

# NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

**D  
P  
S**



## Racial Sensitivity (NM240018)

New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy

Annual In-Service Training Curriculum 2024

Lesson Plan / Student Guide

**COURSE TITLE:** Racial Sensitivity

**TERMINAL GOAL:** The student will learn what racial sensitivity is and how it plays a role in law enforcement.

**ENABLING OBJECTIVES:**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Define Racial/Cultural sensitivity
- 2) Identify what implicit bias is
- 3) Identify harmful behaviors and language
- 4) Identify what a microaggression is
- 5) Identify ways we can work towards being culturally aware

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:**

Classroom lecture, handouts, and visual aids (PowerPoint presentation)

**HANDOUTS:**

Student guide

**COURSE DURATION:**

1 Hour

**CURRICULUM REFERENCES:**

1. <https://time.com/4779112/police-history-origins/>
2. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/02/solving-racial-disparities-in-policing/>
3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_sensitivity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_sensitivity)
4. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-are-microaggressions-4843519>

**EQUIPMENT, PERSONNEL, AND SUPPLIES NEEDED:**

COMPUTER, AUDIO AND VISUAL AIDS; WHITEBOARD

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS – CADETS / RECRUITS

**INSTRUCTOR RATIO:**

1 / 50

**EVALUATION STRATEGY:** Students will discuss and provide examples of intervention strategies and situations.

**AUTHOR & ORIGATION DATE:**

SOUTHWEST TRAINING CONSULTANTS LLC JUNE 2023

**REVISION / REVIEW DATE(S):**

**REVISED / REVIEWED BY:**

This class will be a little bit of a challenge as there can be a lot of discussion related to the premise behind the instruction. For this block of instruction, it is imperative that you do a little research of your own and identify key things found within the instruction so you are well prepared to discuss these topics. The general issues I see popping up is how it will be received. The fact is there are a lot of officers that are culturally aware. We live in an area with a lot of diversity and in most cases, officers recognize the differences in peoples beliefs, backgrounds, cultures, and generally who they are. The problem is there is a national trend to have this type of training put out because of incidents like George Floyd and others.

What you will need to do is convey a positive message about being aware. Having your students understand that there are differences but to try and see everyone the same way, without bias or judgement. Follow the letter of the law and do not base decisions on stopping for anything other than an infraction, violation. Although this may seem like common practice there is obviously some issues, and they need to be addressed.

Start the class off on a positive note, this will be a good class, class participation is encouraged, or you will get something from this class, be an active participant.

## A. Introduction

- a. US law enforcement was started in places like Boston, New York, and Philadelphia with nonformal night watch patrols starting in 1636. Formal publicly funded organized police forces started in 1838 in Boston, MA. In the South, however, it is identified that some of the primary policing institutions were slave patrols. The first formal slave patrol was created in the Carolina colonies in 1704. During the civil war, the military became the primary form of law enforcement in the South. Still, during Reconstruction, many local sheriffs functioned in a way analogous to the earlier slave patrols, enforcing segregation and the disenfranchisement of freed slaves. (1)
- b. Why is this relevant? Historians and researchers identify that little has changed over the years, and there is a tendency for the justice system to target minorities. “Police patrolled Black neighborhoods and arrested Black people disproportionately; prosecutors indicted Black people disproportionately; juries found Black people guilty disproportionately; judges gave Black people disproportionately long sentences; and, then, after all this, social scientists, observing the number of Black people in jail, decided that, as a matter of biology, Black people were disproportionately inclined to criminality.” (Harvard Historian Jill Lapore)(2) We are talking nationally, not one specific location. Still, the inference is that the Criminal Justice System tends to target minorities. The problem is that no one can definitively say it does not. Where does that put us? What are we doing to remedy these concerns?
- c. As we go through this instruction, we will discuss racial and cultural sensitivity. We will identify what implicit bias is, how it affects us, and how we do our job. We will identify harmful behaviors and language. You will learn what microaggression is. We will also work towards identifying ways we can be culturally aware.

For the first block of instruction pose a question to the students about what they know about other cultures. Specifically, their cultural differences, likes, dislikes, maybe ceremonial things. Then ask the class what they believe is racial or cultural sensitivity. The discussion should stay focused on being aware of other cultures and why it is important to be aware of how others see things and do things. This is going to be about acceptance, and how that can change the way we handle call with persons of a different race, gender, nationality, religious belief or whatever makes them different.

## B. What is racial/cultural sensitivity?

- a. Cultural sensitivity, also referred to as cross-cultural sensitivity or cultural awareness, is the knowledge, awareness, and acceptance of other cultures and others' cultural identities. It is related to cultural competence (the skills needed for effective communication with people of other cultures, which includes cross-cultural competence), and is sometimes regarded as the precursor to the achievement of cultural competence but is a more commonly used term. On the individual level, cultural sensitivity is a state of mind regarding interactions
-

- with those different from oneself. Cultural sensitivity enables travelers, workers, and others to successfully navigate interactions with a culture other than their own. (2)
- b. Racial sensitivity training intends to show how words and actions might impact someone of a different race, religious background, gender, or anyone different from them. Often times a joke is told or a statement made that we will laugh off because we believe the sender of the message had no ill intent. Nonetheless, the words that are spoken affect people. I know a lot of people these days feel our society has gotten soft. We are so worried about what others think or feel to the point where some might say exaggeration. Have we, or are we just making people aware of how those things make others feel.
  - c. The reality is no matter your belief, people should be treated fairly and respectfully no matter their race, nationality, gender, age, or whatever makes them different than you. This is why this training is relevant to law enforcement. The fact is every person you come into contact with should be treated equally. You should never seek out a person based on anything other than the fact that they committed a crime or wanted your attention because of their actions. We need to be racially and or culturally sensitive for several reasons. One it is the right thing to do, and two, building trust within a community is important. We minimize this in Law Enforcement with the mindset of, we got this, but the job of a police officer could be much easier with the publics' help. Could you imagine if people who witnessed a crime stuck around and gave a statement.

For this next block make sure you do not insinuate that anyone has a bias. Your students should be given the opportunity to identify for themselves what they believe in.

\*Ask them to think about the words they use, the comments they make, the things they believe in. Have them keep it to themselves but start the discussion so they have an opportunity to look inward at who they are and what they are about. A lot of times we don't think about implicit bias because we don't want to believe they exist.

Then recommend they take the IAT exam. The link below will get them to the Harvard website and allow them the opportunity to take a multitude of different tests. \*\* I would encourage you take the exam before hand so you know how it works and can tell them what to expect. I will also say it is probably not a good idea to have a student take this during class in front of everyone as you do not know what the results are going to be. If you first take the exam and are good with the results maybe you can take it in front of the class so they can see what it looks like.

C. What is implicit bias?

- a. Growing up, your parents raised you to be the best person you could be. They taught you the difference between right and wrong. They taught you manners. They did their best to send you out into the world with an understanding of what you needed to succeed. Maybe not all parents, but that was the goal. Somewhere in this, you learned about what your parents believed in, like church or which political party they preferred. You also had a lot of

---

other influences in your life, like friends, neighbors, co-workers, and even the media, all of these things played a role in what you know and believe in. During this time, there are people that have developed an implicit bias.

- b. An implicit bias is the unconscious favoritism toward or prejudice against people of a particular ethnicity, gender, or social group that influences one's actions or perception.

I would also encourage you to show the video about implicit bias as it describes and teaches on the topic very well. The video is 8 minutes long and covers the material well.

- c. The video link below is about Implicit Bias. It discusses what they are and how they come about.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?&q=Implicit+Bias+test&view=detail&mid=E126C9FAEB0A84D570A2E126C9FAEB0A84D570A2&FORM=VDRVRV&ajaxhist=0>

- d. This link is for the Harvard IAT testing battery.

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

This is another area where having a conversation would be good to meet the learning objectives. At this point it would be good to ask your students if they have seen poor language or behaviors before. What did it look like, how did it sound, and how did they feel about it. Again, please be aware of the direction of the conversation goes and try and keep it focused on identifying behaviors and language that the students can learn from.

#### D. Harmful behaviors and language

- a. Conversation over coffee is about all the woes of the world. We talk about everything from guns to what sports our kids are playing. We also cuss and discuss the things that bother us. During those conversations, we joke and give each other a hard time about different things. Sometimes those things are personal, but in most cases, it is done to build a relationship, camaraderie. We generally have thick skin, which means most things generally do not bother us. However, the family sitting behind you listens to every word you say, and when you comment on your partner's race, it is not received well. Now the family probably won't say anything or complain, but they will hold resentment, tell their friends, and now have a screwed view of who you are. So what, right, what if some family thinks ill of me? What difference does that make? Oddly enough, when this happens enough, which it does, we distance ourselves from our community. The further away we get the harder the job of a police officer will be.
- b. The things we say, the actions we take all affect others. Some are positive some are negative. The problem is when we say things we think don't have significance, because of an unconscious bias, and someone is offended or hurt by such comments. It is often the little things. For example, and maybe not the best, but talking about different foods that might be associated with a particular ethnic background because that is something they

- might favor. Or discussing a task that can't be handled by a specific gender because they may not have the physical ability.
- c. When it comes down to it if you make a comment that causes someone to make a face that is not good or you know the comment you made may not be appropriate it probably is not. We need to be aware of how the comment may be received and if there is any question don't make the comment.
  - d. Our behaviors also reflect our thoughts and opinions on things. There has been a time when you were displeased or upset with someone so much so that you just avoided that person. The concern here is that as a police officer you may enforce the law with those implicit bias's, meaning you may have a tendency to seek out those persons of a different race than you.
  - e. Make decisions based on the law. Focus your energy and efforts into making yourself aware of where you are and what you are doing at all times. Also be aware of other officers and correct behaviors that could be questionable. This may be addressing it with them or taking it to their supervisor.

As you go into the next section give the definition of a microaggression. Then see if someone can identify something they believe might be a microaggression. It is important to identify how these comments, although they may not be a direct outright racial slur, can and will affect people.

E. What is a microaggression?

- a. A microaggression is a subtle verbal or nonverbal behavior, committed consciously or not, that is directed at a member of a marginalized group, and has a harmful, derogatory effect.  
(4)
  - i. Micro Assaults
    - 1. Micro assaults are the most overt type of microaggressions. Most often they are done intentionally and the person doing them knows that they are harmful and derogatory. An example would be using a slang term to refer to someone of a particular race, with the knowledge that this term has a derogatory meaning.
  - ii. Micro Insults
    - 1. Micro insults are more subtle than microaggressions. These are usually comments with an underlying meaning or a backhanded compliment. For example, a micro insult might involve saying that someone only got their job because of affirmative action.
  - iii. Micro Invalidations
    - 1. Micro invalidations involve telling a marginalized group that their experiences of prejudice don't matter or that they are being over-reactive or too sensitive about the things that are being said. In other words, a micro invalidation might follow a micro assault or micro insult.

---

iv. Environmental Microaggressions

1. Environmental microaggressions involve something in a person's environment that sends a message of invalidation of a marginalized group. For example, a child who watches a television show and only sees actors of a different race might feel excluded or not represented because of media portrayal.(4)

F. How can we be more culturally aware?

- a. One of the important ways to develop culture awareness is to educate yourself about other cultures. Learning directly from people of different cultures is a fantastic way to get authentic information. But it's important to engage in conversations with others about their cultures in respectful, appropriate manners.(4)

This section will be focused on getting your students to think outside the box. Open them up to things they think they know versus what they may not know much about.

For the evaluation of this course, you will need to get the class into groups and give them one of the questions below. Ask them to do a little research on the topic and report back to the class what they found. The intent is to get them to broaden their understanding of other cultures.

Don't be afraid to look up other options or events that could be researched.

b. How much do you know about other cultures beliefs and rituals.

i. Do you know what Hanukkah is?

1. Hanukkah is observed for eight nights and days, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, which may occur at any time from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar. The festival is observed by lighting the candles of a candelabrum with nine branches, commonly called a menorah or hanukkiah. One branch is typically placed above or below the others and its candle is used to light the other eight candles. This unique candle is called the shamash (Hebrew: שַׁמָּשׁ, "attendant"). Each night, one additional candle is lit by the shamash until all eight candles are lit together on the final night of the festival.[5] Other Hanukkah festivities include singing Hanukkah songs, playing the game of dreidel and eating oil-based foods, such as latkes and sufganiyot, and dairy foods. Since the 1970s, the worldwide Chabad Hasidic movement has initiated public menorah lightings in open public places in many countries.[

ii. Do you know what a Yei Bi Chei is?

1. The Yei Bi Chei (also spelled Yéibichai) is a sacred night dance of the Diné (commonly but improperly called Navajo) people of the southwestern United States. The ceremony lasts nine days and has a healing function for tribe



members and is generally performed in the winter. The masked dancer personifies the god represented.

- iii. Do you know what the celebration of Kwanza is?
  1. American Maulana Karenga created Kwanzaa in 1966 during the aftermath of the Watts riots<sup>[3]</sup> as a specifically African-American holiday.<sup>[4]</sup> Karenga said his goal was to "give blacks an alternative to the existing holiday of Christmas and give blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and their history, rather than simply imitate the practice of the dominant society."<sup>[5]</sup> For Karenga, a major figure in the Black Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the creation of such holidays also underscored the essential premise that "you must have a cultural revolution before the violent revolution. The cultural revolution gives identity, purpose, and direction."
- iv. What is Cinco de Mayo the celebration of?
  1. Cinco de Mayo (pronounced [ˈsiŋko ðe ˈmajo] in Mexico, Spanish for "Fifth of May") is a yearly celebration held on May 5 to celebrate Mexico's victory over the Second French Empire at the Battle of Puebla in 1862,<sup>[1][2]</sup> led by General Ignacio Zaragoza. Zaragoza died months after the battle from an illness, and a larger French force ultimately defeated the Mexican army at the Second Battle of Puebla and occupied Mexico City. However, following the end of the American Civil War in 1865, the United States began lending money and guns to the Mexican liberals, pushing France and Mexican Conservatives to the edge of defeat. At the opening of the French chambers in January 1866, Napoleon III announced that he would withdraw French troops from Mexico. In reply to a French request for American neutrality, the American secretary of state William H. Seward replied that French withdrawal from Mexico should be unconditional.
- v. What is Juneteenth the celebration of?
  1. Juneteenth (officially Juneteenth National Independence Day) is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Its name is a portmanteau of June and nineteenth, and it is celebrated on the anniversary of the order by Major General Gordon Granger proclaiming freedom for enslaved people in Texas on June 19, 1865 (two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued).<sup>[7]</sup> Originating in Galveston, Juneteenth has since been observed annually in various parts of the United States, often broadly celebrating African-American culture. The day was recognized as a federal holiday in 2021, when President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law.
- vi. What is Eid al-adha?
  1. Eid al-Adha (Arabic: عيد الأضحى ʿĪd al-ʿAḍḥā [ˈʕiːd æl ˈʔɑdˤħæː], "Feast of the Sacrifice") or the Feast of Sacrifice is the second and the largest of the two

main holidays celebrated in Islam (the other being Eid al-Fitr). It honours the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac [10], as an act of obedience to God's command. However, before Abraham could sacrifice his son in the name of God, and because of his willingness to do so, God provided him with a lamb to sacrifice in his son's place. In commemoration of this intervention, animals are ritually sacrificed. Part of their meat is consumed by the family that offers the animal, while the rest of the meat is distributed to the poor and the needy. Sweets and gifts are given, and extended family members typically visit and are welcomed.[11] The day is also sometimes called the Greater Eid.[12] The celebration of Eid, however, is not mentioned in the Qur'an.

- c. The point to this is to make yourself aware of other cultures, their beliefs, and ideologies so they are seen as people, not their race. At some point the hope is everyone is seen the same way, as a human being, someone who bleeds red.

G. Conclusion

- a. There is a national push to see to it that law enforcement nationwide receive this type of training. There is a belief that some law enforcement officers make decisions based on an implicit bias they have and that bias skews their ability to make good decisions.
- b. The purpose of this class is to make you aware of racial or cultural sensitivity and how we might be better at it.

## COURSE AUDIT

PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR:

SECONDARY INSTRUCTOR:

SUPPORT STAFF:

DATE(S)/ TIME(S) OF INSTRUCTION:

LOCATION OF INSTRUCTION:

RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM CHANGES: Identify inaccurate information, outdated information, new information to be added to update material, etc. (Use additional pages if necessary)

---

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS: (If any portion of the course content was not presented, indicate the specific content here)

Alternative curriculum was taught.

Accreditation number of alternative curriculum:

SIGNATURE

DATE

Primary Instructor

Reviewed by Program Coordinator

Reviewed by

Reviewed by Director/Chief or Designee