# Recommendations for Incorporating Culturally Relevant Teaching into Hiring Processes

Foothill staff, administrators, and faculty are all working hard to eliminate achievement disparities for our students, and the Equity and Education Committee recognizes that CRT is an effective approach to achieving this goal. It is with this in mind that we encourage faculty search and selection committees to include CRT as a consideration in their work. Here are some recommendations we've compiled that can help jumpstart the process of incorporating CRT into our hiring practices.  The list is by no means exhaustive, and there is no expectation that a single committee will implement all of these.  We hope that keeping these recommendations in mind can make the important work of faculty search and selection more intentionally equity-focused.

**What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?**

A grossly simplified definition: Culturally Responsive (aka Relevant) Teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning [(Ladson-Billings,1994).](https://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/teaching-diverse-learners/strategies-0/culturally-responsive-teaching-0#ladson-billings) It’s important to recognize there are three levels of culture, and CRT seeks to engage the deep level rather than only the superficial. (See Fig. 2.1 below)

**Recommendations to Search and Selection Committees:**

1. Ask candidates to submit their philosophy of teaching and learning.
   * This is intentionally broad and does not call out CRT specifically. We think asking candidates for their teaching philosophy is invaluable in helping the committee understand the candidate’s overall approach to pedagogy. We hope that committees will look for CRT practices as a part of it.
   * You may also consider asking candidates to include a copy of their syllabus with their application materials as committees may find evidence of CRT practices there
2. Include criteria related to Culturally Relevant Teaching in the job posting, e.g.
   * In the “Duties and Responsibilities” section we suggest adding, “Instruct CC courses … to a diverse student population *in a culturally competent manner*.”
   * In the “Preferred Qualifications” section we suggest adding, “Experience implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching in [discipline] classes”
   * In the “Knowledge and Abilities” sections we suggest including, “ability to utilize Culturally Responsive Teaching pedagogy”
3. Include interview questions related to Culturally Responsive Teaching/Pedagogy, e.g.
   1. What are some approaches you’ve used to foster relationships with your students?
   2. What are some techniques you use to help your students become independent learners?
   3. How do you get your students to connect the new concepts in your class to their previous knowledge?
   4. How do you infuse culturally relevant practices into your pedagogy?
   5. How do you use formative assessments in the learning process?
4. Include CRT in a teaching demonstration prompt. E.g.
   * “Prepare a 15-minute lesson on the topic of \_\_\_\_\_ which you will present to the hiring committee members as if they were your students. This teaching demo should convey your teaching philosophy, in particular the ways in which you incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy into your practice.”
   * “Prepare a 15-minute demonstration that gives us a snapshot from your first day of [course].” (e.g. first day of Bio 10, or first day of Chem 1A, etc.)
5. Please give yourselves enough time to be deliberative in your decision-making.

For reference:

*Attributes of the Culturally Relevant and Assimilationist Teacher*  
(Ladson-Billings, 1994)

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| **Culturally Relevant Teacher** | **Assimilationist Teacher** |
| Views teaching as “pulling knowledge out” like mining | Views teaching as “putting in” the right kind of knowledge like banking |
| Views self as an artist | Views self as a technician |
| Believes all students can succeed | Believes failure is inevitable for some |
| Encourages cultural integrity by using culture as a vehicle for learning, as well as for affirmation and celebration | Pressures diverse learners to conform to dominant culture |
| Helps students make connections to their personal lives, families and communities | Views students only in terms of individual characteristics; views achievement as a means to escape community |
| Teacher-student relationships are fluid, humanely equitable with interactions extending beyond the classroom | Teacher-student relationships are hierarchical, authoritarian, and limited to classroom interactions |
| Encourages a “community of learners” | Encourages individual competition and learning in isolation |
| Knowledge is viewed critically and shared by both teachers and students | Knowledge is infallible and static |
| Values the knowledge students bring to the learning environment | Only values the knowledge that is passed in one direction, from teacher to student |
| Facilitator of knowledge | Transmitter of knowledge |

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