

ISBE Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading (CRTL) Standards Alignment Review, Reflection, and Feedback Tool

Overview

Alignment of the [ISBE Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading \(CRTL\) Standards](#) within educator preparation is intended to support the realization of the transformational potential of culturally responsive education within K–12 education throughout the state of Illinois. This tool outlines several priority areas that characterize effective planning related to the alignment of institutions of higher education (IHE) with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrates the values of culturally responsive education. Given the need for alignment at multiple levels (e.g., institutional, organizational, professional, individual) of universities, colleges, and educator preparation programs¹ and the various starting points for alignment; this tool provides multiple examples of strategies and foci through which various priority areas that may be central to alignment efforts can be considered.

Organization of Tool

This tool is intended to serve multiple purposes:

- To provide guidance to IHEs on best practices of implementation planning as it relates to culturally responsive education.
- To support ISBE personnel in reviewing and providing feedback and guidance to IHEs related to their *planning* of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards alignment.
- To review, document progress, and provide feedback on the *alignment* of each CRTL standard with various educator preparation programs (e.g., Teacher, Leader, Counselor, etc.)

This tool is not intended to serve as a “checkbox” guide for alignment planning. Instead, it is intended to support critical reflection and dialogue about alignment efforts in a way that pays close attention to issues of local context, capacity building, and creating the institutional conditions that support alignment of the CRTL standards. Additionally, it is intended to guide ISBE in its efforts to identify needs at the program and institutional levels and to determine how best to provide guidance and support to IHEs as they align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. To those ends, the tool includes two main sections.

1 Neri et al., 2019; Pollock et al., 2009; Richards et al., 2007.

The first section, **Feedback on Alignment Planning**, is intended to assess the extent to which IHEs have taken a comprehensive and systemic approach to alignment planning to ensure full and authentic integration of the CRTL standards into their programs. This section includes several priority areas, including guiding questions and a rubric to identify the extent to which IHE alignment teams have considered each of the elements described in the rubric.

The second section, **Progress Towards Standard Alignment**, is intended to capture which standards programs/institutions have addressed through coursework, field placements, or other strategies. In addition to documenting which standards are addressed in ISBE CRTL Alignment Matrices and the strategies used, it is an opportunity for reviewers to provide feedback on those strategies and the extent to which they support the standard they are associated with.

Lastly, this document includes an appendix, which offers brief descriptions of key terms and how they are used in this tool.

Materials to Include in Review

Teams that use this tool should consider a variety of documentation in their review to capture all relevant information needed to reflect on and improve their alignment planning and strategy. This documentation includes:

- the IHE Self-Assessment Tool,
- the Illinois Higher Education Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards Alignment and Reporting Guide,
- Program/IHE-based supplementary self-assessment, planning documentation, and other relevant materials (e.g., summaries of meeting minutes, references to institutional or program based strategic plans, descriptions of data collection and/or use processes)

Note that specific examples of where IHEs might demonstrate how they've accounted for various components of alignment planning articulated in each priority area will be included at the end of each priority area within the *alignment planning* section.

Alignment Planning Rubric Scale

Not on track: The priority area is not present; it is in its beginning stages, and/or not enough explanation is provided that details the area's core features and how efforts in this area support alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.

On track: The plan considers the elements of the priority area and their connection to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Although details that explain the priority area and how it will support alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards are present, there still may be additional improvements that can be made to the plan as the IHE alignment team continues its work.

Strong: Details that describe how the plan considers the elements of the priority area, how the elements align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards, and how these efforts impact candidate capacity to be culturally responsive educators are consistently present throughout the plan and the strategies it outlines.

Priority Areas of the Alignment Planning Rubric

Specific and Measurable Objectives

This area addresses the extent to which the objectives stated in the plan are clearly defined, measurable, feasible, and time bound and support alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.

Alignment Strategy

This area addresses the extent to which the plan reflects a clear strategic vision for the work, a plan to provide staff with professional learning, and a systems approach that takes into account institutional conditions needed to support alignment to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.

Quality of Strategies and Activities

This area is focused on the anticipated impact that efforts will have on the effective alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Specifically, this area considers whether the plan's strategies are high leverage and will result in substantive steps toward embedding the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards into coursework, assignments, assessments, field placements, and so on in ways that will prepare candidates to be culturally responsive in their practice. Here, "high leverage" refers to plans that are (a) high impact, in that if you get them right, they will have a significant impact on the system, and (2) as low effort as possible, in that they are feasible and do not require large or unrealistic investments of resources and time.

Data and Measurement

This area has to do with the extent to which there is a plan to evaluate Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards alignment efforts by using program and candidate data and experiences (e.g., Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Candidate Assessment Rubric, empathy interviews, student-faculty check-ins) and how data and measurement will be used to make decisions about how to adapt initiatives to improve alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and cultural responsiveness of candidates and faculty.

Team and Capacity

This area addresses the extent to which Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading alignment teams have been identified, disrupt traditional patterns of leadership by being inclusive and reflective of the educational communities they are a part of, and have clearly defined roles and responsibilities throughout the plan. It also addresses whether team members have the authority, time, capacity, and expertise to carry out the strategies detailed in the plan. Additionally, this area addresses the extent to which program leadership is involved in, and creates the conditions for, alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.

The Rubric: Feedback on Alignment Planning

Reviewer:

Date:

IHE program:

Specific and Measurable Objectives

Where are we trying to go?

Specific and measurable objectives	Not on track	On track	Strong
How connected are the objective(s) to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrated abilities?	The objective has little or no connection to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrated abilities.	The objective is connected to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrated abilities, and it supports alignment to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrated abilities.	The objective is strongly connected to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrated abilities, and it directly supports alignment to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and demonstrated abilities.
Are the objective(s) specific, measurable, and timebound?	The objective is not specific or measurable and does not specify dates (or specifies a time for completion that is far beyond the time frame).	The objective is specific and measurable and specifies a time frame. Still, the time frame may be open-ended, and it is unclear when specific objectives or milestones should be accomplished.	The objective is specific and measurable and specifies a clear date of completion and a clear time frame.
Are the objective(s) feasible and within their spheres of influence or control ?	The objective is not within reason and cannot be achieved.	The objective is reasonable given the program's abilities and what the program can influence or control within the programs represented by the alignment team, and it will likely be achieved.	The objective is mostly or fully reasonable given the program's abilities; there is evidence that shows that the program has developed key relationships and partnerships that have broadened its areas of influence and control outside of the programs represented by the alignment team, and it will most likely be achieved.

Specific and measurable objectives	Not on track	On track	Strong
Potential Sources of Evidence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IHE Self-Assessment Tool for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards • Department/Program Redesign Matrix • Supplemental documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Narrative description, ○ WestEd coaching notes, ○ IHE Alignment team meeting minutes 		

Reviewer Feedback

Recommended Next Steps

Alignment Strategy

What is our vision for how to get there?

Alignment strategy	Not on track	On track	Strong
Are initiatives built from a clear strategic plan for aligning major initiatives with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards?	There is no strategic plan, or the plan fails to inform major initiatives and lacks alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	Major initiatives are situated within some broader efforts and strategic planning related to alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	All major initiatives in the strategic plan are clearly aligned with Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.
Does the strategy address the institutional conditions needed to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards?	The alignment strategy does not address systemic inequities , nor does it establish or maintain the institutional conditions needed to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	The alignment strategy is at the beginning stage, or surface level, of understanding and addressing systemic inequities. It establishes or maintains some of the institutional conditions needed to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	The alignment strategy indicates a clear understanding of and plans to address systemic inequities and promote the institutional conditions, structures, and practices needed to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.
How will team members and staff learn about the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and how to align their practice with the standards?	There is no professional learning plan to train team members and program staff to understand and align their practice to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	There is a professional learning plan that is aligned to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and focuses on one or more dimension(s) of capacity (e.g., knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, behaviors).	A professional learning plan articulates an approach to professional learning for team members and program faculty to understand and align their practice to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards that address all dimensions of capacity building needed.
Potential Sources of Evidence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplemental documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> References to department, college, program, or institutional strategic plan strategies or activities that support CRTL alignment. Faculty professional learning and/or staff meeting plans or summaries. Copies of, or references to, institutional plans/actions aimed at identifying and addressing systemic inequities experienced by candidates, faculty, and/or other partners. IHE Self-Assessment Tool for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards 		

Reviewer Feedback

Recommended Next Steps

Quality of Strategies and Activities

How will we make an impact?

Quality of Strategies and Activities	Not on track	On track	Strong
Are the strategies and activities high leverage ?	The strategies and activities require great effort and have little promise of impacting alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	The strategies and activities require reasonable effort but only some promise of impacting the alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Or the strategies and activities have promise of impact but require unreasonable effort.	The strategies and activities require reasonable effort and have promise of impacting alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.
How have Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Self-Assessment findings, other systems investigation and information on candidate experience informed change priorities?	The strategies and activities do not stem from a systems investigation and show a lack of awareness of candidates' needs and experiences navigating the system.	The strategies and activities are based on Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Self-Assessment findings and systems investigation, and they show some evidence of efforts to consider candidates' needs and experiences navigating the system.	The strategies and activities stem from Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Self-Assessment findings and systems investigation, and they meaningfully consider and address candidates' needs and experiences navigating the system.
Potential Sources of Evidence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IHE Self-Assessment Tool for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards • Department/Program Redesign Matrix • Supplemental Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Descriptions, samples, or summaries of additional self-assessment activities (e.g., summaries of individual faculty assessments of the status of CRTL aligned activities in their course(s)) ○ References to, or summaries of, plans related to the collection and use of data on candidate experience (e.g., end-of-course survey data, focus groups, etc.) 		

Reviewer Feedback

Recommended Next Steps

Data and Measurement

How will we know we are making progress?

Data and Measurement	Not on track	On track	Strong
How are evaluation measures and outcomes used to make decisions about alignment efforts?	There is no plan to use evaluation measures and outcomes to inform decisions about adapting alignment efforts to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Some evaluation plans exist but are vague, lack actionable results, and are only loosely tied to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	There is a general plan to use both formative and summative evaluation measures and outcomes to inform decisions about alignment with Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	Formative and summative evaluation measures and outcomes have been designed for all major initiatives, and they are integral to making decisions about adapting efforts to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.
How are candidate data and experiences used to assess progress and make key decisions?	Little or no analysis of candidate data and experience is used to determine program adoption decisions and program priorities.	Careful analysis of candidate data and experience determines program adoption decisions and program priorities.	Rigorous, comparative analyses of candidate data and experience drive program adoption decisions and program priorities.
What routines and structures are in place that allow the team to learn from data on a regular and iterative basis?	There is no mention of how frequently the team will collaborate to gather, review, interpret, and take action on data, nor what data systems are in place to support the data inquiry process.	There is mention that the team will gather and learn from data and/or that data systems are in place, but there is no mention of a specific meeting cadence for gathering, reviewing, interpreting, and taking action on data.	There is a clear data inquiry plan that specifies how frequently the team will meet and how it will use data systems to gather, review, interpret, and act on data.
How will data be made transparent, accessible, and actionable for key interest holders?	There is no plan to make findings and action plans from the data inquiry process transparent, accessible, and actionable for key interest holders.	There is a plan to make findings and action plans from the data inquiry process transparent for key interest holders. Members of the community are aware of the changes being made but have less ability to contribute feedback because the data is not accessible or there is no clear process for contributing.	There is a plan to make findings and action plans from the data inquiry process transparent, accessible, and actionable for key interest holders. Members of the community understand the data displays, how the changes being made will impact them, and how to contribute their feedback.

Data and Measurement	Not on track	On track	Strong
Potential Sources of Evidence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IHE Self-Assessment Tool for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards Department/Program Redesign Matrix Supplemental Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans, or summaries of plans, for how course evaluation, candidate assessment, enrollment/graduation rates, and/or other data will be collected, shared, and used to support ongoing efforts to align to CRTL standards 		

Reviewer Feedback

Recommended Next Steps

Team and Capacity

Who do we need at the table to make it happen?

Team and Capacity	Not on track	On track	Strong
Is the team equipped with the personal and professional knowledge needed to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards?	The team has not been identified.	Team members have been identified, with some key personnel possessing personal and professional knowledge and experience related to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	All team members possess personal and professional knowledge and experience related to the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards, or a meaningful plan exists to build this capacity within the team.
Is the team representative of the faculty, the student body, and the communities the program serves?	The team is not at all or is only somewhat reflective of the communities the program serves and is mostly composed of dominant identities .	The team is representative of the faculty, the student body, and the communities the program serves, and it includes representation from nondominant groups.	The team is representative of the faculty, the student body, and the communities the program serves, and it prioritizes centering the voices of nondominant groups.
Are there clear roles and responsibilities for team members?	Team roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined and are weakly aligned with the goals and strategies of the efforts to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	Some or most team roles and responsibilities are defined and aligned to the major goals and strategies of the efforts to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	All team roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and aligned to the major goals and strategies of the efforts to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.
Does the team have the authority and time investment needed to carry out the work?	There is no consideration of, or there is a lack of clarity about, the power and investment needed to execute alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	Some of the team members have the authority and investment needed to carry out the work of aligning with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	Team members are strategically chosen for the authority and investment needed to effectively align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.
What is the role of leadership in these efforts?	There are loose or no plans for engaging leadership support and expertise in alignment with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.	The plan includes some details related to leaders' roles in supporting Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards alignment and how it connects to broader efforts to address systemic inequities.	The plan explicitly details how leaders will be strategically engaged to motivate and lead Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards alignment and how it connects to broader efforts to address systemic inequities.

Team and Capacity	Not on track	On track	Strong
Potential Sources of Evidence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department/Program Redesign Matrix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Planning and Implementation Team Supplementary Documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summaries of faculty experience and/or expertise Overview of team roles and responsibilities 		

Reviewer Feedback

Recommended Next Steps

Overall Feedback on Alignment Planning

In the space below, indicate whether the IHE's alignment plans and supplementary documentation indicate that their overall efforts are mostly:

Strong

On Track

Not on Track

Explanation and Recommended Next Steps:

Progress Towards Standard Alignment

Focus on Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Although an IHE's alignment plans should address all of the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards, it is likely that its plan for some standards will be stronger than it is for others. The following table indicates whether the IHE's alignment matrix addresses each standard.

Strategies and activities. The third column, *Strategies*, includes examples of possible strategies to address each of the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. This list is not exhaustive, nor is it prescriptive. Reviewers should consider the specific standard each strategy is meant to address, ensuring alignment between the strategy and the standard. Additionally, reviewers should take into consideration the need to build teacher, leader, and other education personnel capacity along multiple dimensions (Richards et al., 2007; Pollock et al., 2009), including:

Personal – Awareness of the candidate's culture, identities, and social positioning and a willingness to reflect and act upon the ways those cultural norms and identities impact a candidate's practice.

Practical – Foundational understandings of concepts and theories that underpin culturally responsive education, as well as concrete strategies for operationalizing those theories in practice.

Institutional – Learning related to the organizational structures, systems, and conditions necessary to support equitable and culturally responsive educational environments.

Given that some standards align more clearly to certain dimensions (e.g., Self-awareness and relationship to others fall within the personal dimension), some strategies used to align standards may be best suited to certain standards and not applicable to others.

Using the table on the following page, indicate the progress the IHE has made on alignment with each CRTL Standard using the column labeled "Alignment". Additionally, in the column labeled "Strategies", list all strategies and approaches used to align each standard. For strategies that appear in the list below, you may write the number that corresponds with that strategy, along with a brief description of that, or any other strategies used.

Non-exhaustive List of Possible Strategies

1. Inclusive syllabi
2. Field placements
3. Building candidate sociocultural consciousness
(e.g., learning related to culture, identity, race/racism, power, history, bias, etc.)
4. Reflection on one's own culture, identity, and/or history
5. Culturally responsive curricula and content design
6. Culturally responsive instructional strategies
7. Culturally responsive assessment
8. Other equitable and/or culturally responsive practices
(e.g., leadership, student support, counseling, social work, etc.)

9. Assessment of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading dispositions and practices in candidates
10. School and community partnerships
11. Relationship building
12. Admissions requirements
13. Other: Please explain

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standard	Alignment	Strategies
Self-awareness and relationships to others	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	
Systems of oppression	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	
Students as individuals	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	
Students as co-creators	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standard	Alignment	Strategies
Leveraging student advocacy	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	
Family and community collaboration	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	
Content selections in all curricula	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	
Student representation in the learning environment	Aligned Not Aligned Not Applicable	

Feedback on Approaches, Strategies, and Activities

In the space below, provide feedback on approaches, strategies, and activities used to align each standard. Feedback included should highlight approaches that are particularly strong, as well as approaches that may need to be improved. Reviews and IHEs should tailor strategies to the specific needs of each standard.

Self-awareness and relationships to others

Systems of oppression

Students as individuals

Students as co-creators

Leveraging student advocacy

Family and community collaboration

Content selections in all curricula

Student representation in the learning environment

Appendix: Explanations of Key Terms

dimensions of capacity. Research and approaches to coaching and capacity building for culturally responsive education recognize that educators should engage in reflection and learning on a personal level (e.g., awareness or self, beliefs, aspirations), a strategic level (understanding both concepts and ideas and the ability to put ideas into practice), and an institutional level (policies, processes, and systems).

dominant identities. Those identities typically represented in, or in full control of, leadership positions, steering committees, and institutions (e.g., White, male, English-dominant, able-bodied).

high-leverage strategies and activities. Strategies and activities that are (a) high impact, in that, if you get them right, they will have a significant impact on the system, and (b) as low effort as possible, in that they are feasible and do not require large or unrealistic investments of resources and time.

leadership. In this document, those who hold the positional authority that is essential for executing, making decisions about, allocating resources to, and sustaining the work. Leaders might include administrative chancellors; academic deans; faculty senates and representatives; university leadership; department chairs; diversity, equity, and inclusion directors; or student body leadership.

Sociocultural consciousness. In their 2002 article entitled *Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum*, Villegas and Lucas (2002 p. 22) describe sociocultural consciousness as “an understanding that people’s ways of thinking, behaving, and being are deeply influenced by such factors as race/ethnicity, social class, and language.” They go on to add that it is “an understanding that differences in social location are not neutral. In all social systems, some positions are accorded greater status than others. With this status differentiation comes differential access to power. Because differences in access to power profoundly influence one’s experience in the world, prospective teachers need to comprehend how American society is stratified, for example, along racial/ethnic, social class, and gender lines. They also need to understand that social inequalities are produced and perpetuated through systemic discrimination and justified through a societal ideology of merit, social mobility, and individual responsibility (Sturm & Guinier, 1996). They need to critically examine the role that schools play in this reproduction and legitimization process.” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002 p. 22) Critical consciousness is also sometimes used to refer to a similar concept.

spheres of influence or control. The different levels of influence or control (or lack thereof) that people, teams, or institutions can impact.

systemic inequities. The various manifestations of systems of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, ableism) that exist and manifest in IHEs, programs, and the broader institutional community and impact the experiences and outcomes that faculty, staff, students, and community partners have with the program or institution.

systems investigation. All systemic reviews and self-assessment efforts, including those that are formally a part of aligning with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards (e.g., IHE Self-Assessment Tool) and those that are not directly linked (e.g., equity reviews, student surveys).

Sources

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