“Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.” • John Cotton Dana

**BaFa’ BaFa’: Working with Diversity**

**Mónica Torres**  
English

**Cynthia Kratzke**  
Health Science

**Thursday, February 16**  
9 a.m.–12 p.m.  
Room 50 Milton Hall

In the BaFa’ BaFa’ workshop participants come to understand the powerful effects that culture plays in every person’s life. Participants can prepare for living and working in another culture or to learn how to work with diverse populations: people from other departments, disciplines, genders, races, and ages. In the hundreds of thousands of times it has been run around the world, BaFa’ BaFa’ has been used to: Build awareness of how cultural differences can profoundly impact people in an organization; Motivate participants to rethink their behavior and attitude toward others; Allow participants to examine their own bias and focus on how they perceive differences; Examine how stereotypes are developed, barriers created, and misunderstandings magnified; Identify diversity issues within the organization that must be addressed.

BaFa’ BaFa’ initiates immediate, personal change. This classroom experiential learning exercise makes participants personally aware of the issues around culture differences. Participants feel the alienation and confusion that comes from being different. BaFa’ BaFa’ shakes participants out of thinking in stereotypes of anyone who is different. They learn the value of all faces in the workplace in a safe, stimulating environment.

**What happens in BaFa’ BaFa’?**

After an initial briefing two cultures are created. The Alpha culture is a relationship oriented, high context, strong ingroup-outgroup culture. The Beta culture is a highly competitive trading culture. After the participants learn the rules of their culture and begin living it, observers and visitors are exchanged. The resulting stereotyping, misperception and misunderstanding become the grist for an extensive debriefing exercise.

**Mónica F. Torres, Ph.D.**, is an associate professor in English whose research and teaching focus on cultural constructions of identity. She is particularly interested in how cultural institutions discursively shape racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and gender identities in the United States.

**Cynthia Kratzke, Ph.D.**, is an assistant professor in the Department of Health Science. Her research interests include health literacy and health communication across cultures.

Registration is required at teaching.nmsu.edu. If you have problems registering online, call 646–2204 for help.