing professional anthropologists and educators to help facilitate the conversation in small groups.
3. When events are on consecutive weeknights, holding events twice allows both partners to host and thus highlight their institution to CC participants.
4. **Exception to the rule** – Starting in 2005-06 for weekend programs when the host space is large partners have the option to stage their event one time.

E. Targeting Educators– WHY?

1. Core Programs are open to the general public but we do target educators and schools (primary, secondary and higher education institutions). Targeting educators and their institutions exponentially increases our outreach potential
2. Helps to foster relationships between educators, schools and CC partner institutions
3. CC programming can help to fill a void that currently exists in Teacher Education regarding culturally responsive curriculum.

## FAQs

- ***How long are the events?***

All events are two and a half hours long. Remember, however, that only one hour is dedicated to your main presentation. Utilize the Steering Questions, seasonal workshop, and Planning Meetings to focus in on very specific topics and questions to address. Event presentations should be an in-depth *introduction* to a particular concern of your communities and aim to prompt dialogue and encourage participants to return for more! Try not to pack in too much! Other key elements of the program, like the Dialogue, end up being compromised.

- ***How is the program promoted?***

CCUC print two brochures a year (one for each season) with the help of partners, who provide event topic descriptions. These brochures are sent out to a master mailing list created from past participants and mailing lists from the original partners. With the help of volunteers and interns, this database is under reconstruction during the summer of 2005 to ensure postage expenses are well spent. In addition, bulk amounts of brochures are sent out to partners to be sent out to their mailing lists and to distribute in-house.

- ***How do participants register?***

Participants can register in a variety of ways. Generally, they send in their registration panels from the brochures to CCUC through the mail. Registration and payment collection is handled through Field Museum CC staff. Participants can also reserve spots at an event in the following ways:

- o Call the CC registration line (312) 665-7474
- o Email reservation requests to [ccuc@fieldmuseum.org](mailto:ccuc@fieldmuseum.org)
- o Or access program information and download a registration form on our web page:

[http://www.fieldmuseum.org/research\\_collections/ccuc/cultural.htm](http://www.fieldmuseum.org/research_collections/ccuc/cultural.htm)

- ***How much does registration cost?***

The registration fees are broken down as follows: \$15 for general admission, \$10 for teacher and students, \$5 for community members; and for groups of 10 or more, \$8 each. Basic fees for general and teachers/students are listed in the brochure.

- ***How do we fund involvement in the core program?***

Partners participating in the core program do receive a stipend to cover presenters' fees, a portion of staff time, and catering. Once all funding is secured for the program year, partners will receive invoice outlines illustrating how much stipends will be and how funds should be appropriated.

## Things to Know about the...

### Teacher's Professional Development Course

Targeting educators as key disseminators of the valuable information and techniques we provide to them through the CC partnership and program has been a strategic approach to maximizing our potential outreach as a necessary asset of Chicago.

*Teacher attendance requirements:* The teachers who participate in the professional development course, which is coordinated with the CC seasonal programming in both content and schedule, must attend three focused workshops (or In-sessions) with CC staff at The Field Museum as well as three CC events during the season for a total of 15 contact hours in six sessions. This constitutes one Lane Credit in accordance with Chicago Public Schools' Teacher's Academy and/or 15 Continued Professional Development Units (CPDUs) for the Illinois State Board of Education.

*The course content:* The course content is aligned with the theme of the year and the techniques explored are founded in cultural anthropology (ethnography and participant observation), multicultural education (reflective self-analysis and cultural competency) and social justice education (curriculum reform and active civic engagement).

An essential part of achieving the goals of the course is making sure that the events aim to achieve the same goals. As you can see below, the goals of the CC program and the Teacher's course are basically the same except for number 4:

1. Teach the basic concepts of cultural anthropology (definitions of *Culture, culture, a culture, cross-cultural comparison, cultural relativism, ethnicity, worldview, race and racism, assimilation, acculturation, power and privilege*) and nurture an understanding of the reasons for cultural diversity (framework of "common concerns, different responses")
2. Introduce participants to Chicago's cultural museums and ethnic communities so they become familiar with and utilize them as educational resources
3. Provide information about specific cultural communities in Chicago – their challenges and solutions, concerns and responses
4. Create a space where participants can focus on critical self-analysis and reflection regarding personal bias and stereotypes, worldview and its impact on relationships – with peers, students, parents, neighbors, etc – and on the teacher's pedagogy.

At the end of the course, teachers will be able to:

- Define and discuss key concepts of cultural anthropology
- Recognize and examine personal bias
- Evaluate impact of their worldview on their teaching methodology
- Explain anthropological framework "common concerns, different responses" and apply framework in daily life situations
- Develop teaching approach and/or philosophy that incorporates knowledge gained of cultural communities in Chicago and considers local cultural resources as educational tools
- Discuss ways to promote cultural understanding in their schools and communities

### CC Teacher's Guide

To supplement the efforts of the Cultural Connections professional development course, CC senior staff is producing a Teacher's Guide to inform course graduates curriculum development. This Guide will feature strategies for meeting the challenges of effective, relevant and responsive pedagogy in increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms.

## Things to Know about the...

### Parent Field Trip Series Initiative

For several years, *Cultural Connections* has enjoyed a partnership with Chicago Public Schools' Office of Language and Cultural Education. One of the successful outcomes of this partnership is the Parent Field Trip Series initiative, which has recently grown to include other partners with relationships to parents of school age children. CPS or community based service providers coordinate groups of parents from various schools around the city to participate in this initiative. Each parent group makes two visits to Cultural Connections partner institutions and participates in a subsequent cross-cultural comparison workshop. All visits and workshops include facilitators from CAPA (Chicago Association for the Practice of Anthropology) or the CC staff, as well as being coordinated by CC staff.

For each visit, CC partner institutions are expected to:

- Present information on **the history and contemporary place of the community in Chicago including the role of the partner institution**
- Design a presentation that is **relevant to the CC program annual theme**
- **Utilize objects/exhibitions in your institution, stories, video, other visual aids.** This approach makes it easier for facilitators and parents to make the cross-cultural comparison with the other institution they visit as well as with their own experience.
- Provide **light breakfast or lunch** (covered by part of your stipend)
- Some of these parents usually bring young children with them. If possible, plan for a volunteer to do some activities with the children.
- Keep in mind that most parent groups need translations. When necessary, translators will be provided but plan your presentation allowing for time to translate.

### FAQs

- **What time are the visitations and how many participants should I expect?**  
Visits are from 10am-12noon and CPS should bring in about 25-40 parents with children.
- **What if I don't have a space? Can I still do a Parent Field Trip?**  
Yes, you can use a community space such as a restaurant, library, park district house, etc. that could accommodate such a large group.
- **How do we fund our participation?**  
Partners are given a stipend for their participation in this initiative, part of which covers the breakfast. Amounts will be determined as we secure funding (hopefully by the beginning of the program year in the fall of 2005) and notices to all participating partners will be sent out accordingly.
- **Can I participate in the core events and the Parent Field Trip Initiative?**  
Yes, although this is unlikely with a consolidated schedule of visits starting in 2005-06. Partners who are not participating in the core events will have first choice of dates for their Parent Field Trip presentations. Schedules will be sent after coordinating with CPS and other organizers of parent groups (beginning fall 2005).

All parent groups are invited to a Final Gathering at one of the partner institutions at the end of the academic year (usually in early June) to celebrate and reinforce their learning experiences and connect with other parent participants.



## **Section Three: Planning Your Core Event**

- Getting Started
- CC Theme for 2005-2006
- CC Partner Contact List 2005-2006
- Cross-Cultural Comparison Questions
- Program Steering Questions
- Event Planning Timeline (includes lessons learned)
  - Fall/Spring Planning Workshop
  - Meeting 1
  - Meeting 2
  - After the Event
- Event Agenda
- Event Parameters



## Getting Started...

First make sure you have returned your *CULTURAL CONNECTIONS PARTNERS Letter of Commitment 2005-2006* (extra copy in yellow at the back of this guide) and the *Cultural Connections Contact information UPDATE* (in your full partner meeting folder).

To start the planning process for Cultural Connections Fall 2005-Spring 2006 program year is to take a look at the theme and...

- 1) Begin identifying aspects of your culture that relate to the theme and could be central to the topic of your event  
**See Theme Description ( pp.27-28) and Program Steering Questions (p.31) to help develop your topic**
- 2) Find a partner for your joint presentation  
**See CONTACT LIST (pp.29-30)**
  - a. Some things to consider when partnering:
    - i. Cross-Cultural Component
      1. Anthropological Framework
      2. How to apply  
**See Cross-Cultural Comparison question and Program Steering Questions (p.31)**
    - ii. Space – who has it and who doesn't?
- 3) Decide theme related topic for your event  
**See STEERING QUESTIONS and Theme Description**
- 4) Select a date and notify CC Staff  
**See Calendar**
- 5) Register for Fall/Spring Planning Workshop that corresponds to the season of your event
  - a. Tentative date of June 17<sup>th</sup> for Fall 2005 events.
- 6) **Before the Fall/Spring Planning Workshop partners should:**
  - Read through the Event Planning Guide!
  - Use CC Theme for 2005-2006 (pp27-28) and Program Steering Questions (p.31) – to identify specific points of comparison to focus and develop program content
  - Talk with co-partners about potential points of comparison
  - Gather materials to bring to the workshop, e.g. this guide, writings on the theme from the full partner meeting and notes from subsequent conversations with your collaborating partner (The Event Planning Timeline starts on p.32, with the Fall/Spring Planning Workshop.)

## CC Theme for 2005 – 2006

### **Body Language: the messages of appearance<sup>4</sup>**

The **common concern** at the heart of this year's theme can actually be summed up in one word: image. Image is the messages about someone conveyed through their appearance. Clothing, jewelry, accessories, tattoos, hairstyle, gestures or postures, and even the forms of our bodies convey messages about who we are. Some of the important messages that people of all cultures read from appearance are a person's values (or at least some of them), group and community memberships, preferences, social status, gender, and age.

#### **What makes image a common concern?**

Because people read messages from appearance whether we want them to or not everyone is compelled to be concerned with their image in one way or another. We are social creatures, born into communities concerned about image – and with good reason. In social interactions it is often important to quickly gather information, and being visual not verbal one's image is the fastest way to send and receive messages. Who is on my side in a conflict? Who will help me cross the street? Who is married and who is available? Who is my age? Who shares my interests and who will condescend to them? These are examples of questions people want answered quickly and preferably without having to ask.

All societies have conventions of what sort of dress and overall appearance are appropriate for every occasion and which a majority of people usually follow to a significant degree. Though violations of these "rules" are not explicitly punished; violating conventions can result in embarrassment and exclusion from specific opportunities. Conformity is also promoted by the desire of individuals for their messages to be understood and too radical a deviation from expectation runs the risk of being misunderstood. Even people who wish to express countercultural sentiments almost always dress to identify themselves with a group recognized as sharing their beliefs.

#### **What shapes a community's response to the concern of image?**

The specific practices of appearance in any community are shaped by factors of environment, history, and creativity. **Environment** includes factors such as the climate and available fibers from which to make fabric or available minerals from which to form jewelry and adornments. Social factors such as good trading relations with neighboring peoples effect environment in ways that in turn impact responses to image. Trade makes more materials available for clothing and adornment. Within the anthropological framework, **history** is defined as collective knowledge passed down through generations. Religious traditions for example help shape image choices. So for example Orthodox Jews wear earlocks, hair left long to dangle over the ear, and the Amish wear unadorned clothes in conformity with their teaching that life should be as simple as possible.

Cultural change occurs frequently when communities have to respond to changing circumstances under which they address their common concerns. When women started entering the workplace in larger numbers in America, there was a shift to easier care synthetic fabrics and natural/synthetic blends. This is an example of group creativity, using history (the accumulated and growing knowledge of how to make fabric) and environment (the availability of natural fibers and petroleum) to come up with a solution to the emerging issue of having less time for household work.

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<sup>4</sup> This is a preliminary title for this year's theme, pending further consideration by CC staff and partners.

## How do we shape an event around this year's theme?

CC staff recommend that you make the topic of your event one of the specific concerns that is part of the overall concern with image. So for example you might choose one of the following as an event topic:

- Ideals of beauty
  - Gender representations
  - Sending and receiving messages of availability (for marriage, dating, etc)
  - Group membership or affiliation (including ethnic identification, but also profession, clubs, church, school, military, sports team (fan or player), etc.)
  - Displaying status/rank/office/social role
    - wealth
    - political office/power
    - civic authority
    - leadership qualities
  - Showing your piety or virtue
  - Showing solidarity with a cause/purpose/set of values
  - Displaying your age or generation
- 1) Don't try working down the list to arrive at a concern with image to focus your event.
  - 2) Start by having one partner say how their community responds to the concern of image in an interesting way.
  - 3) Decide what specific concern with image that represents (here is where you use the list).
  - 4) Use the *Program Steering Questions* to elaborate on this partner's responses to the specific concern.
  - 5) Think about how the other partner's community addresses this specific concern with image. (again use *Program Steering Questions*)
  - 6) Use the *Cross-Cultural Comparison Questions* to help you arrive at specific comparisons to make between the cultures of your communities. When comparison arrives at dissimilarity in response to the same concern, it is not a reason to go looking for a different comparison. By telling stories of people arriving at these responses by applying their creativity to their available resources along with their available knowledge you will bind the different responses together. Not to mention that they are still connected by a common concern.

## CC Partner Contact List 2005-2006

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## Cross-Cultural Comparison Questions

### All collaborating partners should address the following:

1. Comparing partner communities, have more of one of your community's cultural practices changed than the other? Why or why not?
2. Point out the similarities and differences between the cultural practices that serve common purposes. (Materials, participants, history, logistics, change, etc.)
3. Why do the differences exist? (Use the history, environment, and creativity part of the framework)
4. Why are the differences good?

## Program Steering Questions

### After considering the discussion of event topics in *CC Theme for 2005 – 2006*, Use these questions to further develop your presentation. Feel free to add your own to this list.

1. How do people in your community and/or place of ancestry dress everyday? For special occasions? At home? In public?
2. Do they wear necklaces, rings, pendants, or other jewelry and objects?
3. Do they have tattoos, piercing, or other adornment that alters or attaches to the body?
4. What about other body altering activity, from regulating food consumption to surgical and mechanical manipulations?
5. What messages and meanings are conveyed by the aspects of appearance indicated in 1-4? Consider:
  - a. When are items worn and who sees them?
  - b. Is wealth or social status displayed?
  - c. What groups are people saying they belong to? Sacred or secular?
  - d. How are peoples' values and attitudes reflected in their appearance?
  - e. What is the ideal body type and appearance for men? Women? What do people do to achieve these?
  - f. What about other identity messages including marital or commitment status and sexual preference?
6. How do appearance choices in Chicago today compare to contemporary choices in the country/place of your heritage?
7. How do the appearance choices you considered in 1-6 compare to those in the past in your community, here in Chicago and/or the country of your heritage?
8. How do you account for the similarities and differences in appearance choices between places or through time? Consider:
  - a. What resources do people have to draw on to create their appearance?
    - i. How are these different from place to place?
    - ii. How have these changed through time?
  - b. How do concepts of beauty, wealth, status, ethnic identity, etc differ between communities in the United States and communities in other countries?
  - c. How have these concepts changed through time in immigrant communities?
  - d. In your community, what are peoples' stories of adapting to new or changing appearance expectations or setting appearance trends?
    - i. Have people been innovators?
    - ii. Revived traditional clothing or adornment?
    - iii. What were their reasons for changing and what challenges did they face?
9. How might you address or dispel stereotypes about appearance that are prevalent in your community or wider American popular culture?

## Event Planning TIMELINE

(All approximate meeting dates are noted in your calendar)

### **Fall/Spring Planning Workshop** (4-7 months *before* EVENT)

DAY/DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_ & LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Partners and CC staff meet to:**

- Brainstorm
  - o Review CC program goals, anthropological framework, event parameters and agenda, theme, presentation ideas
  - o Determine what information you want participants to walk away with about your community and institution?
- Write
  - o Common Concerns Different Responses Worksheet to identify similarities and differences and possible reasons they exist
  - o Draft presentation outline
  - o Descriptive Paragraph for Seasonal Brochure

#### **Before the next meeting, partners should:**

- Review relevant sections of the Event Planning Guide (p.14, pp.27-28, p.31, pp.33-34)
- Communicate with co-partners to firm up the points of comparison to be developed for presentation at your event
- Consider who might be presenters at the event. Invite and encourage them to participate in the planning process. Share with each potential presenter one of the green information sheets at the back of the guide.

#### **LESSON LEARNED**

##### *About Partner Liaisons to Cultural Connections:*

It is crucial that partner institutions have the same liaison to Cultural Connections for the entire program year; so one person knows the goals, deadlines, and responsibilities of participation. The liaison should then be the point person for each partner institution during the event planning process, attending all workshops, planning meetings, and the event. This is the only way to maintain continuity in communication and overall focus in the planning process among collaborating partners and CC Staff.

Event Planning TIMELINE-2  
(All approximate meeting dates are noted in your calendar)

**MEETING 1** (8-10 weeks *before* EVENT)

DAY/DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_ & LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

**Partners, CC staff and ideally presenters meet to:**

- Answer the following questions:
  - o How do the comparisons we are planning fit into the Common Concerns Different Responses framework?
  - o How can taking the perspective of the framework help us understand and explain our points of similarity and difference?
  - o Do we need to do some further investigation to complete the comparisons we have planned?
  - o What are the best available ways to communicate/present this information?
  - o Who (else) might we consider as speakers and/or performers?
- Set a deadline for submitting Event program booklet info to CC staff, including:
  - o Edited/updated information (if necessary) on community and institution for program booklet
  - o List of staff, speakers, performers, volunteers, etc.
- Finalize text for promo flyers

**Before the next meeting partners should:**

- Communicate with co-partners to finalize program outline
- Recruit remaining presenters for the event; give them green information sheet
- Check in with all presenters; provide them with one another's contact info so they can plan presentation together – partners should guide them through this process.
- Invite all presenters to join us for MEETING 2
- Prepare a list of staff (with their titles), speakers, volunteers, performers, etc. for CC program booklet
- Send out **promo flyers** to recruit community members and volunteers to attend the event (Flyer will be sent to partners between meetings if information is only finalized at the meeting.)
- Prepare **40 Teacher Folders** to be distributed at event. Folders should be two-pocketed and contain all information that would be particularly useful to teachers. Please label your folders with the name of your institution. (There is money in your stipend to allocate towards this task.)

## Event Planning TIMELINE-3

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

#### *About exhibit and institution tours:*

Do not plan to have participants visit an exhibit or take a tour during the event unless it is *necessarily* part of the presentation. We strongly encourage you to minimize moving participants from one room to another because moving more than about 20 people takes up too much time. Instead, keep in mind that many participants are interested in coming to the museum/cultural center early, not only to register, but also to visit current exhibits. We encourage you to try to have your exhibits open and accessible to early arrivals and/or participants who might want to visit exhibits *after* the event (on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, for example). If your presentation requires moving participants, the time required will be part of your 60 minutes for the presentation.

#### *About guest presenters, moderators, or artistic directors:*

- a. Tell guest presenters, moderators, or artistic directors about *Cultural Connections* goals, target audience, annual theme, anthropological framework, and dialogue format. Make sure they know these are the parameters of the program (**see *Cultural Connections Overview and Guidelines as the back of this guide***).
- b. All experiences are honored. It's okay to talk about personal experiences, but it's not okay to put others' experiences down. Please inform the speakers of the nature of our goals, i.e., reducing ethnic conflict while maintaining cultural identity and creating a comfortable learning environment where people will listen to what is being said and all perspectives are respected. Mutual respect includes the reciprocal ground rules used in many other cross cultural dialogue settings, including not speculating on or inferring the motives or thoughts of others, rather letting them speak for themselves (even if this is in quoted or cited material).

#### *About the presentation format:*

- c. Participants are better able to make the cross-cultural comparison when presentations between partners are cohesive. This can be aided through the use of a moderator(s) or narrator(s) from one (or both) of the partner institutions so that the transitions between partners throughout the presentation are seamless.
- d. Cohesiveness and clarity are also enhanced by the DIALOGUE format. Avoid two different 30 minute presentations; *work with your presenters and your program partner on creating the presentation as a DIALOGUE*. Whether or not the program involves performance, visual art or other elements, have presenters work together.
- e. Focus on no more than 3-5 dialogue questions or aspects of your program topic. **Do not try to cover too much!**

#### *About community members:*

- a. Participants really enjoy talking to community members. It works well to have both community representative(s) and CAPA facilitators distributed among participants to be the "conversation starter" around the topics being explored. Encourage your volunteers/community members to sit and talk with participants during dining time.
- b. You may want to distinguish these community representatives with something like special nametags to encourage participants to ask them questions throughout the event.
- c. Distribute flyers (provided by CC 1 month in advance) about your event to your community members, elders, businesses, churches, social clubs, etc., and request RSVPs.
- d. **Each partner is responsible for recruiting community members.** Community members who do not act as volunteers only pay a \$5 fee to cover food.
- e. Ideally, community members should make up at least 20% of your participants.

## Event Planning TIMELINE- 4



### **MEETING 2** (2 weeks before EVENT)

DAY/DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_ & LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Partners, presenters and CC staff meet to:**

- Hold a walk-through or dress rehearsal that will include:
  - o Confirming questions to be addressed in main presentation
  - o Confirming presentation format – performance? Visual art? Etc...
  - o Confirming speakers and other participants
  - o Decide who will be responsible for Welcome
  - o Walk through space and determine physical/logistical set-up
    - What equipment will be needed?
    - How many microphones are available (and working)?
  - o Who will be catering? What will you serve? Where will it be served?
    - Review catering costs
  - o At the event, what can you say about the food either just before serving it or on labels at the buffet table?
    - Who eats it?
    - When is it served?
    - What is it?
- Confirm EVENT agenda and participants for program booklet
- Go over registration status

#### **Before the event partners should:**

- Have a walk-through/rehearsal with all participants if a majority were not able to do this at Meeting 2
- Communicate with presenters/participants that were not able to attend Meeting 2
- 2-3 days before event, check in with CC staff for final registration head count to confirm for caterer(s)
- Finish compiling teacher folders - insert last minute materials

## Event Planning TIMELINE- 5

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

#### *About Technicalities/Logistics:*

- **All speakers must use a microphone!** Please plan on having all speakers use a microphone. This ensures that everyone hears everything, including discussion and sharing at the end. Please allow presenters the chance to practice speaking into the microphone, so they can get comfortable with it before the day of the event. Decide whether or not you will have a stand or podium, hand-held or lavalier (body mic).
- Make sure your microphone works!
- Plan to have music (traditional, if possible) available/playing during registration and the dining/conversation segment (in the background). We have found that it completes the ambience and helps to create a comfortable and inviting learning environment.
- You should try to recruit someone who will be responsible for monitoring your technical equipment.
- Schedule sound (and equipment) check prior to event

#### *About the food:*

- Have the food delivered before the event – not during (unless you have a back door). It is too distracting for presenters.
- While participants are getting in line for the buffet, give them some information on what they will be eating and for what occasions this food might be traditionally served.
- Utilize your community members/volunteers as servers in the buffet – they can then describe what they are serving to participants, control portions and keep the line moving.
- Alternately, have participants move through the buffet on both sides of the table. This also helps move the line(s) along quickly.
- Label your food – indicate all vegetarian dishes.
- For events with more than 50 participants, invite 1-3 tables at a time to go for food so people are not spending discussion time standing in line.

#### *About staying on schedule:*

Review Event Agenda; and CC will assign staff member to serve as timekeeper and remind speakers of how much time they have remaining during event.

### **HOLD THE EVENT**

See *Event Agenda* and *Event Parameters* sections that follow

### **AFTER THE EVENT:**

Check-in: 2-3 days after event

Call CC staff to review successes, reflections and ways to improve

Event Planning TIMELINE- END

## Event Agenda

<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekend Session I*</b>	<b>Weekend Session II*</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Items</b>
5:30-6:00	11:00-11:30	3:00-3:30	(30 minutes)	Registration
6:00-6:10	11:30-11:40	3:30-3:40	(10 minutes)	Event begins with Welcome and Organization Overview given by both partners
6:10-6:20	11:40-11:50	3:40-3:50	(10 minutes)	Introduction of <i>Cultural Connections</i> framework
6:20-7:20	11:50-12:50	3:50-4:50	<b>(60 minutes)</b>	<b>Main theme-related presentation</b>
7:20-8:20	12:50-1:50	4:50-5:50	(60 minutes)	Ethnic food sampling and guided discussion of image using the anthropological framework
8:20-8:30	1:50-2:00	5:50-6:00	(10 minutes)	Group sharing, discussion and wrap-up

\* For presentations at institutions with a large enough space, partners can choose to stage their event once.

## Event Parameters

- **Welcome and Organization Overview** from a representative of each partner organization - host partner may want to go first. Minimally should include greeting of guests, acknowledgements of collaborating partner, and the mission and role – past, present, and future – of your organization in your community and wider Chicagoland.
  
- Anthropological framework, **common concerns, different responses**, presented by Field Museum anthropologist.
  
- **Joint presentation on this years theme about Image** led by partner museum staff and/or guest presenters with time allotted to answer participants' specific questions (preferably at the end).
  
- Ethnic **food** served (usually buffet-style) with brief background of food history, preparation and/or significance in contemporary culture in Chicago
  
- **Guided conversation** over food about the significance of presenting image in the lives of guests and their cross-cultural comparisons.
  - o Presenters, community representatives, partner organization volunteers, CAPA anthropologists and Field Museum staff are dispersed among participants to facilitate discussion of the theme in terms of *common concerns, different responses* including the environmental, historic and creative reasons for our different responses
  
- Group **sharing** of participant stories and commentary from their table conversations concluding in **wrap-up** by Field Museum anthropologist and/or partner staff that integrates guests' and presenters' various points about diversity.