

Decolonizing Intro Psych

Most Introductory Psychology instructors were trained in Western classrooms under colonized ways of thinking. But what does a decolonized (or less colonized) classroom look like?

Knowledge flow

- Colonized: Knowledge flows from professor and textbook to student (one-way)
- Decolonized: Knowledge flows between professor and students as well as between students

Focus of research

- Colonized: Individual is the main focus of research
- Decolonized: Community and relationships are the main focus of research

Forms of knowledge

- Colonized: Experimental methods upheld as producing objective knowledge and dismissing anything not "proven"
- Decolonized: Other forms of knowledge are acknowledged (e.g., indigenous research methods)

Absence policies

- Colonized: Severe illness is the only excuse for missing class or coursework
- Decolonized: Students are trusted and make-up policies are flexible for more than illness (e.g., family obligations)

Presentation of work

- Colonized: Work by white males is presented first and then work by historically excluded groups is added
- Decolonized: Work by historically excluded groups is presented first

Historical theories

- Colonized: Historical theories are presented as building on one another through research
- Decolonized: Historical theories are presented with discussion of how the greater world context influenced them

Assessments

- Colonized: Major assessments are made up of questions that have a limited number of correct answers
- Decolonized: Major assessments ask students to integrate and evaluate knowledge based on their own lived experiences