**[Multicultural Education Review](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rmer20/current)**

**Volume 7, 2015 -**[**Issue 3**](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rmer20/7/3)

**The what, why, and how of culturally responsive teaching: international mandates, challenges, and opportunities**

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This discussion acknowledges that culturally responsive teaching is relevant for international contexts. However, it needs to be nuanced to fit the specific characteristics and needs of these different settings, relative to societal dynamics, and student ethnic, cultural, racial, immigration/migration, economic, and linguistic demographics. Consequently, it offers both challenges and invitations for specific instructional practices. The character and causes of these challenges and invitations are discussed, along with some suggestion for how they can and should be addressed. They are analyzed through four areas of thought and action essential to culturally responsive teaching. These are its definitional attributes; the importance of teacher beliefs about and professional preparation in/for cultural diversity; the societal and school-based demographics and how these affect culturally responsive teaching in action; and the profound influences that culture has on teaching and learning. The argument is made that these complexities demand serious consideration in planning and implementing instructional programs and practices for and about cultural diversity. It is imperative in so doing that educators’ decisions and actions are guided by principles of local contextuality; plurality of instructional methods and means informed by different configurations of students and societies in different nations; and that cultural understanding is the baseline from which effective educational decisions are made for diverse students, schools, and communities.

Keywords: [teacher beliefs](http://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Teacher+Beliefs), [student demographics](http://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Student+Demographics), [marginalization](http://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Marginalization), [culture and learning](http://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Culture+And+Learning), [international diversity](http://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/International+Diversity), [contextual specificity](http://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Contextual+Specificity)