Abstract:

This presentation will discuss the concept of cross-cultural communication competence and the process of gaining cross-cultural competence. It is essential for educators in the 21st century to be sensitive to the needs of students from diverse cultures and the acquisition of cross-cultural competence is imperative. As the world is flat and people move from place to place, many children live in bilingual/multicultural environments. Many move the East to the West and vice versa. Understanding the differences between the East and West is necessary to function effectively in the education arena. This presentation will focus on the comparison of the Eastern and Western cultures—ways of life—namely, the collectivist versus the individualist views. In the collectivist culture, which is most of Asia, the concept of “I” is very small. In the individualistic culture, the concept of “I” is much bigger. The presentation will further describe the horizontal view of education (Western and Socratic) versus the vertical way of education (Eastern and Confucian). When East meets West, challenges will arise. At the same time, the best of the East and the best of the West can be adopted and adapted to create a best practice model-taking from the East and the West. Finally, current thinking on how to educate a cadre of innovative, creative, and socially responsible global citizens will be discussed.