Teaching and Learning for Social Justice and Equity in Higher Education

Virtual Settings

Edited by
Laura Parson · C. Casey Ozaki

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Land Acknowledgments

North Dakota State Land Acknowledgment: We collectively acknowledge that we gather at NDSU, a land grant institution, on the traditional lands *of the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda) and Anishinaabe Peoples in addition to many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to these lands. We honor with gratitude Mother Earth and the Indigenous Peoples who have walked with her throughout generations. We will continue to learn how to live in unity with Mother Earth and build strong, mutually beneficial, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples of our region.*

University of North Dakota Land Acknowledgment: Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate—presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota—the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.

In acknowledging the land on which our respective institutions reside, we do not suggest that we have assuaged our need to do constant, continuous work to decolonize higher education. We are committed

to affecting change by putting the words of these land acknowledgments into action in our words, praxis, and syllabi. In acknowledging the land we work and reside within and the Indigenous peoples connected to it, we also acknowledge the legacy of settler colonization and the reality of its impacts on Indigenous peoples, past and present. We commit to continued learning as well as holding ourselves and our institutions accountable.

Contents

Notes on Contributors

Candice Bocala, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) is a Lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). Her research focuses on the connections between educator learning and organizational conditions that support collaborative work. She is also committed to supporting educators with understanding issues related to racial or ethnic diversity and enacting pedagogical practices that promote equity in schools. At HGSE, she is the former faculty director of Reimagining Integration: Diverse and Equitable Schools (RIDES) and is the research director of the Data Wise Project. Bocala began her career as an elementary school teacher in Washington, D.C., and she was also a senior research associate at West Ed. Bocala received her Ed.D. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, an M.A.T. in elementary education from American University, an M.A. in policy analysis and evaluation from Stanford University, and a B.A. in government from Cornell University.

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academic experiences of minoritized students. Her multicultural experiences have shaped her research goals to build a more just society through improved educational success for diverse students and helping dominant groups practice multicultural inclusion. Her publications and presentations include sole-authorships and co-authorships with colleagues. She has published on translation studies, multicultural education, diversity and identity in E-learning, curriculum design, inclusive education, web-based pedagogy, and graduate students' socialization experiences.

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Alyson Froehlich, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) is a Teacher and scholar interested in how people learn about and perceive the world around them. She received her Ph.D. in Cognitive Neuroscience Psychology at the University of Utah. She spent 8 years researching cognition and neural development in autism. She is currently an Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in the Department of Psychology at the University of Utah and a Higher Education Instructional Consultant for the university's Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence. She is also an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Maryland Global Campus. In her free time she enjoys hiking, camping, traveling, and being outside with her dog and family.

Staci Gilpin, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education and Social Work at The College of St. Scholastica and a Ph.D. Student in Educational Foundations and Research at the University of North Dakota. She teaches and designs graduate and undergraduate courses using multiple delivery methods to include face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Before moving into higher education, Staci worked in both urban and rural K-12 schools for nearly 20 years as a teacher for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities, elementary classroom teacher, instructional coach, and special education administrator. She is an advocate for quality online instruction as an avenue to provide access to higher education for students who live in rural areas, historically

underrepresented communities, and to address teacher shortages. Staci's research utilizes quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods designs with social justice and equity lens to study the scholarship of teaching and learning, online learning, open educational resources, and teacher preparation. She presents at the Online Learning Consortium (OLC), OpenEd, and AERA National Conferences. Staci also recently published a model of persistence for online learners and she is a 2020–2021 William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Open Educational Resources Fellow.

Matthew A. Gonzales (he/him/his) was born in Houston, TX. In 2018, he earned his Bachelor of Arts with Paideia Scholar Distinction in Psychology from Southwestern University, where he also had the opportunity to be trained in Classical and Flamenco guitar. In 2020, he completed his M.Ed. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Auburn University. Still at Auburn University, he is currently a student in a Ph.D. program in Counselor Education. Matthew is the graduate assistant in the Auburn University College of Sciences and Mathematics Office of Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity, in addition to having interned as a clinical therapist in an inpatient psychiatric setting. His research interests include marginalized populations, group therapy, using music in counseling and Existential factors in counseling.

Eric Hall serves as a Program Coordinator for the Engineering Academic Excellence Program. The program focuses on recruiting, retaining, and advising minoritized students pursuing a STEM degree at Auburn University. His responsibilities include creating professional development o pportunities and academic support programs to provide students with a sense of community as they matriculate through college. He has a higher education background in residence life and career services, where he worked on diversity and inclusion initiatives. At Auburn, he serves as an instructor for a STEM first-year seminar course and introductory course within the business school. In teaching for a few years, his teaching philosophy is centered around the transformative learning theory and Kolb's Learning Cycle. He is a doctoral student in Higher Education & Administration at Auburn University. His research interests lie in formal mentorship programs for minoritized students and success strategies for minoritized students pursuing a STEM degree.

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Elizabeth Legerski, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of North Dakota. Her research interests include gender, family, social inequality, and health and social policy. Her work explores the way family characteristics, employment opportunities, social policies, and religious values shape the lives of low-income, working-class, and other marginalized families. She is also interested in the scholarship of teaching, including the use of open education resources and technologies to reduce educational inequalities. Her work has been published in journals such as *Social Forces, Gender & Society*, *Sex Roles*, *GLBT Family Studies*, *Health Sociology Review*, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *Sociology Compass*, and *Frontiers in Education*.

Austin McCoy, Ph.D. (he/him/his) is an Assistant Professor of history at Auburn University. His research interests focus on social movements and activism, the carceral state, and hip-hop culture.

Hope McCoy, Ph.D. (she/they/theirs) is a Postdoctoral Research Associate with the Pullias Center for Higher Education at the University of Southern California. Dr. McCoy works with the Promoting At-Promise Student Success (PASS) project, a mixed-method research study, specifically working on developing, assessing, and sustaining professional learning communities. McCoy's research agenda focuses on the intersection between education and diplomacy, with an interest in transnational education and policy. McCoy's dissertation examined Russian Cultural Centers in Africa, identifying the ways that nation states and students use higher education to engage in critical geopolitics. A Fulbright scholar (2015–2016 Russia) with multidisciplinary expertise, McCoy has also worked as a research strategist at Harvard University on projects related to racial justice and equity, and inclusion. Dr. McCoy has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Northwestern University and a master's degree and Ph.D. from UCLA in Education.

Kimberly X. Mulligan, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) earned her B.S. and M.S. in Chemistry from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University and Ph.D. in Molecular Physiology and Biophysics from Vanderbilt University. Upon completion of her degree, she worked for the Vanderbilt University Center for Science Outreach where she merged her love of science and desire to enhance STEM education through the creation of elective scientific curriculum and professional development opportunities which fostered interdisciplinary learning in the United States and abroad. In her current role as the Assistant Dean of Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity for the Auburn University College of Sciences and Mathematics, she works to develop and implement initiatives which create an inclusive environment for a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. Dr. Mulligan utilizes her position to explore new avenues to promote inclusion in higher education to help shape a STEM workforce that reflects our diverse population.

Thalia Mulvihill, Ph.D. (Dr.) is Professor of Higher Education and Social Foundations in the Department of Educational Leadership at Ball State University. She teaches several qualitative research methods and academic writing courses for doctoral students and has authored six books as well as 77 refereed publications, co-edits *The Teacher Educator* journal,

and is the recipient of numerous teaching, research, and mentoring awards.

Pat Munday, Ph.D. (he/him/his) is a Professor of Science and Technology Studies with Montana Tech in Butte. He has taught a wide array of web-based courses since 1999, including courses in communication, history, and philosophy. He has long been interested in issues concerning multicultural education in his own teaching of and working with Han and minoritized students in China, Indigenous American students, and international students in the United States. He has also researched multicultural education and has published on the history of American students in Germany, twentieth-century Chinese American students in China, and contemporary Chinese minoritized students in China.

Jonathan J. Okstad, MBA, M.Ed. (he/him/his) is a doctoral candidate in the higher education program at Loyola University Chicago and currently serves as a research and teaching assistant. Before enrolling at Loyola, he served in various higher education roles within academic affairs, advancement, alumni relations, and student activities. Previously, he worked in the non-profit sector in the United States and Central America for an NGO. Jonathan's research interests center around equitable and inclusive learning environments, university finance and governance, and underrepresented populations and communities in higher education. Jonathan received his baccalaureate degree from North Dakota State University in sociology and earned a Master of Education degree in youth development leadership from the University of Minnesota and a Master of Business Administration degree from St. Catherine University.

Julian Oliver (he/him/his) is a two-time graduate of Wright State University where he earned his Bachelors of Science in Athletic Training/Sports Medicine & his Masters of Education in Student Affairs Administration. Although Julian has been with the Auburn Family for a short time, he has intentionally fostered a genuine and meaningful relationship with all the students he serves. Julian firmly believes that no matter what office or department an individual works in, the students will not care how much you know until they know you really care. As the Office of Inclusion, Equity & Diversity Program Coordinator, Julian hopes to continue to build up young adults to become leaders within their future professions and their surrounding communities. If one wants to reach a destination quickly, they go alone; but if one wants to go far,

they unite as one community and go together. And that is exactly the type of culture that Julian hopes to manifest as he continues his career within Higher Education.

C. Casey Ozaki, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) is a Professor in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of North Dakota and the Chair for the Department of Education, Health, and Behavior Studies. During the period discussed in Chapter 9, she served as a Faculty Fellow for Inclusive Excellence, working with faculty and academic units on diversity and inclusion in the classroom.

Laura Parson, Ph.D. (she/her/hers) is Assistant Professor of Educational and Organizational Leadership at North Dakota State University. Her work seeks to understand how policy, procedures, discourses, and institutional environments inform student experiences, and how the institution coordinates those factors through translocal practices.

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Elizabeth Bond Rogers, Ph.D. (she/her/ hers) has had the opportunity to work in many roles in her career in education including public high school teacher, outdoor educator, adjunct faculty, college administrator, community education organizer, and instructor of faculty development. Liz received her M.Ed. from UC Santa Barbara and her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership & Policy at the University of Utah. Currently Liz serves as the Director of Faculty Development and Transformational Educational Initiatives at Salt Lake Community College. Liz engages in faculty and staff professional development, climate assessments, program development, and curriculum design, and she deeply appreciates collaborating with colleagues in this work. Liz's research and practice are grounded in gender and racial justice, equity-mindedness, and compassion.

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List of Figures

List of Tables

Introduction

Laura Parson and C. Casey Ozaki

Education in virtual settings[1] is a reality that was forced on almost all higher education practitioners in March of 2020, yet online education was already a reality for many higher education practitioners prior to COVID-19 and looming on the horizon for many of the rest. COVID-19 accelerated, at a significant financial, emotional, and mental cost, higher education's transition to virtual education. In 2020, the transition of courses and content online occurred almost overnight, which required instructors to transform a face-to-face or hybrid course into an online

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[1]We use online and virtual interchangeably in this volume to refer to education delivered synchronously and asynchronously via virtual methods including Learning Managements Systems (LMS) like Canvas and Blackboard and live videoconferencing programs like Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

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medium. This transition required instructors to, at a minimum, transition content, transform teaching methods, and learn new technologies. They did this all while dealing with the impact of a pandemic on their lives and the lives of their students. Even without the added pressure of a global pandemic, creating or revising an online course requires a great deal of (often unpaid and/or unrecognized) work, and so this quick transition was often rocky and fraught. The "education of the future" was accelerated to the present, and this revealed the need for more knowledge, training, and innovation in virtual education. Furthermore, and critically, the transition to virtual education also illuminated stark disparities between students' access to higher education content when delivered virtually, which further exacerbated existing disparities.

Indeed, COVID-19 and the resultant transition to virtual education highlighted what critics of online education had been saying for years: online education is not the panacea for all of higher education's woes. Without careful and thoughtful attention, online education can exacerbate problems of access, equitable inclusion, and content knowledge construction. Yet, online higher education can also present an opportunity for expanded access to higher education, diminished student costs, and increased profit. There is potential (perhaps great potential) for virtual education to promote social justice in ways that traditional higher education cannot. But the costs of online higher education are real, too, and we will illustrate some of those costs through an exploration of the history of online education and a problematizing of the tenets on which many pro-online education arguments are based. We begin this introduction to the volume with a brief and targeted overview of the history of online education, followed by a discussion of its limitations and potential for great harm. Then, we discuss the opportunities presented by online education, the opportunities on which this volume is premised. Finally, we conclude with an overview of the chapters included in this volume and, we hope, cautionary optimism that, with careful attention and intention, social justice can still be promoted in online and virtual education settings.

OVERVIEW OF ONLINE EDUCATION

Feenberg (2017) described the emergence of online education as a supplement to distance education—educational content was sent via mail to students—where students would "discuss" the content received with

fellow students on a web forum tool. The first course delivered that way was through Western Behavioral Sciences Institute in 1982 (Feenberg, 2017). While this use of an online tool was to supplement student learning, there had been attempts to replace instructors with technology as early as the 1950s with Computer Aided Instruction (CAI), although those attempts were not successful; computers cannot replace human interaction (Feenberg, 2017). Yet, as budget cuts in higher education became a perennial challenge, institutions viewed online education as an economic alternative to live, human interaction (Feenberg, 2017). These pushes for online education sought to remove the need for human interaction despite technological advances that were allowing virtual interactions to happen more easily and synchronously (Feenberg, 2017).

As virtual tools continued to evolve and facilitate synchronous human interaction more easily, the next major innovation in online education came with Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs), which brought courses to thousands of students through direct instruction mediums, like videos and readings, with evaluations and discussions, facilitated by peers instead of instructors (Feenberg, 2017). MOOCs were also viewed with excitement in higher education as a cost-saving course delivery model (Turner & Gassaway, 2019), yet they had a 90% dropout rate (Feenberg, 2017) and raised concerns about the ease in which western knowledges are exported to non-Western locations, further colonizing global higher education (Adam, 2019; Reyes & Segal, 2019). However, those criticisms did not temper hopes that MOOCs could help to bring education one step closer to automation and, therefore, reduce faculty salary costs: "The promise of technology is the transformation of education into a decreasing cost item, like CDs or pencils. Initial investment in courses may be high, but the nth copy will be nearly free. Economies of scale will save mass education from bankruptcy" (Feenberg, 2017, p. 365). Indeed, online education outside of the MOOC model, which had largely fallen out of fashion prior to COVID-19 global quarantines, raised hopes that higher education could be exported nationally and globally and simultaneously reduce costs (Smith et al., 2018).

Pre-COVID, more common than fully online courses, synchronous or asynchronous, were blended courses, where different types and amounts of online resources were incorporated into face-to-face classes. This was often seen through the use of Learning Management System (LMS) such as Canvas, Blackboard, or Google Classroom where portions of the content were delivered online. One example of a blended classroom

model was the "flipped classroom," where direct instruction was delivered asynchronously for review prior to a synchronous course meeting that often met face-to-face. Class time in the "flipped classroom" was dedicated to projects, collaborative learning, and answering questions, which represented a "customization" of education typical of blended education (Grimaldi & Ball, 2021). Blended education became, at least in some ways, a foundational part of the "hybrid" model that was touted by higher education institutions as the course delivery model during the 2020–2021 academic year. Hybrid courses during COVID-19 were explained at my (Laura's) institution as a model that allowed for students to attend in-person, virtual-synchronously, virtual-asynchronously, or a combination of the three and still receive a similar educational experience. The description of "hyflex" or hybrid/online education as creating equal access to course content is evidence of the extreme ways online educational tools were marketed as creating equitable access but, in practice, required exceptional levels of work from faculty and still could not feasibly offer the same educational experiences across virtual and in-person settings. The need to promote a seamless experience for students who had various expectations for a pandemic college experience illustrates how the student, conceptualized as a consumer, impacted education delivery through the pandemic. Altogether, understanding neoliberalism provides additional insight into the ways that virtual education is marketed and discussed by higher education leaders.

Online Education and Neoliberalism

Although a deep exploration of neoliberalism is outside the scope of this chapter, understanding how a neoliberal view of higher education impacts the management and organization of higher education is key to understanding the ways that institutions talk about online education and online learners. According to Maiese (2021), neoliberalism is "an ensemble of ideological forces and norms whose primary aim is to construct a specific kind of social reality, one in which every aspect of human life is managed and evaluated in relation to market demands" (p. 285). In a neoliberal environment, higher education is viewed a commodity instead of a public good (Mayo, 2017), and students are the consumers; through a neoliberal lens, the individual student is responsible for learning the content as long as the institution has provided the educational product (Grimaldi &

Ball, 2021). In this view of students, students are expected to be self-directed, motivated, and seek out any needed help and support (Winslow, 2017); as consumers who are responsible for their own development, they are also expected to continue learning across their lifetime to increase or maintain their role as a valuable participant in the economy (e.g., life-long learning. Through a neoliberal lens, an institution must supply the educational product that helps students to meet an economic goal (i.e., employment; Maiese, 2021). Once an institution provides an adequate educational experience to students, students are responsible for being successful: "blame is placed on individuals, not the structure, institution, or external circumstances that put them in a position to fail in the first place" (Winslow, 2017, p. 587). This allows institutions to place the blame on students who do not succeed as lacking motivation, skills, or foundational knowledge instead of being held accountable for lacking content, delivery, and/or student support. Further, by marketing online education as a method for increasing access to content using examples of marginalized learners who were successful online, institutions tout online education as a social justice initiative that will emancipate disadvantaged learners without the infrastructure, content, and practices needed to create a truly inclusive and emancipatory online learning experience (Winslow, 2017).

Neoliberal market changes, such as the privatization of public services or the rapid shift to online learning tools during the COVID-19 pandemic, often occur during crises:

> in the wake of geopolitical unrest, economic turmoil, and natural disasters … neoliberalism can then absorb the most painful effects of these manufactured crises by shifting chaos and upheaval onto easily disposed of populations: the poor, the sick, the immigrant, and the elderly. In contrast, it is the powerful and aligned that can take full advantage of neoliberal disasters. For them, neoliberalism represents a platform where free individuals can then compete fairly, unencumbered by bureaucratic interference from the state. (Winslow, 2017, p. 587)

In these "raids on the public sphere" (Winslow, 2017, p. 587), neoliberalism thrives on crisis, "because it is only in vulnerable moments—when citizens are psychologically unmoored, economically fragile, or physically uprooted—that old habits could be remade in accordance with the purity and perfection [*sic*] envisioned" (Winslow, 2017, p. 586). Prior

to the pandemic, online education had most firmly taken root in the for-profit education sector: "it is a natural occurrence whenever technological evolutions disrupt the status quo that they initially take root at the bottom of the market—in this case in online education's adoption in for-profit schools, community colleges, and nonselective public schools— before moving up and displacing more established institutions" (Winslow, 2017, p. 583). For institutions, online education can be an opportunity to increase profits: "By appealing to efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and disruptive technological innovations, online education facilitates the commodification of higher education in ways that reflect the core principles of market logics. For example, online education discourses can scale up from hundreds of students to thousands and millions at minimal cost" (Winslow, 2017, p. 591). As the pandemic forced a shift to online education, institutions might now try to capitalize and keep or expand online delivery of courses where it proves viable (and, perhaps, even where it did/does not lead to equitable learning outcomes).

Problematizing Online Education

Early on, online courses were often delivered by private and/or for-profit institutions, such as the University of Phoenix in the United States, where education relied on discussions facilitated by tutors and delivered pre-recorded content created by professors in a way that combined "deprofessionalization and automation" (Feenberg, 2017, p. 369). Across the industry, online courses had high attrition rates (Feenberg, 2017), students had reduced access to on-campus resources (Smith et al., 2018), and, reportedly, students felt like they were paying the same price as on-campus students for a lesser education (Smith et al., 2018). Faculty reinforced reports of diminished educational environment online, reporting that they struggled to create and implement critical pedagogy and provide important emotional support online (Smith et al., 2018). Research supports the assertion that an online education is "less than:" "When the face-to-face educational relationship is substituted for a screen, interaction becomes strained, less enjoyable, and less rewarding" (Winslow, 2017, p. 585). As a consequence, online education often limits social interaction between students (Winslow, 2017, p. 585): "the online learning environment affords and solicits a more distant, less fully embodied mode of communication and interpersonal engagement. There are few opportunities to develop the sorts of communicative skills

needed to navigate disagreement or partake in 'difficult conversations' about controversial issues" (Maiese, 2021, p. 294). The challenges of online education are not mitigated by synchronous courses: Although synchronous online classes may increase opportunities for interaction and collaboration, they cannot not adapt to the reality of student lives (especially relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic, when family schedules drastically changed; Schwartzman, 2020).

The online student often targeted by online education is classified as underserved (Feenberg, 2017), and many students may need access to technological tools that are not evenly available across the "digital divide," such as appropriate bandwidth, software, computers/tablets, consistent access (Schwartzman, 2020; Smith et al., 2018). A student's frustration with trying to access the content because of technology limitations can become a barrier to learning that occurs before instruction begins. According to Winslow (2017), prior to COVID-19, online learners were "more vulnerable to unforeseen events, are less technically skilled, less confident in their technical abilities, less likely to have Internet access and access to computers, have less prior computer training, less educational experience, lower class ranks and incoming GPAs, less learner readiness, less awareness of their own learning style, and are more likely to work outside of school" (pp. 585–586). Further, even though online courses are often marketed as more accessible, learning materials may not be always truly accessible (e.g., lacking alternate text for images) (Schwartzman, 2020).

The promise of online higher education was to increase access to people who would have been traditionally excluded, either through test scores, location, or money (Winslow, 2017). Yet, when access is limited by technology, materials are inaccessible, student interaction is limited, and/or content is delivered without regard to context, that promise fails, and the failures of higher education are replicated online. Within a neoliberal environment, where the onus is on the student to perform, failure is seen as the student's fault even when infrastructure has not been put into place to support student learning. Crisis only serves to reinforce an emphasis on individual responsibility, valorizing students who are able to succeed despite increased challenges, "reinforcing the meritocracy that accompanies privilege" (Schwartzman, 2020, p. 510).

Online education also puts additional labor on faculty and instructors. Pushes for more online education often come in times of increased retrenchment measures (e.g., budget cuts, reduced hours, program cuts),

where an increased teaching load may come with the additional burden of increased online education requirements (Smith et al., 2018). Smith and colleagues (2018) found that online education created challenges for instructors as it related to their available time, as faculty had to spend time converting face-to-face courses to online formats, reviewing increasing numbers of student discussion posts, all while they faced pressure to be available to students all of the time. This resulted in less time for research and other scholarly activities and less time for individual attention for students. While online education may have been promoted as an opportunity for professors to make their content available nationally or globally, the pressure put on faculty to create online content, record high-quality videos, and facilitate online environments—skills that most faculty are not trained in—resulted in an increased workload and increased pressures to perform to meet market demand (Winslow, 2017).

Opportunities for Online Education

Despite numerous concerns about online education, it is still considered by many to be one future of higher education that increases access to previously unavailable content and credentialing. We suggest that many of the promises of online education are still possible, although that possibility relies on appropriate instructional methods, thoughtful use of technology, and attention to equitable student access, which we define as access not limited by technology or dis/ability. Yet, even equitable access must be carefully considered, especially as access to Western beliefs, methods, and systems of thinking risks further colonization through delivery methods, teaching methods, and colonizing content:

> At risk are diverse approaches to learning, indigenous ways of teaching, and unique perspectives on how knowledge is transmitted and received within different cultures. Because technology design and development accelerate exponentially, countries which have fewer resources, infrastructure, and knowledge base become set in the role of education consumers, and those countries which have greater technology resources continue to benefit as the producers and deliverers of higher education on a global level. This producer–consumer relationship increases dependency upon Western approaches to higher education and further promotes a growing power differential among nations and cultures. (Reyes & Segal, 2019, p. 382)

Although globalization is often touted as an unmitigated good, whether or not content should be globalized through online learning needs to consider the audience and if and how the educational processes, including the content, perpetuates colonization (Reyes & Segal, 2019).

Altogether, online education has the potential to vastly expand access: "distance formats of course delivery are valued for their capacity to expand access for students who are socially disadvantaged or geographically isolated. It is believed that students from remote communities, Indigenous students, students with varying (dis)abilities, and others who face structural barriers to accessing post-secondary education can achieve a degree without leaving their home communities" (Smith et al., 2018, p. 699). Online education, especially as it reaches a wide audience and connects individuals that may not have otherwise been connected, provides an opportunity for consciousness raising, or an, "opportunity for disadvantaged populations to build community responsibility and engagement" (Reyes & Segal, 2019, p. 380). Online education,

> creates opportunities for those who would not otherwise have the chance to pursue higher education to expand their understanding of social conditions and thereby raise their levels of awareness. Such consciousness is an essential means of acquiring the tools to succeed in local and global economies and social structures. In this educational environment, technology may be harnessed to incubate ideas to alleviate poverty, separation, and oppression. (Reyes & Segal, 2019, p. 380)

The achievement of these goals, however lofty, requires careful attention to content, access, teaching methods, and use of technology. We discuss each component of virtual education in this volume.

Outline of the Volume

In this volume, we discuss ways to mitigate the potential harms of online education as well as opportunities to expand access to content, promote social justice, and consider equity and inclusion in course design and delivery. The COVID-19 pandemic led higher education courses as well as student affairs and faculty development programming to move to virtual and online settings. This revealed a clear gap in the skill set for higher education professionals across the board—most were not trained as instructors and almost none had received formal training in synchronous

and asynchronous online. While virtual classroom settings can provide new ways of access to higher education, if those virtual settings do not consider privilege, access, and equity, those settings will just serve to reinforce and replicate existing marginalization and disempowerment.

In this book, the fourth volume of the series, we focus on how to promote social justice in higher education in virtual and remote classroom settings. Chapters focus on updating the scholarship of teaching and learning in the context of the online classroom, providing updates to the application of traditional learning theories in virtual and remote settings, and specific applications of SoTL to improve teaching and learning to promote equity in the classroom through specific content areas such as STEM.

Chapter 2, Designing and Using Online Discussions to Promote Social Justice and Equity, provides an overview of the research on the experiences of underrepresented students in online courses and share resources to build on student strengths to create welcoming classrooms. Using culturally responsive pedagogy, universal design for learning, and transformative learning, the authors demonstrate how to create equitable small group online discussions using multi-modal asynchronous and synchronous technologies.

Chapter 3, Designing the Syllabus for an Online Course: Focus on Learners and Equity Online, describes how syllabus design can create challenges for learners and provides actionable steps and examples for how instructors can leverage technology to create syllabi that meet the needs of diverse learners. The author's focus is on how to create a learner-centered syllabus that both centers learning and equity, including ways to consider accessibility and context.

Chapter 4, Synergistic Pedagogies in Virtual Spaces: Preparing Social Justice Educational Researchers Through SoTL, discusses approaches to teaching qualitative research methods courses online with a focus on how empathy, critical questioning, and ambiguity inform the exploration of power structures as a part of research design and analysis. The authors also discuss how to teaching these courses online to promote reflection, critical questioning, and empathy.

Chapter 5, Remoting into STEM Summer Bridge Programs, describes how to adapt a STEM summer bridge program, a program that has been identified as important in recruiting and retaining students traditionally underrepresented in STEM programs, in virtual environments. After discussing the components of successful bridge programs, the chapter

describes methods for adapting a program to a virtual environment through the lens of creating Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE: Museus, 2014).

Chapter 6, Transitions, engagements, and environments: Supporting underrepresented students through e-learning, presents curriculum and pedagogical strategies for faculty to incorporate through the lens of the Equity-Minded Framework and Technology Acceptance Model. These frameworks are used as ways to help ensure that underrepresented students are engaged and supported to flourish in an e-learning format. The authors provide tools and resources to support learners from diverse backgrounds in multiple education settings and levels.

Chapter 7, Brave New World: Transformational Teaching for a Web-based Multicultural Education Course in the Age of COVID-19, explores the difference between a "safe" space and a "brave" space, exploring why creating a brave space is needed to promote more equitable learning spaces that promote social justice. Through the lens of transformative teaching, this chapter provides actionable recommendations to create a virtual classroom environment that balances challenge and support and encourages critical reflection.

Chapter 8, Building Virtual Communities of Practice for Equity in Education, discusses how to help practitioners implement equity changes in their schools. The authors discuss how to create virtual communities of practice and examines the experiences of participants in the RIDES Institute through the lens of Ubuntu. Through the framework of Ubuntu, the chapter explores how creating communities of practices that includes teachers and school leaders can create a sense of belonging through a shared mission.

Chapter 9, Resisting State Violence: Teaching Social Justice Virtually in an Era of Black Lives Matter and the Coronavirus, discusses how COVID-19 and 2020's uprisings against structural racism led to a reconceptualization of how to build community, teach histories of anti-racist movements, and to prepare students to engage politics virtually. The author describes how he reimagined teaching history and organizing in a virtual setting in a way that helped students to develop the organizing tools they needed to mobilize people for protest, create political education projects, and to form their own organizations.

Chapter 10, Four Keys to Unlocking Equitable Learning: Retrieval, Spacing, Interleaving, and Elaborative Encoding, reviews four of the most heavily researched and empirically supported cognitive learning principles:

retrieval practice, spaced learning, interleaved learning, and elaborative encoding, and makes suggestions for how they might be incorporated in virtual setting to create more equitable learning outcomes.

Chapter 11, Teaching Empathy Online Through an Ethic of Care, envisions teaching empathy online through the lens of an Ethic of Care. The authors adapt a framework for teaching through an ethic of care for teaching empathy online in various content areas and settings. An ethic of care emphasizes relationships and perspective taking, which makes it a valid framework for teaching empathy online in a way that promotes social justice and promotes development at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and global level.

Finally, Chapter 12, Queering the Classroom: Emancipating Knowledge(s) through (Found) Poetry, proposes (found) poetry as an instructional tool to disrupt normative classroom practices and uncover alter/native interpretations of course material. Through the lens of Queer theory, the author discusses how (found) poetry can engage students in discussion on relevant topics to the course material, interpretations of the course material, and classroom discussions on how student make sense of the world.

Conclusion

As I (Laura) was writing the introduction to this volume, the fourth and likely final volume in this Teaching and Learning for Social Justice in Higher Education series, I was simultaneously fielding emails from faculty in response to an internal request for proposals (RFP) for programs that would like to seek funds to become completely virtual. In many ways, the conversation I would like to have with my colleagues mirrors much of what I covered in this chapter, which began with a brief overview of online education and then proceeds to a problematization of online education, especially as it relates to creating a more equitable and inclusive higher education environment, one that promotes social justice. Before COVID-19, online education was touted as a solution to higher education's problems of scale, funding, access, and relevance in a way that reflects the neoliberal reality of the higher education market-place. That argument is still being used by institutions today, who may see the forced transition to online education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to create new online programs and, therefore, new

pathways to increased attendance and profit. Yet, the transition to online education and the delivery of online education is rarely as simple as it seems, even with courses that were (forced) to be delivered virtually throughout the pandemic. The additional (unpaid or underpaid) labor required from higher education practitioners with any transition to virtual education is often formally (and informally) unrecognized in a new public management logic that governs a neoliberal shift to higher education.

For my colleagues, and perhaps all programs discussing whether to pursue a completely virtual and asynchronous delivery model, the conversation needs to be grounded in an awareness of why higher education institutions might offer to financially support efforts to go virtual—the view of online education through an economies of scale argument is tempting in a higher education environment struggling with low enrollment, continuing budget cuts, and pressure to treat students as paying customers. Through that understanding, a program might see how a virtual delivery could benefit both the program and its faculty: receiving funds to work on the transition to an online program as well as the potential for increased student enrollment in the new program might help to keep one employed, as it becomes increasingly difficult to rationalize one's job if there are no students enrolling in the program. Yet, the costs of transitioning to and delivering an online education program are not limited to time, and those costs are often unpaid and unrecognized. Teaching and delivering an online course often requires more work, albeit different work, and the mental and emotional toll of that work are different and often misunderstood if not completely unacknowledged. Online education also results in a potential cost in decreased scholarly productivity and increased student support and time demands, costs that have to be measured and balanced in making any decision to take a program online. The impact of these changes are complicated by questions about if and how the transition to online education can truly do what it purports to do without negatively impacting student access.

Online education is not the panacea scholars once hoped it could be, and its use needs to be thoughtfully considered, planned, and its impacts assessed for it to continue to educate. The need for attention to content, methods, and assessment is increased in efforts to promote social justice through online education. The authors in this volume address some of those key considerations. If virtual education is both our present and our future, we hope that this volume can inform practice in ways that allow for immediate implementation of teaching methods, frameworks,

and models to promote equity, inclusion, and diversity in the higher education classroom.

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Designing and Using Online Discussions to Promote Social Justice and Equity

Staci Gilpin, Virginia Clinton-Lisell, Elizabeth Legerski, and Bri Rhodes

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Asynchronous:	Students participate at times that work best for their learning while meeting a set schedule of deadlines.
Discussions:	Interactions among peers guided by the instructor.

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15

Instructors:	People teaching online courses, including those involved with course design.
Microaggressions:	Acts of everyday systemic racism which include acts of disregard or subtle insults stemming from often unconscious attitudes of white superiority (Bell et al., 2016; Solorzano & Perez-Huber, 2020).
Online learning:	Post-secondary, credit-bearing coursework that is delivered through a learning management system (LMS) such as Blackboard or Canvas.
Persistence:	Students enrolling in a course and completing it with a passing grade.
Synchronous:	Students participate at the same moment in real-time.
Underrepresented:	Students who have historically been less well represented in higher education (e.g., LatinX and Black students).

Introduction

The online student population continues to grow as students look for convenience and flexibility. To illustrate, the Strada Center for Education Consumer Insights (2020) surveyed 22,000 Americans that included a diverse group of learners of all ages. One of their findings indicates 59% prefer online-only or hybrid models over exclusively face-to-face experiences with the preference for online learning even stronger for Women and Black learners. This growth and interest is promising as online courses are often equivalent in quality to face-to-face courses (Bowers & Kumar, 2015) and provide access to higher education for students who otherwise may not attend. However, some studies show students have

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lower persistence rates for online courses than face-to-face courses (Hart, 2012; Xu & Jaggars, 2011). Instructors must consider how the influx of diverse students can provide new opportunities for online course design.

Today's online learners differ from online learners of yesteryear, which may contribute to lower online persistence rates. It seems the iconic distance learner of the Twentieth Century/early Twenty first Century who was geographically isolated or bound, an older adult, and goal-oriented is no longer as prevalent. As we move deeper into the Twenty first Century, and technology continues to evolve rapidly, the distance education population is shifting to learners that are more diverse, tentative, and younger (Bawa, 2016). For example, 45% of today's online learners are undergraduates living on-campus (or within proximity) while taking a mix of face-to-face and online courses due to the flexibility online courses afford students (Raza et al., 2020; Seaman et al., 2018). It is essential to note today's online learners understand, value, and engage in social interaction and collaborative learning and possess strong interpersonal and communication skills (Bawa, 2016). This is key because interactions and collaboration are deemed critical to student success and necessary for post-secondary persistence (Tinto, 1993). Fostering these relationships is easier in face-to-face courses, yet more difficult and often lacking in online courses (Callister & Love, 2016; Cherney et al., 2018). As a result, it may be difficult for online students to feel part of an institution's social fabric, which is critical for student success and retention, thus impacting online student persistence.

Moreover, there are issues of equity and inclusion that arise in online courses that must be addressed because they also likely contribute to lower persistence rates. These concerns are illuminated when we consider that some groups of students who have historically been underrepresented in higher education are even less well represented in online courses (e.g., LatinX and Black students). For example, an analysis of administrative data at one university showed Black and LatinX students were 10–20% less likely to enroll in online courses than their white counterparts (Cheslock et al., 2018). Studies analyzing nationally representative data show similar trends, noting the odds of minoritized students enrolling in some or all online courses ranged from about 14 to 26% less depending on the academic year (Ortagus, 2017). As a result of this underrepresentation, they lack an online presence, which impacts LatinX-white and other achievement gaps, hypothesized to widen with the additional challenges associated with online learning. When students from underrepresented

groups attend online courses, their persistence rates are lower than for face-to-face courses (Kaupp, 2012).

It is important to remember when we discuss underrepresented groups and the barriers they face, that we recognize we are talking about populations who were, and still are, historically and systematically excluded. We need to be cognizant of language, because inaccurate and exclusionary language can suggest that these situations simply came to be, as if by accident. However, the first step in unpacking inequality in online spaces is to acknowledge that it exists by design. Some examples of the challenges specific to online courses that exist for underrepresented groups include bias and microaggressions, absence of their culture, and access to technology. In the end, these barriers impact student persistence.

In this chapter, we begin by describing in more detail the reasons some groups of students are underrepresented in online courses and why they have lower persistence rates when they do attend. Then we consider online discussions and their impact on students from underrepresented groups. To improve online student experiences, we outline a plan that emphasizes the creation of a welcoming classroom culture, grounded in culturally responsive pedagogy, universal design for learning, and opportunities for transformative learning to create equitable small group online discussions using multi-modal asynchronous and synchronous technologies. Within this plan, we address concerns related to adequate bandwidth and access to technology. Through a proactive approach, we share how to build off student strengths and minimize difficulties while also using any challenges that may arise as opportunities to promote growth. Resources and a lesson plan checklist are shared to support instructors in implementing equitable online discussions and navigating difficulties in a meaningful way. Ultimately, we share how to create more inclusive online courses that broaden access for underrepresented students while also making classes more accessible to all.

UNDERREPRESENTED ONLINE LEARNERS

Bias and Microaggressions

First, bias and microaggressions are important to consider when looking at underrepresentation of some groups of students in online courses and their low online persistence rates. Microaggressions are acts of everyday systemic racism which include acts of disregard or subtle insults stemming

from often unconscious attitudes of white superiority (Bell et al., 2016; Solorzano & Perez-Huber, 2020). Examples of microaggressions include people of color being ignored by salesclerks, watched for shoplifting, complemented for speaking "good English," or expected to perform a certain way (e.g., teachers expecting students of color to not perform as well as white students). Compounding these acts is the lack of awareness by those who commit microaggressions that they have done anything offensive (Ortega et al., 2018). Microaggressions are associated with a lower sense of belonging among those that experience them (Lewis et al., 2019) and over time microaggressions have harmful cumulative effects including psychological, physiological, and academic tolls (Solorzano & Perez-Huber, 2020).

Unfortunately, many of the same kinds of microaggressions identified in in-person classrooms can also be identified in online learning environments (Cohn, 2016). While instructors may not have the same opportunities to see and hear their students in online courses, students will see the materials posted and likely the instructor too. The findings of a large-scale study of online course enrollment pages suggest that visual and verbal cues send important messages about the diversity climate of a course, shaping students' anticipated sense of belonging and success, ultimately impacting their decision to enroll in online courses (Kizilcec & Kambhampaty, 2020). In addition, there is evidence that LatinX students and other students of color perceive racism and microaggressions in online courses more frequently than in face-to-face courses (Barraclough & McMahon, 2013; Mills, 2020) and there is consensus that instructors must deal with them immediately (Cohn, 2016; Maslowski, 2020; Ortega et al., 2018; Plotts, 2020a). In short, some students are being excluded from online education due to bias and microaggressions and, by extension, from critical learning opportunities.

Culture

Second, cultural norms and values shape how people think and behave, which in turn influences how one teaches and learns (Gay, 2010). As a result, one would assume culture is always on the minds of instructors as they design courses, especially online courses given lower persistence rates. Nonetheless, Plotts (2020a) argues that culture is often ignored in online spaces, leading to online courses that are not aligned with the values of underrepresented students. Plotts (2020a) also argues that considering

students' culture in online environments is perhaps more important than in face-to-face environments as online spaces are void of social cues. In fact, researchers have found ethnic and cultural consideration to increase course attendance and individual participation (Booker et al., 2016).

The mismatch between culture and underrepresented students in online courses is evident in the individualistic approach to most online course design, which is based on academia's bias towards white culture. This approach includes assignments completed individually even though many underrepresented students, such as LatinX and Black students, identify with collectivist cultures. Collectivist cultures tend to value collaboration, communication, and relationships, which are supported in learning environment utilizing small learning communities and collaborative assignments (Plotts, 2020a). Unfortunately, opportunities for small learning communities may be more limited in online courses compared to face-to-face classes. Consequently, underrepresented students may experience cultural conflict with typical online structures due to barriers that limit their connection with others (Luyt, 2013; Ojeda et al., 2014) impacting their satisfaction and persistence.

Access to Technology

Third, some suggest a lack of access to high-speed internet and the technology needed to fully participate in online classes as other contributing factors to the underrepresentation and low persistence rates of some groups in online courses (Johnson & Mejia, 2014). Technology is essential for students taking face-to-face classes but perhaps even more so for those taking online classes. In a face-to-face class, it is easier for instructors to make accommodations for students without access to technology by having computers available that students can use during class. In addition, campuses typically provide internet to on-campus students without access fees, and it is possible to provide low tech assignments (i.e., pencil and paper) if necessary. Online courses require frequent use of fast and reliable internet technologies to complete course activities. This means those without access to a reliable computer and high-speed internet cannot fully participate, thereby jeopardizing success for already marginalized students, creating a sense of shame and anxiety, and leaving students feeling like second-class citizens. As an example, consider the photo (https://www.ksbw.com/article/photo-showing-2-salinas-girls-doing-homework-outside-taco-bell-goes-viral/33834659) of

the students doing their homework outside a Taco Bell on social media that gathered substantial attention. For students like these, it is important to consider the added time and energy required to access resources when they are not readily available at home. What is the "success cost" for those students?

To be sure, access to internet and technology is an issue that arises for students across all populations and is part of the larger issue of income inequality as lower income students often struggle with unreliable internet and subpar technology (Baraniuk et al., 2017). However, over the years, the enrollment gaps between LatinX and white peers has widened in online-learning environments by nearly 50 percent. Some tend to suggest this is due to limited access to technology (Johnson & Mejia, 2014). Another factor to consider is that unlike face-to-face classes, to fully participate in online classes students also need to have access to quiet workspaces (NYU Steinhardt, 2020). Without a quiet place to attend online classes and study, the fastest internet or newest technology will not make a difference. To improve online student persistence, institutions need to support online students in obtaining both the tools they need and spaces conducive to learning, while also supporting instructors in their knowledge and understanding of the different types of tools available and the bandwidth requirements to use them.

So far, we have illuminated today's online learner as one that is diverse, tentative, and young, who values relationships, collaboration, and social interaction, yet opportunities to foster these relationships may be limited online while easier in face-to-face learning environments. Additionally, the mismatch between culture and the online environment, experiences of bias and microaggressions, and access to technology have been identified as prevalent issues across groups in online spaces and likely contribute to the underrepresentation and low persistence of some groups of online learners. Issues of equity and inclusion that arise more often in online courses than face-to-face courses must be addressed to improve student persistence. Still, despite these challenges, online formats can provide a valuable option for students when done thoughtfully. Thus, the task is to take the currently available research and use it to inform the creation of online learning environments and interactions that are mindful of students' culture and systemic racism, and address access to technology. In the next section, we share how online discussions can accomplish this while simultaneously supporting student persistence.

Online Discussions

Benefits

Regardless of delivery modality, online or face-to-face, discussions are commonly defined as verbal interactions among peers, guided by the instructor, and deemed an effective method of actively engaging students in course content (Freeman et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2009). In general, discussions help with community building, provide opportunities for peers to support each other and interact with content, and prepare students for collaboration in the workplace (Poll et al., 2014; Uijl et al., 2017; Zach & Agosto, 2009). There are two types of online discussions: Asynchronous (Kauffman, 2015), which are usually text-based responses through a learning management system (LMS) threaded discussion board and synchronous (Francescucci & Rohani, 2019; Yuan & Wu, 2020), usually through video conferencing, such as Zoom. With both types of online discussions there are numerous benefits.

For example, online peer-to-peer discussions have been found to support knowledge construction for students across racial and ethnic backgrounds (Ke, 2013). Also, online discussions prepare students for future workplaces where online collaboration will be the norm. When designed in a culturally sensitive manner and free of microaggressions, online discussions with peers also benefit social presence because they increase sense of belonging while decreasing feelings of isolation (Andel et al., 2020; Wang & Wang, 2020). Social presence, or the perception that you are not alone in an online environment, is positively associated with positive academic outcomes (Richardson et al., 2017). This research aligns with Tinto's (1993) assertion that students need both academic and social integration to persist in post-secondary education. Whether online or face-to-face, discussions are a way to support this integration and student persistence.

Challenges

Even though there are many benefits to online discussions, common approaches to online discussions may need revitalization as many students still seem to prefer face-to-face discussions (Jaggars & Xu, 2016; Majid et al., 2015), which undoubtedly contributes to low persistence rates for online courses. Students report disliking the transactional nature of asynchronous discussion boards, miss the spontaneity and immediate feedback

of face-to-face discussions, and report discussion boards sometimes feel like busy work (Hurt et al., 2012; Majid et al., 2015). The way to increase social presence is through quality interactions, rather than a precise number of interactions (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005). As such, discussion boards, which are often grounded in posting a certain number of times (Page et al., 2020), are perhaps counterintuitive to social presence development. Additionally, asynchronous discussions can be scary for students who lack confidence, are shy, or have learning disabilities because their posts will be visible for a long time, which can feel threatening (Darby et al., 2020; Dahlstrom-Hakki et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, synchronous online discussions are used less frequently because the real-time component impacts the flexibility and convenience students want from online courses (Raza et al., 2020). Instructors are also reluctant to use synchronous discussions because students express frustration with these discussions due to technology tools not operating properly or a weak internet signal disrupting their interaction (Basaran & Yalman, 2020; Fatani, 2020). In both asynchronous and synchronous online discussions, students dislike the lack of nonverbal feedback and body language due to limited information in video feeds and text (Dixson et al., 2017; Gordon, 2020), which also likely impacts social presence. In spite of these challenges, there are new research and technology tools available to improve online discussions.

Steps to Improve

Because online learning is still relatively new, research regarding designing effective online discussions is sparse compared to research on face-to-face discussions. However, some promising findings address the previously shared downsides of online discussions. For example, Clinton and Kelly (2019) found that informing students about the usefulness of online discussions improved student attitudes. When used flexibly and with the technology access of students in mind, synchronous discussions can support students in experiencing more closely what is possible in face-to-face courses than what asynchronous tools can provide (Gilpin, 2020). Others suggest that blending asynchronous and synchronous discussions can help retain students who would otherwise fail to persist in online courses (Hart, 2012; Joksimović et al., 2014; Leeds et al., 2013; Zhan & Mei, 2013; Gilpin, 2020). New advances now make it possible to post in a multi-modal format to discussion boards using text, audio, and video

(Ching & Hsu, 2013). These developing tools offer students choice and flexibility in how they interact with their peers while also, through the visual component, making an online course seem more like a face-to-face or blended course (Page et al., 2020). These benefits notwithstanding, it is also essential to consider the unique needs of underrepresented groups when designing online discussions.

Underrepresented Groups

It is important to acknowledge two groups of students that are perhaps impacted the most by online discussions—LatinX and Black students. When it comes to connecting with others in online courses, which is crucial for social presence and persistence, one barrier for both groups is the widely used asynchronous discussion board that typically requires typed responses to long threads of posts. Research indicates Black students may be less active when participating in online text-based discussion boards than white students (Ruthotto et al., 2020). Plotts (2020a) hypothesizes this is because of the history of the Griot in Black culture which prioritizes oral conversation and storytelling (Collins, 2011). Ruby Paine (2018) also discusses that poverty, particularly among Blacks, is hallmarked by entertainment and developmental learning through speaking and listening. This also holds true for rural white students living in poverty. Because of the mismatch between online course design, which often includes text-based discussions, and cultures that are geared more towards oral interactions, students from these groups may struggle. Domingue (2016), suggests one way to address these issues and make discussion boards more inclusive for all learners is by allowing students to upload video or audio clips.

Evidence also suggests that microaggressions and bias impact online discussion participation for underrepresented groups. LatinX students experience microaggressions more often in online courses than face-to-face courses, which undoubtedly also impacts their participation in online discussions (Barraclough & McMahon, 2013). Others hypothesize the reason Black students are less active in online discussions than white students has to do with the presence of bias and microaggressions (Mills, 2020). That said, asynchronous online discussions may afford students better opportunities to respond to peers' microaggressions than synchronous or face-to-face discussions because they provide students time and space for reflection on how to best communicate and address the

issue. In contrast, identifying microaggressions can be particularly diffi-
cult in online discussion boards where comments may be "embedded in
voluminous textual entries – and therefore easily missed by well-meaning
instructors who 'speed read' through hundreds of posted discussion
threads" (Cohn, 2016, p. 1). Page and Colleagues (2020) argue that
asynchronous audio and video interactions may also facilitate more
authentic and respectful discussions when tackling controversial topics
because peers seem more "real." For both synchronous and asynchronous
online discussions, not being in the same physical space may also enhance
feelings of safety when confronting microaggressions (Eschmann, 2020)
because, to some extent, students can maintain moderate to high levels
of anonymity that can, in some cases, lead to increased participation
(Haythornthwait & Andrews, 2011; Jenkins, 2011). On the whole, there
are many benefits specific to online discussions and opportunities to
address microaggressions and bias for underrepresented groups.

A related issue has to do with discussion group size. Some suggest
group size can have a significant impact on social presence with 3–5
students per group being optimal (Akcaoglu & Lee, 2016), however
many online discussions, whether asynchronous or synchronous, are large
whole class events with sometimes upwards of 30 students. Akcaoglu
and Lee (2016) assert that small group discussions afford the develop-
ment of relationships and a sense of community better than whole group
discussions Moreover, Plotts (2020a) notes that small online discus-
sions, whether asynchronous or synchronous, support the persistence of
students from collectivist cultures by capitalizing on their ability to collab-
orate with others. All in all, small group discussions seem to align with the
values of underrepresented groups and with those, in general, of today's
online learners.

In summary, there is a need to create online environments that build
off students' strengths and preferences for authentic interaction and
collaborative small group learning. Also, research indicates it is vital to
minimize difficulties and remove barriers that students may encounter
in online discussions, such as microaggressions, racial bias, and the use
of text-based communication if online persistence rates are to improve
for underrepresented populations. Recent technological advances can aid
in this endeavor, but merely adding a tool is not enough. In the next
section, we provide specific suggestions for rejuvenating online discus-
sions. Through the creation of a classroom culture grounded in culturally
responsive pedagogy, universal design for learning, and opportunities

for transformative learning, instructors can create equitable small group online discussions that foster persistence and improve enrollment using multi-modal asynchronous and synchronous technologies. We also share accommodations that address bandwidth and access to technology.

DESIGNING AND USING EQUITABLE ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Traditional online course design often aligns with academia's bias towards white culture (Plotts, 2020a). However, by doing so and not considering the diverse culture and values of learners, this type of course design does not support the socialization process of all in online environments, and likely perpetuates low online persistence rates. Thus, it is important to filter the design of online courses and, specifically, online discussions through a culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), sometimes referred to as culturally responsive teaching. CRP is a proactive approach, not an after-thought, that can be accomplished by considering the unique needs, values, and experiences of today's online learners to include specific ethnic and cultural aspects of online learning, such as those shared earlier in regard to underrepresented groups (Heitner & Jennings, 2016; Woodley et al., 2017).

These unique factors then become instrumental in course design and provide a foundation so that students from underrepresented groups are better situated for academic success by supporting them as they balance between their own culture and the prevailing culture of the online environment (Campbell, 2015; Woodley et al., 2017). See Woodley and Colleagues (2017) for more information about CRP and implementing best practices in online spaces. It is generally agreed that small group discussions are effective for students from a variety of cultures (Plotts, 2020; Woodley et al., 2017); thus, this is a key practice aligned with CRP. Nevertheless, designing and carrying out small group discussions in the online environment can be complicated and at times sensitive. However, there are some practical things instructors can do to scaffold equitable and inclusive online discussions. Here are a few suggestions:

Collaborate with students to develop discussion guidelines. Ask students what is important to them, get feedback, and revise. This is also a great way for instructors to get to know their students—who they are, their interests, and values (Plotts, 2020a; Woodley et al., 2017). Instructors

may also share a draft of the guidelines as a starting place and ask students for feedback before revising. Either way, revisit the co-constructed guidelines throughout the course by checking in to see how students are doing with upholding the guidelines. You can do this check-in with a survey, online discussion, or both. By working with students to create discussion norms, instructors ensure that more than white academic values are represented.

Create connection. Discussions work better when students feel safe and comfortable with one another, especially for students from underrepresented groups. So, instructors should consider adding discussion prompts that ask students to discuss something unrelated to the course work that will get them to share something about themselves (Ecklund, 2013; Plotts, 2020a; Woodley et al., 2017). These types of discussions simulate the "hallway conservations" that often occur at the beginning and end of face-to-face classes, when students chat with one another. Instructors might also consider discussion activities that require students to connect course content to their cultural backgrounds and the cultural backgrounds of their peers (Peralta Online Equity Initiative, 2020).

Grading. To create a true collaborative culture that reaches more students, instructors need to reflect on their grading practices. First, instructors should consider group discussion grades rather than individual grades or a combination of group and individual grades. In addition, having course information in advance is important for online students (Mupinga et al., 2006), especially when it comes to grading. Regardless of how instructors grade discussions (group, individual, or a combination) it is recommended that online discussions account for 10–20% of the overall course grade as a way to motivate students to engage in productive discussions (Aloni & Harrington, 2018; Rovai, 2007). Also, instructors should provide students specific examples along with grading rubrics at the beginning of the semester as a tool to reduce anxiety and foster self-directed and reflective learning (Rovai, 2007).

Finally, instructors should be mindful that not all students come able to write in academic language. Plotts (2020a) asserts instructors should not get rid of academic standards in online discussions but, rather they should prioritize student growth and development related to new content/concepts. For example, she argues that if instructors want to really know what their students know, then when using text-based discussion boards, they should not grade spelling and grammar. She also suggests letting students share their sources informally rather

than formally (e.g., APA, MLA, etc.). For instance, instructors might allow students to state "I found some information in [insert article name and link] to be interesting because it supports [insert claim]" rather than require a formal in-text citation. Another culturally responsive practice, which we will discuss more later, is for instructors to provide multi-modal options for engaging in discussion boards, including posting short audio and video clips (Gay, 2010). This might seem counterintuitive for instructors because it is important for students to develop their academic writing skills; however, there are other times instructors can work with students to hone these skills.

Provide consistent and timely feedback. Instructor presence in online courses is important and must be intentional to ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment. One strategy instructors can use to show their presence is providing predictable feedback to students. Doing so allows instructors to monitor for bias, stereotype threat, microaggressions, and correct these issues when present. At the same time, an opportunity might be created for instructors to share how they work to manage their own biases, which empowers students to identify, learn about, and address their own biases (Peralta Online Equity Initiative, 2020). For asynchronous discussions, instructors can scan discussion board threads with an emphasis on supporting the points of view of those from underrepresented students and highlighting small groups that are showing the values consistent with the discussion guidelines. For synchronous discussions, instructors can have students document their work in a shared document (e.g., Google Doc), that is shared with the instructor and those in the group. Then much like with the discussion board example, instructors can read about the discussion and provide their thoughts/feedback directly in the document, so it is visible to students (Ecklund, 2013).

When concluding all types of discussions, it has been shown to be beneficial for instructors to gather take-a-ways from group members and themselves and post the take-a-ways in the announcements section of the LMS (Plotts, 2020a). All students can benefit from this shared discussion. Regardless of the mode for providing feedback, instructors should use cultural norms and phrases that are familiar to students (Plotts, 2020a), which might include posting audio and video recordings rather than just text feedback.

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is often mentioned in the same circles as CRP and some suggest that together they create a powerful way forward (Darby, 2020). However, UDL lacks a research base to support many of the claims made by its supporters (Murphy, 2020). Nonetheless, given the prominence of UDL in relation to CRP, we will address UDL because there are many benefits for students when online discussions are designed through both a CRP and UDL lens. Specifically, we will share how motivational access applies to the design of equitable online discussions as students do not all come to online courses with the same readiness to engage.

By offering multiple paths to get to the same learning outcome, UDL is a framework that supports learner variability resulting from culture, skills, abilities, interests, experience, and socio-economic status (Takacs & Zhang, 2020). UDL reflects an awareness of the unique nature of each learner and the need to accommodate differences through flexible approaches. UDL encourages instructors to proactively consider who is experiencing barriers and to design learning experiences available for all students that take these barriers into consideration (Cast, 2013). What is good for one student, might help others; then students can select and benefit from those materials that are the best fit for them to maximize their progress. It is important to note that if none of the materials provided are relevant to students' lives, then all is for naught—and lack of motivation is a serious barrier to learning (Keller, 2008; C. Kim & Keller, 2010). Interest and motivation as they relate to learning is better supported by research than UDL and even a little interest or motivation can make a big difference (Rieber & Estes, 2017; Renninger & Hidi, 2020).

While instructors are learning about their students' ethnic and cultural backgrounds, they should also learn about them as a learner. What motivates them? What are their interests? Find out what makes them "tick" as a learner. Then instructors can use this information in their course design and students will be more engaged. More engagement leads to a deeper understanding of content and facilitates a desire to learn more (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), leading to increased persistence (Renninger & Hidi, 2020). An easy way to address learner variability, incorporate UDL, and motivate students in online courses is by adding collaborative group work, such as online discussions (Nagpal, 2020).

Remember, collaborative group work, when done in small groups, is a strategy aligned with CRP. However, online discussions are in need of revitalization beyond CRP to be inclusive. Instructors need to go beyond merely providing small group online discussions and instead be intentional about supporting student agency and offering choices when designing their courses. This also simultaneously addresses some of the ethnic and cultural barriers discussed earlier. An emphasis should be placed on sequencing synchronous and asynchronous discussions in ways most responsive to the needs of students. Here are a few suggestions:

Nurture student agency. As shared earlier, Clinton and Kelly (2019), propose informing students about the usefulness of online discussions and making the connection to motivation straightforward. Do students see the relevance and importance of what they are being asked to do? By explaining the power of discussions as a learning tool, instructors report more buy-in and enthusiasm. At the same time, instructors should provide students with an "escape hatch," in which a student can ask privately to be assigned to a different discussion group, no explanation needed (Ecklund, 2013).

Offer students choice in how they participate. Students can post directly to LMS discussion boards via asynchronous audio, video, or text. There are tools such as Voice Thread and Flip Grid that can accomplish similar things. Additionally, it is important for instructors to know there are new products like Hypothes.is and Perusall that look to make reading a social activity by allowing students to annotate a shared text. However, collaborative learning annotation tools are beyond the scope of this chapter. Instructors might also consider using video conferencing technologies to facilitate live online discussions as some students report preferring real-time interactions like this even though they lose the flexibility they desire. Offering students a combination of asynchronous and/or synchronous discussions can provide options for both preferences. This blend allows students some semblance of the "anytime, anywhere" aspect of online learning they desire while also supporting the development of social presence. Keeping in mind technology disparities, Stanford (2020) urges instructors to be mindful of the bandwidth required for any activity. It takes quite a bit of bandwidth to use the video conferencing tools required for synchronous online discussions and to upload audio and video clips to multi-modal asynchronous discussion boards.

Gilpin (2020) suggests instructors survey students prior to the start of the course to not only get to know them, but also to gather information on the kinds of online discussions they prefer as well as their access to technology and internet. See Woodley and Colleagues (2017) for examples of technology and access questions. Then that information can be used by instructors to plan the types and amounts of online discussions within their courses and to create small discussion groups. Furthermore, instructors will be able to identify students who may need assistance with technology and direct students to where/how to get help. Instructors should also solicit on-going feedback from students on their experiences and be ready to modify discussions based on the changing needs of students.

Offer students choice in what they discuss. Provide students with 3–4 questions or activities related to the lesson. Then let students pick which one they want to discuss with their small group. Choices like this can be used in either the asynchronous or synchronous format. When using choice with asynchronous discussion boards, instructors also might consider letting students build off the initial post of a peer rather than having to post in response to one of their prompts. This is especially helpful for those that are late to posting and all they have left to say is what everyone else has already said. Much like in a real-time conversation, with this option, students can build off what a peer has already posted for their initial post, creating fertile ground for a rich back and forth discussion. For both types of discussions, also consider having a "create your own discussion" option, where students come up with their own prompt, get instructor approval, and then post or discuss their response.

Let students lead. One of the most powerful ways to empower and transform students is for them to have a role in the design of course activities and even lead activities (Woodley et al., 2017). Rather than everything coming from the instructor, students report enjoying discussions in which content specific questions come directly from their peers—giving them choice and agency in the direction they go with course topics. Additionally, students can offer support to one another, and share experiences which relate to the course work (Buelow et al., 2018; Page et al., 2020). Instructors then have the opportunity to mentor and coach students one-to-one when they are leaders, which can be empowering and transformative (Woodley et al., 2017). Within each small group, instructors should consider identifying discussion leaders on a rotational basis so that all students are engaged in a leadership role at some point and facilitate a

discussion. Student-led discussions can be used in either the asynchronous or synchronous format—for examples of guidelines and grading rubrics for both types refer to the "Suggestions for Future Reading" section.

Transformative Learning

So far, we have illustrated how CRP and UDL can be used in tandem to foster more equitable and inclusive online spaces and online discussions, which can be empowering and transformative. Much of this discussion has centered on using audio, video, and text to create opportunities for student-to-student collaboration and interaction, but with this comes opportunities to enact harm. It is important instructors are equipped to deal with microaggressions and other forms of bias or oppression in online spaces because as Plotts (2020a) shares, "students need to feel safe— if not, they stop attending." However, instructors should not shy away from online discussions, rather, they should see them as an opportunity to promote growth and change. Transformative Learning (TL) is grounded in using students' experiences as a starting point for learning, reflection, and discourse (Ortega et al., 2018) and complements CRP and UDL. TL provides a platform to address microaggressions through the "direct naming and acknowledgement of the act and engaging all students as key stakeholders in transforming the conditions of the classroom" (Ortega et al., 2018, p. 33).

A key to successfully implementing TL is situated in the role of the instructor. It is crucial that instructors know their students' cultures and are aware of possible microaggressions to be able to identify them when they occur. Along with that, direct and meaningful instructor facilitation must be intentionally built into online discussions. This means instructors educating students to prevent microaggressions and bias and when incidents undoubtedly do occur, responding in a thoughtful and timely manner (Cohn, 2016; Maslowski, 2020; Ortega et al., 2018; Plotts, 2020a). While this is not easy, the experience can be a rewarding growth opportunity for both students and instructors. Researchers provide some insights specific to online discussions and preventing/dealing with microaggressions. Here are a few suggestions:

Facilitate online discussions. Instructors should begin by educating students about microaggressions and bias specific to online environments. Then they need to read, view, and listen consistently to all student dialogue posted on discussion boards or shared in synchronous meeting

notes. Time is of the essence when dealing with microaggressive statements (Cohn, 2016; Maslowski, 2020; Ortega et al., 2018). Instructors should encourage students to preview their discussion board posts before posting and prepare for their synchronous discussions ahead of time by reviewing the prompts and jotting down points they want to make (Ortega et al., 2018). Instructors should also require students to support their perspectives with evidence and use that as a basis for their arguments (Ortega et al., 2018). That does not mean students must cite their evidence formally using APA or MLA, rather, they do need to informally share where they found the information that backs up their claims. For instance, "I found some information in [insert article name and link] to be interesting because it supports [insert claim]."

Check in periodically with students. Instructors should build a short self-reflection into each online discussion (Cohn, 2016; Maslowski, 2020; Ortega et al., 2018). This is important for both types of discussions because even with asynchronous discussion boards, instructors can miss things and may not interpret posts the same way as their students. The self-reflection can be a survey completed by each group member that only the instructor views or it could be publicly shared with the entire group through a discussion board or synchronous meeting notes. Possible questions for individual reflection shared by Ortega and colleagues (2018) include: "How did it feel to participate in this discussion?" "What was the experience like for you?" "Were you able to say what you wanted?" "Are there additional thoughts you have that you would like to contribute?" Plotts (2020a) also provided the following sentence stems that can be used to facilitate small group reflection: "[We are] fully seeking to understand different points of view and opposing points of view are respected," and "[We are] aware of cultural and ethnic differences and create a safe space for all."

Address microaggressions immediately. One best practice for instructors when addressing microaggressions is to collaborate with a colleague. Even though it might take longer, in the end, it likely will take students farther (Ortega et al., 2018). Instructors should also be sure to keep all students involved, including those responsible for the microaggressions. Depending upon the circumstance, this might mean one-to-one, small and large group interactions. For example, in response to a microaggression, instructors could post a response to an asynchronous discussion board that offers more inclusive language/perspectives along with an explanation related to historical legacy and including links to articles or

videos to supplement the explanations (Ortega et al., 2018). If addressed in this manner, it is important for instructors to make sure all students view and read the explanations, so they might consider posting in both the current discussion thread and also use the announcement feature of the LMS. At other times a synchronous discussion with all group members might be more appropriate. Both options support community and connection amongst peers and fosters the group's capacity for resiliency and growth moving forward. See Ortega and Colleagues (2018) for an example of a decision tree for addressing microaggressions that can be modified by instructors for a variety of online spaces.

Refer students in need of additional support. Plotts (2020a) reminds instructors it is also important for them to be knowledgeable about the campus agencies who support students struggling with anxiety, depression, acculturated stress, and marginalization. They should keep the mental health of students in mind before, during, and after difficult conversations. When needed; instructors should refer students to campus agencies for additional support.

In this section, we shared how UDL, CRP, and TL can be used together to foster more equitable and inclusive online discussions. The suggestions offered reflect strategies that can be used at different points in time as well as in the moment when problems arise. See "Appendix A" for a lesson planning checklist that complements these suggestions. Further, accommodations that address bandwidth and access to technology were discussed. Ultimately, we presented how to create more inclusive online courses where everybody gets to learn, no one has to out themselves, and all are welcome, by the very design of the class.

Conclusion

The shift in higher education from a face-to-face delivery model to an online delivery model requires instructional design that puts students at the center and leverages the unique advantages of the online environment. But the online environment does not inherently always create the equity we think it does. Intentionality is key to planning, building, and maintaining connectedness through online discussions that are designed to support the success of all students in online spaces. The day when we no longer speak of "online learning" but only "learning" might arrive sooner than we think, and when this time comes, we want to ensure the success of all students.

Appendix A

Designing and Using Equitable Online Discussions Checklist

Prior to the first discussion, instructors should…

- Share the purpose and usefulness of discussions.
- Survey students to learn more about their discussion preferences and access to technology.
- Based on survey information, create small discussion groups, prompts, and determine type (asynchronous and/or synchronous). Individually reach out to students who may have technology needs to problem solve.
- Co-create discussion guidelines with students.
- Share the grading rubric.
- Educate students about bias and microaggressions in online environments.
- Plan how to address bias and microaggressions when they occur.
- Identify campus agencies who support students struggling with anxiety, depression, acculturated stress, and marginalization.

During each discussion, instructors should…

- Facilitate discussions by providing consistent and timely feedback.
- Continue to educate students about microaggressions. Keep an eye out for those "teachable moments."
- Be ready to immediately respond to bias and microaggressions.

After each discussion, instructors should…

- Immediately review student self-reflections and contact students about concerns that arise, especially as they relate to bias and microaggressions. Refer students to campus agencies as needed.
- Gather take-aways from group members and yourself and post the take-aways in your announcements.
- Provide discussion grades and feedback in a timely manner.

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Suggestions for Future Reading

Bandwidth and Access to Technology

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Bias and Microaggressions

Ortega, A., Andruczyk, M., & Marquart, M. (2018). Addressing microaggressions and acts of oppression within online classrooms by utilizing principles of transformative learning and liberatory education. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 27*(1), 28–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2017.1417945

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Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

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Designing the Syllabus for an Online Course: Focus on Learners and Equity

Emily A. Johnson

Key Terms and Definitions

Accessible:	The degree to which something is easily located, fully used, and/or completely understood.
Discourse:	The social and interpersonal context of any piece of communication: written, spoken, built, or enacted.
Discourse Analysis:	Dissecting discourse to discover its effects on humans' lived experiences and the world.
Equitable:	The degree to which something is accessible to all peoples, taking into account differing identities, backgrounds, contexts, and systems of oppression.

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Designing the Syllabus for an Online Course: Focus on Learners and Equity

The term syllabus as a descriptor of a document of course content is almost as old as higher education in the United States (*Online etymology dictionary*, n.d.). Though colleges and universities around the country vary greatly in size, scope, and population, the syllabus is ubiquitous. Given that some institutions require that instructors make syllabi available prior to the first day of class (e.g., The University of Texas at Austin, n.d.), the syllabus could be a learner's first encounter with an instructor and course. Because the syllabus plays such an important role, we need to understand how a syllabus functions in defining the learning space. Unfortunately, "syllabi are often treated as informational, not rhetorical, documents" (Womack, 2017, p. 501). However, the syllabus is indeed a rhetorical document, and it shapes learners' understanding of and engagement with the course, the instructor, and the institution.

This chapter positions the syllabus as a dynamic document that shapes learning and defines the relationships between the learner and instructor, the learner and institution, the learner and course content, and the learners and one another. Following a brief primer on discourse analysis and how texts dictate lived experiences, the chapter proceeds to outline how the format, content, tone, method of sharing, and process for revising syllabi shape learners' realities. The chapter presents the results of research—both the author's and other scholars'—into the mechanics and functions of a syllabus. This research illustrates the pitfalls of instructor-centered syllabus design as well as the benefits of learner-centered design, including creating a supportive and active class community, clearly communicating expectations and opportunities, and establishing productive relationships.

Online platforms offer instructors unprecedented freedom to create innovative and accessible syllabi that meet diverse learners' needs, but there has yet to be a revolution of syllabus design that leverages these platforms (Cummings et al., 2002; Maurino, 2005). Throughout the chapter, the focus is on creating a learner-centered syllabus, and specific recommendations guide instructors on how to craft a syllabus to center learning and, especially, learners. Equity is central to this idea of learner-centeredness. The chapter identifies ways in which syllabi marginalize learners—particularly learners of color, first-generation learners, and learners with disabilities—and offers counter-practices to center these

learners. Within the framework of equity, the chapter also addresses the issues of accessibility and consent. While most of the chapter can apply to the syllabus for any course, Online Opportunities throughout will identify specific ideas for online courses. Examples, anecdotes, memes, and thought exercises bring key points to life and enable you to practice incorporating techniques into your own syllabi.

One final note before diving in: This chapter was written during 2020–2021, amid political turmoil and global pandemic, by a white, gender non-conforming, middle-class U.S. citizen in the southern United States. The context and positionality are bound up in this chapter's content, so the value and interpretations of this chapter will change as these elements change. This chapter is not meant to serve as the expert or singular voice on these topics, and it is limited by the author's own privileges and biases. As you read, I ask that you consider the text alongside your own expertise and lived experiences. Allow yourself to be open to new possibilities and points of view while acknowledging the always/already changing natures of knowledge, power, and education.

WHAT DOES DISCOURSE ANALYSIS HAVE TO DO WITH SYLLABI?

Discourse analysis is the act of considering a text (spoken or written) in its social context (Salkind, 2010). Analyzing discourse means exploring the ways in which a text functions, beyond the simple transmission of information. A good example of this in the twenty-first century is the discussion of the best way to digitally communicate that something is "okay" (as in "fine," "good," or simply "acknowledged"). According to numerous articles, blogs, and memes, there are very important differences between the following variations of "okay" in text and email communication (e.g., Torres, 2019; Zetlin, 2019) (Fig. 3.1).

Okay	okaaaaaayy	OK	ok.	K
Okay.	OKAY	OK.	okkkkkk	K.
okay	OKAY!	O.K.	kay	k
okay.	OKAY.	ok	kk	k

Fig. 3.1 Different meanings for variations of "okay" in text and email communication

Regardless of your age, generation, or digital savvy, you likely have a different reaction to "okay" versus "OKAY!" However, unless you're a member of Gen Z or an avid consumer of memes, you may not understand the horror of the single k, which, according to Mahan (2019), roughly translates to "I hope you die in a fire." The implications of this discussion encapsulate a lot of what discourse analysis is about:

1. The method, format, and content of text communicate meaning.
2. That meaning may be intended or unintended, but the impact matters most.
3. The impact of a text's meaning shapes relationships, actions, and reactions.

Thus, to analyze the discourse of a text, we should ask "How does [the text] function?" and "What are its social effects?" (Bové, 1990). In other words, one way we can learn about how syllabi affect learners is by analyzing how the format, content, tone, and methods of sharing and revising the syllabi impact learners and shape their actions and relationships with instructors. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) involves exploring texts particularly for the ways they enact power and inequity (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). As St. Pierre (2011) says, "anything always goes until someone who has some power draws a line" (p. 623). Performing discourse analysis on syllabi means looking for lines that have been drawn and understanding how these lines affect the lived experiences of learners. Bawarshi (2003) described how the syllabus serves to "transform the physical setting of the classroom into the discursive and ideological site of action" (p. 119); as such, this chapter investigates how a syllabus defines and mediates the interacting physical, discursive, and ideological spheres of the course.

Format of the Syllabus: Invite the Learners In

Many universities require certain content be present in syllabi, and some provide optional templates, but few require that syllabi adhere to a particular format (Stanny et al., 2015). Why, then, do syllabi from wildly different disciplines, levels, contexts, and methods of delivery have such similar formats?

The format of e syllabi is usually consistent, with the design and structure giving few, if any, clues about the course content. This can make it more challenging for learners to connect with the course and the instructor. Further, syllabi are usually characterized by walls of text, which can be more difficult to read and establish the relationship between instructor and learner as an instructor-led contract rather than a learning space into which learners are invited and welcomed.

Rather than formatting the syllabus as a report, instructors should consider formatting options designed to attract, inform, and engage learners. As previously mentioned, the syllabus is often the first opportunity the instructor has to connect with learners. Considering the syllabus from this perspective opens up opportunities for creativity and connection.

Rearranging the syllabus to center learner needs means reconceptualizing the syllabus format, breaking the old mold, and considering what information can and should be in particular locations. Of course, not everything can be conveyed in bullet points, so paragraphs are sometimes needed to appropriately explain syllabus concepts. The key is to be judicious with "ink"; consider how much information really needs to be written paragraph style and what can be linked to or described in a less-dense way. The appendix to this chapter contains a single-document-style syllabus that contains paragraphs, but the paragraphs are short, readable, separated by white space, include links, and are sometimes accompanied by images. Also, paragraphs are broken up with lists or tables where it makes sense to do so.

When a syllabus is not formatted with learners in mind, it can give learners the impression that instructors are, at best, out of touch and, at worst, their adversaries. If important details are buried within a syllabus, that is problematic and it could make the learner feel like they are in battle with the instructor rather than working with them to achieve learning goals. A syllabus is not a benign vessel of information. Rather, the format of a syllabus has direct effects on learners' emotions and ability to engage with the content and instructor. Finally, research suggests that learners' needs may change throughout the semester. A study by Smith and Razzouk (1993) found that students looked at, in order of frequency from most to least, "test dates, course schedule, assigned chapters, assigned reading, various due dates, project information, and grading evaluation" about three weeks into the term, but they referred to the "course schedule, assigned reading, various due dates, assigned chapters,

test dates, project information, and grading evaluation, in that order" later in the term (p. 217). This suggests that a syllabus may even need to change formats or be dynamic and responsive to student needs across time.

Figure 3.2 shows two versions of the first page of a syllabus, the left one more instructor-centered and the right one more learner-centered.

The left-side syllabus looks nearly identical to the traditional syllabus: large blocks of text, no images, and beginning with the instructor's information, course description, and required materials. The right-side syllabus has been rearranged to have grading and support resources information at the beginning so all content on the first page is information learners need and will likely refer to often. Also, the right-side contains additional tweaks to engage and support learners:

- More white space to make the document easier to read and skim
- Descriptive headings targeted at learner needs
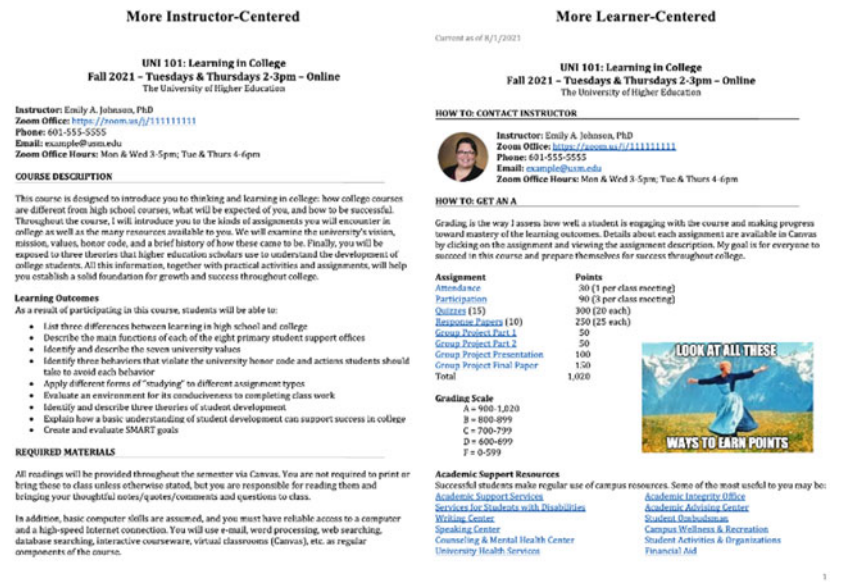
Fig. 3.2 Example of the first page of two syllabi for the same fictitious course, right side centering learners

- Instructor's photo to humanize instructor and encourage learners to reach out
- Humorous meme with positive message to reinforce that learners can succeed in the course
- Clearly explained grading system
- Links to assignment details to save space and make navigation easier
- Support resources specifically listed, linked to institutional websites to make it easier for learners to locate and access, along with encouraging and normalizing language
- Header with date so learners can easily identify the latest version in case of changes
- Footer with page number for easier navigation through syllabus.

All these changes, easily accomplished with basic word processing software, lead to a syllabus that reflects the way in which learners are most likely to use it. Furthermore, the right-side is more accessible to learners' diverse needs.

All instructors, regardless of course delivery mode, can ensure syllabus accessibility by first making sure documents are fully and correctly readable by screen readers. From there, following ADA recommendations and promising practices for accessibility of text, images, video, rhetoric, and policies is critical to facilitating access for all learners, building positive relationships, and inviting learners into the learning space. AccessibleSylla bus.com (Womack et al., 2015) is a great resource for learning how to format a syllabus to be as accessible as possible.

Beyond accessibility, instructors can offer learners flexibility by supplying them with an editable version of the syllabus. The syllabus in this chapter's appendix, which was created in Microsoft Word, is an example of a document that could be easily shared with students and edited by them for their own needs. Providing an editable version of the syllabus allows learners to edit it into a version that is most accessible and beneficial for them, one they can order, format, and annotate as desired.

Online Opportunities

The most exciting opportunities for creativity in syllabus format exist in online spaces. So much of the restrictive format of current syllabi is due to thinking of the syllabus as a printed, multi-page, 8.5″ × 11″ document. These limitations encourage packing text onto the page and using

few colors to limit printing costs; unfortunately, these elements are antithetical to accessibility and engagement. Reconceptualizing the syllabus in a virtual space means allowing learners' needs and discipline content to guide format. No longer must the syllabus be conceived as a single document; rather, it can be a virtual network of connected information, organized to meet learners' needs and supported by multiple media. Figure 3.3 shows an example of what a syllabus landing page could look like in the Learning Management System (LMS) Canvas.

Web formatting a syllabus in this way allows for all headings to be on the "front page" and enables learners to easily locate needed information. Linking to relevant assignments, pages, and modules removes the need to repeat information and allows for the incorporation of images and annotations to engage the learner and reinforce key points. Also, the virtual syllabus can be edited with a few keystrokes and delivered to learners immediately. Remember to follow all recommendations for web accessibility. **NOTE**: To maintain accessibility and flexibility, it is critical that online syllabi include an option to view the syllabus as one editable document. This multi-faceted format meets diverse needs and maximizes learner engagement. This does not have to create a lot of extra work for instructors. Information from the website can be easily copied and pasted into a single document with a few format adjustments to maximize readability and accessibility.

Fig. 3.3 Example online course syllabus frontpage

Key Takeaways

- Avoid prior templates; reconsider learners' needs.
- Tailor the format of your syllabus to center learners and highlight the discipline/content.
- Think of the relationship you want to build with learners, and use the syllabus to foster it.
- Don't be afraid of images, gifs, and videos; use them to engage learners and reinforce key points.
- Use links to allow learners to access more information without a continuous wall of text.
- Provide an editable version of the syllabus for learners to tailor to their needs.
- Let your learning management system help you with flexible syllabus design.

Content of the Syllabus: Consider Learners' Perspectives

The genesis of this portion of the chapter was a post-qualitative study conducted by the author in 2018 (Presented at the ASHE Conference in 2018, see Johnson, 2018). Based on the importance and ubiquity of syllabi noted above, the study sought to examine syllabi as rhetorical documents. The original research questions were 1) How does a Foucauldian reading of syllabi illuminate structures of power/knowledge between instructors, students, and institutions? and 2) How do syllabi discourses create detrimental material effects on marginalized students thereby deepening their marginalization? The author used Jackson and Mazzei's post-qualitative method of thinking with theory to open up possibilities for analysis. The author compiled artifacts in multiple, publically-available forms: syllabi, syllabi policies, memes, and research literature. For the syllabi, the author selected a sample of ten syllabi from first-year courses, all earmarked as addressing cultural diversity; these were selected for their representativeness across disciplines and departments as well as to see whether curricular attention to diversity translates into syllabus diversity or equity attentiveness. Using Foucault's (1980) power/knowledge framework, the author analyzed each text and focused on the discursive-material intra-action, looking for how the text governed bodies, dictated behaviors, and subjugated learners. No IRB approval was

sought because all data were publicly available. Further, in the excerpts provided as examples subsequently, any identifying information has been redacted.

In this chapter, the author uses the 10 syllabi explored in the original study to illuminate differences in amount and type of content from the perspective of the learner. This research indicates that the area in which syllabi differ most is the amount and type of content they contain. Some instructors treat the syllabus as the only document needed for the course, filling it with every possibly policy and every assignment prompt, while other instructors treat the syllabus as an outline of the course, offering only a sketch of course content and a few policies. Both approaches come from the same instinct: to treat the syllabus like a contract that must be followed. The former approach throws everything in, while the latter provides little detail; both, oddly, seek to have little room for interpretation and control the class environment. Neither approach centers learners' perspectives on which content should be included in a syllabus. Rather than considering the syllabus as a contract, instructors can center learners by viewing the syllabus as a learning tool (Parkes & Harris, 2002). The example syllabus in the appendix includes headings and content tailored specifically to the student experience. One element of this is a map of the learning objectives to the weeks in the semester, making explicit connections between what students will do and how that connects to what they will learn. Learners are not monolithic; different learners have different needs.

One way to address these different needs related to content is to leverage learner-centered formatting. As discussed previously, prioritizing the information learners need, offering an editable syllabus document, and creating the syllabus in an online space all enable instructors to communicate information in a way that reflects an understanding of learners' needs and diverse approaches. Beyond format, a good approach for deciding what content to include in a syllabus is to think of the syllabus not for what it must contain but what it could achieve. Grunert O'Brien et al. (2008) described this perspective in this way:

> The more we tell students about what to expect in a course by addressing these details and removing from the syllabus and the course the unknowns and the guessing games, the likelier we are to enlist students' interest and cooperation. The syllabus becomes an invitation to share responsibility for successful learning. (p. 22)

One way to construct a syllabus from this perspective is to ask yourself these questions:

- What do learners expect when they come to this class?
- What prior knowledge (both discipline knowledge and "college knowledge") should/should not be assumed for learners in this class?
- What do learners need to know to be successful in this class?
- When do learners need to know specific information throughout the class?
- Is my syllabus an introduction to the course or a user manual for the course? Which approach best suits learners in this level/discipline/institution?
- How can I present and connect interrelated concepts (e.g., grading, assignment prompts, learning goals) in a way that engages and informs a variety of learners?

Beyond policies, procedures, and details, the next level of centering learners in the syllabus is to reconceptualize the curriculum with learners in mind. In particular, review the curriculum with many diverse identities of learners in mind. When learners see themselves reflected in the curriculum, they feel a part of the subject rather than an outsider looking in (Alunan, 2019; Mark, n.d.). Curriculum that showcases the work of People of Color, people with disabilities, underrepresented gender and sexual identities, non-Western thinkers, etc. provides learners with what Laverne Cox calls "possibility models" (Couric, 2014), particularly in areas where their identities are severely underrepresented. Here are some items to consider related to centering learners in curriculum:

- What identities (e.g. ability, nationality, citizenship, class, income, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, age) and intersections of identities are represented in the authors/scholars studied in this course?
- What identities and intersections of identities are represented in the readings, activities, word problems, and assignments in this course?
- How could these aspects of the curriculum represent more identities and more intersections of identities?

- What identities and intersections of identities are underrepresented in my discipline?
- How can I use course content to engage learners with theses identities?

Considering Equity to Meet Learners' Diverse Needs

There are three particular content items within a syllabus that relate so centrally to equity that it is important to discuss them individually in more depth: academic accommodations, religious holy/holidays absence policy, and trigger warnings. These items in most syllabi are perfunctory at best and totally absent or outright negative at worst. In this section, we will dive into how you can include and improve each of these components to center learners and equity in your syllabus.

Academic Accommodations Policy

Much of the literature on syllabi does not discuss accommodating learners' different needs beyond mentioning the legal requirement to have an accommodations statement. Doolittle and Siudzinski (2010) describe how the presence of the accommodations statement does more than meet a legal requirement: "Faculty can demonstrate acceptance and encourage students with disabilities to self-identify by providing disability policy statements on syllabi, thus recognizing the rights of students with disabilities to receive needed and entitled accommodations" (p. 39). Further, the statement is critical to encouraging learners who need accommodations to self-disclose, especially when learners are used to having accommodations provided automatically as in high school (Broadbent et al., 2007). The omission of an accommodations statement might lead learners to believe that their instructors will not provide needed supports. Beyond serving only learners who need academic accommodations, accommodations statements demonstrate a wider view and acceptance of learning practices and may help challenge the negative labels and assumptions of other learners (Bowers-Campbell, 2015).

Womack (2017) points out that academic accommodations statements in syllabi must go beyond bare-minimum, boilerplate text because learner needs are important and varied, "particularly because disability intersects with race, gender, class, preparedness, and other identities" (p. 502). Despite the wealth of scholarship on the importance of considering learner diversity in curriculum (e.g., Stanny et al., 2015), this same rarely

extends to the course syllabus, even more rarely in a multidimensional way. Doolittle and Siudzinski (2010) insist that accommodating learners goes beyond learners with disabilities to include all learners via support services, such as mentioning reading and writing centers, tutoring and study centers, health and counseling centers, women's centers, and library assistance programs (p. 39). Their work points out that accommodating learning is not an in-classroom-only concern nor does it look like one type of assistance. Further, it encourages faculty to think of all the services that support learning generally as opposed to a laser-focus on disabilities that ignores learners' identities and complex needs. By focusing on services and creating an inclusive learning environment, instructors can work to "remove the physical, social, and emotional barriers of the disabling environment" (Jones, 1996, p. 353) rather than 'accommodate' one learner at a time without making real, lasting change.

The corpus of ten first-year course syllabi of focus in this chapter represent syllabi from varying disciplines. Exploring those syllabi revealed a range of accommodations statements, presented in Table 3.1 from more instructor-centered to more learner-centered. Most syllabi had only the boilerplate wording for an accommodations statement, copied exactly from the institution's minimum requirements

Openness to feedback is one of the clearest signals in a syllabus that the instructor is interested in working with learners. The most welcoming, learner-centered statement, unsurprisingly from a course on disabilities, included a nod toward universal design and noted that the instructor is willing to work with "any special needs," not only those "qualified disabilities" on file with the university. Such openness could lead to encouraging learners who need accommodations but have not yet disclosed to the institution to do so. Because policies and procedures often lag behind the realities of learners' lives and challenges, openness to discussion and willingness to enable learning are critical to meeting varying needs. The example syllabus in this chapter's appendix includes an abbreviated, deidentified version of the accessibility statement the author uses in their syllabi, followed by contact information for the office that handles academic accommodations. The online version of the syllabus includes additional information about accommodations and disabilities.

> It is my sincere desire that every portion of this course be accessible to all students. I value your contributions, and I want each of you to be engaged with the course, with your colleagues, and with me. All course

Table 3.1 Statements on academic accommodations in ten first-year-course syllabi

←*More instructor centered*		*More learner-centered*→	
[Statement Absent] "Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from [support services]"	"Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. Visit [with professor and TA] to discuss your circumstance (bring university documentation of disability and recommended accommodations)" "Please provide the instructor with documentation as soon as possible of requirements from [support services]"	"Please notify the instructor as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible, or if other disability-related accommodations are required" "Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.)" "Please let me know immediately if you have any problem that is preventing you from performing satisfactorily in this class"	"I have tried to design this class using the principle of universal design whereby all elements of the course are designed to accommodate a wide range of student needs. However, I am prepared and quite willing to accommodate any special needs that a student might have"

materials should be screen-reader ready, and any video or audio materials should have captions and/or transcripts. If any element of the course is inaccessible to you for any reason, please let me know as soon as possible so I can correct it.

Also, [this institution] fully supports the rights of students to access and participate fully in courses. If you have a disability and need accommodations, you should contact the [support services] for information and support. Please contact [support services] if you are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies for accommodations.

Instructors can show their earnest desire to help learners thrive through a syllabus statement such as this one. By doing so, they decrease the distance between the learners and themselves and present the educational space as one of mutual construction, rather than unidirectional power.

Religious Holy/Holidays Policy
At the time of writing, the author had been unable to locate any other scholarship focused on religious holy/holidays policies in syllabi. This absence is evidence of the underestimated importance of attention to policies that are more likely to affect marginalized (in this case, non-Christian) learners. The Christian calendar is so foundational to US education (Killenberg, 2017; Learning for Justice, n.d.) that concerns about the scheduling needs of learners of other religions are barely on the radar of instructors or scholars.

In this corpus, religious holy/holidays policies in syllabi were rarer and less detailed than even academic accommodations policies, likely because the former is not legally protected. In this study of ten first-year-course syllabi, three had no policy present. Of the seven that contained a policy, most included the boilerplate text: "In accordance with [university] policy, you must provide notice 14 days in advance if you plan to be absent for an approved religious holy day, or on the first day of the semester if the holiday falls within two weeks of the beginning of classes" (Johnson, 2018). Two of the syllabi further invoked the state's education code in their policies by noting learners would not be penalized for absences of this nature. Four of the syllabi included the timeframe to makeup work, though this varied from as little as one week to "a reasonable amount of time." Only two syllabi specifically noted respect for observing religious holidays, and only one of these contained details about how to notify the instructor.

Not including a clear, welcoming syllabus policy on absences due to religious holy/holidays oppresses already minoritized learners (non-Christians) further by requiring more self-disclosure than necessary and leaving space open for the at-will interpretation of the instructor. Learners who need to take time away from class for religious observance have to go through steps that their Christian peers never/rarely have to do. Thus, it is important to consider how a thorough, welcoming, and respectful religious holy/holidays policy attends to learners' needs and identities. Further, since non-Christian learners are more likely to be people of color (Pew Research Center, n.d.), it is critical for instructors to consider

the racialized effects of the wording and role of this policy in maintaining white supremacy in education (Squire, 2016). The attendance and absences statement the author currently uses in their syllabi is offered here as an example of one approach:

> Because we will engage in class activities designed to stimulate and expand your learning, attendance is essential to the learning process. Repeated absences will likely hinder your progress toward the course learning outcomes. You have a responsibility to yourself and our class community to come to class on-time and be prepared to engage in discussions and activities.
>
> If you must be absent from class due to illness, religious holy/holiday observation, or professional/personal obligations, please let me know as soon as possible. While I ask you to communicate any needed absence to me, you do NOT need to disclose the reason for the absence. I respect your privacy with regard to your health, religious exercise, and other needs, and I expect you to manage any absences responsibly. If you miss class, you will be required to watch the Zoom recording of that session and connect with a classmate to catch up on anything you missed.

A similar, abbreviated statement is present in the appendix to this chapter under the section about required components.

> Consistent attendance at class meetings, which will take place via Zoom. During class sessions, I will answer questions, offer additional resources, and facilitate discussions. If you must be absent, please let me know as soon as possible. Afterward, watch the Zoom recording and connect with a classmate. I expect you to manage any absences responsibly.

Regardless of whether attendance is connected to grading, it is important to communicate to students *why attendance matters* and what they need to do should they need to be absent.

Trigger Warning
There is a multi-faceted debate about trigger warnings/safe spaces across education, particularly related to academic freedom and career preparation. This section will not address these issues nor comment on much of the debate. Rather, this section will consider trigger warnings as elements of syllabi that center learners and contribute to building an equitable, productive learning space.

Within the conversation on creating learner-centered syllabi, trigger warnings should be conceived as an issue of consent. Much of a syllabus is designed to introduce learners to course structure and curriculum so they know what to expect if they choose to remain in the course, and trigger warnings serve the same function. Just as a biology course would not suddenly introduce economics content without warning, so should the course not suddenly introduce violent content without warning. As Stringer (2014) says, trigger warnings are not about limiting or removing content but about "*adding* a system of warning or forecasts about upcoming content" (p. 63).

Trigger warnings can broaden access to courses for learners with disabilities and/or histories of trauma. Furthermore, trigger warnings can model respectful engagement and conversations and "signal to all students that the instructor values their health and wellbeing and does not expect them to perform like automatons without bodies and emotions" (Kulbaga & Spencer, 2019, p. 91). Rather than leaving it to learners to either wonder whether particularly triggering content will appear or, worse, be negatively impacted by unanticipated trauma, trigger warnings enable broader access to courses. Trigger warnings can be considered an act of "radical inclusiveness... a fundamental respect for students, recognizing their full humanity and dignity as physical, intellectual, and emotional persons" (p. 94). An example of a syllabus statement that serves the functions of respecting learners, broadening access, and modeling successful behaviors is given in Kulbaga and Spencer's (2019) *Campuses of Consent*:

> A note about the readings: Authors sometimes write memoirs after surviving or witnessing abuse, assault, family violence, self-harm, military conflict, or other trauma. While these stories are moving and inspirational, they can be painful or triggering to read. Don't hesitate to contact Counseling Services ([number redacted]) at any time, or visit [website redacted] for helpful resources, including suicide awareness and prevention, mental health, and veteran support. Self-care is strength! Please let me know if there's anything I can do to support your learning experience in this class. (p. 94)

Regardless of the discipline, it is important to consider whether one or more trigger warnings are appropriate. Here are some questions to ask yourself to inform this decision:

- What readings, activities, and assignments have content related to trauma (e.g. domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, gun violence, war, death, child abuse, elder abuse, stalking, suicide, self-harm, murder, depression, anxiety, genocide, imprisonment, enslavement, hate crimes, lynching, harassment, poverty, food insecurity, etc.)?
- How could knowledge of upcoming content help learners better prepare for and engage with it?
- How can I enact and demonstrate respect for learners as whole people and invite them to bring their whole selves to the course?

Online Opportunities

Mentioned previously, one of the strengths of utilizing an online syllabus format is the ability to showcase more content quickly and allow learners to find out more information through linking. One way to say all you want to say on important policies like those mentioned above is to use headings and link to more details. In addition, instructors can link to campus resources and outside resources to encourage learners to connect with them. Online learners have to take an extra step to connect with most campus support offices since they never walk by them, so linking (and reinforcing links verbally and through other content) provides the "walk by" for online learners. The example syllabus in the appendix makes heavy use of links, enabling the instructor to present an easily digestible version of the syllabus from which students can learn more about areas of need or interest.

Further, online course management and fully online courses provide opportunities for instructors to use a greater variety of content for both syllabus creation and curriculum. Open-source textbooks, blogs, online magazines, and journal access through institutional libraries all offer low-or-no cost ways to bring in new and different voices. Memes and gifs allow instructors to bring levity to syllabi and connect course concepts to existing learner schema. Also, instructors can use videos to introduce themselves, demonstrate using the learning management system, and explaining complicated concepts. Videos bring the syllabus to life, show the instructor as a real person, and build a relationship with learners. All these techniques for diversifying syllabus content provide different ways for learners to engage with the course and instructor and center the learner experience.

Key Takeaways

- Syllabus content should reflect learners' needs.
- Policies that are more likely to affect already marginalized learners should be present, clear, and thoughtfully constructed to minimize harm and promote equity.
- Academic accommodations policies should invite communication and promote accessibility for all.
- Religious holy/holidays policies should communicate respect and not require undue disclosure or academic burden.
- Trigger warnings are mechanisms for creating and sustaining a consensual, safe learning space.

Tone of the Syllabus: Build a Relationship with the Learners

Tone is a major focus of research literature on syllabi. Ludwig et al. (2011) felt that most syllabi they examine had a "tone more akin to the first day of incarceration than of learning" (p. 20). Womack (2017) described why this tone does not make sense in a classroom: "We always depend on student cooperation to achieve class goals, and focusing only on top-down authority misrepresents the choices students continually make" (p. 512). Palmer et al. (2016) offered that syllabi that are learning-focused should have "an inviting, approachable, and motivating tone" (p. 36). This is not meant just to appease learners; rather, syllabus tone contributes to learning and engagement. This can be especially true for learners who may already question their fit with the course/instructor. According to Womack (2017),

> Changing the tone of the syllabus is integral to making the document accessible to learners. . . . Students with disabilities must feel comfortable approaching a professor to request accommodations, so approachability constitutes more than a worry about popularity. Yet, instructors often write syllabi in response to 'problem' students, promoting an antagonistic tone. (p. 512)

It is easy to see how learners would be less likely to approach instructors about challenges when the tone of the syllabus is punitive and strict.

This means that the tone/language of a syllabus can actually perpetrate violence against learners by making their needs and their bodies unwelcome.

Most of the syllabi in this corpus contained language that ranged from rigid to decidedly harsh and unwelcoming. A few syllabi had much more flexible and inviting language. Table 3.2 includes some examples of this difference in language by comparing statements on similar elements of the syllabi. Based on these statements alone, it is easy to understand why learners might be less inclined to seek help from the instructors on the left than those on the right. While the statements on the right acknowledge learners' needs, those on the left expect every learner, regardless of ability, experience, or circumstances, to fit the instructor's expectations of engagement, performance, and success.

These examples show how a more instructor-centered tone is often punitive and focused on what a student is not permitted to do. Conversely, the more learner-centered examples offer suggestions for what a student may do, encourage communication, and focus on ways to earn (rather than only lose) points.

Table 3.2 Comparison of language signaling tone in syllabi

More instructor centered	*More learner-centered*
"Each minute you are late to class will result in a one-point deduction from your point total"	"If you are absent from a discussion section, plan to make up the lost points through extra credit"
"'Extra credit' will not be offered for this course, so don't ask!"	"If you just missed the cut-off for a grade, I will bump up your grade if, <u>and only if</u>, you have made at least <u>two</u> (2) postings to any of the discussion activities"
"More than four (4) absences will result in a reduction of a full letter grade in the final course grade (e.g., B to C)"	"If you have mediocre or poor participation—this is an invitation to speak with us about your progress and our expectations and make improvements"
Writing resources not present	"Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project"
Support services information not present	"[The university] provides a number of support services for students. An initial overview of services can be found at the [support services] website"

More subtle tonal cues are found in the pronouns and verbs used in syllabi. For example, scholars of linguistics have researched the different discursive effects of I/you versus we/our in syllabi (Baecker, 1998). While it may seem that more collectivist pronouns (we/our) create a more positive atmosphere, this is only true when the content really is/will be cooperative. Otherwise, the use of we/our is not genuine and conceals the power differential between the instructor and students. For example, compare these two statements: "We will work together to create a class environment that is inclusive by challenging ideas, not individuals", and "We will learn how to write persuasively through three op-ed assignments." In the former statement, the "we" refers to a task that truly is collective; the instructor and students can (and must) work together to achieve that goal. In the latter sentence, the "we" refers to a learning outcome and assignments that will only be undertaken by the students and for which the instructor has the role of evaluator. Thus, this "we" is not genuine; it obfuscates that power dynamics at play. Baecker (1998) referred to these "we's" as "false or coercive" because they pretend there is solidarity where it does not truly exist. A better approach is to use pronouns to specifically reflect who is involved in each element of the course, acknowledging the role of power in the class and the opportunities for authentic solidarity (Baecker, 1998).

The verbs we more readily connect with syllabus construction are those that describe the actions of the course: listening versus experimenting, writing versus exploring. While these certainly play a role in shaping students' understanding of the course, the modal verbs do the heavy lifting when it comes to tone (Afros & Schryer, 2009). Modal verbs—will, must, may, cannot, should, etc.—express "possibility, necessity, and permission" (Merriam Webster, n.d.). The use of these verbs in the syllabus conveys the tone of the course and instructor and shapes the class experience. Consider the difference between "Students should not arrive late to class," and "Students must not arrive late to class." While the former discourages tardiness, the latter might convey to students that it is better to not attend class at all than to arrive late. Review the modal verbs and pronouns in your syllabus to illuminate the tone(s) conveyed.

Afros and Schryer (2009) explored the use of modal verbs in syllabi at length, with many illustrative examples. Parson (2016) extended this analysis to examine gendered elements of STEM syllabi, illustrating how language choices go beyond conveying tone as simply welcoming or not to communicating what identities are normal/welcome/privileged within

the class and the discipline at large. Higher education syllabi are some students' first glimpses into specific disciplines, what it really means to "do" science or to "be" a historian. Whether instructors intend them to or not, syllabi evidence how professionals in the discipline think, how they speak/write, what they read, and the kind of work they do. Indeed, syllabi are powerful tools for socializing students, not just to the course or instructor, but to disciplines at large by drawing "links between classroom and research genres" (Afros & Schryer, 2009, p. 224). Given this, it is important to consider what the many elements of the syllabus communicate about the discipline. If a student is made to feel unwelcome by a course syllabus, it is possible they might not simply think "this class is not for me;" instead, they might think "this discipline is not for me." Analyzing syllabi for tone through word usage can bring implicit conceptualizations of the course and discipline to the surface (Hong & Hodge, 2009). To broaden the participation in disciplines to include more diverse peoples and identities, we can start with considering the syllabus as a welcome mat. Some questions to ask of your syllabus through this lens are:

- According to this syllabus, who gets to "do" *science*? (substitute your discipline for science)
- If a student only had this syllabus to learn from, what would they assume about *science* and the work of *scientists*?
- Based on the tone and content of this syllabus, what forms of knowledge are accepted as "good"/"valid" in the field of *science*?
- What/whose identities are privileged based on the preference for these forms of knowledge? What/whose identities are minoritized?

Larger Discourse About Syllabi: An Uphill Battle

Unfortunately for instructors, the discourse about syllabi extends beyond that created in their class environment. In the course of their research, the author was inspire to perform an internet search for memes dealing with syllabi. Conducting image searches for "syllabus meme" and "it's in the syllabus" meme returned a wealth of results, from which two perspectives became clear: either learners or instructors. Figure 3.4 contains a sample of the memes from the learner perspective, and Fig. 3.5 contains the same from the instructor perspective.

Fig. 3.4 Syllabus memes from the learner perspective

It is clear from the learner-authored memes that learners view both their syllabi and their instructors as adversaries. Whether facing Darth Vader or a seriously outmatched sumo competitor, learners as depicted in these memes are enemies—unprepared, less experienced enemies—of instructors/syllabi. Of particular note were the memes that say "Any questions on the syllabus? Good, see you Wednesday." and "Oh for fuck's sake, that's not even on the syllabus." The former conveys that learners feel instructors erroneously believe everything a learner needs is in the syllabus, and they are uninterested in answering questions about it. Meanwhile, the latter reflects learners' frustration when, even when something is not in the syllabus, they feel powerless to dispute it. Compounding this frustration is the meme that says, "I have zero tolerance policy for late

Fig. 3.5 Syllabus memes from the instructor perspective

work." followed by "The syllabus isn't ready today and I will get it to you next class." This meme juxtaposes the flexibility with which instructors apply the syllabus to their own actions with the rigidity with which it is applied to learners' actions. Interestingly, this meme combines two different meme styles: "Unhelpful Teacher" and "Scumbag Steve" (hat

from the latter meme style). The subtle addition of the hat conveys that the creator finds this syllabus double-standard not just unhelpful; it is unjust, "scumbag" behavior.

Conversely, the instructor memes almost all include the phrase, "It's in the syllabus." Based on the memes, "It's in the syllabus" is coded language that has the effect of distancing learners from instructors and silencing them by implying one or more of the following:

- "I already told you, and I'm not telling you again."
- "You should know that, so you are dumb for asking."
- "It's your fault that you did this incorrectly."
- "I have no patience for explanations."

Regardless of the particular meaning, all of these have a tone of impatience at best and intolerance or animosity at worst. Based on the volume of these memes, instructors acknowledge that learners repeatedly ask questions the answers to which are (from the instructor's perspective) in the syllabus. However, based on the learner memes, instructors rarely, if ever, see learners' questions as a reflection on the format, content, or tone of the syllabus itself. One of the learner-perspective memes hits on this point. By saying "If you say 'It's on the syllabus' one more time," the learner is voicing that they are as tired of hearing the phrase as instructors are of saying it. Rather than taking the opportunity to make a syllabus more accessible, instructors often simply refer learners back to the document that confused them in the first place, conveying to learners that they are stupid or lazy for misunderstanding.

Given the abundance of memes, there is already a strong discourse about syllabi and how they mediate instructor-learner relationships, so instructors need to take this into consideration regarding their tone. There is an existing imbalance of power between instructor and learners, so instructors have to go beyond neutrality to achieve a positive, welcoming tone. As evidenced in Table 3.2, some of the ways to do this include:

- Inviting communication and feedback.
- Encouraging positive behaviors.
- Referencing and encouraging the use of support services.

- Using positive phrases (e.g., earning points) instead of negative (e.g., losing points).
- Acknowledging needs, struggles, and occasional absences as normal and able to be overcome.
- Explicitly stating belief in the learners' abilities.

Online Opportunities

In online spaces, instructors have the benefit of not relying solely on text to communicate information. Incorporating images and videos, in addition to clarifying content, can underscore the tone of the syllabus. Having a video that introduces the instructor can convince learners that their instructor is truly interested in connecting with them and seeing them succeed. Using images and color (being sure to maintain accessibility) can clarify tone where it might be ambiguous. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 and the example syllabus in the appendix show some simple ways to incorporate digital images to convey a positive, supportive tone. Alt text, digital sticky notes, and special text styles can further support the tone of the syllabus, instructor, and course in ways that take the guess work away from learners and create a positive, collegial atmosphere.

Key Takeaways

- The tone of the syllabus—conveyed through word choice, text styles, and design—will set the foundation for the instructor's relationship with learners.
- A positive tone coupled with references to good behaviors and support services can have multifaceted effects of connecting learners with the institution, modeling successful habits, and facilitating growth.
- A punitive or harsh tone will likely discourage learners, especially those with underrepresented identities, from connecting with the instructor and communicating their needs.
- The ways instructors and learners refer to syllabi, even in jest, convey a lot about how the tone of syllabi mediates the relationship between them.

Method of Sharing the Syllabus: Set the Stage for Learning

In a chapter about how syllabi shape instructor-learner relationships, it is important not to neglect the topics of how, when, and how often the syllabus is shared. Typically, instructors deliver the course syllabus to learners one the first day of class in a method corresponding to the delivery mode of the course (paper for in-person; digital for online). In the spirit of equity, it is important for instructors to interrogate whether sharing the syllabus via a single method is helpful for meeting the diversity of learners' needs. Providing a digital syllabus, in addition to a paper copy if provided, will enable learners to more easily file, search, and keep track of the syllabus. As mentioned in the format section, a great option is providing an editable syllabus (in addition to a static syllabus for reference) so that learners can reorganize and annotate content in a way that is most helpful for them.

Coupled with the method of delivery is the question of how the instructor approaches reviewing the syllabus with learners. Instructors generally expect learners to read fully and understand the syllabus, but this expectation can be communicated and assessed by going beyond reading the syllabus aloud in class or having learners read it on their own. At a minimum, it is important for instructors to explicitly invite learners to voice confusion, ask for clarification, and point out any errors. Beyond this, instructors can assess learners' understanding of the syllabus content and engage them by creating an interactive quiz on key/tricky elements of the syllabus. An activity of this nature underscores the importance of the syllabus, communicates that the instructor cares that learners understand it, and engages learners in a more spirited way than reading alone. Also, an activity lessens the pressure on individual learners to speak up on the first day of class and voice confusion.

Based on their own study, Thompson (2007) offers numerous, specific suggestions for how to present the syllabus in a way that engages students, builds a foundation for class community, and establishes positive relationships between the instructor and students. The author of this chapter has seen success with techniques Thompson (2007) recommends, such as openly addressing students' fears, explaining the rationale for policies, using humor, attending to students' nonverbal cues to adjust tone or add explanation, showing an interest in learning students' names before syllabus review, sharing their teaching philosophy, emphasizing students'

control regarding grades, and letting students know they have valuable insight.

In the author's experience, learners are eager to access the syllabus, and many would prefer to be able to review it prior to the first day of class. Due to time constraints and course load assignments, it is not always possible for instructors to provide complete syllabi prior to the first class meeting. However, one way we can open up more possibilities and center learners is to reconsider the syllabus as one, sacrosanct document. Perhaps, there is information that is ready to be shared with learners the week before classes (e.g., instructor's information and introductory video, required texts, class meeting details, and course description). While this is not all the information learners need, it gives them enough information to confidently attend the first class meeting and begin to understand the personality of the instructor and the tone and content of the course. This technique illustrates that centering learners does not mean sacrificing or ignoring the needs of the instructor. Rather, it asks the instructor to consider the learners first as a way to open space, explore new possibilities, and innovate.

Many instructors do not explicitly refer to the syllabus again after the first day of class beyond mentioning the course schedule. This is a missed opportunity for instructors to reinforce those policies, procedures, and tips for success that they felt were integral enough to the course to appear in the syllabus. Referring back to the syllabus also models good academic habits and underscores the importance of the syllabus as a tool for success.

Online Opportunities

Online classes make all of the suggestions in this section even easier to accomplish. Instructors can quickly and easily share syllabi (in whole or part) with learners via email or learning management system. Free, online quiz/poll websites like Slido, PollEverywhere, and DirectPoll allow instructors to create interactive activities that can instantly assess learner understanding and display results. PollEverywhere even includes a competition feature to engage competitive learners while maintaining anonymity through the use of screennames. Finally, instructors can easily add a link back to the syllabus (in whole or part) to pages/modules throughout the course as needed to reinforce key ideas.

Key Takeaways

- The methods of delivery of and discussion about the syllabus should center learners' needs and encourage questions and feedback.
- Instructors do not have to wait until the whole syllabus is perfect to share important parts with learners; sharing key parts before class begins can lessen learners' anxiety and create a more positive atmosphere.
- Regularly referring back to elements of the syllabus models this behavior for learners and provides instructors with an easy way to reinforce key policies and recommendations.

Revising the Syllabus: Let Learners Lead the Way

In conclusion, the best instructors regularly evaluate their pedagogy, curriculum, and policies. The same applies to syllabi. Regularly reflecting on and finding ways to improve your syllabi is key to promoting equity and centering learners. One good method for this is to keep a document of notes where you can record issues you notice throughout the semester to reflect on when you prepare the syllabus for the next course. This relieves the pressure of trying to remember everything that happened at the end of the course or even the next semester or year. Another technique is to go back through this chapter with a syllabus in hand, asking each question and reviewing each key takeaway to see where the syllabus could better center learners.

A great way to center learners in syllabus revisions is to invite them to provide feedback specifically on the syllabus and ask learners what changes they would make to the syllabus itself as well as the course content. The key here is to encourage feedback and truly be open to learner suggestions. As evidence of the always-growing nature of education, it occurred to the author while writing this chapter that an anonymous link specifically for sharing feedback about the syllabus could be included in the footer of the document. This small step would indicate that the instructor views the students as important course collaborators. Following up with learners to enumerate changes you made and how their feedback helped shape the course strengthens the instructor-learner relationship and empowers students to make their needs known.

In this author's experiences, students do not understand the work that goes into a syllabus unless it is explained to them. Working with learners

to revise the syllabus can be a powerful tool for illustrating the connections between learning goals, assignments, curriculum, and the syllabus. Further, it can give them insight on new ways to interact with syllabi in the future as well as ways they could approach other instructors to share their needs and challenges. For instructors, syllabus co-creation enables continuous innovation and keeping in touch with new needs and identities as new learners enter the class. In their study on creating student-centered syllabi, Riley (2012) found that "encouraging students to speak out and listening to what they have to say results in a more highly motivated, interactive and successful learning process" (p. 57).

Online Opportunities

Again, the digital space opens up more and different ways to solicit student feedback on syllabi. Learning management systems allow instructors to deploy brief surveys at key points in the course, soliciting student feedback and enabling just-in-time improvements to meet student needs. Moreover, collaborative online tools can facilitate synchronous and asynchronous syllabus discussions and co-creation. Google Drive, Google Jamboard, Microsoft Word Online, and Dropbox Paper all allow document collaboration, allowing instructors and learners to edit, annotate, and discuss in real time or asynchronously. Further, instructors can leverage institutional resources like learning management systems (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard) and conferencing software (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) to chat and video call with learners individually or in groups to develop course content and revise syllabi.

Key Takeaways

- Center learners by regularly revising syllabi to reconsider learners' identities, needs, and experiences.
- Invite learners to provide feedback on the course and syllabus at least twice per semester.
- Be explicit about ways feedback from learners has helped improve the course.
- Offer learners an opportunity to collaborate in revising the syllabus for future courses.

Appendix

Current as of 8/1/2021

HED 900: Capstone
Fall 2021 – Wednesdays 5:30-6:45pm – Online
The University of Higher Education

HOW TO: CONTACT INSTRUCTOR

Instructor: Emily A. Johnson, PhD
Zoom Office: https://zoom.us/j/111111111
Phone: 601-555-5555
Email: example@usm.edu
Zoom Office Hours: Mon & Wed 3-5pm; Tue & Thurs 4-6pm

HOW TO: GET AN A

I believe that courses are for learning, exploring, experimenting, take risks, making mistakes, and growing new skills and knowledge. For this reason, I do not expect you to complete assignments at an expert level. Also, I subscribe to the research that shows grading does not relate to mastery of learning objectives. Rather than focusing on a particular grade, I want you to focus on completing course tasks to the best of your ability and using these as opportunities to develop your knowledge and skills related to the course learning objectives. As such, this course will involve a type of "ungrading" in which the focus is on feedback and development.

What does ungrading look like?
For each assignment you submit, I will provide written or oral feedback with the goal of helping you improve and develop toward mastery of the course learning objectives. The Canvas gradebook will show a 1 for completed assignments and a 0 for incomplete assignments to help you keep track of your work.

During the 6th and final weeks of the course, you will complete a self-assessment designed to boost metacognition, help you reflect on your progress and strategies, and allow you to grade yourself. **This means that earning an A is achievable and relies on you completing work to the best of your ability, incorporating feedback, and accurately reflecting on your progress.** I reserve the right to alter the grade you assign yourself prior to official entry if I feel your grade does not match your self-assessment, but I do not anticipate needing to do this. Click here for more details on how to have a successful ungrading experience.

Academic Support Resources
Successful students make regular use of campus resources. Some of the most useful to you may be:

Academic Support Services
Services for Students with Disabilities
Writing Center
Speaking Center
Counseling & Mental Health Center
University Health Services

Academic Integrity Office
Academic Advising Center
Student Ombudsman
Campus Wellness & Recreation
Student Activities & Organizations
Financial Aid

1

Current as of 8/1/2021

HOW TO: PREPARE FOR CLASS

Most weeks in this class will follow the same pattern, with 1-reading(s), 2-activity(ies), and 3-assignment(s) to complete. These are designed to 1-introduce you to the topic, 2-allow you to explore and practice the topic, then 3-ask you to apply the topic, so I recommend you complete the tasks in this order to build your knowledge and skills. All tasks are due each week by Wednesday at 5:30pm. Materials and instructions are available via Canvas at the links provided.

If university closures or unforeseen events require any changes to the schedule, any such changes will be announced as soon as possible in class and via Canvas, and I will post an updated syllabus with a new date and highlighted updates. Please contact me via email if anything is unclear.

Week	Topic	Readings Due	Activities Due	Assignments Due
8/19	Overview and Introductions			
8/26	Types of Research and Selecting a Topic	• Arnold • A Complete Dissertation	• Alber (Frames 1.1, 1.2)	• Discussion Board 1 (DB1)
9/2	Gathering Preliminary Information	• How to Find Articles • Article Searching Tips • How to Skim Articles • How to Read Articles	• Compare and Select a Citation Manager • Alber (Frame 1.7)	• DB1 Replies • Prelim. Literature Description
9/9	Drafting the Research Question	• Drafting a Question • Good/Bad Questions • Common Problems	• Alber (Frames 1.3, 1.4)	• Discussion Board 2 (DB2)
9/16	Connecting with Stakeholders	• Stakeholders in US Higher Ed (SKIM) • How to: Informational Interviews • Sample Questions (p. 2)	• Identifying Interview Subjects	• DB2 Replies • Interview Plan
9/23	Synthesizing Literature	• Writing Annotations • Examples of Annotations • How to: Lit Review • Types of Lit Review	• Evaluating Annotations	• Discussion Board 3 (DB3) • Interim Self-Assessment
9/30	Summarizing the Research Topic	• Writing a Strong Intro • (Video) Chapter 1	• Alber (Frames 1.5, 1.6, and 1.9)	• DB3 Replies • Annotated Bibliography
10/7	Individual Meetings – Sign Up via Doodle			
10/14	Choosing a Methodology	• Diagram of Paradigms • Epistemology • Methodologies	• Match methodology to question	• Methods Summary
10/21	Comparing Methods	• Qualitative Overview • Quantitative Overview	• Alber (Frame 3.1, 3.2)	• Discussion Board 4 (DB4)
10/28	Outlining the Research Plan	• Outlining • Example Outline	• Alber (Frame 2.2, 2.10, 3.8)	• DB4 Replies • Interview Report
11/4	Sharing the Research Plan	• How To: Elevator Pitch		• Action Plan Outline/Draft
11/11	Individual Meetings – Sign Up via Doodle			• Elevator Pitch Draft
11/18	Pitches and Debriefing			• Action Plan • Elevator Pitch • Self-Assessment

Current as of 8/1/2021

HOW TO: MASTER COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The overall goal for the Capstone course is for you to develop, describe, and defend your plan for an applied research project. To meet this goal, you will complete tasks designed to develop your mastery of specific learning objectives:

Learning Objectives	Related Weeks
Identify a problem of practice that has not been thoroughly addressed by prior scholarship.	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
Articulate a research question of appropriate scope to be answered within your given timeframe and resources.	4, 5, 7, 10
Locate, compile, and summarize scholarship related to your research question.	3, 6, 11
Compare the benefits and challenges of quantitative versus qualitative methodologies for answering the research question.	9, 10
Develop a written action plan that clearly identifies your research question, its value in the context of existing literature, and a basic description of your plan for answering it.	4, 7, 9, 12
Describe the action plan to a non-expert within 60-90 seconds in a way that is clear and captures the essence of the project.	11, 12, 13

Required Components

To participate fully in this course, you will need:

HAVE ALL THE THINGS!

- American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.
    - All other readings will be provided on Canvas.

- Reliable access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection, web camera, microphone, word processing software, spreadsheet software, an Internet search engine, and a PDF reader

- University-provided email address (If you choose to forward your e-mail to an alternate account, then please make sure the forwarding mechanism is working correctly.)

- Regular engagement with Canvas, our online course system

- Consistent attendance at class meetings, which will take place via Zoom. During class sessions, I will answer questions, offer additional resources, and facilitate discussions. If you must be absent, please let me know as soon as possible. Afterward, watch the Zoom recording and connect with a classmate. I expect you to manage any absences responsibly.

If you are unable to access any of these, please let me know as soon as possible, so I can assist you with locating them.

3

Current as of 8/1/2021

HOW TO: CREATE A SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE CLASS SPACE

Conduct

Kindness and engagement are the primary expectations of all participants in this course. We must each treat each other with respect and remember to challenge ideas not individuals. Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged. Behavior/language that harasses or oppresses minoritized groups will be addressed immediately by the instructor. Repeated instances after instructor intervention will not be tolerated. More information can be found on UHE's Classroom Conduct Policy website.

Accessibility

It is my sincere desire that every portion of this course be accessible to all students. I value your contributions, and I want each of you to be engaged with the course, with your colleagues, and with me. All course materials should be screen-reader ready, and any video or audio materials should have captions and/or transcripts. If any element of the course is inaccessible to you for any reason, please let me know as soon as possible so I can correct it.

Also, UHE fully supports the rights of students to access and participate fully in courses. If you have a disability and need accommodations, you should contact the Office for Academic Accommodations (OAA) for information and support. Please contact OAA if you are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies for accommodations.

UHE Office for Academic Accommodations
Voice Telephone: (101) 555-5555
Hearing Impaired Contacts: (800) 555-5555 (TTY) or email Jake Matlin jake.matlin@uhe.edu

Nondiscrimination

There are many things I believe that directly impact my role as an educator:

- Every student has skills, experience, and expertise.
- Education must be designed to serve students, taking into consideration their many identities, experiences, and abilities.
- There are many interwoven systems of oppression that require consistent, directed efforts to dismantle, including white supremacy, patriarchy, racism, heteronormativity, cissexism, ableism, xenophobia, colorism, and the intersections of any/all these.

- I have been socialized in these systems to have and act out biases, and I must work to identify, name, and correct these biases.
- All people have value, regardless of their ability to contribute to capitalism.

I promise you that I will work to create an equitable and enriching class experience for you and to remember that you are all individuals worthy of dignity and respect. Concerns about discrimination should be directed to: Dr. Ruth Bader Ginsburg at (111) 555-5555 or rbg@uhe.edu.

4

Current as of 8/1/2021

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

One of the ways I contribute to a safe learning environment on our campus is by serving as a resource to students. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a faculty member. While I can keep almost all information you share with me in confidence, I am required by law to share information regarding sexual misconduct – more details here. If you would like to speak in confidence, please contact the Center for Crisis Intervention, the Counseling Center, or a spiritual advisor.

Children in Class

Although UHE does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom, the policy described here reflects my commitment to enabling full participation for student parents. I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class or leaving children with less-than-ideal supervision. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally having a child present for class to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a commitment that students make to one another to do their best, respect each other's work, and not misrepresent someone else's work as their own. This commitment strengthens the UHE community. Behaviors that violate your commitment to academic integrity include (but are not limited to):

- Cheating (including copying from others' work)
- Plagiarism (representing another person's words or ideas as your own; failure to properly cite the source of your information, argument, or concepts)
- Falsification of documents
- Disclosure of test or other assignment content to another student
- Submission of the same paper or other assignment to more than one class without the explicit approval of all faculty members involved
- Unauthorized academic collaboration with others
- Conspiracy to engage in academic misconduct

Engaging in any of these behaviors or supporting others who do so will result in academic penalties and/or other sanctions. For more details, please see the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

This example, deidentified syllabus was developed by Emily A. Johnson, PhD.

5
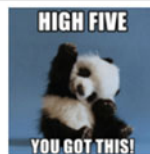
Suggestions for Further Reading

For those who are interested in diving deeper into the topics mentioned in this chapter, the following suggested readings would be good places to start on each topic. The chapter references also provide rich sources for exploration on these topics.

Critical Pedagogies

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Herder & Herder.
hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge.

Discourse/Rhetorical Analysis of Syllabi

Afros, E., & Schryer, C. F. (2009). The genre of syllabus in higher education. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 8*, 224–233.
Baecker, D. L. (1998). Uncovering the rhetoric of the syllabus. *College Teaching, 46*(2), 58–62.
Liao, H. C. (2015). What are course syllabi telling students? Critical discourse analysis of classroom power relationships. *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry, 12*(1), 13–27.
Parson, L. (2016). Are STEM syllabi gendered? A feminist critical discourse analysis. *The Qualitative Report, 21*(1), 102–116. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2467

Designing Syllabi

Grunert O'Brien, J., Millis, B. J., & Cohen, M. W. (2008). *The course syllabus: A learning-centered approach*. Jossey-Bass.
Womack, A.-M., Blanchard, A., Wang, C., & Jessee, M. C. (2015). *Accessible syllabus*. https://www.accessiblesyllabus.com/

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Alunan, A. (2019, December 9). Where do I belong in science? *Medium*. https://medium.com/stem-and-culture-chronicle/where-do-i-belong-in-science-4168d4ca6f4b

Baecker, D. L. (1998). Uncovering the rhetoric of the syllabus. *College Teaching, 46*(2), 58–62.

Bawarshi, A. (2003). *Genre and the invention of the writer: Reconsidering the place of invention in composition*. Utah State University Press.

Bové, P. (1990). Discourse. In F. Lentricchia & T. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Critical terms for literary study* (pp. 50–65). University of Chicago Press.

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Broadbent, G., Dorow, L. G., & Fisch, L. A. (2007). College syllabi: Providing support for students with disabilities. *The Educational Forum, 71*(1), 71–80.

Couric, K. (2014, June 10). *Laverne Cox opens up about 'TIME' cover & 'Orange is the New Black'* [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mgBwCxTRDY

Cummings, J. A., Bonk, C. J., & Jacobs, R. F. (2002). Twenty-first century course syllabi: Options for online communication and interactivity. *The Internet and Higher Education, 5*, 1–19.

Doolittle, P. E., & Siudzinski, R. A. (2010). Recommended syllabus components: What do higher education faculty include in their syllabi? *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, 20*(3), 29–61.

Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Introduction to discourse analysis* (pp. 258–284). Sage.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interview and other writings 1972–1977* (C. Gordon, Ed.). Random House.

Grunert O'Brien, J., Millis, B. J., & Cohen, M. W. (2008). *The course syllabus: A learning-centered approach*. Jossey-Bass.

Hong, P. Y. P., & Hodge, D. R. (2009). Understanding social justice in social work: A content analysis of course syllabi. *Families in Society: THe Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 90*(2), 212–219.

Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. Routledge.

Johnson, E. A. (2018). "It's in the syllabus": A Foucauldian reading reveals how syllabi maintain educational hegemony. In *ASHE Conference*.

Jones, S. G. (1996). Toward inclusive theory: Disability as social construction. *NASPA Journal, 33*(Summer), 347–354.

Killenberg, J. (2017, November 20). School breaks unfairly based around Christian holidays. *The Southerner*. Retrieved from https://thesoutherneronline.com/65800/comment/school-breaks-unfairly-based-around-christian-holidays/

Kulbaga, T. A., & Spencer, L. G. (2019). *Campuses of consent: Sexual and social justice in higher education*. University of Massachusetts Press.

Learning for Justice. (n.d.). *Analyzing the school holiday calendar*. Retrieved February 14, 2021, from https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-res ources/lessons/analyzing-the-school-holiday-calendar

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Mahan, L. (2019, July 31). Youthsplaining: You've been texting the word "okay" wrong. *InsideHook*. https://www.insidehook.com/article/advice/the-differ ence-between-texting-k-ok-kk-explained

Mark, R. (n.d.). *How to: Incorporate diversity into the curriculum*. Retrieved February 12, 2021, from https://www.fcs.uga.edu/docs/Incorporate_Divers ity_into_the_Curriculum.pdf

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Riley, C. E. (2012). Learning from the learners: A student centered syllabus in preparation for the real world. *Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education, 4*(1), 50–60.

Salkind, N. J. (2010). Discourse analysis. In *Encyclopedia of research design*. https://methods.sagepub.com/reference/encyc-of-research-design/ n115.xml

Smith, M. F., & Razzouk, N. Y. (1993). Improving classroom communication: The case of the course syllabus. *Journal of Education for Business, 68*(4), 215–221. https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.1993.10117616

Squire, D. (2016). Engaging race and power in higher education organizations through a critical race institutional logics perspective. *Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs, 2*(1), 105–121.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2011). Post qualitative research: The critique and the coming after. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative inquiry* (4th ed., pp. 611–635). Sage.

Stanny, C., Gonzalez, M., & McGowan, B. (2015). Assessing the culture of teaching and learning through a syllabus review. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 40*(7), 898–913.

Stringer, R. (2014). *Knowing victims: Feminism, agency and victim politics in neoliberal times*. Routledge.

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Torres, M. (2019, February 13). Why replying 'OK' in work chats sounds so aggressive, according to an internet linguist. *HuffingtonPost*. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/okay-ok-k-workplace-language_l_5c619182e4b0910c63f35750

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Synergistic Pedagogies in Virtual Spaces: Preparing Social Justice Educational Researchers Through SoTL

Raji Swaminathan and Thalia Mulvihill

COVID 19 thrust higher education faculty into reimagining teaching and learning in virtual and online settings. In this context, we ask how faculty can learn to build virtual educational spaces focused on social justice and equity and explore what the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) holds for building critical pedagogical approaches to virtual education. As university faculty members who teach qualitative research methods to educators within two different Schools of Education at public institutions, we seek to prepare early career educational researchers and help them understand how research can inform and

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advance their practice. SoTL research helps us to maximize our pedagogical approach to teaching research methods in ways that promote greater social justice and equity even within the online classroom. Specifically, we seek to find the synergies that exist between the skills needed by qualitative researchers in general and the skills needed by those routinely using SOTL projects. Facilitating those synergies has the potential to advance both teaching practices and helping to grow and enhance the overall body of knowledge educators rely on to refine and improve their work (Larsson et al., 2020).

Online educational research methods courses are designed to prepare educators to conduct and use research often focused on their own teaching practices. Educational spaces, both in higher education and K12 education, represent key opportunities to model equitable teaching practices and imbue criticality. For example, these courses can help students to construct research questions that center and prioritize creating emancipatory learning spaces. Further, these courses can help students to create socially conscious professional development plans while strengthening their sense of social justice. Finally, the work they do in the course can contribute to theory and knowledge creation. As such, these courses are important spaces to explore how to design socially just and equitable learning spaces.

In this chapter, we argue that educational research has long been tainted with colonial, hierarchical overtones that have been resisted and transformed by feminists such as bell Hooks (1994) and critical race scholars such as Ladson-Billings (2014). Ladson-Billings and hooks have encouraged counter storytelling and non-verbal arts-based research practices as ways to highlight narratives from populations that are usually muted or silenced. We draw from critical theorist scholars to craft a pedagogy that is culturally adaptive, attentive to vulnerable students and is deliberately reflexive. Culturally adaptive research methods have an emphasis on developing or climbing the empathy wall (Hochschild, 2018), learning through critical questioning and pedagogical discomfort, learning to be comfortable with ambiguity and learning to listen deeply to acknowledge without judgement, beliefs that may not be synchronous with one's own. We present the teaching of empathy, critical questioning, and ambiguity as important qualitative research stances and practices that can engage with the vulnerabilities faced by people while also interrogating power structures that give rise to inequities. We also describe and explain our online teaching pedagogies related to these courses, the role

of SoTL in the curriculum, and share specific activities for teaching qualitative research online that will encourage reflexivity, empathy and critical questioning. Shulman (2011) pointed out that the problems of teaching and learning cannot find a final cure or solution; instead as the world evolves and changes, new challenges of practice appear in teaching and learning that call for innovative solutions.

Virtual Education in a (Post) COVID World

Some of the challenges of 2020 in higher education teaching and learning are centralized around the COVID-19 pandemic that has served to highlight the inequalities of contexts between groups of students and brought to the attention of higher education faculty the critical need for social justice pedagogies that can interrogate racism and classism as a key element in innovation. Virtual platforms have been adopted around the world during the pandemic so that a majority of teaching both at the K12 and university levels are taking place online. Different platforms are being widely used and the question of when to use synchronous or asynchronous teaching online has been given serious thought. Faculty in higher education have tried at times to come up with a solution that can simultaneously meet the challenges all students face such as the hyflex approach that calls for an adaptable pedagogy in terms of how students can access coursework and participate in class meetings. Higher education faculty have been similarly challenged to be able to design learning experiences for students that are meaningful in the online environment.

Teaching qualitative research to novice scholars who are also in education and preparing to be educators means that they need to understand and use qualitative research to improve upon and learn from their own teaching experiences. For many higher education students, the online platforms were not new, what was new was the degree to which they were compelled to use them consistently, making it all the more important to pay attention to questions of equity as they manifest in the online platforms. It is becoming clear that online learning is here to stay in one form or another and even after COVID-19, so it is likely that the flexibility offered by online learning will be sought after by many students in higher education as they juggle life and jobs with their academic pursuits.

Life in lockdown and shutdowns have challenged educators and students alike resulting in experimentation with different virtual platforms and strategies to keep students engaged in learning while navigating life

issues simultaneously. Alongside the shutdown, incidents of racism like the George Floyd murder have brought national and worldwide attention to racial injustices leading to protests and demands for change that go beyond lip service. Actionable items are sought in business, law and in higher education. Universities are in a unique space to be able to respond to these calls as they navigate teaching in the virtual environment with a social justice impetus.

Research Methods Courses in Education

Research methods courses in undergraduate and graduate education are often oriented towards quantitative content, which comes with a history of colonization and a hierarchical relationship between the researcher and researched. The historical beginnings of qualitative research similarly led scholars to respond to the colonial aspect over time (feminists, scholars of color, anti-racist research approaches) by emphasizing decolonizing research, by paying particular attention to populations marginalized in research, learning to listen and learn from and not merely about participants, and in particular by trying to bring to the forefront non-verbal methodologies (arts based) that can elicit stories from vulnerable populations. Behari-Leak (2020) points out that decolonized, socially just, research is needed to "constantly challenge ourselves to unlearn, relearn, and reframe assumptions and practice" (p. 2). As faculty in higher education it has been important to us to continuously learn about democratic educational spaces and in particular to create virtual spaces for students that are democratic (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2011) and are inclusive of multiple student voices (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2012).

Researchers have to learn to engage in reflexivity related to race, class, and gender, and interrogate their personal belief systems which can be different from those of participants they encounter in a research setting. As higher education faculty who have been teaching research methods for twenty plus years and have taught research methods online for a number of years, we see this moment as an opportunity to teach and engage with pedagogies that will nurture and train emerging scholars in research methodologies. While the pedagogies for teaching qualitative research methods are still being developed, holistic pedagogical approaches (Mulvihill et al., 2015; Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2018), critical approaches to questions (Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2017) and life writing methods (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2017) as well as arts

based approaches (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2020) contribute towards deepening our understanding of shifts in consciousness and ways of coping with traumatic events that are increasingly global in nature as they permeate our lives in different ways. The impact of these events led to an urgency in terms of teaching research methodologies online in ways to bring a nuanced understanding of such differences in a struggle for a more just world.

Purpose of the Chapter

Qualitative research can examine the complex reasons and emotional motivations for people's choices that may indicate worldviews different from one's own. We offer culturally adaptive methodologies that use empathy, critical questioning and ambiguity as strategies to engage with participants. Examples from three case studies are used to help outline a methodology aimed at finding the deeper story underlying vastly different life experiences. Further, we offer activities to teach empathy, critical questioning, and tolerance of ambiguity to emergent scholars and researchers.

Our aim is to examine and adapt qualitative methodologies to craft a pedagogy of the political to meet the ever-changing current world events. Methodologies that have examined vulnerable populations' experiences have their foundation in indigenous and decolonizing methods (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013), culturally relevant approaches, cross cultural research, and the pedagogical discussions of Ladson-Billings (2014) and Paris (2012). Culturally responsive methodologies are attentive to vulnerable populations and questions of power in research. As a way to move towards a culturally adaptive methodology that is simultaneously critical in terms of questioning power while at the same time being sensitive to vulnerable populations, we advocate for the use of culturally responsive methodologies as a bridge. In this process, taking our cue from Ladson-Billings (2014) who outlined a culturally relevant *pedagogy* 2.0 aka the re-mix, we refer to *culturally adaptive methodologies* or methodologies that are flexible and capable of mashups as well as amalgamate different ways of approaching research topics that are currently relevant, political, and individual. Turning a qualitative lens onto research questions that have triggered vastly different responses, questions that are political as well as educational, and questions that require us to gain a deeper understanding of motivations driving different actions is part of the work. As a contested

field, education has stakeholders taking sides in terms of the best way to educate and provide an environment for learning. We are interested in examining what types of methodologies will help us understand worldviews that may be vastly different from that of the researcher. We seek to understand the ethical implications of crossing divides, learning to be empathetic and trying to understand actions that might not be what the researcher chooses. We hope that this understanding will provide additional insight into how these questions and stances help situate the SoTL alongside qualitative research methodologies and pedagogies and create synergy within a virtual environment.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

What is needed is a culturally responsive methodology that embraces empathy, ambiguity, and critical questioning. Qualitative research can delve into the complex reasons for the choices people make, the emotional motivations behind their choices that may indicate worldviews different from one's own. Recent political events in the world such as the experiences of COVID 19 and the different responses across the world and within the United States, the murders of George Floyd and the aftermath as a groundswell of a movement for social justice, and the controversies surrounding the election in the United States make it clear that there is much to be understood that cannot be ascertained by predictable parameters. Further, divisions run deep, causing emotional schisms and a communicative impasse, which require researchers who are adept at methods that are adaptable and equipped with skills that are able to cross ideological lines and bridge communicative divides. Within educational settings, these skills are needed to conduct research to understand security on higher education campuses and K-12 schools, conflict studies, and other aspects of educational research where education is seen as a contested site for several world views to compete. For qualitative researchers, this is an opportunity to use culture as a lens through which to understand the complexity of the human experience. To do this research, a culturally responsive methodology focuses on:

(a) examining how to prepare novice researchers to use sensitive, culturally adaptive approaches to research in online environments where researching culture, differences, and diversity is not easy;

(b) exploring the meaning of critical questioning and ambiguity in research processes;

(c) exploring the pedagogical strategies and frameworks for researching different worldviews; and

(d) learning how to climb the "empathy wall" (Hochschild, 2018) to open communication channels with people on different sides of an issue.

Theoretical conceptualizations of culture are numerous across multiple disciplines. This chapter frames culturally responsive methodologies to include methodologies that are adaptive to the political. In order to explicate culturally adaptive methodologies as a methodological construct, we draw on conceptualizations of culture, communication, empathy, and reflexivity from various disciplines such as sociological (Hall, 1992; Hochschild, 2018), anthropological (Crawford et al., 2015), political science (Box-Steffensmeier et al., 2010), and education (Alim & Paris, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris, 2012). Hall (1992) categorized culture in three ways: *culture as community*, *culture as conversation*, and *culture as code*. The essentialist idea of culture as a fixed concept has long been replaced with post-modern fluid notions of culture and multiple meanings generated by the term. In education, for example, Ladson-Billings (2014) and Paris (2012) discussed and adapted culturally relevant pedagogies to move away from an essentialist perspective to include culturally sustaining and revitalizing pedagogies that had a more fluid definition of culture and that centralized social justice and equity principles. The *methodology of the political* that we construct in this chapter aligns with and is a product of our theoretical framework as it draws on culturally adaptive methods including constructs of empathy, ambiguity, and critical questioning.

Using Case Studies in Virtual Environments

Valverde-Berrocoso et al. (2020) examined the literature pertaining to online environments to identify the key themes arising from research about education in virtual spaces (Valverde-Berrocoso et al., 2020). They discovered three primary focus areas of research, namely, e-learning and online students, e-learning and online teachers, and finally e-learning and online curriculum. While the case study method was one of the more popular and prevalent research methods for studies about online spaces,

we have used the case study research methods and case study pedagogies as teaching tools. Specifically, case study methodologies have been advantageous for designing learning within online environments where an emphasis on SoTL can assist with delving deeper into analysis of social justice projects. Considering cases, for example, as pedagogical tools for students in primarily synchronous online spaces to engage in structured role play. These experiential exercises within online spaces helps students practice what it means to conduct research cross-culturally. Synchronous online spaces such as Zoom give students multiple tools to use simultaneously to engage, reflect, log questions, have 'back-channel' dialogue in chats while the 'main stage' role play is underway. In the process, novice researchers learn to be aware of the fallacy of regarding culture as simply 'other.' Learning to take into account differences in worldviews and what that might mean in terms of power within research settings is fundamental to understanding the process of the movement of power in research settings.

Case studies for teaching in online synchronous spaces not only allows for such explorations and deep analysis, but also holds the capacity to document the learning via video, transcripts, and chat dialogue for further and continuous reflection. Creating multimodal data that can be further analyzed fulfills pedagogical goals related to preparing social justice researchers. Case studies in the online synchronous environment can work well especially if drawn from experiential interviews contributed by students. Involving them in the creation of the case as well as the deeper analysis elevates their engagement and readiness for synergies that emerge. This use of case studies as pedagogical tools for building research capacity building in novice researchers is made stronger through the lens of SoTL. Further, it was our aim to create a community in synchronous online spaces by encouraging teaching, social, and cognitive presence (Valverde-Berrocoso et al., 2020) from all participants as they learned what it meant to become a qualitative researcher through nurturing empathy, critical questioning, and reflexivity. The next section explores how case studies can serve as catalysts within SoTL projects.

Case Studies Catalyzing SoTL Projects

Scholars have pointed out that SoTL researchers need flexibility in their research methodologies since they are often from a wide range of disciplines (Webb & Welsh, 2019). Case studies can be used as flexible

tools for methodological and pedagogical purposes for SoTL projects. Further, we applied the principles of good practice in SoTL (Felten, 2013) by focusing on student learning while engaging in methodological and pedagogical inquiry in partnership with students. Drawing from three case studies that we used when teaching research methods courses the multiple purposes they served will be explicated. Methodologically they were meant to help students deepen their understanding of what it means to use a culturally responsive methodology focused on critical questioning skills and to bring into sharp relief the pedagogical benefits of continuous engagement with a SoTL project. The merging of these purposes allowed for new experimental forms of case studies to develop.

The cases were initiated from an assignment specifically designed to trouble the status quo and to bring forward any latent understanding students held about the "other" in order to make space for further interrogation. Students were required to conduct an introductory interview foregrounding culturally responsive methodological concerns. Webb (2015) points out that the interview is a valuable tool for SoTL research projects. The interview is a dynamic exchange of ideas that leads to a shared experience between the interviewer and participant. Further, the power of the researcher versus the participant calls into question the interview as a purely empowering experience. As faculty who conduct SoTL research projects, we are aware of our multiple roles as part of the institution of higher education, as the faculty teaching and as the interviewer in our research role. In order to learn from our own teaching, we designed projects that would lead students to deliberate and carefully think about the assumption of a shared understanding in interview research. In order to foreground the importance of empathy, critical questioning, and reflexivity in our research methods pedagogy of research, required the creation of assignments that created a juxtaposition of world views. The assignment called for a deliberate selection of participants whose worldview was different from that of the emerging scholar. The three cases were selected because of the discussions that followed, the lessons learned, and the contribution of the cases towards a deeper understanding of what it means to engage in culturally responsive methodologies. All three cases highlighted the importance of engaging in working the empathy wall (Hochschild, 2018), getting at the deeper story (Cramer, 2016; Hochschild, 2018) through a process of learning to be comfortable with ambiguity and practices political listening (Cramer, 2016) that includes a critical questioning stance. The three cases serving as exemplars include

Case 1: interviewing an adult graduate on retrospective memories of his special education classroom experiences, *Case 2*: interviewing a counselor at a school which had an alternative school-within-a-school; and *Case 3*: interviewing a parent on their experiences of homeschooling their children. These case studies set the stage for students to analyze and discuss the economic, social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of their work in virtual settings, and to raise questions about social justice imperatives. The details of the cases, and lessons learned from each, are given below. We also share how our analysis of these cases in relation to the extant literature helped us to arrive at a series of propositions about the relationship between the tenets of SoTL and the how teaching online qualitative research methods courses serve learning objectives related to social justice and equity.

Case Study 1: Retrospective Memories of Special Education

In our classroom discussions of the interviews students conducted, some moments stood out as especially significant for learning several lessons about culturally responsive methodologies and garnered lengthy, stimulating discussions among students. One of these cases was an interview with an adult graduate of a special education program at a high school. The student had graduated and was now holding a job at a local grocery store. The student who had conducted the interview had done so because of her strong belief in the failure of special education programs and a conviction that special education classrooms were particularly harsh environments for students combined with very little if any learning. This was the student-researcher's starting assumption. In order to prepare for the interview, the student practiced reflexivity by outlining her own positionality with regard to the interview. She admitted that her preconceived ideas regarding the appropriateness of special education came from her experience observing a cousin who had been through special education programming and had learned very little, did not graduate from high school and has continued to struggle with life and with work. The student wrote a pre-interview journal that outlined her preconceived ideas. Further, she checked the interview protocol against any leading questions, asking questions that might lead to monosyllabic answers like yes/no and to ensure that questions were open-ended and elicited stories that might be positive or negative.

The preparation allowed the student to complete the interview after which she had to contend with her own emotions. Contrary to her

expectations, the graduate of the special education program had very good memories of his classroom experiences and his teachers. Post interview debriefing facilitated by online asynchronous discussion forums and supplemented by synchronous Zoom discussions revealed the difficulty and emotional stress on the interviewer who found the task of listening without argument or contradicting what she heard hard. The experience allowed for a vigorous debate among members of the class and questions arose as to how to listen in ways that muted one's own assumptions in order to allow and actively encourage the other to be heard. Despite good intentions and preparation, the case taught us that it is entirely possible for researcher values to dominate. Advocating for a social justice perspective, the case lessons included the value of a political listening. Political listening in our view is a culturally adaptive listening that requires one's own voice to be quiet to enable an acknowledgement of the perspective that is different from one's own.

Case Study 2: Seeking the Deeper Story
Examples from *Case Study 2* taught lessons of the difficulty of getting at the deeper story when the participant and the researcher have assumptions that generate mistrust. The case raised ethical issues regarding full disclosure; what type of disclosure is appropriate, and when should it occur and under what circumstances does alignment with social justice aims, combined with the principle of beneficence (research for the benefit of a group of people), indicate a necessity for non-disclosure? These types of provocative questions prompt debates about how researchers determine the appropriateness of covert (or partially covert) studies. In this case, the student chose to interview a high school guidance counselor at his own high school in which he had been a student. As an alumnus, he gained access to visit his teachers and explore the school-within-a-school that he had, in his years as a student, barely been aware of. The school-within-a-school was an alternative education program that comprised students who were struggling academically in the main school or were labeled with behavior difficulties. These students, placed at risk by a variety of factors that they often did not have control over, were moved to the program that was housed in the basement of the school. School-within-a-school programs exist in most states and often have different schedules, academic curricula, and include behavior modification programs. The student became aware of places within his own school that served as a different environment for students whom he rarely saw. The questions of

what that site might mean for students, and how sites might help one see and experience differently, the extent to which borders existed between one and the other and how the different sites gave rise to different experiences fueled his inquiry (Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2019). Asking to have a conversation with the guidance counselor had been consented to because of his alumni status. The student prepared for what he anticipated to be a somewhat hostile conversation. In preparation for the conversation, the student examined his questions, decided to memorize them rather than write them down, while keeping one set handy to give to the counselor should that be needed. Further, the student had questions that given his social justice stance had much to do with the students in the school-within-a-school, how they were counseled into the program and whether they were counseled into higher education. The conversation was granted after the student revealed he was an alumnus of the school. The case became interesting to all the students during the student's presentation and was chosen as one among the three that would serve as a case for further study and investigation. The interview proved to be difficult from the start with distrust on both sides. The guidance counselor was unwilling to talk during the interview about the process of his job and his decision making regarding how he counseled students. The interviewer distrusted the counselor's social justice stance and tried to find stories that would get at issues of equity or justice or lack thereof. The student interviewer did not wish to disclose his own stance regarding social justice while the participant was unwilling to tell the stories that might have shown the complexity of his role. The student did not gain the trust of the counselor and as a result got a stilted interview conversation. Further, as an alumnus, he was approached by several students in the school halls who remembered him as a star basketball player and were eager to tell him stories about the school and the school-within-a-school. The data that he gathered did not arrive in the form he anticipated. Rather, the data turned out to be the reactions his participant had within the interview environment (not direct and full answers to the prepared interview questions), but also the data came from the school context where students' informal conversations in the hall further informed his analysis. This data was unanticipated yet turned out to be quite meaningful as an indicator of the school environment. The students in the research methods class raised important questions about the ethics of obtaining data through casual conversations and wondered what and whom they could trust when entering the field. Further, as a social justice advocate, what was the step

one needed to take in the field that would further equity? The students asked ethical questions: whether it was ethical to mask one's advocate stance to allow the other to speak; whether it was ethical to have an agenda for change at the outset that involved persuading the other to change their minds. The critical questioning stance therefore was taken by the students in the classroom who were wondering whose word could be trusted and what ethical issues all this raised. The post interview discussions took place in the virtual environment synchronously via zoom and asynchronously via discussion boards.

Case Study 3: Striving for Empathy
Examples from *Case Study 3* brought to the forefront the challenges of building trust and empathy when one's own belief systems are sharply in contrast with those of participants. Case study 3 involved a student who wanted to interview a woman who homeschooled her children. Home-schooling was perceived by this student to be practiced by people who are unwilling to send their children to public school due to their religious beliefs or perceived ideas about public schools. The student who wanted to interview a parent who homeschooled their child, prepared for her interview by practicing reflexivity and writing down and acknowledging her own assumptions regarding home schooling. During the interview, she learned about the different ways in which women juggle different roles, a variety of subjects and topics and how they figure out pedagogies that can engage their children. She found that listening deeply allowed her to put aside her own beliefs while building the empathy wall. Since she was herself a mother, she drew on that commonality to scale the empathy wall. She also found that the participant held equally strong views and assumptions about public schools as she herself did about homeschooling. This extended to paying taxes that funded schools that the children did not attend, and to the right or appropriate texts for inclusion in curricula, as well as the conflicts that make public schools potentially dangerous places. As a qualitative researcher looking to take on a stance of empathy, the interviewer found herself trying to find ways to hold conversations where false beliefs and assumptions could be dispelled through a slow building of trust. But is it the job of the researcher to dispel faulty assumptions? The key was to listen and talk without the intention to prove or drive home a point. But what does the researcher do in the face of what they believe to be falsehoods? What if the researcher starts to experience a shift in their own understanding based on the ideas being asserted

by the participant? What does the researcher need to do in order to practice a culturally responsive approach to this research encounter? The students in the research methods class chose this as the third case study for further discussion about these types of questions and the dilemmas it raises. They were interested in learning more about researchers' ability to empathize but also critically question. In other words, how can they learn to be in reflexive conversation with themselves and other researchers when practicing culturally responsive research methodologies, can include experiencing high degrees of ambiguity and uncertainty? If listening means being open to other beliefs and cultures, it can also mean researchers may find themselves increasing their malleability as they are impacted by the experience of the research process.

Applying a Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to Case Study Methods

From these three cases, more in-depth pedagogical learning was realized by applying the tenets of SoTL. We examined the implementation of these cases in our research methods course in the context of teaching online qualitative research methods with a focus on social justice and equity in education. Specifically, we learned five key things. First, culturally responsive research methodologies can be taught via online qualitative research courses that combine elements of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The case study assignment, in particular, provided students with alternative frameworks and lenses through which they could effectively understand the layers of analysis that are required when asking research questions related to social justice and equity within the context of education. Furthermore, the importance of the interactive nature of the learning that occurs when case studies are built and debriefed within online research methods courses was reinforced. The students were engaged with the central critical questions of research practice where the backgrounds and experiences of participants' multiple identities and cultures are taken into account and acknowledged within the inquiry process to allow for a co-creation of knowledge between researchers and participants.

Second, we learned that culturally responsive qualitative research can incorporate decolonizing methodologies by rejecting a single epistemology. The case study pedagogy quickened the learning around this

point as the students were immersed in various ways of navigating simultaneous multiple realities. By rejecting a single epistemology and looking for a solidarity-based epistemology (Bulbeck, 1998), students can lead to what Santos (2017) referred to as "ecologies of knowledges." All three cases demonstrated the importance and significance of multiple epistemologies.

Third, we learned how to include culturally responsive methodologies that include a methodology of the political should begin with working at the 'empathy wall.' An empathy wall is "an obstacle to deep understanding of another person, one that can make us feel indifferent or even hostile to those who hold different views or those whose childhood is rooted in different circumstances" (Hochschild, 2018, p. 10). The use of the case study assignment demonstrated in entirely different ways the powerful role that resentment (Cramer, 2016) can play in dialogues of social justice and the challenge of building the empathy wall by moving into view the tacit understandings held by students usually concealed in typical online course structures.

Fourth, we learned that culturally responsive qualitative research can be taught to students by intentional focus on various reflexivity exercises designed to pull up and make visible researcher values. The case study assignment used reflexivity as the center point to help guide all individual and group examination of the critical questions raised by each case. Paying attention to the values that animate their lifeworld can also help researchers see how to examine the subtle life worlds of their participants. The three cases demonstrated the ways in which researchers' emotions and assumptions need continuous examination and to be considered part of the data set under analysis.

Finally, we learned that a methodology of the political requires researchers to be aware of their moral and ethical boundaries (Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2017). Culturally responsive pedagogies for qualitative research led us to examine our personal epistemologies and how they influenced our teaching so that in turn, we could teach students to reflect on and examine their own personal epistemologies. How personal epistemologies influence methodological decisions including design is a growing area of interest (Singh & Walwyn, 2017).

Additional Applications

To further demonstrate the outcomes of our SoTL inspired project we offer some student exercises for research courses that developed after further reflecting on what we learned from our most recent use of the case study assignment. These exercises can be used to help guide students as they are learning to employ culturally responsive thinking within research projects focused on social justice. Specifically, these exercises are for research projects where students encounter a clear dissonance, such as when the researcher does not share the values of the individual or the group whom she studies. Engaging in culturally responsive methodologies requires us to ask how to teach empathy and more crucially, how to build rapport when empathy does not derive naturally in the field. Second, these exercises can help researchers anticipate the decisions they will have to make in order to study populations and power circles during the course of field work. These guided reflexivity assignments should be implemented in a synchronous online environment.

Exercise 1: Reflexivity

Goal: Practice reflexivity (think about why I think the way I do).

Guidelines

Divide the class into groups of four. Two students should take the role of interviewer and interviewee while a third student should take notes and the fourth observes the interactions. Choose debate topics that have at least two clear sides to an issue (e.g., all K-12 schools should require uniforms, K-12 schools should ban sites like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram on their computers, school funding should be equal across districts, homework should be banned, higher education should be free; affirmative action in college admissions is the best policy; legacy admissions should be banned; universities should serve as sanctuaries for undocumented students; college fraternities and sororities should be abolished). Each group of students should pick one debate topic and take sides. The interviewee should take a position while the interviewer should take the opposite position. The others should take on neutral roles and observe and take notes of the conversation.

The interviewer should prepare 3 questions for the interview. The interview should proceed for no more than 10 minutes.

Reflection

The group should write a short note about the process and their own thoughts in response to the following prompts:

1. Did you take the position you naturally believe in or the opposite?
2. How did taking the position make you feel?
3. How well did you listen to what was being asked/said?
4. What parts made you uncomfortable or angry or have any other strong emotion?
5. Why do you think you felt the emotion at those points?
6. What assumptions or prior beliefs did you uncover about yourself during or after the interview.

Exercise 2: Critical Questioning

Goal: Learn to critically question what we take for granted.

Guidelines

Pick a favorite show that you watch regularly. Watch one episode of the show with the following questions in mind.

1. Does the show reveal any stereotypes (race, class, gender, disability).
2. Does the show position any person as an 'outsider.' What characteristics does that person have?
3. What (or who) is missing from the show?
4. Think of 2 reasons why you like the show.
5. Think of 2 reasons to critique the show.
6. How did watching the show through a critical lens make you feel?

Exercise 3: Building an Empathy Wall

Goal: Learn to build trust and practice empathy.

Guidelines

Divide the class into groups of four. Let each person take turns being asked questions by the others. Ask one question each in round robin fashion. The questions can be about challenges, motivations, goals and aspirations. In a virtual environment, this exercise can be adapted for synchronous or asynchronous discussions. For example, most virtual platforms allow groups to be formed. Questions can be posted by group members for each student by a set day of the week with responses to be posted a day later as reply posts to the questioner.

Reflect

(a) What did you learn about asking questions?
(b) What did you learn about the people in your group?
(c) To what extent did this exercise help build trust?
(d) What else could you have done to build trust?
(e) To what extent did you get a sense of the person's life?

OR
Think of a person at your workplace or in your circle of friends who holds a completely different job from you. Make a list of 10 questions you would like to ask her to know more about her/him and her/his job.

Reflect

Share within the group. Discuss why you would like to get to know this person and what your questions might reveal about any assumptions you might have.

CONCLUSION

It is becoming increasingly important for qualitative researchers today to learn to cross boundaries and face incongruent belief systems in their journey as researchers exploring the human condition. Incongruent belief systems can surface between the researcher and those they are engaged with during the research process, including those they observe and/or interview. These incongruencies are rarely addressed when preparing early career researchers and can be sites for important questions related to social

justice whether the researcher considers themselves to be an insider or outsider to the subculture under examination. Faculty who teach online qualitative research methods courses need to be able to help early career researchers build the capacity to recognize and explore these dynamics within an online environment. To do that, faculty must work on building their own empathy and learn to question what they think they know about their students. Online environments will require faculty to create new innovations for opening channels of communication among students especially when approaching complex discussions related to social justice and equity. The preparation of graduate students requires pedagogical decisions that emphasize the teaching of critical questioning and reflection along with the skills and knowledge needed for qualitative research. In addition, the pedagogies need to go beyond teaching empathy and listening and focus on teaching students to become more aware of their personal epistemologies, note the gaps between their understanding and their participants' understanding of their worlds. In this sense, the pedagogical decisions made by faculty teaching qualitative research courses to students need to incorporate different sets of exercises that help students navigate various belief systems and navigate a methodology of the political through cultural adaptation. In order to engage in these advanced pedagogies, faculty can benefit directly from incorporating SoTL projects into their own professional development plans for continuous improvement. These efforts help navigate the multiple methodological decisions that researchers will need to make in order to create greater empathy while exploring the critical questions related to social justice and equity within educational spaces.

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Remoting into STEM Summer Bridge Programs

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Key Terms

Summer Bridge Program:	Program designed for incoming first-year students, with the goal of improving these students' success in college.
Retention:	A student is retained when they do not depart from their institution early (i.e., before attaining their desired degree).

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107

Marginalized:	Those who are not considered members of the dominant culture and thus do not receive the privilege and power associated with that dominant culture.
Cultural Engaging Campus Environment:	A campus space that is culturally affirming for marginalized students, and the focal point of Museus's (2014) model of student retention.
Emergency Remote Teaching:	Modality of disseminating content remotely in response to an emergency situation (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic). Distinct from distance education.
Distance Education:	An established, flexible modality of disseminating content that is designed to consider various forms of distance (e.g., space or time). Distinct from emergency remote teaching.

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) Summer Bridge Programs were created in the early 1990s to address attrition and persistence for traditionally marginalized students by providing a mechanism for a successful college transition (Ashley et al., 2017; Tinto, 1993). Although Black people represented almost 13% of the US population in 1998, Black students accounted for only 7.9% of STEM Bachelor's degrees, while white students were awarded almost 69.8% of these degrees (Stolle-McAllister, 2011). Eight years later, in 2006 when those same students would have had an opportunity to complete a Ph.D., Black graduate students earned only 2.5% of STEM doctoral degrees. These

types of comprehensive programs were developed to increase diversity in the STEM field by creating a pipeline for traditionally marginalized students to gain an interactive and engaging experience prior to the start of the academic year. These programs focused on academic success, identity development, and professional development by creating opportunities for students to create their social and cultural capital on college campuses and the STEM community (Ashley et al., 2017; Sablan, 2014; Stolle-McAllister, 2011). Most of these programs include the following: academic skills, campus culture, building community, networking opportunities, site visits, and social support systems (Cooper et al., 2017; Stolle-McAllister, 2011). Additionally, the efforts of STEM Summer Programs are designed to provide the selected students a multiweek comprehensive experience that helps the students adapt to the college campus pursuing a STEM degree (Cooper et al., 2017).

In particular, summer programs focused on STEM were designed to diminish the extreme achievement gap between white and Black students (Ashley et al., 2017). Indeed, investigation into the impact of participation in STEM Summer Bridge programs highlights benefits for active learning, critical thinking skills, and confidence in navigating the classroom (Cooper et al., 2017). Participants in STEM Summer Bridge Programs tended to value the power of group work and focus on discussing problems and concepts, whereas non-Bridge students gravitated towards numeric values such as the right answers and getting good grades (Cooper et al., 2017). According to Sablan (2014), studies investigating STEM Summer Bridge Programs showed that the participants tend to excel in college-level courses in their first-year experience. Specifically, participants in the STEM Summer Bridge program at University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) valued the experience such that they felt acclimated to the STEM atmosphere academically, socially, and professionally (Stolle-McAllister, 2011).

Components of STEM Summer Bridge Programs

There is no set formula for how STEM Summer Bridge programs are constructed, but they typically consist of fourteen major components (Ashley et al., 2017). It is important to note that these components are not listed in any particular order of importance. The first main component centers around providing students with foundational knowledge in the broader STEM domain. Incoming students may have trouble with

the level of difficulty of college STEM course work, so some bridge programs engage in remediation efforts to assist these students (Chen, 2013). The second component is improving students' content knowledge in a more specific STEM discipline (e.g., biology or chemistry). First year STEM majors often take very rigorous college classes their first two semesters, therefore even the most academically prepared students sometimes struggle with the amount of coursework they are assigned. STEM Summer Bridge programs aim to give students somewhat of a crash course of the classes they are expected to take their first year, in turn giving them a head start (Ashley et al., 2017).

The third and fourth components of STEM Summer Bridge programs focus on increasing a student's interest in a major and increasing their research participation (Ashley et al., 2017). One reason that college students choose to leave STEM majors is because the lack of interest in the discipline (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997). Thus, Bridge programs often aim to increase student interest in the major and with research in hopes that increased interest will lead to increased recruitment and persistence.

The fifth, sixth and seventh components of STEM Bridge programs include networking with other students, networking with faculty, and improving a student's sense of belonging (Ashley et al., 2017). Indeed, a student's sense of belonging has been shown to influence both student academic motivation and student well-being (Anderman & Freeman, 2004; Trujillo & Tanner, 2014). Understanding this, Bridge programs foster opportunities for students to build relationships with their peers which helps them feel as if they are part of the college community. Finally, building relationships with faculty is extremely helpful to students when navigating the rigorous STEM disciplines (Ashley et al., 2017). Oftentimes, faculty are perceived as intimidating by students, therefore commonly creating a sense of disconnect between faculty and student. STEM Bridge programs help deconstruct this perception, allowing students to gain valuable connections with the individuals who facilitate their instruction.

The eighth component of most STEM Summer Bridge programs focuses on improving students' GPA (Ashley et al., 2017). Throughout the course of a student's collegiate career, Bridge programs often keep in close contact with the students in addition to tracking their GPA at the end of each semester. GPAs are traditionally assessed by retrieving institutional data and some Bridge programs require students to sign a waiver granting them access to do so. The ninth and tenth components include

increasing student retention and increasing student graduation rates. These two components tie very closely back to improving students' foundational and content knowledge, which ultimately increases a student's sense of preparedness. This moves us to the eleventh component, which is a student's sense of how well-prepared they are for a collegiate-level degree program. Similarly, the twelfth component is improving student academic self-efficacy (i.e., the confidence that a student has in their ability to successfully complete their degree program). Bridge programs help students become and feel more prepared, especially if the student attended a high school that did not adequately provide them with the knowledge and academic tools needed to succeed in college (Ashley et al., 2017). The last two components of STEM Bridge programs are the recruitment of students and enhancing diversity. These last two components in particular can be categorized as departmental-level goals. As mentioned previously, there is a large deficit between the diversity of the current scientific community and the general public. Therefore, diversity in the STEM field is important because it could lead to diminished socioeconomic disparities and minimized cultural bias in scientific findings (Intemann, 2009).

Theories of Student Retention

Tinto's Theory

Considering Ashley et al.'s (2017) components of STEM Summer Bridge programs which focus on retaining students, specifically the eighth through twelfth outlined earlier, it is important to understand the underlying theories of early student departure within higher education. In this vein, Tinto's (1993) model of student departure is the theory most often cited to explain retention and early departure of college students and, as such, was the foundation of many early bridge programs (Ashley et al., 2017; Guiffrida, 2006; Museus, 2014; Seidman, 2005). In this model, Tinto (1993) asserts that every student enters higher education with a unique set of pre-college attributes, such as family background, prior schooling, and individual ability (Seidman, 2005). In turn, these attributes influence the creation of personal goals related to their upcoming academic and social experiences at their institution. In addition, these attributes affect the level of student commitment to achieving their goals. After arriving at their institution, the student's goals and level

of commitment to these goals interact with their experiences of integration into their institution's academic and social systems. Specifically, the model purports the more well-integrated students are into their campus systems, the more committed they will be to their goals and to their institution. With greater integration and greater commitment, students are more likely to remain at their institution.

In particular, Tinto (1993) defines two ways for a student to integrate into an institution's academic and social systems. Specifically, integration is accomplished through formal and informal manners of interaction with these systems (Rasco et al., 2020). Formal academic system integration involves engaging in activities related to academic performance (e.g., participating in class discussions or researching a topic in the library), whereas informal academic system integration involves personal interactions with faculty and staff (Chrysikos et al., 2017). Similarly, formal social system integration involves engaging in extracurricular activities (e.g., joining a campus organization or attending a campus event), whereas informal social system integration involves interaction with peers (Chrysikos et al., 2017). In other words, formal integration is characterized by interaction with institution-related activities (e.g., a student completing a lab practicum or attending a symposium). On the other hand, informal integration is characterized by interaction with the people who are associated with these activities (e.g., a student's personal interaction with the faculty member who leads their lab practicum or connecting with a peer who attended the same symposium). In sum, this model purports that a student's retention is predicted by their separation from their previous sociocultural environment and integration into their institution's systems. The more well-integrated a student is into the social and academic systems of their university, the more committed to their personal goals and to their institution the student will be. In turn, the model purports a well-integrated and committed student is more likely to remain at their institution.

Critiques of Tinto's Theory

Despite Tinto's (1993) model having attained near ubiquity in the literature, scholars have called into question its applicability to traditionally underrepresented students (Guiffrida, 2006; Museus et al., 2011; Seidman, 2005; Tierney, 1999). For example, Tierney (1999) asserted that the separation aspect of the integration process is incongruent with

marginalized folks' cultural existence. Indeed, Tinto's (1993) stage model of integration adapted the stages of cultural transition (Van Gennep, 1960) to explain a student's separation from their home context and integration into their campus context. Importantly, these stages can be useful in explaining the progression of an individual within a culture (e.g., Chrysikos et al., 2017), however marginalized students' socio-cultural context of origin is oftentimes different from the sociocultural context of their campus. For these students, their transition process has been described as "cultural suicide" (Tierney, 1999; i.e., abandoning one's previous cultural context and assimilating to a new culture rather than progressing within one's culture). Specifically, this separation from one's prior cultural environment is problematic because it encourages isolation from one's cultivated support systems (Guiffrida, 2006). More-over, this aspect of the model is rooted in a Eurocentric paradigm which ignores many marginalized cultural identities, including bicultural and multicultural identities. Therefore, whereas it is important for traditionally underrepresented populations to obtain both the academic qualifications and the cultural and social tools in order to be successful in STEM, it should not come at the cost of disowning their own cultural experiences and backgrounds to assimilate into the more dominant culture (Guiffrida, 2006; Museus, 2014; Stolle-McAllister, 2011; Tierney, 1999).

Alternative Model: Cultural Advancement of Tinto's Theory

Considering the culturally-limited perspective of Tinto's (1993) model, Guiffrida (2006) offers suggestions to remedy some of the problematic aspects of this model when applied to marginalized students. Specifically, Guiffrida (2006) incorporates components from two theories of human motivation, namely self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002) and job involvement theory (Kanungo, 1982), to create a framework that describes how culture and motivation affect student success and retention. Self-determination theory, or SDT, asserts that individuals are moti-vated by two forms of motivational orientation, which are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1991). When applied to a higher-education context, these motivation orientations are related to the process of learning. Within this context, intrinsic motivation is characterized by being interested in the content that one is learning, whereas extrinsic motivation is characterized by learning as a means to an end (e.g., learning as the means to get to the end of a good grade in a class). SDT posits

that optimal learning motivation is intrinsic because intrinsic needs are more closely related to personal growth than are extrinsic needs (Reeve et al., 2004, cited in Guiffrida, 2006). However, SDT also asserts that individual motivation is composed of the desire for autonomy in engaging with the learning process, the need for feeling competent interacting with the content, and the desire for relatedness (i.e., establishing close relationships with others; Reeve et al., 2004). The literature has shown that for individuals who identify more with a collectivistic identity than an individualistic identity, a perspective often associated with folks with African, Latinx, Indigenous American and Asian cultural backgrounds, autonomy may not be a particularly important factor when considering intrinsic motivation (Guiffrida, 2006). A caveat exists such that individuals from collectivist cultural backgrounds are not a monolith and vary based on the influence of US culture at large. As such, collectivist and individualist cultures should not be seen as categorical, but rather that some collectivist values and some individualist values are present in varying degrees in most people.

Considering the varying degrees of collectivist and individualist values present within marginalized students, Guiffrida (2006) incorporates aspects of job involvement theory, or JIT (Kanungo, 1982) to account for students' differing cultural norms on their motivation. Congruent with SDT, JIT asserts that human behavior is driven by external and internal motivations. However, separating from SDT, JIT states that an individual's identification with a job (i.e., their job involvement) does not necessarily relate to that job's ability to satisfy the worker's intrinsic needs. Rather, job involvement is more closely related to whichever needs of the worker are most salient, which are influenced by their prior socialization experiences. These prior socialization experiences, which include one's internalized collectivist/individualist social identification, are one of the factors that influence which needs are most salient for an individual. In addition, needs-saliency patterns are affected by one's present job conditions, meaning that considering both one's past socialization and one's present occupational environment is important to understand which needs may be most salient for an individual. Importantly, this theory had been thus far used within a work environment and had yet to be applied to other systems (Guiffrida, 2006). However, Kanungo (1982) stated that this theory could be applied to other contexts, such as in the case of understanding the importance of marginalized students' cultural backgrounds in relation to their patterns of salient needs (Guiffrida, 2006).

Taken together, Guiffrida (2006) asserts that Tinto's (1993) model can be used as a starting point to create a culturally-sensitive model of student retention, though it requires some changes to consider both the importance for a marginalized student to remain connected to the support systems of their home environment and which particular needs are most salient for the student at a particular time. However, Museus (2014) proposed a different framework, separate from Tinto's theory, that centers the voices of marginalized students.

Alternative Model: Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE)

To create a model of student retention that is applicable to the experience of marginalized college students and not based on Tinto (1993), Museus (2014) first outlines four particular critiques of Tinto's theory that are common in the literature. The first of these is the *cultural foundations* critique, which argues that the integration aspect of Tinto's theory is culturally biased against students of color, echoing an argument of Guiffrida (2006). The next critique mentioned is the *self-determination* critique, which describes potential problems with the theory's emphasis on self-determination—that the student is responsible for success within a university system and the institution's role in fostering students' success is deemphasized. Third, the *integration viability* critique is explained, which calls into question the validity of academic and social integration to predict college student success. Finally, the fourth critique mentioned is the *psychological dimension* critique, which states that much research focused on Tinto's (1993) theory measures quantitative, objective behaviors of academic and social integration, ignoring the qualitative, subjective sense of an individual's connection to their institution.

According to Museus (2014), addressing these four critiques of Tinto's (1993) theory is one of the three necessary tasks in the process of creating a culturally-sensitive model of college student retention that is applicable to marginalized students. In addition, a new model must be based on research that highlights the voices and experiences of diverse student populations and this model must also be easily quantifiable and testable for its own validation. Museus (2014) asserts that this is done through the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments model (CECE).

The CECE model states that external influences impact both individual influences and academic success outcomes (Museus, 2014). In

addition, each student enters their institution with a set of pre-college inputs, such as personal cultural identities or academic preparedness, that relate to individual influences and success. However, the primary focus of the CECE model is on the relationship between environmental factors of a campus and one's individual influences on college success. Specifically, the model posits that more positive campus environment (i.e., culturally engaging campus environments) are associated with more positive individual influences and overall greater college success outcomes. Finally, and importantly, the model asserts that positive individual influences are related to a higher likelihood of institutional persistence and degree attainment.

Museus (2014) described the factors of external influences and pre-college inputs as contextual, though these concepts are still important to include because they do have an effect on student success outcomes and can be controlled for in statistical analysis of the CECE model. In particular, these external influences include personal financial resources, one's employment status (and thus, employment time commitments), and family of origin support. Perhaps unsurprisingly, marginalized student success is positively related to being able to pay for one's education (Choy, 2000), receiving needs-based grants if qualified (Modena et al., 2020), and having a supportive family of origin (Foltz et al., 2014; Palmer et al., 2011). Pre-college inputs include demographic factors such as age or ethnic identity, initial academic dispositions (e.g., academic motivation) and academic preparation prior to attending college (Museus, 2014).

The external influences and pre-college inputs are important to give context to the main focus of the model, which is the construct of culturally engaging campus environments (Museus, 2014). This construct focuses on how an institution can engage diverse students' cultural identities and cater to the most salient needs of these students. In particular, "the CECE model hypothesizes that there are nine indicators of culturally engaging campus environments that engage students' racially diverse cultural backgrounds or identities, reflect their diverse needs as they navigate their respective institutions, and facilitate their success in college" (Museus, 2014, p. 210). These indicators are as follows.

- **CECE Indicator #1: Cultural Familiarity**. The amount that students interact with and are exposed to faculty, staff and peers who share their cultural background on campus is related to a greater likelihood of success.

- **CECE Indicator #2: Culturally Relevant Knowledge**. Students sustaining and increasing knowledge about their culture and community of origin can positively impact their experience and success in college. In particular, when students can create, maintain and strengthen connections to their community of origin through spaces allowing them to increase their culturally relevant knowledge, they tend to feel a stronger connection to their institution and experience greater success.
- **CECE Indicator #3: Cultural Community Service**. Students being provided tools and opportunities by their institution to improve and give back to their community of origin through spreading awareness about issues important to that community, community service, service-learning opportunities, and other means can positively impact students' experiences and success.
- **CECE Indicator #4: Opportunities for Meaningful Cross-Cultural Engagement**. Students' meaningful and purposeful engagement with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds can have positive impacts for not only marginalized students but for students from all backgrounds at an institution.
- **CECE Indicator #5: Collectivist Cultural Orientations**. Students who attend an institution that is based in a more collectivist perspective rather than an individualist perspective are more likely to succeed.
- **CECE Indicator #6: Culturally Validating Environments**. Students who are surrounded by educators who validate their students' cultural identities will have more positive experiences and are more likely to succeed. Specifically, cultural validation occurs when institutions and educators show that they value the diverse cultural identities of their student population.
- **CECE Indicator #7: Humanized Educational Environments**. Campus environments that are characterized by institution-affiliated individuals who care about, are committed to and develop meaningful personal relationships with students are considered humanized educational environments. College students who engage with humanized educational environments tend to have more positive experiences and be more successful.
- **CECE Indicator #8: Proactive Philosophies**. When faculty and staff members make extra efforts to bring valuable information and support to students, students are more likely to maximize their success and persist at their institution.

- **CECE Indicator #9: Availability of Holistic Support**. The availability of holistic support depends on students being provided one or more faculty members who can provide them with the information that they seek, offer the help that they require, or be able to connect them with the information or support they need. If students are supported holistically, they are more likely to be successful.

Altogether, Museus (2014, p. 217) provided the CECE Indicators to create a framework, "that might be able to guide institutional action toward positive transformation." Being that these are aspects of a campus environment that can be fostered by those on-campus, the CECE Indicators are the most important aspect of the CECE model to the development of the STEM Summer Bridge program.

Technology Considerations

In addition to the advancement of theories of student retention to consider modern students' cultural identities in relation to their institutional culture (Guiffrida, 2006; Museus, 2014), considering the role of technology in the development of STEM education (Dogan & Robin, 2015) is important to the development of a STEM Summer Bridge program. Generally, the advancement of technology has impacted many aspects of STEM education, from utilizing cloud-based technology like Box, DropBox or Google Cloud services to facilitate remote collaboration to using simulation software to run experiments that would be prohibitively costly otherwise (Kumar & Sharma, 2017). However, beyond technology's ubiquitous integration into traditional STEM education, technology plays an even more integral role in the delivery of emergency remote teaching (ERT). Despite seeming similar on a surface level, ERT differs from traditional distance learning in multiple ways (Bozkurt, 2019; Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020). For example, distance learning is an established flexible option for students to choose if they desire, but engaging in ERT is oftentimes an obligation (e.g., students did not choose to engage in the learning process remotely and were rather required to due to safety policies regarding the COVID-19 pandemic).

Emergency Remote Delivery Considerations

To address changes in programming due to the necessarily remote method of delivery, the tenets of empathic design were used (Tracey & Hutchinson, 2019; Xie, 2020). Specifically, empathic design in this context denotes a style of instructional design wherein the designer keeps in mind the cognitive and emotional reaction of the learner to the instructional design. One's empathy, which has many operationalized definitions (Elliott et al., 2011) though in this case means imagining oneself in the position of the learner within the program, can be integrated into the design process through a framework proposed by Kouprie and Visser (2009). In particular, the authors offer a four-stage model to facilitate empathic design. The first stage is discovery, in which the designer makes first contact with the user, either literally by reaching out or by examining literature pertinent to the user population. Second is the immersion stage, which is characterized by the designer taking the user's perspective, considering the various factors that will affect the user's experience. The third stage is connection, when the designer draws upon their own past emotional experiences to make connections with anticipated user emotional experiences elicited by the program being designed. Finally, the fourth stage is detachment, when the designer returns to the role of designing with a perspective that is informed by empathetically taking on the role of the user.

Expounding upon empathic design and directly applying it to an ERT context, Xie (2020) asserts that instructional designers should consider the remote context (i.e., the learning environment) in which students are engaging with the content, which is especially important when taking a social justice perspective for many reasons. According to the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC), 22.3% of individuals in rural areas lack broadband internet access with the minimum acceptable speed and furthermore and 27.7% of persons living on land sovereign to Tribal Nations lack minimum acceptable broadband access (US Federal Communications Commission, 2020). Beyond simply being able to access the internet, availability of devices used to access the content (e.g., having to share a laptop among multiple individuals in a household) or the ability of students' devices to run programs necessary to engage with the content (e.g., having an older laptop that frequently crashes when running Zoom) should be considered as well (Xie, 2020). As shown, technological factors are an important aspect to consider when designing a program for online delivery. However, in addition to technological

factors, there are other considerations to keep in mind regarding the students' learning environment. For example, available learning environments may not be particularly suitable for adequate engagement due to a high level of ambient sound, lack of suitable desk space, or the presence of other individuals in the learning space.

CREATING AN ONLINE STEM SUMMER BRIDGE CURRICULUM

General Considerations

In developing the curriculum for the virtual STEM Summer Bridge Program, the components were designed to align with the traditional in-person program. The program embodies the academic development, personal development, and professional exploration aspects of the in-person program, which all are connected to building community. The four-week schedule contain themes where we would dive into three-hour blocks on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays covering content, listening actively to guest speakers, and unpacking material in lively conversations. Additionally, the participants engaged in peer groups led by Graduate Interns to debrief about the topics and start building community on a micro-level.

The academic component of the program focuses on engaging with faculty, alumni, and current students to understand the resources on-hand and to see academics from various point of view as the incoming students embark their collegiate career. A major component related to academics involved collaboration among the students, which is called the Innovation Design Project. The Innovation Design Project presented the student groups with a real-world problem and the groups were challenged to develop a product or a service to address an identified problem (e.g., access to clean water, COVID-19, and transportation). The groups met to discuss their ideas and delivered their pitch to the entire program to receive feedback to refine the project going forward. This opportunity allowed the students to work in small groups and gain exposure to presenting as a group.

Another component of the program centered around personal development, which focuses on shaping one's identity. The curriculum provided a number of interactive activities centered around values, interests, personality, and strengths. In that vein, we discussed Clifton's StrengthsFinder 2.0 and Sinek's (2011) *Start with Why*, during which we explored these

concepts and applied them to personal, academic, and professional goals for their college journey using SMART Goals. Our program emphasized the importance of understanding one's self as each participant navigates college.

In regard to professional and career exploration, the students had the opportunity to interact with alumni and current students at the institution. The participants had the opportunity to learn about research experience, study abroad, and internship opportunities. The students participated in a Statement of Purpose with the University Writing Center to develop skills for applying for future opportunities in their collegiate career. The student completed writing exercises in the presentation to outline their Statement of Purpose.

STEM Summer Bridge Program Schedule

Each week of the four-week program was characterized by a theme through which to engage the students. Prior to the start the of the program, we conducted an orientation session along with a pre-survey to make sure we tracked the participants progress and addressed any accessibility needs for the virtual experience. We also covered the expectations and goals of the program both with the students and their families. Furthermore, we introduced the students to the key staff members that would be interacting with the students (i.e., graduate interns, program administrators, and college deans). The purpose of orientation is to cover the schedule in detail and address any needs, concerns, and questions about their participation in the program. The program orientation session emphasized the following:

- Create a welcoming and engaging environment for students to build community in the summer program.
- Introduce students to the university's resources to assist with their transition and success on the collegiate level (i.e., campus partners, academic resources, faculty, and alumni).
- Develop a personal connection to the institution (i.e., tradition, culture, and purpose).
- Explore and investigate students' academic and career exploration for their collegiate journey.

In the first week of the STEM Summer Bridge Program, the theme centered around meeting each other and getting acquainted with the

campus and staff. Each morning started with an activity to share who we are, whether it was movies, music, a family memory, discussing doubts, or sharing major accomplishments in their life. For example, the Show & Tell exercise gave the participants the opportunity to find an item that represents who you are, which can be a photo, stuffed animal, or personal artifact. These types of activities helped ease the tension of meeting new people and breaking down barriers. All activities were hosted via Zoom and utilized application tools such as the breakout rooms, the chat feature, Padlet, Kahoot!, and Menti. Additionally, these tools allowed students to participate actively and anonymously. The students were introduced to all the application tools we would be using, which primarily included Canvas and Zoom. The next core component of the week included discovery and discussing our Top 5 Talent Themes from StrengthsFinder. The students engaged in a presentation on Strengths-Finder and transitioned to take the assessment inventory to discover their Top 5 Talent Themes. Once each student received their results, the discussion shifted to how we see and use our strengths in a personal, academic, and professional aspects of our life. One of the next items completed on the first week included an interactive virtual tour, introduction to the department of Student Affairs, a student panel from current STEM majors, and finally a campus trivia using Kahoot!

Week two of STEM Summer Bridge was primarily comprised of the same material that was covered in week one, but allowed the students to review what was introduced to them from a more personal lens. On Monday the students attended a virtual workshop that discussed the result variations of their StrengthsFinders Test. This gave students the opportunity to understand what their different test results meant and how to best use them to their advantage. Within the workshop, students were also allotted time to discuss their findings among their peers in order to get a deeper understanding of how individuals can build off of others' strengths and weaknesses. On Tuesday, students were given a homework assignment titled "My Major Assessment Tool." This assessment platform was distributed by the Auburn University College of Science & Mathematics (COSAM) Academic Advising Office and required students to answer questions pertaining to their personal interests, career interests, and goal aspirations. The following day, students attended a workshop, separated by college, that was facilitated by an Academic Advisor to discuss the students' assessment results. This particular workshop was significantly impactful for the students because it shed light on how their results could

help them better understand the major and career path best suited for them.

On Thursday of week two, students were introduced to a panel of COSAM and Engineering Student Ambassadors. Student Ambassadors within both colleges serve as leaders who advocate and spread awareness about the different initiatives that each office carries out. They are also uniquely tasked with creating programs that specifically center around diversity and inclusion within the field of STEM. It is also important to note that each one of these leaders has a major that is housed in the College of Science and Math or Engineering. During the panel discussion, the student leaders were asked a variety of questions that ranged from their major selection, class experiences, campus life, research and/or internship preparation, and even graduate school. The incoming were also given the opportunity to ask any questions of their own.

On Friday of week two, students concluded with a workshop facilitated by the Auburn University Office of Inclusion & Diversity (OID). Every year, our planning team is very intentional about partnering with OID because a lot of our undergraduate student programming is transferable and possesses quite a few similarities. The primary difference between our in-house initiatives and OID is the student populations we serve. OID is tasked to serve the entire Auburn student population, whereas the College of Sciences and Mathematics Office of Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity (OIED) and Samuel Ginn College of Engineering Academic Excellence Program (AEP) specifically serve those housed within each respective college. Outside of those given parameters, a lot of what we do mirrors; therefore, we make sure our students are aware of all the services each office provides and how they can benefit from them. In this year's OID workshop, the presenters discussed the importance of cultural competency and what it means to practice inclusive excellence as a student. We place such a strong emphasis on inclusive excellence within the Summer Bridge program because it is practically the cornerstone of what we do. We want all of our students to comprehend that when all individuals are truly welcomed and given an opportunity to excel within the field of STEM, the advancement of science and technology along with the well-being of those who are traditionally underrepresented in the field is limitless.

The third week of the STEM Summer Bridge program was characterized by meeting and interacting with institution-affiliated individuals who can serve the students in various ways. In particular, on Monday

the students met with a representative from the Career Center who discussed with them the process of creating SMART goals (Doran, 1981) and the ways in which the Career Center on campus can be of assistance to students. Tuesday's activity included the creation of personal SMART goals, which would later in the week be evaluated and revised. On Wednesday of week three, representatives from the Office of Academic Support and the University Writing Center spoke with the students, clarifying what their respective positions do to serve the student population. In addition, Summer Bridge staff offered feedback on the students' SMART goals, which was used by the students to revise their goals as their Thursday activity. Finally, on Friday, students met with faculty and administration within their respective colleges to (1) make initial contact with faculty members they will one day engage with academically, (2) allow the faculty members to answer any questions the students may have about academic issues and (3) begin the process of showing the students that they will be supported holistically by multiple institutional agents, including faculty members and campus administrators.

The fourth and final week of the STEM Summer Bridge program followed the theme of establishing and connecting with community, in addition to continuing the previous week's goal of introducing folks who serve students in various ways. On Monday, students participated in a presentation on mental health considerations for undergraduates in general, mental health considerations during the COVID-19 pandemic in particular, and the development of a self-care action plan. In addition, students were provided a list of resources that could be beneficial for their mental health, such as the Crisis Text Line number and contact information for the on-campus office of Student Counseling and Psychological Services. On Tuesday, the students met with representatives from the Office of Student Affairs and Student Organizations to spark consideration of ways to connect with a community additional to their Summer Bridge community. Wednesday's activity included presentations about financial aid (e.g., University scholarships, grants and the FAFSA, and housing options). Important to consider during the COVID-19 pandemic was transparency about housing options, highlighting that policies were in flux and may be liable to change as time progressed. As the final activity, STEM Summer Bridge alumni returned to be a part of a round table-style discussion with the students. In particular, alumni spoke about their current professional positions, described their STEM Summer Bridge experience and how the relationships they established

therein impacted their overall college experience. The STEM Summer Bridge program schedule is summarized in Appendix 1.

Applicability of CECE Model to STEM Summer Bridge Schedule

Bringing theory into practice, the STEM Summer Bridge schedule maps well onto the CECE model (Museus, 2014). In particular, we identify how aspects of the curriculum satisfy each of the nine CECE Indicators.

- **CECE Indicator #1: Cultural Familiarity**. By nature of our targeted recruitment efforts, many of the STEM Summer Bridge participants hold marginalized racial identities, $N = 39$, 61.5% Black/African American, 7.7% Asian/Asian American, 2.6% Indigenous American, 2.6% Pacific Islander, 12.8% white and 12.8% Biracial/More than one race. Thus, most of the students interacted with peers who share a similar cultural background. In addition, faculty and staff members who hold marginalized identities were invited to present to and speak with the students, thus satisfying meaningful exposure to institution-affiliated individuals who may share a similar cultural background with the students.
- **CECE Indicator #2: Culturally Relevant Knowledge**. Of particular import to this CECE Indicator was the OID Identity Development workshop in week two of the program. This activity not only allowed the students to engage with content regarding the development of various personal identities but also to engage in discussion with peers and staff members about experiences of prejudice, their own personal biases, and the salience of one's identities based on the space one occupies.
- **CECE Indicator #3: Cultural Community Service**. The Innovative Design Project of the STEM Summer Bridge program satisfied this indicator. Students were asked to identify an issue in their home community, and in this case, all students chose something related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In groups, they then designed a product or service to address this issue. Though not implemented during the program, this project showed the students that their knowledge is and will continue to be beneficial to their community of origin. In addition, it showed the students that faculty and staff members are interested in serving the students' communities of origin.

- **CECE Indicator #4: Opportunities for Meaningful Cross-Cultural Engagement**. As mentioned in CECE Indicator #1, the STEM Summer Bridge participants themselves were a diverse group of individuals. Additionally, the students engaged with graduate interns, faculty and staff who held diverse cultural identities. Thus, by nature of this engagement, this indicator was satisfied.

- **CECE Indicator #5: Collectivist Cultural Orientations**. Briefly and over-simply stated, collectivist cultural orientation is characterized by valuing the individual as part of a collective and individualist cultural orientation is characterized by valuing the individual independent of groups of which the individual is a member (Triandis, 2018). There are many measures of individualist/collectivist cultural orientations, though reducing a construct such as culture to a numerical index does not provide a holistic and comprehensive perspective (Cozma, 2011). As such, a collectivist orientation was fostered, and thus this indicator was satisfied, through the cultivation of relationships within peer groups, working toward addressing a community-focused issue through the Innovation Design group project, and through modeling (Bandura, 2017) of a collectivist perspective by the program facilitators.

- **CECE Indicator #6: Culturally Validating Environments**. This indicator was satisfied through particular workshops led by institution-affiliated individuals that valued students' cultural identities (e.g., the Identity Development Workshop), the inclusion of briefer culturally-validating interventions (e.g. the Show & Tell exercise), and supplementary interventions such as having the students submit their favorite song to create a playlist that was played during breaks from content sessions.

- **CECE Indicator #7: Humanized Educational Environments**. The environment of the STEM Summer Bridge program was humanized in many ways. For example, the program facilitators stated from the beginning of the program that the students are valued holistically, explicitly avoiding a reductionistic perspective of a student. Indeed, consistent check-ins and debriefing by the program facilitators, in addition to the playlist, Show & Tell exercise, and other activities evidenced this humanistic perspective.

- **CECE Indicator #8: Proactive Philosophies**. The existence of the STEM Summer Bridge program is itself evidence of a proactive philosophy toward the retention and success of marginalized

students. The program offers important information about a multitude of avenues of support, from academic to financial to mental health.

- **CECE Indicator #9: Availability of Holistic Support**. Through the different campus office presentations, students were introduced to staff members who can support them during their college experience. Furthermore, the program facilitators directly stated to the students throughout the program that they are here to support them, and if they cannot directly help them with an issue, they will connect them with someone who can.

Limitations

Despite satisfying all nine of Museus's (2014) CECE Indicators and its congruence with Ashley and colleagues' (2017) components of STEM Bridge programs, the remote delivery of the STEM Summer Bridge program did present challenges. For example, the simple fact that there are fewer hours of engagement every week when delivering a program such as this remotely than if delivered in-person necessitates the elimination of some program content. In this vein, the students were not asked to complete academic coursework, a component of STEM Bridge programs outlined by Ashley et al. (2017) and normally a part of this STEM Summer Bridge program. The decision-making process behind eliminating this content was informed by empathic design (Tracey & Hutchinson, 2019; Xie, 2020), such that we did not want to subject our students to excessive "Zoom fatigue," formally known as computer-mediated communication (CMC) fatigue (Nadler, 2020). Another factor in this decision is that there exist many avenues to receive academic help (e.g., free tutoring sessions offered through the program facilitators' offices) though there are not many other avenues to receive the important proactive, holistic support (Museus, 2014) provided by this STEM Summer Bridge program.

In a related vein, it should be noted that the CECE model assumes a physical campus environment. Clearly, the campus environments related to the STEM Summer Bridge program in this chapter were not physical environments, but were rather an online environment affiliated with the university. A student's sense of place (i.e., the association one has with spatial structures because of their individual), collective or cultural experiences (Sebastien, 2020), would logically be affected by emergency

remote teaching. At the time of writing this chapter, there is no litera-
ture examining how higher education students have reacted to emergency
remote teaching in regard to sense of space. However, considering the
Community of Inquiry framework (Garrison, 2007), a sense of space
can be established online through social presence (e.g., students inter-
acting with peers), cognitive presence (e.g., engaging with content),
and teaching presence (e.g., program facilitators offering guidance or
direction). Through fostering students' sense of space in an online envi-
ronment, we created an online campus environment in which we were
able to satisfy the CECE Indicators.

Conclusion

In conclusion, STEM Bridge programs were designed to assist tradi-
tionally marginalized students in the transition to a higher education
environment. However, the theoretical basis upon which these earlier
programs were designed, namely Tinto (1993), tends to be less appli-
cable when considering a student whose culture of origin does not match
with the culture of their institution. To address this, many scholars (e.g.,
Guiffrida, 2006; Museus, 2014; Tierney, 1999) have offered critiques and
alternative theories of student retention, and the present STEM bridge
design applied the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments model
(Museus, 2014) to support marginalized students' cultural existence
within a higher-education system. In addition, it is important to consider
the online delivery of this STEM Bridge program due to the necessity of
engaging in an emergency remote teaching modality (Bozkurt & Sharma,
2020). Empathic design is useful when creating a program that must be
delivered in an emergency remote teaching modality (Xie, 2020), such
that considering program participants' experience within the program and
possible barriers to effective participation will result in a more human-
ized and engaging experience. The integration of a socially just theory
of student retention (Museus, 2014), a framework of empathic instruc-
tional design in relation to emergency remote teaching (Xie, 2020), and
the hallmarks of a STEM bridge program (Ashley et al., 2017) result in a
programmatic experience that is culturally affirming, supportive and effec-
tive for students whose cultural background does not necessarily match
with the culture of the students' institution.

Appendix 1

STEM Summer Bridge Program Schedule Summary

Mondays	*Tuesdays*	*Wednesdays*	*Thursdays*	*Fridays*
Live Zoom Meetings 10 AM–1 PM	Assignments and Peer Breakout Groups (2-h BLOCK)	Live Zoom Meetings 10 AM–1 PM	Assignments and Peer Breakout Groups (2-h BLOCK)	Live Zoom Meetings 10 AM–1 PM

Live Zoom Meetings: These synchronous sessions will have presenters delivering content and covering material that will help prepare students for the assignments (assessments, discussions, and interactive activities).

Assignments: The material for student projects and tasks will be posted and submitted on Canvas daily where students will complete the given material both individually and collaboratively/collectively.

Peer Breakout Groups: Each student will be placed in a small group (5–10 students) where students' designated team will be led by a graduate intern to engage in teambuilders, assignments, and discussion via live Zoom sessions.

Week 1: Meet and Greet

- Program Overview and Resources
- Introduction to Campus Life
- Virtual Campus Tour

Week 2: Self Exploration

- Innovation Design Project
- Career and Major Assessment Tools
- Major and Career Exploration
- Academic Advising

Week 3: Supporting Cast

- SMART Goals

- Academic Support Resources
- Faculty Engagement
- Personal Statement
- Student Leaders Panel

Week 4: Connecting with the Community

- Self-Care and Mindfulness
- Student Involvement and Organizations Preview
- Alumni Roundtable

Suggestions for Further Reading

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Transitions, Engagements, and Environments: Supporting Underrepresented Students Through E-Learning

Jonathan J. Okstad and Quortne R. Hutchings

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Underrepresented students: Underrepresented students are defined as individuals who are disadvantaged economically, minoritized, and/or first-generation (Gershenfeld et al., 2016; Hurd et al., 2016). Our book chapter

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135

	refers to underrepresented students that have been historically and systematically oppressed and disenfranchised within the field of higher education due to their race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, and ability.
E-learning:	E-learning is defined as "the effective integration, fusion even, of face-to-face and online learning depending on the educational need and purpose" (Garrison, 2009, p. 200). Our book chapter refers to e-learning as distance learning and online learning in educating students outside of in-person education.

Higher education encountered significant disruption during Spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required fundamental changes in teaching pedagogy, student engagement, and support for students in addition to unexpected financial burdens. Faculty and instructors were required to transition and redesign their course curriculum to e-learning formats without much support or time for preparation, often to the detriment of supporting students, specifically underrepresented students' learning. As faculty and instructors integrated to an e-learning format, the support for underrepresented students at times was not considered in this transition (Blankenberger & Williams, 2020; Cao et al., 2020). This unforeseen transition posed various curriculum and pedagogical shifts in creating robust online environments for underrepresented students coupled with student services (Kimball-Hill et al., 2020).

In this transition to e-learning, additional concerns and needs of students have arisen, tasking institutions and instructors with supporting student engagement, learning, and assurance that students are able to meet course outcomes (Cao et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic heavily impacted minoritized and underrepresented communities (Kimble-Hill et al., 2020), with students reporting mental health concerns associated with the pandemic (Cao et al., 2020). Even outside of the pandemic-related shift to online learning, a critical examination

can reveal how online education creates challenges for marginalized and underrepresented persons in higher education and how institutions need to allocate resources to aid their e-learning. Despite the growing reliance on virtual learning, there remain concerns about how effective e-learning is compared to face-to-face classroom learning, particularly the ability to provide a socially just education (Rovai & Ponton, 2005; Ward et al., 2010). E-learning is a cost-effective solution for higher education institutions engaged in distance learning and the dissemination of knowledge to larger populations (Harting & Erthal, 2005). Yet, as colleges and universities contend with increasing demands to convert to e-learning, there will also be continued growth in student populations and non-degree and certificate offerings (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Harting & Erthal, 2005). Additional questions and concerns have been raised around the efficacy of STEM, health sciences, or the humanities utilizing online classes even as the push grows for more online offerings (Harper, 2010).

This chapter advances the scholarship of teaching and learning by providing curriculum and pedagogical strategies for faculty and instructors to incorporate into their online classroom pedagogy to ensure underrepresented students are engaged and supported to flourish in an e-learning format. Additionally, it addresses the institutional barriers that can impede success for underrepresented students within the virtual classroom. We utilize the Equity-Minded Framework and Technology Acceptance Model as practice-grounded lenses for engaging in quality virtual learning for all students. Additionally, we provide tools and resources to support all learners–undergraduate and graduate students, nontraditional students, continuing education courses, and certificate programs, taking into account that these tools and resources should be utilized in the context of individual institutions, communities, and individual student needs.

E-Learning Experiences for Marginalized and Underrepresented Students in Higher Education

Before entering higher education, underrepresented students often have experiences with online learning. Okwumabua et al. (2010) indicated that while 55% of African American youth engage with computers in various settings (i.e., home, school, work), only 38% of students expressed online

tutoring and learning were valuable. Yet, underrepresented populations are less likely to own technology often needed for online education such as computers or tablets (Ervin & Gilmore, 1999; Webb, 2002). Altogether, research suggests that traditionally underrepresented students may face additional challenges when pursing online education. For example, Huffman Leyva (2005) indicated that Latina students faced family obligations while completing their studies in online learning environments; they sought out academic support when taking online courses and reported preferring in-person courses to build strong faculty relationships. Research also suggests that there are often struggles with online technology and virtual communication. Merrills (2010) reported that Black students experienced technical issues using online course platforms (i.e., computer screens froze and submitted answers not saved) and a lack of connection among their classmates and the instructor. Similarly, Black graduate students also expressed challenges with professors' communication styles in online learning (Rovai & Ponton, 2005). Finally, despite the existence of support mechanisms, Black students felt online academic support did not improve their skills in specific courses such as math (Okwumabua et al., 2010). Overall, underrepresented students reported having higher anxiety levels using online education and academic support programs (Okwumabua et al., 2010). In addition to challenges with technology, underrepresented students report facing financial, housing, and food insecurity that impeded their academic learning experiences (Kimble-Hill et al., 2020). Finally, in a study comparing student preferences regarding online course delivery, underrepresented students reported preferring asynchronous delivery for classroom content (Kimble-Hill et al., 2020). These research results have led to calls for more research to understand the experiences of Students of Color with online learning to support their retention and completion (Eastman et al., 2021).

As students navigate the pandemic, their primary concerns and fears are influenced by public health concerns with COVID-19 coupled with institutions shifts due to the pandemic. These are all significant factors that will affect a student's engagement within the e-learning environment. As students endure various remote learning adjustments, it is essential to learn about faculty and instructors' experiences with e-learning environments.

Faculty Perceptions of E-Learning Environments

As students engage within e-learning environments and face successes and challenges, experiences are similar for faculty members. Sixty-nine percent of higher education administrators and leaders stated that online learning is essential to their strategic planning (Allen & Seaman, 2013). Yet, research has shown that faculty are often reluctant to teach online courses (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Faculty endure various challenges with e-learning such as technology reliability, course load burnout, and hesitancy to learn new forms of online teaching (Bacow et al., 2012; Betts & Heaston, 2014; Bolliger & Wasilik, 2009; McQuiggan, 2012; Wingo et al., 2017). Specifically, in Wingo et al.'s (2017) analysis of 67 empirical studies on faculty online teaching between 1995 and 2015, they found that faculty reported concerns about online image and presence, technical support concerns, and managing online class enrollments. Similarly, Osborne et al. (2009) found that there was a divide between faculty who reported being experienced in online education and those who had or anticipated significant challenges with online education, perceiving that there would be a lot of time involved in learning to teach online education. This reinforces the need for training, specifically basic software skills (Elliston, 2020).

Research has shown that faculty endure technological barriers in creating online courses for students (Richardson et al., 2020). Research suggests that formal faculty online pedagogical development and training had a positive impact on faculty approaches to online learning, their views of online learning, and their comfort level with teaching online (Garner & Bonds-Raccke, 2013; Perrotta & Bohan, 2020). Faculty and instructors have expressed the importance of learning various course management sites and technological support to create robust learning environments (Ranieri et al., 2018). For example, faculty professional development in e-learning through various online training sessions in a self-paced environment can aid faculty as an opportunity to learn about various procedures and solutions with their online courses (Ranieri et al., 2018).

In addition to virtual training sessions, attending teaching and learning conferences that highlight technology and pedagogical practices can build comfortability for instructors in this area. Attending teaching and learning conferences enhances faculty pedagogy and the ability to learn critical skills to improve their learning approaches with students. Institutions can also create year-long professional development opportunities for faculty

to participate in and collaborate with other academic departments to co-learn and create robust e-learning strategies. By institutional prioritizing professional development within online spaces and environments, it increases morale and support structures for faculty to engage in this vital work.

Practical Pedagogical Strategies and Frameworks for Educators

Research suggests that nontraditional students (e.g., student-parents, older than average, returners, etc.) often choose an online course[1] rather than an in-person classroom because of convenience and often-flexible assignment timelines (Miller, 2014). In developing an online course, it is important to decide the best modality for the students enrolled in the course, which should guide the selection of technologies and pedagogical strategies to support that modality. Further, it is important to vary strategies to support student engagement. Utilizing varied learning resources such as readings, videos, online activities, podcasts, discussion forums, and tools such as VoiceThread or FlipGrid can help engage diverse learnings that may not absorb content in a sole lecture or reading style. In turn, those tools and strategies need to be collaborative and monitored to maximize participation (Bangert, 2004).

The Equity-Minded Framework (MacKnight, 2000) and Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) have heuristic potential to address the concerns facing underrepresented students when developing online courses.

Equity-Minded Framework

Creating an equity-minded framework in online learning is one that requires various technology modalities. Faculty and instructors can create more equitable online environments through intentionality and accessibility. MacKnight (2000) provided a list of ways that students and faculty can create an equitable classroom culture that supports learning and development. This list provides practical tools and skills that faculty can

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[1] Asynchronous online courses offer students flexibility allowing them to complete their coursework when and where they want. This allows post-secondary institutions the opportunity to provide courses to communities across time zones (Melkun, 2012). In turn, synchronous online courses offer a similar reduction to these barriers, flexibility with student scheduling, time zones, and access to steady internet is challenging.

implement in their online courses through critical thinking approaches. To be equity-minded as an instructor means to think of the ways in which you meet students at the margins through your pedagogical and teaching practices. MacKnight (2000) utilized critical thinking approaches within online formats as a pedagogical anchor to center how students engage in online education through suggestive prompts to guide the course format. MacKnight (2000) suggests that students in online courses should do a list of things, that could be used as list to prompt a discussion with students about how to engage in and maximize an online course experience:

- ask the right questions
- listen to each other
- take turns and share work
- respect each other's ideas
- build on each other's ideas
- construct their own understanding
- think in new ways

Similarly, faculty who work with students in online courses must facilitate online learning by:

- maintaining a focused discussion
- keeping the discussion intellectually responsible
- stimulating the discussion by asking probing questions that hold students accountable for their thinking
- infusing these questions in the minds of students
- encouraging full participation
- periodically summarizing what has or needs to be done

Providing students with a course agreement and intentions activity can aid students to develop critical thinking and communication skills within the course content and class engagement. Using course agreements and intentions among students can cultivate an environment where students learn how to respect each other's perspective while challenging each other in a brave space environment. Facilitating course discussions and dialogue must be role modeled by the instructor so that students know what is expected. The equity minded framework in an online classroom provides

a way to integrate an equitable environment regardless of the content, and engages students through reflection, peer interactions, and critical thinking skill development (MacKnight, 2000).

Technology Acceptance Model

Davis (1989) created a technology acceptance model (TAM) to assess the usefulness of computer usage for consumers; it has evolved as model since its development as technology has change (Davis et al., 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 1996, 2000). The TAM model helps provide insight into how individuals discern whether they receive or discard technological information (Davis, 1993). This model derives from Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) utilizing psychology principles and addresses the three factors that help explain an individual's motivation: perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and attitude toward using the system (Davis, 1993). Perceived ease of use refers to the belief that using a particular system can be free of physical and mental effort (Davis, 1985). Perceived usefulness refers to the belief that using a particular system can enhance one's job performance (Davis, 1985). The TAM model provides an approach to help individuals adapt to new forms of technology by addressing their predicted use of, obstacles to, and need for the tool. If an individual can use a tool without too much effort, it can alleviate technological productivity issues (Davis, 1985).

Faculty and instructors can apply the TAM model's three factors to designing their course management systems as a way to engage students in the course materials and content. Specifically, in creating course management that is feasible, effective, and efficient, faculty and instructors can assess their management sites for accessibility, utility, and enhancement in supporting various student needs and skills. Thus, utilizing the TAM model can serve as an equitable approach to support students, specifically for underrepresented students within online learning. Second, the TAM model can create equitable systems in having institutions create audits of technology equipment and resources it provides to students, faculty, and staff. One application of the TAM model might result in the development of mobile hotspots; additional mobile hotspots for internet usage and semester laptop usage and aids students in saving financially on technology-related costs. As a result, applying the TAM model can help institutions offer adequate technological support for underrepresented students to be successful in online environments.

The TAM model is supported by Harper's (2010) anti-deficit framework. The anti-deficit framework can help instructors reflect on their own harmful biases and ideologies to understand that traditionally underrepresented students have an abundance of academic intellect and abilities to flourish in the educational environment. An anti-deficit pedagogical framework can aid instructors to center equitable teaching practices and ideologies in their course content and materials. This anti-deficit framework can be integrated with the TAM model into the instructor's course readings, syllabi, and course management modalities to ensure students are affirmed, valued, and supported in the online environment. In conjunction with an anti-deficit framework, the TAM model helps instructors to think about their assumptions about underrepresented students' backgrounds based on their intersecting identities and explore how that relates to access.

Integrating an equity minded framework and the TAM model is useful in online learning that seeks to meet the needs of underrepresented students' experiences in the learning process. Cultivating an equity-minded mindset in supporting underrepresented students through e-learning supports students' holistic development. Utilizing an equity-minded framework within online education allows instructors to expand students' thinking and learning through various online teaching practices. The TAM model aids students in the instructor learning how the evolution of technology can impact how students learn and engage in online education. Instructors can use the equity minded framework approach in their lesson plans to guide course content and discussions to increase class engagement among peers. Utilizing these two frameworks advances how instructors can think creatively, proactively, and critically on how to engage students in learning through an equity lens.

This chapter has underscored the importance of faculty using equity-based pedagogy and practices in supporting underrepresented students through online education. As this chapter has situated the importance of providing underrepresented students with pertinent technological knowledge and support for their holistic development in higher education, it is advantageous to center how faculty can bolster equity-based development in their teaching practices. With the growing demand for faculty to offer online courses to students, the importance of course design and online teaching pedagogy is critical to student success.

EQUITY PRACTICES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

The following practical and pedagogical recommendations can be utilized in e-learning formats (see Appendix A for practical examples). Note that not all recommendations will fit every context and should be considered when developing a course syllabus and thought through when reviewing course content, student demographics, learning preferences, and course learning outcomes. While several of the following recommendations may refer to developing a policy or procedure, it is more important to recognize the need for flexibility and to practice sensitivity to various student needs and available resources.

Syllabi Development

General Policies and Statements

It is critical for students, in particular underrepresented students, to be well aware of instructor policies or expectations—making the unspoken or expected clear to students. This may be a student's first course in higher education, and it may take time to assimilate to a university's demanding academic requirements. It is important to be clear and explicit about institutional policies and procedures, allowing students to understand how the course will operate and to let them know the resources available. We recommend including links to university academic and student policies, campus resources such as the writing or tutoring center, and academic advising in the syllabus as well as additional policies about late assignments, clear deadlines, technology requirements, statements about basic needs and security, and any other policies helpful to the student's success. While it may feel redundant and frivolous to include links to so many policies and resources, this will likely be the first time a first-generation student is made aware of them. It is important that in instructor policies and expectations, traditionally underrepresented students are not viewed under a hidden curriculum lens that may impede their success within the online environment.

Teaching Philosophy/Pedagogy Statement

When developing a syllabus, it is helpful and critical for students to understand the instructor's teaching philosophy. An instructor's teaching philosophy can create the foundation of how the class community engages with the course content and each other. It provides the instructor the

opportunity to integrate inclusive pedagogical language in their teaching practices for all students in their classroom environment.

Audio/Visual Policies

When teaching synchronously in a virtual environment, it is important to develop an audio/visual policy so students understand expectations of when to have their cameras on, when to mute, and expectations for engagement in a synchronous online course. Additionally, recognizing students may be attending class from environments that are not as suitable or safe for learning, it is essential that instructors are mindful that online engagement does not require all students to have their video camera on at all times. Adding a closed caption option or recording lectures (with all students' permission) can help with universal design learning strategies. Further, a flexible and accommodating audio/visual policy statement can create a welcoming environment for all students to engage within the online space. Integrating inclusive audio/visual policies provides students an opportunity to know how an instructor is aware of various ways students learn and engage in an online format.

Letter to Student

At the beginning of the course semester and/or quarter, it is extremely helpful to send a formal note to students welcoming them to the course and what your hopes and expectations are as an instructor. This personal welcome statement can include the course syllabus and/or ways to utilize the online course management tools and systems. It is important to personalize and express a commitment to each students' success and needs. For a first-generation student or other typically underrepresented population, this practice is helpful in establishing the instructor as a resource for the student in their academic journey.

Commitment to Inclusivity

Including a statement of inclusivity is imperative in any classroom but particularly in an online environment. Recognizing the diversity of instructors, guest lecturers, learning resources, students, community, and changing world, it is essential to clearly define how the course is a space of learning and growth and how you, as an instructor, are committed to an inclusive environment for learning. This is especially important for minoritized students so they may see themselves in the literature, course content

and will understand the instructor's commitment to their identities or success.

Teaching Strategies

Study Guides and Review Sessions

In courses that assign quizzes, exams, and major take-home assignments, creating study guides and offering review sessions are important ways for students to know the instructor's expectations and guidelines for completing major assignments. In creating study guides and review sessions, think about various online platforms (i.e., Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet) to engage students through poll questionnaires, raised hand, and chat features. Further, an instructor can record and upload study guides and review sessions to the course management system. It is important an instructor thinks about different learning modalities when creating study guides and review sessions. This practice aids students that may never have had an assignment in this format or may not have had a rigorous secondary education experience that aligns with the demands of the course.

Rubrics

Rubrics can serve as a useful approach to assessing a student's learning and understanding of quizzes, tests, and other major course assignments. Additionally, rubrics can serve as a barrier for students struggling with the course content. Critically reflect on how rubrics are being utilized in the course and explain the utility of rubrics to your students on each assignment for clarity and understanding. This allows the instructor the opportunity to provide assignment expectations, clarity to students and supports students in delivering a stronger assignment.

Mixed Media Learning Resources

When developing learning materials for students in an online course, it is even more important to incorporate mixed media to support learning for all types of learners and to support engagement in the course, as mentioned previously. Including videos, podcasts, articles, news articles, movies, webinars, recorded lectures, live lectures, and/or online games and activities can help students engage with the content in more meaningful ways compared to a lecture/reading/test format.

Incorporate Diverse Sources

Integrate sources of various scholars from various social identity backgrounds (i.e., race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, etc.). Use various readings, adding images (or bios) of scholars to lecture slides, and students' feedback of scholars to use within the course content. By creating a syllabus audit prior to starting a course can help instructors modify and change previous readings and assignments for inclusive course content. This practice is especially important for students from underrepresented populations. By seeing themselves in the literature, they better connect with the content and will perform stronger in the class. Additionally, this is also critical to ensure students receive a strong education recognizing all histories, perspectives, and knowledge.

Personalize Yourself

Classroom engagement begins with the instructor. Introducing self, introducing self-positionality, sharing personal stories and experiences, avoiding talking about being "too busy" can aid students in knowing that instructors are engaging students in a humanistic and understanding approach. Building this rapport supports underrepresented students' success in the classroom, and they will see you as a resource. Moreover, having this rapport will support efforts so that students do not fall behind or through the cracks.

Additional Recommendations

The following list of strategies can help instructors personalize their syllabi, course content, and/or offer resources critical to underrepresented students:

- "Meet students where they are at" in their content knowledge. Build-in and allow flexibility in your syllabus to slow down around content areas students need more support.
- Offer flexible office hours by letting students schedule virtually using a tool like Calendly. These tools allow instructors to block off times or create meeting opportunities for students to select that align with their schedules.
- Build-in time for student peer connections within the course, more than merely just including discussion boards. Utilizing tools such as

VoiceThread, Zoom breakout rooms, or Microsoft Teams allows for virtual community building in other mediums.

- Recognize not all students will reside in your time zone. If offering a synchronous class session, inquire with students from which time zone they will be attending class to find an optimal time that may work for the majority of your students or allow you the opportunity to know which students to check in with.
- If and when being innovative with course delivery in an online format, ensure to work with information technology and the teaching and learning center, or similar campus resources, to build out technology support for online learning for aiding students with reliable internet access, equipment loan, or information technology support.
- Allow for flexible or timely deadlines for assignments or course requirements. Arbitrary dates and deadlines can cause frustration for students, and additional time may be helpful, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic or other national events.
- Take time and schedule check-ins with students to build a rapport, assess their learning and retention of course concepts, and to provide resources.
- Promote engagement and discussion using the chat feature on online video platforms (i.e., Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams), allowing students to interact through text responses rather than through audiovisual responses. Embedding the chat feature will enable students to interact with each other on course topics and content. As the chat feature creates a different form of classroom engagement, it validates students' ability to become co-constructive in the learning process.
- Do not require students to have their videos on as a way to force participation.
- Honor that students participate and communicate in courses with in different ways that may not reflect your learning preferences.

Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, higher education continues to navigate transitioning to online and remote learning in a global pandemic. This shift has significantly impacted students, faculty, and staff, specifically individuals from minoritized communities. Specifically, underrepresented

students endure additional institutional challenges within the e-learning environment. Colleges and universities are learning how to adjust and create robust and engaging e-learning environments for students. The TAM model can allow instructors to ask pertinent questions about providing institutional and academic enrichment services when students need course technical support. An equity-based mindset is essential for instructors to learn critical practices to support students; higher education institutions need to aid faculty in developing strong skills within e-learning spaces.

This chapter unearths the dire need to develop critical pedagogical frameworks and tools for supporting all students' populations, specifically underrepresented students. We aimed to provide readers with a practical curriculum and pedagogical strategies for faculty and instructors to create an engaging e-learning format with an equitable lens. By integrating various technological modalities, assessing students' e-learning needs, and creating comprehensive course material content, faculty and instructors can enhance how students engage in an e-learning format. Online meeting platforms (i.e., Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet) allow educators to make e-learning accessible to students across the United States and globally. Higher education must prioritize technological accessibility for underrepresented students on college campuses. Educators must assess their teaching practices and approaches to e-learning. Additionally, while the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted how we teach students, it does not change why we teach students.

Educators must create a classroom environment that encourages active learning, enriching course content, and acknowledging students' individual needs and concerns. We believe that incorporating these practical and pedagogical considerations will enhance faculty and students' learning environments on college campuses. We encourage readers to utilize and refer to our Equity Practices Recommendations for Instructors and Syllabus Template (see Appendix A) for practical approaches in supporting underrepresented students in e-learning formats. The work of an educator requires self-reflexivity, flexibility, and intentionality. It is vital that educators engage in critical reflection and praxis to cultivating an interactive online learning environment and experience.

Appendix A: Syllabus Template

The following template syllabus is an example of course policies, statements, and items to include in an online-based course to encourage and foster student engagement. While not comprehensive, these are key components that are helpful for engaging students within an online class format.

Syllabus components are adapted from courses developed by Jonathan J. Okstad, Quortne R. Hutchings, Demetri L. Morgan, and Lorenzo D. Baber at Loyola University Chicago, School of Education.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Multiculturalism and Social Justice in Higher Education.
ELPS 432—Spring 2021.
Wednesdays at 5:30–7:00 p.m. CST.
Synchronous via Zoom (accessed via Sakai).

Instructor: Jonathan J. Okstad, M.B.A., M.Ed.
Email: jokstad@luc.edu.
Virtual Office Hours: Available by appointment by visiting calendly.com/okstad to see my calendar and book an appointment.

Instructor: Quortne R. Hutchings, Ph.D.
Email: qhutchings@niu.edu.
Virtual Office Hours: Available by appointment by visiting calendly.com/qhutchin to see my calendar and book an appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an exploration of multiculturalism and social justice issues, theories, and practices with an emphasis on twenty-first century higher education from the United States and international higher education lens. The course is designed for students to: (A) critically self-reflect and examine their own positionalities (i.e., salient social identities) within the context of multiculturalism and social justice in higher education; and (B) examine how power, privilege, and oppression influences how higher education functions and operates within domestic and international higher education institutions. This course will require students to engage in critical reflection and discernment from readings related to diversity, equity, inclusion. As a result, students and the instructor

will have the opportunity to deepen our understanding of how we all contribute to social justice in our personal, academic, and professional spheres. Ultimately, this requires students and the instructor to use self-work and making-meaning practices and experiential lessons and activities to challenge the ideas and concepts to mitigate harm and discomfort.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate observable growth in their ability to:

- Critically reflect on one's identity and its influence on power, privilege, and oppression within the context of multiculturalism and social justice domestically and globally,
- Identify the ways in which higher education institutions engage in social justice and multiculturalism and its role in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts internally and externally,
- Communicate deepen understanding to critique and reflect on theories, concepts, and models introduced throughout the course,
- Draw upon how various social justice lenses, concepts, and issues shapes one's personal, academic, and professionals' positionalities,
- Articulate how course materials can apply to enhancing one's critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making processes, and
- Embrace and invite dissonance, conflict, and challenges as part of the learning process.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury Academic.
hooks, b. (2000). *All about love: New visions*. Harper Perennial.

*Both texts are available via LUC Libraries as downloadable e-books.

COURSE ESSENTIALS and EXPECTATIONS

Instructor Pedagogy Statement

Our pedagogical approach to teaching and cultivating a learning environment is grounded in decolonization and anti-oppressive pedagogy. Zinga and Styres (2019) argue that it is essential that educators engage in self reflection to effectively aid students to immerse themselves in challenging and complex course content. This course is designed for students to

learn and disseminate knowledge within a historical–critical lens in higher education. Using decolonization and anti-oppressive as a pedagogy framework will help students understand underlying assumptions and embrace differences among one another to have critical dialogue around social justice issues in the course. Using a student-centered approach, we will build community by "calling each in" rather than "calling each other out." We are all experts only on our lived experience and should value each other's perspectives throughout the course. As co-learners, we will work in a collaborative and brave space environment to create a holistic learning process. The classroom environment encourages active learning, critical feedback, and diverse ways of learning and knowing. Centering education as a liberating experience that situates as Paolo Freire (2000) shares the "teacher" and "student" as co-learners and as co-teachers. Using this pedagogical approach to teaching, this course will act as a conduit in addressing the course readings, assignments, discussions, and activities to evoke change in our communities respectively and in the field of higher education.

Classroom Engagement

Engagement in class is defined as having completed the assigned material and coming to class prepared with notes, questions, and reflections that will contribute to a vibrant class dialogue. Engagement in class is being aware of the quality, quantity, and appropriateness of your contributions and pushing yourself to strike a fitting balance. Engagement is also actively listening to your peers, managing your emotions, and practicing self-care before, during, and after class sessions. This is no easy task and something we will work towards every class session as a learning community. The important takeaway is that you give your best effort every class and improve your engagement level every class.

Attendance

Class attendance is essential to your learning and development, so you are expected to attend and be on-time to every class session this semester. This is especially important because it is imperative that we begin on time because of the back-to-back courses. If you know you must miss class, please let me know with as much advance notice as possible via email. This class observes university defined holidays but there may be days that are significant to your religion or faith practice that are not observed

university-wide. Please make me aware of those days and I will work with you to accommodate your needs.

Out of Class Engagement and Group Work

To make up for the lost time, there is a significant expectation of engagement in out of class learning activities. They are outlined as follows:

- Learning Resources: This is the umbrella term we use to cover things like readings from the textbook or articles, podcasts, videos, and recorded mini-lectures. Every week will have between three and five resources. This is where we want you to focus on understanding information. On average, you should anticipate spending between 3 to 6 hours with the learning resources, depending on your learning style and the number of resources assigned. This timeframe includes engaging the resource, taking notes, making connections across the resources, and filling in your learning journal.
- Out-of-Class Engagement: Utilizing Sakai forums or an asynchronous video platform (e.g., VoiceThread), there will be weekly opportunities for you all to work together to start to make sense of the learning resources, pose questions, challenge the material, seek clarification, and make connections across content weeks. On average, this will take 1–2 hours per week.
- Graded Assignments: Graded assignments will require additional work above and beyond the weekly workload. Everyone works differently and has a different relationship with procrastination. Still, we recommend spending at least 1–2 hours each week either working on a short-term assignment or making progress on your final project. This will ebb and flow so be sure to plan accordingly, depending on your work style.

School of Education Commitment During COVID-19

The School of Education (SOE) recognizes that this is an unprecedented time. We understand that moving into the 2020–2021 academic year while living in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic may stir feelings of uncertainty, fear, or anxiousness. We want you to know that your safety, health, and well-being, as well as that of our faculty and staff, remain our primary concern. We want to be able to support you in any way that we

can. We ask you to embody the Jesuit value of Cura Personalis, or care for the whole person, as we prepare to learn together. We ask that you consider your way of being in this community, to act with care, and treat all with dignity to keep yourself and others safe.

The University understands that you may encounter obstacles that make reaching academic goals more difficult. We strongly encourage you to access the Student Resources on Loyola's COVID-19 Response webpage for information, supports, and resources on basic needs such as housing, food, financial aid, and medical and mental health. This web page also offers information on official University communications, access to technology, and student services. All Loyola University Chicago administrators, faculty, and advisors are also here for you.

The SOE is committed to working with all students to address any challenges that may arise during the semester. Please reach out to your professor as early as possible to discuss any accommodations you think may be necessary in order for you to successfully complete your course-work. We know this will be a semester like none other, but through collaboration, communication, and shared responsibility, we will not only get through this difficult time; we will thrive.

Class Intentions

Engagement in online courses requires a variety of ways to interact with course readings, assignments, peers, and instructors. This course will invite you to challenge your own assumptions, biases, and privileges throughout the course. Your engagement in the course will ultimately depend on your willingness to engage in thoughtful, reflective, and extending grace to yourself and your peers throughout the course. Whether your thoughts are your "first draft" or completed, we will collectively work together in understanding, reflecting, and discerning various topics around power, privilege, and oppression. As a few class sessions will be on zoom, be mindful that engagement can be presented in various ways. We ask that each student be respectful of each other and our time together.

Lastly, one important aspect of a Jesuit education is learning to respect the rights and opinions of others. Please respect others by (1) allowing all classmates the right to voice their opinions without fear of ridicule, and (2) not using profanity or making objectionable (gendered, racial or ethnic) comments, especially comments directed at a classmate.

Course Policies

Email/Sakai/Zoom

Email will be the primary means of communication between all of us (i.e., you, your classmates, and the teaching team) outside of class time. Please be prompt in responding to emails—no more than 48 hours should lapse before emails are returned or acknowledged. Zoom will be the main form of connecting synchronously. Please make sure you have the Zoom software downloaded and that you regularly check to ensure you have the latest Zoom updates. Finally, the Sakai site for this course will be used extensively. If you are unfamiliar/uncomfortable with course management software like Sakai please peruse the Sakai Student Tutorial website to help acquaint yourself.

Continuous Commitment to Inclusivity

As citizens of a democratic society and stakeholders of a Jesuit university, we are called to promote human dignity. In order to be aware of the ever-changing world, an open dialogue must be able to occur in a non-threatening environment in which students and faculty can engage in discussions that are taking place, challenge comments that are made, and evaluate aspects of the structural environment that support injustice. Bringing attention to expressions of cultural bias is a way to model against stereotyping. At any time, a moment of consideration can be called. This can and should be called by anyone, student or faculty, to facilitate needed conversation around sensitive issues. These moments are times for all of us to learn how to become more sensitive in our language and actions. Such dialogues may pertain to stereotypes related to race, ethnicity, sex, religion, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, weight, economic status, and anything that can impact the dignity of persons. These moments of consideration should be freely addressed in the classroom and are an essential aspect of learning in this course.

The teaching team considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability—and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

Basic Needs and Security

Any student who faces challenges accessing food, secure housing, and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students CARE Team for support. Furthermore, please notify the teaching team if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide any resources that we are aware of and work with you to make accommodations during the course.

Online Class Sessions

The Loyola University Chicago Community Standards applies to online behavior as well as in-person or classroom behavior. You are expected to be professional and respectful when attending class on Zoom. The following are class policies for our meetings with Zoom. Please read carefully, as all students are expected to adhere to the policies.

GENERAL

- Login with your full first name and last name as listed on the class roster. Do not use a nickname or other pseudonym when you log in. (It makes it difficult to know who is in attendance or challenging when guest speakers join class. Using your full name quickly sorts students into their groups when needed). Users who do not provide their full names will NOT be admitted to class.
- Exceptions
  - Since enrolling in the class, some students have changed their names to better reflect their gender identity. If you currently use a different name than what is listed on the official roster, please send me an email so I can note this on my roster. Then you can use your current name on Zoom. (If you would like to change your name officially with LUC, please review the Registration & Records Preferred Name FAQ).
  - If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone with internet access, call into class from a phone line. This is not optimal; please try to locate an internet-enabled device to use for class. Loyola IT has Wi-Fi hotspots available to check out.
  - Stay focused. Please stay engaged in class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications.
  - Need technical help? Contact the IT Help Desk at helpdesk@luc.edu or 773–508-4487.

Video

- Turn on your video when possible. It is helpful to be able to see each other, just as in an in-person class.
- Exceptions
  - If you have limited internet bandwidth or no webcam, it is ok to not use video. If you are unable to find an environment without a lot of visual distractions, it is also ok to turn off your video.
- Keep it clean. Do not share anything you would not put up on the projector in class!

Audio

- Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps eliminate background noise.
- Use a headset when possible. If you own headphones with a microphone, please use them. This improves audio quality.
- Be in a quiet place when possible. Find a quiet, distraction-free spot to log in. Turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

Chat

- Stay on topic. Use the chat window for questions and comments that are relevant to class. The chat window is not a place for socializing or posting comments that distract from the course activities. If you fill it up with random comments, I will be unable to sort through the information quickly to address students' real questions/concerns about the course.
- No disrespectful language. Just like in our in-person class, respectful behavior is expected. Consider Zoom a professional environment, and act like you are at a job interview, even when you are typing in the chat.

Class Confidentiality

Throughout the course of a class, students/faculty/speakers may share information about their personal lives, organizations or communities to

enrich the class discussion. These discussions are to be kept confidential by both students and faculty.

Recording of Class Content Notice

In this class software will be used to record live class discussions at times. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions may be recorded. These recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the class, to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. All recordings will become unavailable to students in the class when the Sakai course is unpublished (i.e. shortly after the course ends, per the Sakai administrative schedule). Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Please discuss this option with the teaching team.

The use of all video recordings will be in keeping with the University Privacy Statement shown below:

Privacy Statement

Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Students will be informed of such recordings by a statement in the syllabus for the course in which they will be recorded. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording. Recordings including student activity that have been initiated by the instructor may be retained by the instructor only for individual use.

Suggested Readings

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Brave New World: Transformational Teaching for a Web-Based Multicultural Education Course in the Age of COVID-19

Shihua Brazill and Pat Munday

Key Terms and Definitions

Multicultural Education:	Multicultural Education reframes education so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, language, and socioeconomic classes can all experience educational equality (Banks, 2016). James Banks, the founder of multicultural education, outlined five dimensions of multicultural education: content integration,

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163

	knowledge construction, equity pedagogy, prejudice reduction, and empowering school culture and social structure (Thompson, 2014).
Safe Space:	Safe Space creates a space where students feel safe through the early establishment of group norms and commitment to mutual respect (Ashlee & Ashlee, 2015).
Brave Space:	Brave Space focuses on the responsibility of individuals to gauge their own level of comfort and determine how far outside of their comfort zones they are willing to go in discussing sensitive issues (Ashlee & Ashlee, 2015; Brazill, 2020a).
Transformational Teaching:	Transformational Teaching increases students' mastery of key course concepts while transforming their learning-related attitudes, values, beliefs, and skills (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012, p. 576).

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate how to establish "brave space" as a foundation for critical conversations about identity and intersectionality in a multicultural education course for pre-service teachers. In brave space, the instructor encourages students to go outside of their comfort zone in discussing sensitive issues while, at the same time, engaging in critical self-reflection about what others say and about their own willingness to come forward (Chirema, 2007). Brave space is important to multicultural education, because those courses includes discussions of various forms of social identity, such as race, sexuality, gender, spirituality, age, socio-economic status, and dis/ability (Brazill, 2020a). Thus, brave space is essential for facilitating pre-service teachers' understanding of social justice in challenging conversations. Nonetheless, little research has been done about how to build brave space in an online learning environment when teaching multicultural education or social justice courses.

Multicultural education is relevant and necessary in today's world because the student population has become more diverse and education has largely rejected the deficit model for minoritized students in

the classroom. Thus, this chapter examines the following two research questions:

1. How can transformational teaching facilitate brave space in multicultural education?
2. How is brave space important and useful to online education?

To address these questions, students' final reflections papers were analyzed after they completed the online multicultural education course. The goals of this qualitative analysis were to understand and describe students' experiences and perspectives of brave space with the multicultural education course in the virtual setting. Framed by the first author's personal and professional experience teaching multicultural education in a virtual setting, this chapter will provide valuable insights to educators as how to employ brave space to incorporate social justice into an online learning environment.[1] Though the second author does not teach a multicultural education course, his experience in teaching social justice issues in online professional ethics and communication courses provided a complementary perspective and helped validate the data. Having taught face-to-face, "hybrid," and online courses, we agree that online learning and teaching can be challenging as it requires authentic assessments as well as creative mindsets and pedagogy (Anderson, 2008; Brazill, 2019a).

Theoretical Perspectives

This chapter explores the importance of brave space in an online multicultural education course in the age of COVID-19 and why it is important to move beyond safe space in addressing social justice issues. Next, we discuss how to apply transformational teaching practices to establish a shared brave space vision.

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[1] I treasure this opportunity to thank my Multicultural Education students. I learned about your journeys, experiences, and passion for becoming effective multicultural educators. I heard your struggles with online learning in general, for example, time management, social interactions, and self-regulation.

Safe Space in Multicultural Education

Safe space is where students feel safe through the early establishment of group norms and commitment to mutual respect (Ashlee & Ashlee, 2015; Bess & Dee, 2008; Brazill, 2020a; McNeil, 2015). Rom (1998) identified safe space as vital for discussing challenging dialogues about identity and social justice issues to enhance our perspectives—for example, discussions involving LGBTQA, race/ethnicity, social class, sexuality, or religion/spirituality to examine the dispositions of people with diverse values. Similarly, Gayle et al. (2013) believed that safe space fosters effective student learning when exchanging ideas about difficult topics such as multicultural issues. As a common practice, establishing "class norms" helps create a safe space in the online learning environment. This collective practice aligns with Landreman's (2013) notion that when students communally shape the group norms there is more consistency with the goals of social justice education. Moreover, if class norms are formulated by students, they have ownership in the process and take on the responsibility and foster their own learning (Lippmann et al., 2009). Despite the benefits of safe space, criticism and experience have shown its limitations and flaws.

Moving Past Safe Space to Brave Space in Multicultural Education

Barrett (2010) argued that safe space is not a culturally attuned choice for marginalized students from underrepresented groups. Furthermore, safe spaces are not conducive to growth because they attempt to eliminate any threat of discomfort. Additionally, safe classroom spaces teach students to "discount, deflect, or retreat from a challenge" (Arao & Clemens, 2013, p. 135). Students who are marginalized cannot truly experience the classroom as a safe space because they often experience microaggressions in the classroom. As a corrective, brave space goes beyond safe space to encourage students to be brave and focuses on individual responsibility to determine how far outside of their comfort zones they are willing to push themselves in contributing to social justice conversations (Arao & Clemens, 2013). In contrast with safe space, brave space encourages challenging dialogue that empowers students to discuss experiences and feelings while acknowledging discomfort (Cook-Sather & Abbot, 2016). Conversely, brave space allows students to take risks by creating a mutually supportive learning environment that is more congruent with their

understanding of "power, privilege, and oppression, and the challenges inherent in dialogue about these issues in sociocultural diverse groups" (Arao & Clemens, 2013, p. 149).

Winters (2020) believed that, along with safe space, bravery is beneficial. Entering any difficult conversation with another person is inherently an act of bravery and in order to have meaningful interactions, people have to be willing to be vulnerable with each other. Brave spaces allow for more honesty and authentic connection, which allow for productive conversations about social justice issues that we don't always feel comfortable talking about. Educators must foster challenging dialogues regarding social justice by being brave and allowing for vulnerability. In brave space, students may encounter stressful situations and feel uncertainty. Nevertheless, brave space also cultivates an atmosphere inclusive to all social identities and intersectionality, i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, social class/socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, (dis)abilities, and religion/religious beliefs, or immigration status (Ali, 2017; Brazill, 2019b; Cook-Sather & Abott, 2016).

Brave Space as a Social Justice Practice in Higher Education

Salinas and Guerrero (2018) described how the controversial concept of social justice has been integrated into higher education in the past decade. However, faculty, institutions, and society need to go beyond "buzzwords" and "non-performative" language. Social justice is a goal, a life-long process, and is vital in facilitating meaningful dialogues where multiple perspectives can be heard in higher education (Adams & Bell, 2016). Thus, Salinas and Guerrero (2018) presented two new practices (brave space and multi-contextual thinking) to support effective engagement in social justice among individuals, institutions, and communities. Multi-contextual thinking allows space for multiple voices and perspectives and facilitates challenging dialogues where multiple perspectives can be heard. It avoids the one size fits all approach to diversity issues and problems. Furthermore, the authors recommended specific strategies for personal exploration, including critical reflections, dialogue with numerous perspectives, investigating historical context, and developing brave space (Salinas & Guerrero, 2018). Additionally, brave space allows individuals to critically reflect upon their own biases, to discuss challenging issues with others, and to challenge ideas without attacking the people (Salinas & Guerrero, 2018). While brave space is a classroom

approach that can be critical to social justice education, the strategies used to create brave space in both the conventional classroom and in online classes are less clear. As a remedy, transformational teaching employs practices that facilitate brave space.

Transformational Teaching: Student Perspectives on Brave Space

For brave space to be effective in an online multicultural education course, it is vital to employ transformational teaching by establishing a shared vision. Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) defined transformational teaching as "increase(ing) students' mastery of key course concepts while transforming their learning-related attitudes, values, beliefs, and skills" (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012, p. 576). Furthermore, Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) argued that transformational teaching involves creating dynamic relationships between teachers, students, and a shared body of knowledge to promote students' personal growth and enhancing their professional disposition toward learning through these six practices:

1. Establish a shared vision for a course;
2. Provide models and mastery experiences;
3. Challenge and encourage students;
4. Personalize attention and feedback;
5. Create experiential lessons that transcend the boundaries of the classroom; and
6. Promote ample opportunities for critical reflection.

Instructors can create brave space in an online course using these six transformational teaching practices in the following ways.

Establish a Shared Vision for a Course

Transformational teaching is especially important in creating a shared vision for brave space. This shared commitment to multicultural education can be built through consensual mission statements that encourage students to bravely speak up while minimizing classroom conflicts through shared norms, instructor expectations, and course outcomes (Howe & Lisi, 2018; Meyers, 2003; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012). In

brave space, students share responsibility and may challenge the learning process. Further, students are willing to take initiative and responsibility for the success of the learning process (Grasha, 1994). Moreover, the shared vision increases student motivation to learn and build a community of learners, thus fostering positive student–teacher and peer relationships (Meyers, 2003). Specifically, instructors can do this in an online course by learning about students' values and co-constructing brave space through the course syllabus and interactive activities such as synchronous online class discussions that connect students with the instructor and peers, and virtual office hours/video conference calls for students.

Provide Modeling and Mastery Experiences

Multicultural educators connect with learners at a deeper level through modeling and mastery experiences (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2013). It is vital to model multiple ways to learn and teach. Meaningful ways to stimulate student interest and motivation include "us(ing) collaborative and cooperative learning", "clearly identify(ing) the learning objectives and goals for instruction", "us(ing) examples, analogies, metaphors, and stories", "us(ing) critical questions to engage learning and challenging reflections and discussions", and "us(ing) case studies to deepen learning and to engage challenging and authentic topics" (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017). Instructors can do this in an online course by designing assignments carefully, providing exemplary responses to assignments from both the instructor and students from previous classes—with the permission of those students, of course.

Challenge and Encourage Students

Multicultural educators should put students first by balancing a climate of challenge and support (Mildred & Zúñiga, 2004; Ward et al., 2005; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017). Educators can do so by (1) challenging students and allowing them to work hard to reach a high academic standard, while (2) offering substantial support for their learning and intellectual development process. Doing so will teach students subject knowledge and develop a strong work ethic, thus contributing to student development and benefiting society. Having students challenge the process and encouraging them to get out of their comfort zones is vital for building brave space. Instructors can do this in an online course by establishing

a consistent pattern or flow for weekly assignment due dates, announcements, lectures, and other course materials. An interactive calendar with clearly labeled assignments helps greatly in keeping students on track.

Personalize Attention and Feedback

More importantly, multicultural educators need to provide personalized attention and feedback to facilitate student learning. Also, instructors can use personalized feedback and messages to students that challenge them to be flexible, patient, organized, creative, and adopt a growth-mindset as well as grit (sheer perseverance). Students succeed and thrive when expectations are clearly defined, and feedback is frequent, timely, consistent, and meaningful (Winstone & Carless, 2019). Instructors can do this in an online course by providing interactive weekly guides/checklists to help students with their time management. For example, we encourage student planning by telling them how long each video or lecture is, how long each article is, and how long they should plan to spend on each assignment. Also, instructors should consider providing audio–video based personal feedback to promote active learning and a sense of connection with students.

Create Experiential Lessons that Transcend the Boundaries of the Classroom

Furthermore, experiential lessons need to transcend the boundaries of the classroom by connecting to students' prior knowledge and promoting students to think deeply about how to apply what they learn to real-world situations (Flynn & Vredevoogd, 2010; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). This requires instructors to create opportunities, such as small group discussions, where students can interact with material, with each other, and with faculty (Quinlan, 2016). Instructors can create a brave space in an online course by collecting students' questions anonymously via technology tools such as Menti, Padlet, Google Jamboard, or Wooclap, and allowing students to respond anonymously to other students or to the discussion board.

Promoting Ample Opportunities for Critical Reflection

Instructors must also encourage critical reflection associated with this experiential learning, so that students think about experiences, present information from multiple viewpoints, and seek to find its meaning (Gorski, 2009; Ukpokodu, 2003). Critical self-reflection is vital to transformational learning and teaching (Zull, 2002). Also, it is important to accept the value of students' emotional discomfort as a natural part of reframing their relationships with themselves, experiencing changes in identity, or feeling grief in the process of growth (Quinlan, 2016). This includes students reflecting on their own biases, their discomfort with conversations about identity or otherness, and their willingness to engage in sensitive discussions. In this way, students can transform their own attitudes and learn to embrace perspectives and experiences different from their own (Moore, 1994).

Critical reflection associated with transformative learning is based on evaluating assumptions about underlying intentions, values, feelings, habits of mind, and points of reference (Mezirow, 1997; Taylor & Cranton, 2012). In order to become critically reflective, Brookfield (2017) asserted that educators must use four lenses: (1) the teacher's unique autobiography and personal self-reflection; (2) input from learners; (3) peer review of teaching; and (4) theoretical literature that might offer alternative explanations (Brookfield & Associates, 2018). When it comes to seeking input from learners, instructors can do this in an online course by requiring students to keep a bullet journal or passion journal to reflect on their own growth throughout the course. Learning management systems allow this to be done in ways that are easy for the student to access and visible only to the student and instructor.

For testing the effectiveness of brave space on growth and self-reflection, we found it especially important to solicit feedback from students in the first author's multicultural education course. "Multicultural Education" is a required course for pre-service teachers. The course examines teacher identity and school-society relationships, including equal opportunity, human diversity, ideology, politics, and social change. After courses went online during the COVID-19 pandemic, the first author sought to gather data on brave space and transformational teaching. Students were given a "final reflection" course assignment and asked what they learned, how their identity might have changed, how they practiced cultural humility, and how brave space might have contributed to

their learning and future career as pre-service teachers. We reviewed the reflection papers and thematically coded the comments. This study was approved through the Institutional Review Board (IRB), exempt from human subjects' review, and allowed direct quotations from students so long as there was no personal identifying information.

In their comments, students took readily to the idea of brave space and demonstrated a strong shared understanding of why it was important. One student described the importance of brave space and how brave space positively influenced their learning and plans for future teaching:

> One way my understanding of multicultural education has changed is the term brave space. Before enrolling in this class, I had never heard of this term. Now I truly understand the importance of transforming the online classroom into a brave space. As an educator I will create a place where each of my students feel confident and welcome to share, no matter their viewpoints. I love using brave instead of safe. Students should feel welcomed and courageous to speak, not simply just safe enough to do so. Multicultural education in my classroom will be welcomed into this area of becoming a brave space.

Building on this shared understanding of brave space, students were critical and reflective about how brave space could enrich conversations and learning about social justice. One student especially emphasized the way that brave space encourages learning in contrast to the way that safe space might suppress learning:

> I learned that there is a difference between what it means to foster a brave space and a safe space. A brave space is not a space that always feels comfortable. It recognizes that to create a space dedicated to social justice conversations, it is essential to be vulnerable and ask hard questions, to not be quiet for simple fear. A brave space is a place for people to learn and ask questions, and that is much more important than simply feeling safe which reinforces the mainstream social structure by ensuring that no one ever works through the hard stuff.

The student's reflection above indicated the significance of having a brave space for Socratic dialog, a space where students can be brave both in expressing their identity but also in asking questions and embracing the growth that comes from accepting diverse otherness. Instructors can model brave space by speaking forthrightly about our own identity

and ways that we had experienced growth. Students picked up on this modeling and envisioned themselves as future teachers who cultivated brave space:

> I am excited to incorporate my knowledge that I gained from this class into my future classroom. My classroom will be a brave space for my students. I want them to challenge themselves and speak up taking risks with their statements. If there are no boundaries pushed or a little bit of discomfort when we take those risks, then you are not pushing yourself to learn as much as you can. If I can achieve and make a brave space for students where they feel comfortable stepping out of their comfort zone and taking risks then I will see their learning grow immensely, and the classroom environment transformed.

Acknowledging the hard work that goes into social justice conversations was an important step, including the realization that pushing the boundaries of every day safe space can be uncomfortable or even risky. The student quoted above clearly described that discomfort and risk but saw brave space as a way to make pushing boundaries a risk worth taking.

Pre-service teachers experiencing the social disruption and isolation brought on by the pandemic; they could have easily turned inward and erected barriers against transformative teaching. Instead, they seemed to seize it as an opportunity to make up for the normal social connections that had been taken away from them. It was as if they sublimated this relationship deprivation in a positive way, imagining how they would relate to future students. For example, one student was particularly cogent regarding this future goal:

> I want my classroom to be a brave space where students can share and educate their peers and myself on their culture and beliefs. I want a community where we can celebrate our diversity and differences. In addition to this, I want my students to know I care about them and their success. Developing a relationship with students is very important to me as an educator and I think that is what sets a good teacher apart from the rest.

Students reflected on the instructor's modeling of brave space and how the course experience shaped their personal epistemologies and positionality as future educators.

We were also interested in how student reflections on their own positionality might shape their future relationship with students—especially given the likely prospect that they will teach at least some online courses. One student critically reflected on the importance of relationship building and establishing brave space and how this might play out in their future online teaching:

> The skills I have learned in this class will allow me to create these meaningful relationships between myself and future students in an online learning environment. The stories and articles over the course have shown me different perspectives that I would not have been able to see in any other classes. One thing I want my online classroom to be is a Brave Space. I want to encourage my students to ask questions and be open-minded.

Generally, students' critical final reflections reinforce the conclusion that brave space empowers students to share what they are thinking without worrying about being ridiculed or judged. In brave space, students, peers, and faculty are respectful of each other, care about one another, and are open minded. Brave space allows for everyone to learn and grow together which in turn, we believe, promotes global citizenship education (Milana & Tarozzi, 2021). By instilling bravery, we create a space where challenging conversations can thrive while we also maintain emotional safety. Students maintain their comfort level while taking a leap of faith out of their comfort zone. In brave space, we can share and ask questions in a way that is respectful but will help us transcend our previous understanding of culture, diversity, and identity. Essentially, we become comfortable with uncomfortable topics.

Brave Space in the Online Class: From the Instructor's Perspective

Brave space and transformational teaching practices are essential in multicultural education because many difficult topics are discussed throughout the course. Multicultural education is "a process through which one achieves transformation of self, school, and society" (Thompson, 2014, p. 531). Transformational teaching practices are especially important for a web-based multicultural education course in the age of COVID-19 because of the limiting context an online course can place on student interactions with the subject, teacher, peers, and self (Quinlan, 2016).

Building on the concepts from Quinlan (2016), an essential element of creating brave space for a multicultural education course in a virtual setting, is to give students a voice in the four dimensions of relationships: (1) student-faculty interactions; (2) student-content interactions; (3) peer interactions; and (4) students self-growth. Each of these dimensions can be used as a transformational teaching practice in teaching an online multicultural education course to promote social justice.

Our experience confirms the research that shows that positive faculty-student relationships are one of the most important criteria for the online learning environment. Thus, it is vital to build such relationships even without a fixed physical class time through the frequency and quality of interactions among instructors and students (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014). Furthermore, teaching and learning should be viewed as a two-way street, the course will not be complete without learners' emotions, engagement, and motivations to learn (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017). Tanaka (2016) emphasized positive teacher-student relationships as "teacher as learner, learner as teacher" (Tanaka, 2016, p. 101). These values about student engagement and learning align with Lowman's (1996) research on the two-dimensional aspect of mastery teaching, intellectual excitement and interpersonal relationships. Intellectual excitement is about making content come alive and expressing passion for what we teach. Trust and vulnerability are vital in building interpersonal rapport (Quinlan, 2016); however, brave space is also needed to overcome this vulnerability and to enable discussions of sensitive topics. As Arao and Clemens stated:

> As we explored these thorny questions, it became increasingly clear to us that our approach to initiating social justice dialogues should not be to convince participants that we can remove risk from the equation, for this is simply impossible. Rather, we propose revising our language, shifting away from the concept of safety and emphasizing the importance of bravery instead. (Arao & Clemens, 2013, p. 136)

In order to provide high-quality multicultural education and a brave space for the online learning environment, a curriculum needs to be sensitive to individual differences and offer diverse perspectives that are congruent with students' experience (Ossorio & Kline, 2018). Notably, the "affective" domain of Bloom's Taxonomy and emotional ties/feelings/heart tailor students' learning toward their emotions and

mindsets to stimulate their feelings and create an in-depth learning experience (Ossorio & Kline, 2018; Quinlan, 2016). Students' emotional well-being is crucial in the learning process. Faculty can create collaborative learning and authentic assessment using "creative expression" or storytelling to connect student's emotions to promote deeper and meaningful learning experiences (Ossorio & Kline, 2018). For example, one of the authentic assessment projects for this online course was for students to select or create a small object (artifact) that they believed best represented their social justice journey. Students were then asked to provide a written, audio, or video description that reflected upon two prompts for their artifact: (1) Why did you select this artifact? and (2) How does this artifact represent you and your social justice journey? The example activity in Appendix A relates directly to modeling brave space and encouraging students to be brave with one another in this artifact assignment. Using artifacts to explore social justice is an example of sentipensante (sensing/thinking) pedagogy (Rendón, 2012), activating both the student's heart and mind.

Another recommendation from this chapter is to integrate brave space into the big picture of best practices for online teaching beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we developed this paper during the challenging and uncertain world of COVID-19, this world also provided opportunities to reimagine online education in ways that are more engaging, equitable, and accessible (Dhawan, 2020). The first author taught multicultural education online after COVID-19 quarantine began, and the courses proved successful as shown by feedback from students in their final critical reflections. Also, as shown by our experience and the literature, an online course can have a number of benefits. First, the original face-to-face course was at 8 a.m., and after it moved online students really appreciated not having to wake up so early. Second, being online offered students the flexibility to engage fully because instructional technology can provide improved access to information and more opportunities for collaboration, online breakout rooms, and other community building activities. Third, in the online environment, students found it easier to embrace brave space and have difficult conversations with less fear of offending others who were physically present or of physically feeling themselves exposed (Ko & Rossen, 2017). Fourth, many students explained that there was more flexibility to spend time with their family and save time and money by not having to travel to class (Bender, 2012). Finally, students thought it was good preparation as pre-service

teachers who might someday need to teach online, take online courses for professional development, or pursue graduate education with courses online.

Online learning challenges students to be self-disciplined and self-directed, meaning they must budget time and space (and invest in the technology) to access course material and engage with peers and instructors (Darby & Lang, 2019). Also, it challenges faculty to invest time to develop effective curriculum and pedagogy that promotes students' learning outcomes (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2019). There are many myths about online teaching and learning, and one of the misconceptions is that it takes less time for students and faculty (Li & Akins, 2005). Personally, we invest far more time in developing a web-based course than in preparing the same material for a face-to-face (F2F) class. Also, online students from diverse backgrounds might need additional support in navigating the learning management system, grasping the course rhythm, and achieving self-discipline compared with students in a traditional F2F class. Faculty need to provide guidance and structure for students while also encouraging students to be self-directed (Palloff & Pratt, 2013).

Since online teaching and learning (E-learning) is one of our passions and research areas, we want to share some additional perspectives based on our experience and existing research about online learning, especially when it comes to courses with social justice goals such as multicultural education. From our years of experience in teaching online and F2F at several higher education institutions in the U.S., online students tend to be somewhat more diverse compared to students in traditional classrooms, who tend to be of similar age and from similar backgrounds (Brazill, 2020b; Shonfeld & Ronen, 2015). Teaching online better allows instructors to engage with students from different backgrounds, which creates interesting and sometimes challenging dialog. Knowlton's (2018) concept of "reconstruction of student identity" informs our perspective and philosophy about online teaching and learning. Knowlton (2018) argues that instructional technology helps students enhance their intellectual or academic identity as they learn to express their ideas cogently. In our experience teaching multicultural education and other social justice courses online, we find that introverted students are more likely to actively participate and contribute to class discussions. Students generally want to meet course requirements. When online discussions or assignments such as the "social justice journey" artifact (Appendix A) are required, they will leave their comfort zone to engage with peers. In a traditional classroom

with many students, students can more easily dodge classroom participation and presentations. More importantly, when it comes to sensitive topics and trigger events, instructors may allow students to share anonymously, encouraging a brave space that goes beyond mere safe space. We find that many students enjoy the process of learning from diverse perspectives through online discussion, helping them with personal and intellectual growth. Finally, it allows students time for critical reflections and to more clearly articulate their perspectives.

Personally, we find there are unique opportunities inherent in online teaching and learning that are not available in traditional classrooms. Students are more engaged with the content in a "brave space" online learning environment knowing that they are not being judged when they make mistakes in their social justice journey. Building a supportive online learning community of inquiry embraces cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence (Garrison, 2007) can help students become more engaged in learning, especially when they draw upon and connect the content to their own personal and professional experiences and identities. The real-world context and connections are important if we want online students to be engaged (Martin & Bolliger, 2018). For example, students can link to the course content or share stories based on their own identities, backgrounds, passions, and personal interests through multimedia such as infographics, video, or audio posts. Doing so provides context for students and encourages them to articulate the how or whys of their life, which are truly deep existential and ontological questions (Bradbury, 2015). Indeed, online learning can increase student diversity, including non-traditional students who may be older, live in rural areas, work full-time jobs, or have family responsibilities (Palloff & Pratt, 2013). Once again, we emphasize that students become more engaged with the content if the course is well-structured and offers guidance, both through written directions and direct messaging from the instructor, in accessing and mastering the content. Online education requires instructors' commitment to excellence and quality control (Cooperman, 2018) and requires students to be organized and self-regulated (Cook & Grant-Davis, 2020).

Conclusion

Although it remains to be tested through future comparisons of online with face-to-face multicultural education courses, our findings showed that the online environment facilitated brave space in ways that might be difficult in the face-to-face classroom. Students indicated that they were more willing to speak out online vs. the physical social pressure they felt when sitting live with other students, perhaps obviously looking like an "Other". Also, anonymity proved a useful tool for encouraging brave space in the online discussion board.

It is possible that our findings about the value of transformational teaching and brave space were unique to students socially isolated and taking online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. We expect, though, that an entire generation of students will be marked by COVID-19 and social justice issues such as the Black Lives Matter movement. They may be especially receptive to pedagogy that emphasizes shared vision, instructor-student relationships that further social justice, and transformational teaching that uses brave space and other techniques to achieve these goals.

In conclusion, integrating transformational teaching practices in a multicultural education course can create a brave space, an inclusive online environment that is equitable and accessible for all learners. Brave space is not a panacea, as it can endanger students who might be triggered by what "brave" students say. In practice, it is impossible to create a completely inclusive environment and brave space for all students whether online or in the traditional classroom. If students do not abide by group norms, respect boundaries, and respect others, they might affect others' well-being and even cause psychological harm. Likewise, strong disagreements may cause conflict and mistrust within the learning community. Individual comfort levels vary and each student deals with triggering actions or events differently. Make no mistake, this imposes a burden on the instructor who must balance brave space with respect for differing opinions or views. The stakes are high, and if we do not implement the lessons of transformational teaching, these disagreements could poison the higher education learning environment.

Appendix A: Authentic Assessment Courageous Conversations Activity Example

Online Course: Multicultural Education
Learning Outcomes

- **Understand** our own identity and its impact on teaching and learning; and
- **Develop** understanding of compassion, empathy, and cultural humility in diverse learning environments.

Instruction for Students

Step 1: Please select a small object (artifact) that best represents your social justice journey.

Step 2: Provide a written, audio, or video description that reflects upon the following reflection prompts:

- Why did you select this artifact?
- How does this artifact represent you and your social justice journey?

You can attach a picture of your artifact if you are submitting only audio or you can show your artifact in the video.

Step 3: Small Group Discussion via Learning Management System.

- Share your artifact with your peers.
- Share your story of how the artifact represents you and your social justice journey.
- What did you learn about your peers and their social justice journey?

Step 4: Large Group Discussion via Learning Management System: Each group shares their takeaways from this activity.

Recommended Readings

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Building Virtual Communities of Practice for Equity in Education

Hope McCoy and Candice Bocala

Ubuntu cannot be fragmented, because it is continuous and always in motion.

—(Nabudere, 2005, p. 3)

While describing cultural differences in the workplace, Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) offer the vignette of a Black employee named Mambara, engaging with his white employer in Zimbabwe. Mambara requested time off from work to bury his father, then months later, requested time off a second and third time, citing again the need to

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187

bury his father. The white employer fires Mambara, believing he must be using the same excuse to shirk his duties. Mambara explains that in Shona culture, family extends beyond the primary unit. His father's brothers are also considered his father, and Mambara's mother is a mother to his entire community (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013).

This cultural phenomenon falls under the lens of Ubuntu, an African philosophy that minimizes Western individualistic ideology, in favor of a form of humanism that emphasizes the needs of the whole (Mangena, 2016). Distinct from Marxist notions of collectivism, Gyekye (1997) argues that in Ubuntu, the individual is not lost or assimilated within the group, rather, the self and one's identity are unique, while benefitting the community in a reciprocal relationship (Gyekye, 1997). Gyekye distinguishes the two ideologies by offering the Akan proverb: "The clan is like a cluster of trees which, when seen from afar, appear huddled together, but which would be seen to stand individually [when] closely approached" (Gyekye, 1997, p. 32). In this way, each tree (each person) stands individually, but their roots are connected, with their leaves touching one another, engaging in a symbiotic relationship with one another (the local community) and the plants and animals residing in the branches of each tree (society at large). Lutz (2009) furthers this distinction, stating "in a true community, the individual does not pursue the common good instead of his or her own good, but rather pursues his or her own good through pursuing the common good" (Lutz, 2009, p. 314). This chapter reflects on three years of the project, Reimagining Integration: Diverse and Equitable Schools (RIDES), offering some of the ideas and principles from Ubuntu as a method and paradigm for school leaders to pursue transformative change in their organizations.

RIDES is a Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) project that aspires to dismantle racism in education by desegregating schools and integrating students. Although many people use those words interchangeably, RIDES distinguishes between "desegregation," which focuses on gaining diverse bodies in school buildings, and true "integration," where schools provide all students with strong academics, a sense of belonging, a commitment to understanding and dismantling racism, and an appreciation of diversity.

The mission of RIDES is to disrupt systemic inequality in America's schools by building individual and team capacity to tackle race and racism, and supporting the use of improvement tools practices, and examples that help schools, districts, and charter management organizations promote

diversity, equity, and true integration. As part of our programming, RIDES trains graduate students and practitioners (district administrators, school leaders, and teachers) through a Virtual Community of Practice (VCOP), that spans multiple streams of engagement online. This chapter will describe the action research conducted on the VCOP that focused on providing professional learning opportunities for practitioners in a program called the RIDES Institute. Through the development of the RIDES Institute, we learned how to engage practitioners in virtual communities of practice, so that they could implement targeted equity changes in their local schools. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What does it look like when graduate students, professional equity coaches, faculty members, and practitioners learn and engage in virtual communities of practice focused on social justice?
2. How do practitioners build community while learning an equity improvement process online?

We hope that these questions, and our experience developing virtual communities, lead to future implications, by asking the question: how can a university-based project focused on social justice reach a broader public community of practice?

The Scope and Impact of the RIDES Project

In 2014, a young Black man named Michael Brown was fatally shot by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Because of the impact of that event, faculty from the Harvard Graduate School of Education founded the RIDES Project in 2015 to enhance the role schools could play in addressing racial inequities and social violence. RIDES uses a three-part strategy to accomplish this mission: educate the public, collaborate with other educators, and train future leaders.

One of initial goals of the RIDES project was to create a Community of Practice (VCOP), with a minimum of fifteen participating schools, districts, or charter management organizations cumulatively reaching at least 5250 students. The RIDES VCOP features three tiers of engagement, the most broad and inclusive tier is the general public, who participate in our free of cost virtual webinar series, which offers a

platform where participants can log on and watch a real time lecture from an expert while also dialoguing online with the guest speaker and fellow participants. The general public also engages with the free digital resources on our website, including case studies, video lectures, promising practices, and digital tools. The second tier of virtual engagement includes a moderately selective group: those who have signed up for our newsletters, who pay to attend our annual conference, and who are invited to participate in occasional on campus workshops. The third tier of engagement is the most selective group, which includes HGSE graduate students engaged in team learning, our fellowship program, professional partnerships with other equity organizations, and the RIDES Institute.

The RIDES Institute (RI) was a selective, paid professional development program at the center of study in this chapter, in which we offer promising practices on how the RI leveraged an online format to teach social justice. Although the RI focus on K-12 education outcomes, this chapter has implications for higher education, as RIDES engages in the professional learning of graduate students, affiliated equity coaches, and school- or district-based practitioners.

Virtual Communities of Practice

Synthesizing the teaching and learning we gained from hosting the RIDES Institute, this chapter summarizes the opportunities for graduate students, K-12 school and district leaders, and higher education faculty to engage in social-justice-oriented virtual communities of practice. Wenger (1998) defines a "community of practice" as a group that has three dimensions: a joint enterprise or common interest that may have accompanying tasks or activities; mutual engagement that compels members to participate, and shared repertoire of resources such as routines, artifacts, or vocabulary that the members develop over time. Communities of practice form more organically than teams or organizational units that are formed for a certain purpose, with members defining what their practice entails and how people participate. Sociocultural theories of how people learn support the benefits of communities of practice (Lave, 1991; Wenger, 1998). According to sociocultural theory, individuals learn through "situated" interactions in social relationships and learning emerges through conversations and interactions among colleagues (Knapp, 2008; Lave, 1991; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Wenger, 1998).

Virtual (online) communities of practice, or those that blend face-to-face learning with online follow up, have become more common in educator professional development (Kirschner & Lai, 2007; McConnell et al., 2013; Trust & Horrocks, 2017), and have become priorities with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. New technologies allow for video calling, online collaboration tools such as interactive documents, and asynchronous discussion on websites or forums. There are also 'blended communities of practice,' which can mean virtual plus face-to-face learning, as well as formal and informal learning (Trust & Horrocks, 2017).

McConnell and colleagues' (2013) study of K-12 science teachers meeting in a virtual community concluded that online meetings can be a good substitute when face-to-face meetings are not practical, although participants missed the informal socialization that occurs during in-person gatherings. Video conferencing can provide educators with easier access to instructors, facilitators, and colleagues, and it can support professional learning when participants do not have the resources or time to travel to a meeting (McConnell et al., 2013). Another advantage of virtual communities is that they provide multiple means of participation and engagement. For example, Trust and Horrocks (2017) studied a blended community of practice for K-12 teachers and concluded that the teachers participated in face-to-face learning, engagement on social media, virtual events such as tours and workshops, newsletters or blog posts, and access to an online archive of resources.

However, these virtual communities are not without challenges. One study of a virtual community for faculty in higher education found that members had a difficult time accessing technology resources such as learning management systems, leading them to think that the virtual community was too time intensive (Houghton et al., 2015). They were also wary of confidentiality issues with posting thoughts online, where members felt more vulnerable or worried that their writing would be used as a part of their performance evaluation (Houghton et al., 2015). During the process of developing the RI, we encouraged this vulnerability online by requiring the faculty to engage in reflective practices, in partnership with our students.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

As members of the RIDES project, we routinely engage in reflection about our own work in a manner that aligns with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), a method found in education research that emphasizes teaching as an opportunity for faculty learning—synthesizing teaching, learning, and research as a scholarly lens (Felten, 2013). Often a collaboration with students, SoTL is defined by both the process of faculty systematically analyzing their teaching, as well as public dissemination of the findings of said analysis (Shulman & Wilson, 2004).

SoTL promotes cyclical critical reflection, both for the students and for the faculty. Studying equity and diversity, examining personal experiences with racism, and dismantling systems requires students to unpack implicit biases, requires the faculty teaching the material, to engage in the same self-work, on a continual basis while teaching (Lyman & Gardner, 2008).

The philosophy of Ubuntu guiding our work complements SoTL through the requirement of continuous, reflective examination of both the teacher and student. Ncube (2010) offers a model for adapting this lens as a leadership philosophy, stating that within Ubuntu: "Decisions to change come by consensus rather than polling, and there is circularity in the decision-making process" (Ncube, 2010, p. 79). This circularity and continuous movement align with SoTL, which emphasizes both faculty and students engaging in learning during the inquiry process (Marble, 2007; Marble et al., 2000).

Ubuntu as Transformative Change

When analyzing our experiences through the lens of Ubuntu, the concept of belonging is central to our virtual communities of practice as well as core to the RIDES frameworks. A philosophy found throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, Ubuntu is often framed in South African (Zulu, Xhosa, Shona) contexts, first described in the literature in 1846 (Gade, 2011). Mbiti (1990) famously defines Ubuntu as "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am" (Mbiti, 1990, p. 108). Ubuntu requires teachers and administrative school leadership to change their frame of thinking from a top-down approach to transformative change. Instead, teachers should see themselves as part of a community with their students, rather than authoritative figures dictating to subordinates (Oviawe, 2016).

Belonging extends beyond inclusivity for students, expanding to include teachers and school leaders, as members of a community, thriving together towards common goals. Biraimah (2016), states that in an Ubuntu-style education, the priorities are "inclusiveness, equity, and equality" (p. 45); these same tenets guide the mission of RIDES' programming. Additionally, we implement the practice of continuous, iterative reflection through our programming. In RIDES professional learning, we ask individuals to focus on themselves and their understanding of racial identity and social justice, as well as how their team, school, or district can engage in an improvement process toward their vision of equity.

Venter (2004) states that within the field of education, Ubuntu encourages both teacher and student to engage in an emotional learning experience, transforming both mind and soul, with learning seen as "interdependent and bidirectional rather than as independent and unidirectional" (Venter, 2004). Ncube (2010) also describes both harmony and continuity as integral to Ubuntu, which we applied to both the curriculum design, and our pedagogical processes. Many professional development programs begin with a focus on the self, before sharing and engaging with the group. We chose an approach which blends focus on the self with focus on the whole group. Through the creation of a Personal and Team Equity Culture (PTEC) document (see Appendix A), participants in our program described and defined their personal goals simultaneously with their team goals, rather than thinking of themselves first.

In the following sections, we describe the RI as a professional learning opportunity that is built on the principles of Ubuntu, guided by the framing of SoTL. We highlight two practices that we found particularly useful in a virtual learning environment: using online documents to encourage reflection during experiential learning and active facilitation to support building community and the culture of sharing personal stories. Both practices utilized the collaborative and continuous movement encouraged by these theoretical lenses.

The RIDES Institute

As a professional learning opportunity for educators offered at HGSE, the RIDES Institute (RI) was a seven-month program that blended face-to-face on-campus learning with virtual webinars and individualized coaching. Participants attended the institute in school- or district-based teams. The RI began with three face-to-face professional development sessions, followed by six follow-up webinars, which were facilitated by the RI instructors. In addition, each participating team had one virtual meeting per month with a RIDES "coach," who was part of the teaching team for the RI. RIDES coaches provided guidance and facilitated reflective conversations for their teams during these virtual meetings.

The objectives of the RIDES Institute were to utilize tools (see Appendix A), processes, and assessments to help teams of K-12 school leaders gain a deeper understanding of how equitable practice can work in individual school communities. This training included cultivating the ability of participating teams to reflect on equity and diversity, as well as collectively experiencing the power of transformative moments around race and inclusion.

During one academic year, teams were charged to demonstrate one cycle of data-driven improvement by the program's conclusion, tailored to the goals of individual school communities: generating better academic outcomes and fostering a sense of belonging for all students; committing to combat and dismantle racism and oppression; helping students, families, and staff more fully appreciate diversity and its impact within the school setting; fostering a school culture that values transformative changes and the impact these changes bring to the school setting; and developing a community of practice where teams can learn from cohort members, as well as RIDES faculty and coaches.

Over the course of the program, participants engaged in learning key RIDES concepts: how to work together as a team and develop a culture that supports racial equity-oriented conversations and action; how to engage in an improvement process, including focusing on a key problem and gathering data related to that problem; how to think more expansively about the outcomes we want from our students; how to think about oneself in relation to the team's work and the impact one is having on school and community (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1   Institute Timeline

Date	Focus
November	Personal and team equity culture
	Choosing an equity focus
	Beginning data collection plan
December	Data collection (continued)
January	Analysis of data: Root causes
February	Planning: Moving from diagnosis to action
March	Focus on action, including adjustments and measuring progress
April	Sharing journey stories
May	Closure for the Institute
	Planning next steps

RIDES Institute Participants

The RI ran for two academic years: 2018–2019 and 2019–2020. The first cohort of practitioners (2018–2019) consisted of six practitioner teams (five school-based teams and one district-based team), two instructors, and two graduate student fellows. The second cohort (2019–2020) included seven practitioner teams (six school-based teams and one district-based team), three instructors, five professional coaches, and three graduate student fellows. Teams consisted of five to seven people from one school or school district. Each team applied to attend the RI through the Professional Education office at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). They were required to describe the demographics of their students and teaching staff, including racial/ethnic background. In describing the students, teams also had to document the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch, the percentage enrolled in special education, and the percentage of English language learners. These details were important in determining the level of diversity in their schools, or the types of supports needed to advance their goals related to social justice.

In their applications, teams were asked to share their experiences and progress with racial equity, diversity, and school improvement strategies in the past. This included writing about the way they engaged with their school community in improvement efforts, how they have addressed diversity in the school's goals, and how they have tried to make progress toward those goals in the past. Finally, teams were required to write about why they were interested in joining the RIDES Institute. In both years

of the RI, all applicants were admitted since they all completed the application fully and had a good range of roles on each team (e.g., principal, teacher, coach).

RIDES Institute Coaches and Fellows

RIDES trains future educational leaders through a leadership fellowship program that enrolls 6–7 graduate student fellows in each academic year. In the first year of the RI, the fellows were invited to observe each professional learning session (both in-person and virtual programming); however, they were not directly involved in working with the participants. Upon reflection, the RI instructors determined that the fellows could learn more by engaging more closely with the participant teams. However, because the fellows were still learning to build their own coaching and facilitation skills, it was necessary to hire a group of professional equity coaches who already had experience working directly with schools and districts. For the second year of the RI, we created more learning opportunity for graduate fellows by extending their engagement from merely observers to supporters and apprentice coaches, under supervision of both the instructors and their assigned professional coaches.

Both coaches and graduate student fellows were chosen to participate due to their career experience in the field of social justice, with an emphasis on racial equity and leadership. The five coaches included professionals with an average of twenty years' professional experience in the field, spanning across geographic regions in the United States, to provide specialized support to the school teams participating in the RI. Fellows were mid-career professionals and full-time graduate students seeking an opportunity to learn the equity improvement process, network, and receive hands-on training in coaching teams engaged in organizational change.

For our graduate student fellows, the RIDES Institute was an apprenticeship designed to provide an opportunity to observe, learn, and support the work of professional coaches. This was a chance to engage with experts beyond the faculty from their fellowship program, offering an experiential application of what they learned in the classroom. Prior to the start of the RI, they received training, both informal and formal, to prepare them to participate in the program. During the summer prior to the start of the RI, they attended an orientation that introduced them

to the RIDES tools and practices. This orientation was a chance to build community, receive a refresher course on racial equity work, and meet the faculty associated with the program. The professional coaches also attended the orientation, offering a chance to meet the students, build rapport, and establish a shared language, purpose, and process for the work of the year ahead. In addition to the summer orientation, the fellows also attended biweekly seminars together, as well as academic coursework recommended by RIDES faculty, to supplement their training and experience prior to graduate school. By the start of the RI in November, students had four months to build community amongst themselves, assess their goals for the year, and begin to shape a collective identity and shared mission.

Three graduate student fellows took a more intensive role in supporting the RIDES Institute. They were paired with coaches "across difference" to ensure that the pair would represent different racial/ethnic identities. Coaching pairs were mainly matched randomly with the RI participant teams, with the one exception of giving the district-level team to someone with district or system experience.

As part of their participation, fellows attended monthly meetings with their assigned coach to plan for their follow-up sessions with the RI teams. Fellows and coaches co-facilitated the monthly coaching session with their participant team. During this time, the fellows had an opportunity to observe the coaches facilitate the learning exercises for the teams. After the coaching session, fellows and coaches met to debrief and reflect upon the team's progress. Fellows had the opportunity to ask the coaches why they chose to make certain decisions during a session, thus engaging the coach in reflective practice. Fellows and coaches all participated in monthly teaching team meetings with the RI faculty to provide updates on their teams' progress and to problem-solve any issues that were occurring. These teaching team meetings served as a reflective community of practice and opportunity to adjust the curriculum to best meet the needs of the participants.

The nested structure of leadership and learning was designed to provide opportunities for development while building community among the RI instructors, coaches, fellows, and practitioner participants. Priest and DeCampos Paula (2016) illustrate the efficacy of this structuring, finding that peer leadership creates the opportunity to create a learning community. This community contributes to increased self-esteem and
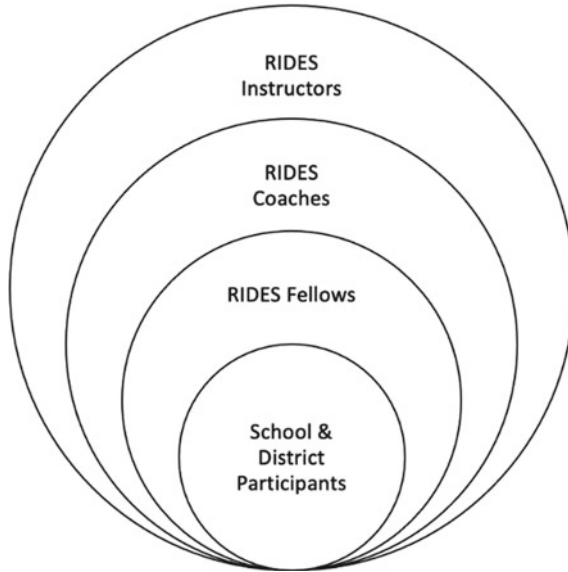
Fig. 8.1 RIDES Institute Learning Community

improved perceptions of their own leadership, professional development, and educational experience (Priest & De Campos Paula, 2016) (Fig. 8.1).

Even with the strength of a well-articulated curriculum, Fine (2019) states that in the case of leadership education, participants may resist or embrace the course's discourse, but ultimately, through engaging with each other, alter the nature of the discourse entirely. Discussion talking points veer into unplanned territory, based on the experiences of the students in the classroom, making new meaning (Fine, 2019).

Supporting Virtual Communities of Practice

Participant teams were expected to engage in conversations about racial identity and school improvement throughout the RI. The challenges of conducting this work in virtual environments, such as through a webinar or a virtual coaching session, required additional structure and guidance for the teams. By putting a few structures in place, we were able to better support the team members' ongoing learning and development.

Below, we highlight two useful practices: using shared online documents to capture experiential learning reflections and providing active facilitation during virtual group discussions about social justice.

Using Shared Online Documents to Support Experiential Learning

For the programming to be successful, time needs to be spent building background knowledge and creating a shared vocabulary. In a virtual context, this can be accomplished through the pre-reading and resources that are posted on the course website. Also, having these definitions posted means they can be referenced throughout the course, as a constant reminder of the culture and ideological framing of the program. Lu et al. found that online reading, specifically allowing students to process and absorb readings on their own prior to online engagement, improved learning outcomes (Lu et al., 2007).

Participants had access to online resources throughout the RI. After each meeting, whether it was a coaching sessions, school team activity, or teaching team meeting, the videoconference recordings, PowerPoint slide decks, and any other readings and resources were all posted for participants to review at their leisure. This freed up more time for participants to engage with one another, rather than assigning someone to take minutes or notes individually on the material covered.

We also used online documents to structure how participants applied the content that they were learning, related to improving an area of focus at their schools or districts. Guided by Kolb's four-phase cycle of experiential learning (1984), the RIDES Institute curriculum emphasized leadership development through experience, both for the schools participating in the program, and for the instructors and graduate student fellows assisting the Institute. Kolb's four phases: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation were woven into the learning activities of the Institute. Kolb's cycle focuses on how students perceive and process information, emphasizing the necessity of reflective practice (White & Guthrie, 2015). Lu et al. (2007) applied Kolb's Learning Cycle Inventory (LSI) to online learning environments, studying the impact on engineering students, and found that the inclusion of digital documentation improved the student learning experience.

In the RI, each team had access to a comprehensive document that summarized their team's work (see Appendix A). The "Equity Improvement Cycle Documentation" was an online form created in Google Docs. Each team had their own form, and it was shared with all team members as well as the RI instructors, coaches, and fellows. Using a shared online document was invaluable, as it gave team members, working remotely, a hands-on opportunity to collaborate. It also enabled the RI instructors, coaches, and fellows to see what progress each team had made by looking at the documents online. In the virtual follow-up sessions, coaches and fellows used the online documents to structure their discussions with participant teams and at times. The online documents served as a reminder of the various Equity Improvement Cycle steps and guiding questions for participants to consider at each step.

Providing Active Facilitation in Virtual Discussions to Foster Community

Professional learning related to racial equity and school improvement requires thoughtful, engaged facilitation. This is especially true in virtual learning environments, when participants are discussing topics such as racism and inequitable school conditions, and some participants might be reluctant to participate openly.

During the RI, we made use of virtual Zoom "breakout rooms" to encourage participants to talk within their teams as well as across teams with others from different settings. When we had breakout rooms without a facilitator, we received strong feedback that facilitation was needed. First, groups without a facilitator found that they could easily go "off topic," and discuss other matters rather than the serious and often challenging issues related to racial identity or inequities in schools. We found that keeping race "on the table" (i.e., at the center of attention) was difficult, with participants wanting to talk about other types of diversity. Some of the school leaders brought up the topics of ethnicity versus race and did not have background knowledge of how racial categories are formed and why it matters in the context of understanding, confronting, and ultimately dismantling racism in education. For example, one of the school teams had a majority population of Latinx faculty and students, but they identified racially as white and found it hard to locate themselves within conversations of structural oppression and racism. The coach assigned to work with this team had to intervene to provide resources on racial and

ethnic identity, as well as ask the team members to reflect upon their own personal experiences with racial categories.

Second, having a facilitator helped groups to "share airtime" and generally manage participation patterns. Without facilitation, it was easy for a few people to dominate the conversation and for others to sit back without participating. This can be especially challenging in virtual environments: where people are not face-to-face, it is more difficult to read body language, and it can be harder to interrupt a speaker. Studies from previous literature are mixed in terms of whether virtual participation supports or challenges participants' abilities to have honest discussions. For example, Merryfield (2001) describes the process of transforming a graduate-level multicultural education course into an online course. As her course was completely asynchronous, the opportunities for discussion, debate, and collaborative reflection moved from a weekly in-person seminar to a threaded discussion board, with students posting comments and responding to each other at their own pace of communication. Merryfield found that when discussing topics related to discrimination and injustice, such as racism and sexism, online students were more frank and open than previous face-to-face classes (Merryfield, 2001). Some of the literature supports Merryfield's assumption (Suler, 2004; Warschauer, 1995), whereas others argue the opposite, describing a "spiral of silence" imposed by difficult conversations online (Hampton et al., 2014).

In the RI, facilitators were able to push the participants to do more personal reflection and "dig deeper" into their own histories with racism. Some participants were uncomfortable sharing personal stories, confronting their own implicit biases, and having difficult conversations as a team. These school leaders wanted to move quickly to "doing things" such as training others and implementing activities. "We all still have work to do on ourselves" was an idea that was hard for some to address, expressing reticence to the inevitable vulnerability equity work requires.

It was important for RI participants to share their own stories because we drew from Bauer and Clancy's (2018) concept of Empathic Scaffolding, a process for teaching race that develops students' level of comfort by first applying the material to their personal experience and understanding, before expanding to examine the experiences of broader groups of people. Emphatic Scaffolding builds on the concept of emotional ecology which integrates empathy and pedagogy to encourage students to take a personal approach to learning, a necessity in teaching hot topics in social justice (Bauer & Clancy, 2018). Storytelling is the

hallmark of RIDES' approach to teaching and learning, beginning with the personal experiences of each person in the classroom. In the RI, the faculty begins the process by telling their own stories about racial identity and education before turning it over to the participants reflect on their own experiences.

Skillful facilitation can help a team establish conditions of trust and honesty—at RIDES, this is the foundation of building a strong Personal and Team Equity Culture (PTEC). Facilitators helped the teams to set norms for their interactions, encouraged participants to be vulnerable, and praised participants for saying something that may have been difficult.

Implications and Conclusion

We suggested two useful practices for building community in a virtual learning environment: using online documents to encourage reflection during experiential learning and active facilitation to support building community and the culture of sharing personal stories. Both practices utilized the collaborative and continuous movement encouraged by the theoretical lens of Ubuntu. Online documents are the prototype of manifesting Ubuntu as a tool in virtual education. This continuous motion of creating, discussing, and revising one's thoughts, in a public–private space, allows for the individual to engage collaboratively, pushing back on the isolated thought work that usually occurs prior or after a diversity-focused discussion. The use of storytelling and facilitation also bridges the gap between teacher and student, Us and Other, encouraging the "I am because we are" principles of Ubuntu.

We also hope the tools and suggestions we present catalyze tearing down the divide that separates the lofty ivory tower from its local communities. Universities must see and present themselves as part of the whole, pursuing goals that benefit the community of which they are members, rather than as organizations merely acting on others. Through continuous reflective practice, in conjunction with our communities, we are able to teach and learn at higher levels, while pursuing the necessity of dismantling racism in education.
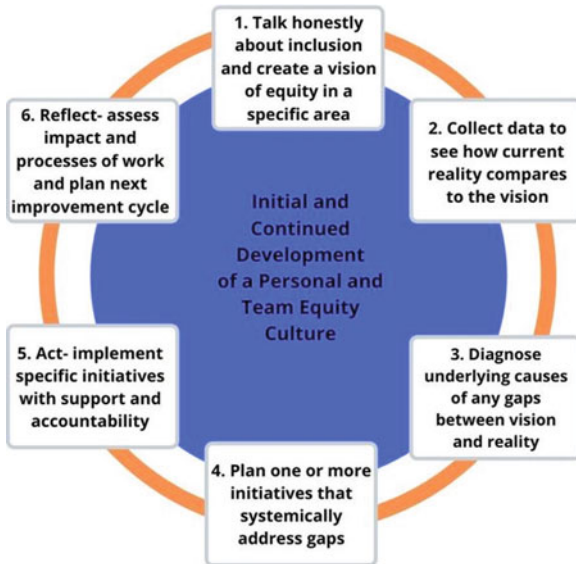
Appendix A

RIDES Institute 2019–20

Equity Improvement Cycle Documentation

Purpose: This document is to be used to summarize and share the headlines of your progression through the Equity Improvement Cycle.

The Equity Improvement Cycle, developed by Lee Teitel and Darnisa Amante for the Reimagining Integration: Diverse and Equitable Schools Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

School or District Information

Team name
Participants
Paste a photo of your team here

Step 1: Talk honestly about inclusion and create a vision of equity in a specific area

Building a Personal and Team Equity Culture (PTEC)

What is coming up for your team from the PTEC discussions?

What are your reactions to the key ideas presented in the sessions about PTEC?
Review and summarize your PTEC self-assessment scores. Where is there most agreement? Where is there least agreement? (*Consider creating a table with a summary of your scores here.*)
What insights or reflections does the PTEC self-assessment process raise for you?

Based on the results of your discussion above, your team will need to make a choice about how to focus your first equity improvement cycle.

- Choice 1: Keep the focus for the first cycle on improving our personal and team equity culture;
- Choice 2: Select another focus for the first cycle but revisit and continually improve upon our personal and team equity culture.

Record your choice & the rationale below:

Step 1A: Identifying a Specific Equity Focus Area
Summarize your learning about the **RIDES Progress Assessment**.

Where are the areas of strength?
Where are the areas of growth?
What other patterns did you notice?
What insights or reflections does this raise for you?

Summarize the key elements of your discussion about the focus for your first equity improvement cycle.

The focus area for our first equity improvement cycle is:

Why did you choose this first focus area?

What evidence did you draw upon to establish this focus? (*Include thoughts on the RIDES Progress Assessment.*)

Are there other stakeholders or members of our community who need to be involved in selecting this focus area? Who are they and how will you draw them in?

Step 1B: Articulating a Vision of Equity

This section helps you articulate your vision for equity. Start by thinking about the focus area you have chosen.

In this focus area, what outcomes are you hoping to achieve?

What will have changed about behaviors and mindsets?

What will it look like, sound like, and feel like when this has happened? Provide specific examples

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Consider who else might need to be involved in finalizing this vision for equity. Write down a plan below for how you will gather their input and finalize the vision in the next few weeks:

Step 2: Collect data to see how current reality compares to the vision

Based on your focus area, what kinds of data will give you the information that you need to explore the gap between current reality and your vision?

What data do you already have?

What data do you need to collect?

What is the plan for collecting those data in the next 4–5 weeks? (*Note: We will begin analysis of the data you have collected in our first webinar*)

The following sections will be filled out after the November Institute.

Step 3: Diagnosing underlying causes of any gaps between vision and reality

What are 3–5 patterns that emerged as you were taking a close look at your data? Highlight which patterns seem to be the most "high- leverage" to address, and why.
What insights about root causes did you get from doing the "Five Whys"? *(If you have photo of your 5 Whys diagram, paste it here or attach it as a link.)*
What insights did you get from the "thinking developmentally" questions? *(If you have photo of your developmental map, paste it here or attach it as a link.)*

Step 4: Plan one or more initiatives to systemically address gaps

Since we are now mid-way through the Equity Improvement Cycle, before going on the formal planning step, there are several set-up elements to connect to the why, what, how, and who of your equity improvement work. Please fill in headlines for each (4 A, B, C, and D below) before going to the rest of the Plan (4 E, F, G, H, and I below).

Summarize the key components of your plan or initiative
4A: How does it tie to your "why"—the sense of purpose about race and equity that started this journey?
4B: How is your plan high-leverage and systemic (meaning if successful, it would not only address the pattern you are working on, but it will be reinforced by other initiatives and ripple out to improve other areas in the system)?
4C: How will designing and implementing this plan help your team move toward improving its Personal and Team Equity Culture?
4D: Who will be involved in this initiative, and how will you work to include stakeholders often left out or marginalized in equity initiatives? How will you communicate the WHY, and WHO most needs to hear this?

4E: How is it operationalizable? (How will you organize the capacity to implement it?)
4F: How will the plan be measured? Can you make measurable progress on the plan in a relatively short time frame ("small wins")?
4G: How will the next step of this work connect to a variety of stakeholders so it is broadly owned and understood? How will your "why"—the reason you are doing this—be visible to all?
4H: Design your next step: what would you suggest doing in the next month? In the next 4–5 months? Next school year? And how will you continue to develop your capacity as individuals, team, and site to implement this equity plan with fidelity?

Next month:
Next 4–5 months:
Next year:

Step 5: Act—Implement specific initiative(s)with support and accountability

Step 5 is both about "product" (e.g., what you will implement) but it also about "process" (e.g., how you accomplish the work).

5A: How have you tried to ensure that people don't experience this as being "done to them," by thinking about the WHO and WHY work you have done? How did that go?

5B: In what ways were you able to align to organizational structures, resources, and processes in your setting? What worked and what didn't?

5C: How are you leveraging different types of support and accountability—hierarchical, lateral, reciprocal?

5D: What results do you have to track progress and celebrate successes (including small wins)?

Step 6: Reflect—Assess impacts and processes of work and plan next improvement cycle

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6A: Individually and collectively reflect on what worked and what you would want to do better in the next cycle

Consider:
- PTEC: Personal and Team Equity Culture
- Your ideas for WHAT working systemically looks like, being clearer about WHY you are doing equity work, and broadening WHO is engaged in the work

6B: Conduct an After-Action Review:
- What did you try to do?
- What actually happened?
- What worked?
- What could be improved for next time?

6C: Look ahead to the next improvement cycle:
- What have you learned about improvement?
- What should your next area of focus be?

6D: Plan to tell your story. What will you tell your team, your school, and other stakeholders? *(Paste a link to your journey story here.)*

Suggested Readings

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Resisting State Violence: Teaching Social Justice Virtually in an Era of Black Lives Matter and the Coronavirus

Austin McCoy

Key Terms and Definitions

Abolitionism:	Abolitionism is a form of politics that seeks to eradicate particular institutions or systems of governance and economics. Police and prison abolition is concerned with dismantling the current structure of criminal justice and replacing it with a system activists believe are less harmful.
Organizing:	Organizing is the practice of bringing people together to advocate for a particular cause. Organizers help teach people political ideas, tactics, and strategies in their pursuit of social change

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211

Political education:	Political education is a form of teaching that focuses exclusively on developing a deeper understanding of concepts, processes, and norms related to systems of governance
Settler colonialism:	Settler colonialism is a structure of power aimed at displacing and eliminating indigenous peoples. In this system, settlers take land, become the majority, and set up structures designed to remove any vestiges of native societies in an ongoing process
State violence:	State violence is a form of harm perpetrated by institutions related to governance and social regulation
Visioning:	Visioning is a brainstorming tactic where participants are encouraged to conceive of potential imaginative solutions to solve a social problem

In the largest mass protests in U.S. history, hundreds of thousands of Americans took to the streets in protest against police killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Tony McDade, and other Black people in the midst of the novel coronavirus pandemic in the summer of 2020 (Buchannan et al., 2020; McCoy, Toward state capture, 2020). The deaths of Taylor, Floyd, and others reminded many Americans but especially Black people, that structural racism and state violence remained an existential threat that predated, but persisted, alongside the COVID pandemic that had already taken thousands of lives. The interlocking crises of the pandemic, economic recession, and state violence appeared to "wake up" many people. Americans participated in anti-racist book clubs, joined political organizations, and partook in protests for the first time. Members of Congress called for police reforms. Corporate CEOs and University presidents directed institutions to release statements in support of racial justice. Mayors commissioned street art proclaiming their solidarity with the protesters. Media outlets devoted much coverage to the protests and opinion writers began wondering if the U.S. had embarked on a "reckoning" with its racist past (McCoy, 2020).

These events, as *Inside of Higher Education* senior writer Beth McMurtrie observed, has established "new rules of engagement" for college and university for all instructors as they seek to adopt their in-person courses

to virtual settings (McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020). McMurtrie, National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), and other observers raise questions about the tools of engagement (i.e. virtual platforms such as Zoom), access to technology, the terms of engagement when building a virtual community, addressing issues related to structural racism and violence, and accommodating students' mental and emotional health needs in the wake of these crises (Collymore, 2020; McMurtrie, Teaching: How to Engage Students in a Hybrid Classroom, 2020; McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020; National Association of School Psychologists, 2020; Smith, 2020). COVID, police killings of Black people, and the Black Lives Matter movement also reminds us of how societal disruptions like the coronavirus pandemic and mass protests can propel transformation within higher education institutions and unsettle pedagogy. As Kevin V. Collymore wrote in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in July 2020, "Higher education will not be immune from this reckoning. Whether colleges end up operating in person, online, or in a hybrid format this fall, they will have to confront structural racism head-on" (Collymore, 2020).

The global pandemic and uprising against structural racism pushed me to reconsider how to build community, teach histories of anti-racist movements, and to prepare students to engage politics virtually. Motivated by my desires to offer relevant courses where students can learn organizing and activist tools and replicate them for others interested in pursuing social justice, I have reimagined a course I designed while serving as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan, "Resisting State Violence: Race, Policing, and Social Justice in America" (RSV). Yet, as I reconceived RSV, I considered two important questions: What might it look like to teach history and organizing in a virtual setting? And, is it possible to forge the necessary deep connections it would take to help people develop the organizing tools to mobilize people for protest, create political education projects, and to form their own organizations following participation in a virtual course?

I initially designed RSV in 2016 in the midst of the 2016 presidential election and the indigenous-led protests to block the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (#NoDAPL) in Standing Rock, ND (Estes, 2019). Student activists on campus expressed a desire to learn more about the historical context of #NoDAPL and how it might connect to other histories of resisting various forms of state violence (Appendix A). Some also told me they were not just looking for new ways to understand past

instances of violence, exclusion, and protest, but to think of ways to adopt those lessons for future protests. They believed Donald Trump's presidential administration would encourage more as white nationalist and white supremacist violence and police brutality against Black and Brown people. They also wanted to prepare to respond to any policies restricting immigration and deportation of undocumented people. Thus, the goal of RSV was "to encourage students to investigate the histories of policing, surveillance, political repression, deportation, and incarceration, and the ways they intersect with racism, settler colonialism, xenophobia, economic exploitation, and sexism and misogyny. Seeking to contextualize Black Lives Matter and the Dakota Access Pipeline protests, we examine how marginalized people have resisted various forms of state violence" (McCoy, A Lesson in Protest, 2017).

In reconceiving my approach to social justice education and virtual instruction in Resisting State Violence, 2.0 (RSV 2.0), I took inspiration from past and present political education efforts outside of higher education, such as the Highlander Folk School as well as contemporary programs such as prison abolitionist online curriculum, Study and Struggle (Appendix A; Horton, 1990; Study & Struggle, 2020, https://www.studyandstruggle.com/). When devising courses aimed at teaching students histories of power and protest, I strive to develop what Myles Horton (1990) calls a "yeasty" model of political education that could be replicated outside of the classroom (p. 57). Such a model emphasizes teaching students to develop organizing tools, tactics, strategies, and projects they can take outside of the classroom and apply to their own situations, hopefully with the intent to inspire others to develop their own social justice programs. What follows is a consideration of how bringing historians' methods of understanding of the past and the present together in a virtual setting with higher education professionals' and activists' political education strategies could generate a vibrant praxis that further develops students' capacities to confront injustice and to transform their environment. This praxis emphasizes students learning histories of the U.S.'s racist, settler-colonial, and patriarchal past. Historical analyses of oppression and resistance offers a sturdy analytical foundation they could use to develop and fortify organizing skills and facilitate the creation of new political projects inspired by contemporary online activism such as webinars, toolkits, podcasts, and mutual aid campaigns. Ultimately, this discussion will show how social justice-minded educators can also play a

crucial role in reshaping how their contemporaries and future teachers and organizers leverage virtual platforms and online teaching tools and methods to teach social justice.

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL AND SNCC FREEDOM SCHOOLS: HISTORICAL INSPIRATIONS FOR RESISTING STATE VIOLENCE, 2.0

The examples of the Highlander Folk School and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Freedom Schools shaped my approach to the teaching of African American and U.S. History and social justice and inspired my conception of Resisting State Violence (Horton, 1990; Payne, 1995).[1] In 1932, Activist and educator Myles Horton, along with educator Don West, and minister James A. Dombrowski, founded Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee, with the intent of teaching poor and working people how to engage in politics and community organizing. Horton took inspiration for Highlander from University of Chicago sociologist Robert Park, Hull House, as well as the International People's College and Folk High School in Denmark. Horton's studies at the University of Chicago encouraged him to think consciously about people addressed contradictions and addressed conflict among one another. These institutions also focused on analyzing the establishment of the Hull House and its emphasis on teaching self-governance, the sensibilities of various folk schools in Denmark, and created an institution and pedagogy centered on democratic practice (Horton, 1990, pp. 46–55). All of these experiences provided Horton with a foundation of developing a replicable political education practice and program in what became the Highlander Folk School.

Highlander trained and inspired Black Americans to implement political education programs in the South during the 1950s and 1960s to support local people and to help build the civil rights movement. The first Citizenship School grew out of a Highlander workshop about the United Nations. Activist Septima Clark and Esau Jenkins, both attendees of the UN workshop, collaborated with Horton to start a school. Clark soon

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[1] Highlander Folk School is now known as the Highlander Research and Education Center. I will refer to the school by its original name, or by "Highlander," for consistency. See the Highlander Research and Education Center's website: https://highlandercenter.org/.

recruited beautician Bernice Robinson to join the school as an instructor. Initially focusing on teaching reading skills, organizing protests, and voter registration, the schools expanded their scope by holding workshops with Black activists who encouraged students to expand their view of social change beyond voting and engaging in electoral politics (Horton, 1990, pp. 101–104). Eventually, Clark and Robinson spearheaded the spread of Citizenship Schools throughout the South.

Highlander and the Citizenship Schools served as a model for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) Freedom Schools. Serving a vital function in organizing SNCCs Freedom Summer campaign in 1965, activists conceived of their program as a service that would fill in the gaps in education created by segregated and unequal white and Black schools (Ransby, 2003, p. 326). As historian Barbara Ransby (2003) acknowledges, "The Freedom Schools were a welcome supplement to black education in Mississippi, which was in a desperately impoverished condition because the state government spent nearly four times as much money per year on white students as it did on black ones" (p. 326). Open to African-Americans of any age, instructors taught traditional subjects as well as offerings unavailable in established public schools such as foreign languages, typing, art, and college prep math (Payne, 302). Activist Charles Cobb helped create Freedom Schools in Mississippi, which attracted thousands of students and expanded quickly due to demand (Payne, 1995, p. 302).

Yet, the Freedom Schools also sought to offer a political education for African-Americans seeking to participate in the civil rights movement and to engage in electoral politics. Cobb saw the Freedom Schools playing a vital part in politicizing Black people who would contribute to the movement: "The schools expected to be 'an educational experience for students which will make it possible for them to challenge the myths of our society, to perceive more clearly its realities and to find alternatives and ultimately, new directions for action'" (Payne, 1995, p. 302). Consequently, instructors developed a "citizenship curriculum" that entailed examining the limits of the values of "majority culture," the power structure in their towns and in the U.S., as well as lessons on registering to vote and the legislative process in Congress (Payne, 1995, pp. 303–304).

The Highlander Folk School's and Freedom School's models of political education underscore key principles that social justice-minded educators could adopt as they consider virtual instruction. Both schools sought to teach activists and local people how to organize and engage political

institutions. Yet, Horton also emphasizes the importance of developing pedagogical models and tools that allow for people to duplicate their work in order to spread organizing skills widely. Horton (1990) wrote in his autobiography,

> I wanted to use education in such a way that I could find out whether I was succeeding in achieving what I'd set out to do. The kind of education I started had to be manageable enough for me to know whether it was useful. Therefore, I decided to work with a small number of people. Now, if you're going to work with small groups and your aim is to change society, and you know that you need masses of people to accomplish that, you have to work with those people who can multiply what you do. It isn't a matter of having each one teach one. It's a matter of having a concept of education that is yeasty, one that will multiply itself. (p. 57)

Developing a "yeasty" social justice-based curriculum, course, or seminar is a goal for many activists and for educators who desire for their students to apply what they have learned inside and outside the classroom in the service of accelerating structural change. This outlook remains compatible for instructors engaging in virtual education too. Teachers and organizers can facilitate courses and seminars that not only inspires students to learn histories of oppression and resistance that challenge mainstream narratives, but they can use class materials and organizing workshops to develop activists. Additionally, instructors can encourage students to work in teams virtually to build online organizing tools that they can utilize in an effort to duplicate their work in other settings.

Upon my discovery of these political education projects as a graduate student, I was drawn to the notion that one needed to learn histories of racism, oppression, and activism in order to do good activist work. Since I encountered those examples, I thought of how to organize courses around challenging master narratives of U.S. and African American History and encouraging students to develop tools necessary for engaging in political organizing and activism. Then, spurred by George Zimmerman's acquittal in Trayvon Martin's death, Black students at the University of Michigan sought to address racial inequities on campus in Fall 2013. The #BBUM (Being Black at University of Michigan) movement called for the administration to implement measures that would raise the Black student enrollment, revise curriculum, rebuild the multicultural center on central campus, and extend more scholarships and financial aid

to Black students and students of color (Holdship, 2014; Jaschik, 2014). This movement contributed to the growing protest culture in Ann Arbor and throughout Southeastern Michigan as people organized around issues related to campus sexual violence, policing, and immigration restrictions over the next few years (Adamopoulous, 2015; Basha, 2017; Woodhouse, 2014). I developed "Resisting State Violence: Race, Policing, and Social Justice in Twentieth Century America" (RSV), in response to student demands for the University of Michigan to offer more courses on anti-Black racism and social justice, the Black Lives Matter movement, the 2016 election, and the Standing Rock protests, but also in the spirit of Highlander and the Freedom Schools. The goal of RSV was to deepen students' understandings between the relationship between state violence and protest, but to also develop organizers who could take a "yeasty" model of political education into the world.

Resisting State Violence 2.0

Starting with the goal of developing a "yeasty" form of political education inspired by Highlander Folk and the Freedom Schools, I envisioned a "Resisting State Violence 2.0" as a synchronous virtual course that fulfills the goal of teaching students to think critically about histories of oppression and resistance. RSV 2.0 urges students to think more self-consciously about how to organize social justice projects virtually for an online and in-person audience (see Appendices A and B). And, this would be an experiment in whether it was possible to bring particular organizing strategies, such as participatory democracy and envisioning, along with traditional classroom approaches such as student-led evaluation, into a virtual setting.

RSV 2.0 is a synchronous course organized around classroom discussions of readings related to histories of racism, settler colonialism, heteropatriarchy, and class oppression, as well as how marginalized communities responded to these forms of oppression (Appendix A). In addition to examining histories of power, students also consider histories of activism and social movements such as the civil rights movement, feminism and women's liberation, anti-police brutality campaigns, indigenous protests against settler colonialism, and abolitionist practices. RSV 2.0 is inspired by past political education programs outside of higher education such as Highlander Folk School. It also draws inspiration from a contemporary political education program, Study and

Struggle and University of Michigan's Social Justice Labs (Study & Struggle, 2020, https://www.studyandstruggle.com/; Sterilization and Social Justice Lab, https://www.ssjlab.org/; Policing & Social Justice History Lab, https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/dcc-project/policing-social-justice-historylab/) RSV 2.0 utilizes organizing labs designed to teach students how to engage in political work in virtual settings and final projects that gives students the opportunity to devise their own programs that they can replicate outside of the course (Appendix B).

Community Building and It's Challenges in RSV 2.0

Community building is vital in the tough job of teaching difficult political topics and organizing. And as observers and institutions in higher education have acknowledged in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, forging a vibrant classroom culture is especially challenging in synchronous virtual settings (LSA Learning & Teaching Technology Consultants, 2020; McMurtrie, Teaching, 2020; McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020; NASP, 2020). The ways that COVID have forced scholars to consider all of the potential dilemmas embedded in virtual instruction, especially with little training, are numerous, as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s writer Beth McMurtrie and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) have reported. Educators have to reconsider their expectations of students, the scope of their syllabi, students' mental and emotional health, and their access to technology and WIFI (McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020; NASP, 2020).

These scholars and groups have identified many other obstacles to community building. According to higher education scholar, Sharla Berry (2019): "Limited opportunities to interact with peers in person may increase feelings of distance to undermine students' sense of connection" (p. 165). Thus, it is tougher to forge connections over computer screens, especially when many spend much of their time in front of screens (McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020; NASP, 2020). Some students may suffer from zoom fatigue due to sustained engagement on video conferencing programs. Also, others might desire to protect their privacy, so they may turn their cameras off. Berry, McMurtrie, and the University of Michigan LSA Learning & Teaching Consultants offer an array of suggestions aimed at mitigating feelings of alienation and developing stronger connections in a synchronous virtual setting including reaching out to students and checking in, the use of polling,

limiting lecture time, create space for various types of student engagement, whether its small group discussion, message boards, collaborative annotation, or social media (Berry, 2019; LSA Learning & Teaching Technology Consultants, 2020; McMurtrie, The Rules for Engagement, 2020). But the key point for instructors interested in building community virtually is creating an environment that does not reduce learning to "a series of transactions," as McMurtrie writes (McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020). Ultimately, as McMurtrie implies, students need to feel like they are "part of something larger" (McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020).

Encouraging students to think of themselves as a group of change agents is a goal for social justice teaching, whether in-person or in a synchronous virtual setting. Creating an open learning environment is also important for empowering students to think democratically and collectively. As bell hooks (1994) writes, "As a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognizing each other's presence […] There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources. Used constructively, they enhance the capacity of any class to create an open learning community" (p. 8). Thus, I include a disclaimer in my syllabi outlining some important principles for engaging in the class such as participating in good faith and with mutual respect as a baseline. However, I also encourage students to take ownership over the classroom's culture by participating in establishing ground rules for discussion and engagement. After the discussion, I record the ground rules and values on the Canvas class website (McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020). Community building emphasizes the need for students to develop a sense of trust—that they all will engage the class materials, and each other, in good faith. It is important for the classroom to be a space that inspires learning, experimentation, and reevaluation rather than one that replicates particularly toxic behaviors in public discourse. To invoke feminist philosopher Nancy Fraser, the classroom should represent a "subaltern counterpublic" that students can use to hone their understandings of resistance to oppression and build knowledge and skills to engage people outside of the classroom, whether in person, or virtually, and organize people for social change (Fraser, 1990, p. 67).

I try to utilize breakout rooms for small group discussion and activities in synchronous settings to give students opportunities to contribute to discussion. To make sure students have a chance to work with everyone, and to keep students engaged, I shuffle breakout groups for in-class activities and discussions. I also encourage students to conduct ongoing conversations about class topics and projects on discussion boards. The goal is to get students to participate in a sustainable manner and on their own terms without confronting too much burnout.

Since I value flexibility, I envision my course syllabi as living documents that can be changed with the students' consent. I am often motivated to alter the class schedule if doing so might mitigate students' feelings of fatigue, especially when dealing with stressful topics. When teaching Resisting State Violence in person, I realized I had to provide the class with mental health days because I could sense in their body language and the discussion tone their engagement with the material declining after consecutive meetings where we read, discussed, and engaged graphic and explicit material documenting instances of state violence from police killings of Black people to forced sterilization of women.

Maintaining a flexible class schedule would be especially important in a synchronous virtual setting. Keeping a flexible schedule in a virtual (or in-person) course focused on studying instances of, and responses to, state violence is vital since, unfortunately, it is likely we would have to address contemporary instances of police murders of Black and Brown people, racist violence against other people of color, and efforts to implement other harmful policies directed at groups such as LGBTQIA+ folks, Muslims, and immigrants. It is important to press pause on a lesson plan and give students the space to process contemporary events and grieve, if necessary. Collective reflection helps build and maintain community and can become sources for inspiration for action for students. However, this becomes difficult if we fail to lay the foundation at the beginning of the course and take into account the challenges that virtual instruction might pose.

Consequently, I would conduct daily check-ins with students as suggested (Berry, 2019; McMurtrie, The New Rules of Engagement, 2020; NASP, 2020). These check-ins can include inquiring how the students felt about particular sources before and after class discussion. I also use polling features to conduct temperature checks. Anonymous polling, even if all of the students know each other, still provides space for students to express honestly how they feel. Whether I try to initiate

a conversation through inquiry or take the class's temperature using a poll, I always encourage students to reach out personally if they desire to process. And I propose a mental health day to the students if I get the sense that the class is entering a stage of fatigue after the check-ins and temperature checks.

Community building, whether in the synchronous virtual classroom, or in meetings outside of scheduled class time, lays the foundation for the collaborative work that students will perform in the course. In addition of establishing classroom norms, teaching students how to organize entails encouraging students to work collectively—creating teams that might approximate small political organizations seeking to develop useful tools. As in most classes, instructors should expect students to meet virtually inside and outside of scheduled time. Ultimately, students would be encouraged to think through how to divide labor within their teams and what kind of political principles their group will try to embody. Like with most political groups, their process could change over the course of the seminar or semester.

RSV 2.0 Organizing Labs

To learn and develop organizing skills, student teams would participate in organizing labs where they would respond to hypothetical scenarios and crises. This strategy draws from social movement history and organization methods from groups and programs such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Highlander Folk School. These groups, like many organizing groups, held workshops to teach people how to think strategically, organize protests, develop political education material for the public, engage the media, and conduct campaigns. The best outcome of such involvement is students would utilize their experiences and facilitate their own future workshops.

The organizing labs are not novel features in a history course or in the humanities (Hiatt, 2005).[2] I take inspiration from scholars such as Alexandra Minna Stern and Matt Lassiter who direct Social Justice Labs at the University of Michigan. These scholars formed the Sterilization & Social Justice and Police & Social Justice Labs with the

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[2] Many colleges and universities have digital humanities labs including Yale, Michigan State University, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Georgia Tech, MIT, Northwestern, University of Georgia, and Brown University, and UMass.

intent of illustrating how the humanities can intervene directly into policy debates around issues pertaining to reproductive justice and policing (Sterilization & Social Justice Lab website, https://www.ssj lab.org/; Policing & Social Justice Lab website, https://sites.lsa.umich. edu/dcc-project/policing-social-justice-historylab/). Undergraduates in the Police & Social Justice Lab utilize archival sources, newspapers, and secondary sources to build a series of websites documenting the history of police brutality in Michigan (Policing & Social Justice Lab website, https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/dcc-project/policing-social-justice-historylab/). These web resources provide activists and policymakers more historical context in a moment where many Americans are calling for police reform and the transformation of public safety. What distinguishes RSV 2.0 from the University of Michigan Social Justice Labs, is that the former seeks to teach students how to link the study of history with the practice of organizing tactics and strategies in a virtual (and in-person) settings. RSV 2.0 also resembles a "lab" in that the students are encouraged to use sources and analysis to work through scenarios and to build knowledge. In the RSV labs, students are allowed to make mistakes and even fail in simulated scenarios without it impacting their grades.

In Appendix B, I outline six organizing labs that deal with virtual activist work directly. The labs featured in Appendix B include introductory sessions that focus on organizing, protesting, and building culture virtually. The last three sessions are more issue-, or task-, specific, such as building an online curriculum, developing a mutual aid program, and creating a popular budget inspired by demands to "defund the police" (citation). Each lab contains a set of readings, the scenario, and discussion questions students would address as they complete their tasks. Once students complete the task, we then would process their experiences.

Instructors would conduct organizing labs virtually in a synchronous setting. For example, in the organizing lab on protest, the instructor could provide a class with a scenario asking each team to respond to a particular crisis—an instance of police brutality, the proposal to pass legislation to restricting the rights of immigrants and undocumented people, or a corporation's attempts to violate indigenous sovereignty. After going into their breakout rooms, each team would develop a protest by identifying the goals of such an action, the tactics they intend to pursue, the target of protest, their demands, and messaging. Finally, instructors would ask students questions about their contingency plans in a larger group discussion: Is their protest accessible to dis/abled persons? If not, then

how would they address inaccessibility? Would you all be willing to risk arrest? If so, then how does one communicate that to everyone participating? How would you address safety concerns if authorities deploy violent methods to suppress the protest? The goal of such a conversation is to encourage students to think deeply about how protest works and how it may fit in a larger strategy.

Encouraging students to design a plan for an online course on a related topic could facilitate the replication of virtual organizing. I would ask students to outline their own curriculum. I would pose questions about planning the actual curriculum, the program's purpose and goals, its target audience, how much money would they need to raise to procure texts, guest speakers, and a website. Additionally, each team would have to allocate tasks fairly, and if there were roles team members could not fulfill, they could think about the type of person who could take on such a responsibility. And, like the "Study and Struggle" curriculum, this lab would be conducted virtually and students could build upon their work if they wanted it to serve as their capstone project for the course.

The online curriculum lab is inspired by the "Study and Struggle" prison project for incarcerated people in Mississippi. Devised in the summer of 2020, a group of activists, organizers, and intellectuals built a biweekly curriculum in Spanish and English around various topics related to prison abolition—intersectionality, care work, settler colonialism, border imperialism, transnational organizing, and movement building. The architects of the program also organized a series of synchronous meetings and recorded webinars featuring various organizers, activists, and scholars. Since the goal of "Study and Struggle" is to radicalize incarcerated people and facilitate organizing in prisons and jails throughout the country, project organizers made the curriculum, reading materials, and webinars available for public use. The program expanded quickly as organizers established twenty-one reading groups in Mississippi and participants took part in ninety-four reading groups in twenty-one states in the U.S. and four countries (Study & Struggle, https://www.studyandstruggle.com/). The conception of the RSV online curriculum organizing lab not only draws from Study and Struggle, but its design draws from the program's inspirations like the Highlander Folk School, SNCC's Freedom Schools, and the Young Lords's and Black Panther Party's Liberation Schools that relied upon political education groups as a strategy to grow their movements (Bloom & Martin, 2013; Fernández, 2020; Horton, 1990; Payne, 1995).

Another organizing method that instructors could teach and facilitate virtually inside or outside the organizing lab context is a visioning session. Visioning is a tactic transformative and reparative justice organizers often rely on to encourage community members to think deeply and broadly about the implications of structural change. Essentially, visioning is an exercise in radical political imagination. As Detroit Justice Center Executive Director Amanda Alexander expressed, instead of limiting a discussion of policing to legislative reform, one should ask people a large and open-ended question such as "What would it take for you to feel safe?" and encourage them to think as broadly as possible. "We ask people, 'How would you invest money in order to feel safer in your neighborhood?'" Alexander stated (McCoy, Toward state capture, 2020). From there, community members considered the myriad of factors that contribute to building a safer, democratic, and accountable society. Once groups start exercising the muscle of imagination, they can build on other muscles such as strategic planning, tactics, and movement building.

While some of the organizing labs would help student teams build their portfolios, they would be encouraged to develop final projects that could either take place in a virtual setting, such as a webinar, or could be featured and distributed online. Instructors would urge students to develop final projects that address the relationship between the history of anti-state violence activist work and current trends in organizing. In 2017, students who took my "Resisting State Violence" course at the University of Michigan designed a zine and an accompanying podcast documenting the history of anti-fascist and anti-white supremacist organizing in Ann Arbor during the early-1980s. Organizing against the emergence of white nationalist activists such as Richard Spencer and organizations such as the Proud Boys inspired students' interests in providing material that activists and organizers could use to educate themselves and others about the local history of such protests (Stern, 2019). This was another student-generated example of the symbiotic relationship between protests and education rescuing a memory of a forgotten past to build new organizing tools. And while students collaborated in person and virtually to create the zine and podcast, this is a project that teams could develop while working virtually.

Conclusion: Evaluation, Experimentation, Duplication

It is reasonable that questions regarding student evaluation might arise considering the goals of such a course is to help students develop organizing skills and tools they could use in settings not limited to a classroom. While it may be reasonable to ask students to take an exam on the historical content of the course, quizzing and testing students on organizing skills makes less sense considering much activist labor relies on experimentation in the moment and the development of experience. There is hardly an objectively "correct" way to organize. As Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton explained in 1966, "We present no pat formulas…we cannot set a timetable for freedom. […] programs do not come out of the minds of any one person or two people such as ourselves, but out of day-to-day work, out of interaction between organizers and the communities in which they work" (p. viii). Thus, it imperative for students to understand the importance of working together and practicing, and eventually devising, organizing methods—how groups analyze their targets, assess their resources, decide on tactics and strategies collectively, and then engage in collective assessment. Organizing, much like this course (as evidenced in the organizing labs feature), must be flexible and experimental.

How does one evaluate a student's participation in organizing teams fairly, especially in a virtual setting? Instructors can gauge participation in large group discussion and organizing team activities. However, as with much organizing, there is much labor that takes place behind the scenes. Consequently, student self-reflection and team evaluation become imperative. Devising a rubric posing questions about individual performance and group dynamics that students can use in evaluating their team is a reasonable way to facilitate such critical individual and collective reflection. Did the student feel the group divided labor evenly and fairly throughout the semester? Do you feel everyone was engaged in group work? Was everyone given a chance to take on different roles in the organizing labs? How did the group make decisions? Were there any tense moments of note? If so, then how did the group handle and resolve conflict? All of these questions are key to assessing a political group's performance, especially since the most self-conscious social justice organizations always seek ways to address inequities and harm. Asking students questions about their virtual class experience would continue the trend of

thinking about the organizing setting and would help instructors adjust their future courses.

Ultimately, the goal of such a teaching strategy is to help students learn how activists confronted instances of state violence in the past and to develop the skills and tools to respond to crises in their moment. Learning and understanding the history, is important. History is where organizers and activists go to learn insights about activist traditions, how structures of oppression change over time, and how organizers forced these structural transformations, and then, in turn, changed their tactics, strategies, and goals. However, the success of teaching social justice work—whether in-person or virtually—ultimately rests with how students utilize what they have learned outside of the classroom. Just as sociologist Charles Payne (1995) states, organizing is "slow and respectful work" (p. 236). The payoff is long term as the goal of social justice instruction is to teach people to duplicate their efforts by building groups and projects, and then inspire others to do the same.

APPENDIX A

Resisting State Violence 2.0: Race, Policing, and Social Justice in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century America (Sample Syllabus)

This course introduces students to the history of policing and incarceration and their relationship to the politics of race, gender, sex, and activism during the twentieth and early-twenty-first century. Analyzing the dialectics of state oppression and resistance in historical context, and in art, we will investigate popular struggles against mass incarceration, surveillance, policing, and other forms of state violence. Additionally, students will work in teams to create their own organizing tools in response to the criminalization of marginalized people in the United States.

This class will address the following questions: How did state institutions define legitimate and illegitimate forms of violence and criminal behavior? How did these systems of state control and violence stigmatize particular minority groups? How did people resist and imagine reform and transformation of ways to administer justice? What is the future of surveillance, incarceration, and policing? Is social justice and transformation possible in the legal system?

While discussions of activism and organizing will consider implications for performing such labor in in-person settings, this course will pay special attention to organizing in a virtual setting.

This class is biased: While we will analyze historical sources from a range of perspectives, this class features a social justice component.

Disclaimer: Building Community

Since analyzing state violence is a central component of this course, this class contains explicit and graphic content. The reason for this is because one cannot always separate disturbing content from the historical context or the topic of discussion. Consequently, it is important that we engage in respectful conversation and we are generous with each other, especially considering how some of the content could be triggering. The point of this class is not just learning how historians and historical actors either supported the use of the state to regulate society or opposed it, it also to learn how to participate in conversations about race in an informed manner.

We are exploring complex and politically polarizing concepts. Conversations about violence, settler colonialism, racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, and xenophobia can be difficult. Thus, our classroom serves as a safe space for us to talk, explore, and most importantly, learn. We will learn how to articulate reasoned and evidence-based arguments in class and in writing. Disagreements are okay, if not encouraged. However, your comments should refer to the materials, not another person. In discussion, you will be expected to support your arguments in writing and conversation with quotes and textual references.

Again, it is important to be generous and patient with one another since we all come from various backgrounds and experiences. Some of us will be new to much of the class topics, material, analyses, and language, while some of us may study or work on these issues outside of the class. No one will be penalized for making mistakes or disagreeing, but it is important to take class materials seriously and engage each other in good faith.

Organizing Teams

You will form a group with your classmates and work with them on collective assignments over the course of the semester as well as a final project. One of the goals of the teams is to try to produce organizing conditions similar to those activists experience. So, rather than think of your team as a

typical course group where you discuss class readings, you will be encouraged to think of your team as a collective where relationship building and trust will be important as you all have to respond to hypothetical crises and scenarios.

In doing so, you will need to consider the following questions: How will you make decisions in your team? How will you distribute tasks? Who will take notes for each meeting? Who will be your spokespersons? How will you manage to respond to these crises and build projects virtually?

You will be given time inside and outside of class to work on final projects. So, it will be up to you all to schedule times to meet. Every group should designate a note taker for every meeting and keep notes. These will go into your portfolios.

At the end of the semester, each group will put together a portfolio with material developed out of the organizing seminars and the final project. Additionally, each member will keep a work journal documenting their individual participation (tasks, time spent individually and as a group), and evaluation of the team's operations.

Sample List of Final Project Ideas
The purpose of the final project is to provide an opportunity for organizing teams to use their organizing skills to build social justice projects that might be of use to themselves and other activists. These are a few sample projects that students could work together to create in a virtual setting.

Produce a podcast or webinar:

Podcasts, webinars, and other forms of online and digital media have emerged as critical components of political education for activists and organizations over the course of the last decade. Organizers recognize the importance of intervening in public debates about oppression, activism, and policy. Critical intervention in national conversations about oppression and organizing entails utilizing various forms to challenge prevailing understandings and narratives about race, gender, sex, class, and nationality and mobilizing alternative interpretations of the past and present to organize people for social change.

For a final project, your team could choose to develop, produce, and record your own webinar or podcast on a class-related topic of your choosing. In addition to identifying a topic, you will identify the audience, the purpose of the webinar, and the major lessons you hope viewers

get from the program. You will also produce promotional materials such as posters and fliers.

Develop an online curriculum/political education program:

Your organizing team will devise a virtual curriculum on a class-related topic. Your curriculum must include four lessons featuring guiding questions, readings and other sources, and activities. It is important for your team to identify the audience for your curriculum, its purpose, and the goals that you hope to achieve by creating this curriculum. You will also create a plan of action—how you would acquire the resources and how you would run the program? Would you expand the program? If so, how would you grow it?

Develop a resource guide for organizers:

Your team will build a resource guide for organizers related to a class-related issue. This guide should include an introduction to the topic, articulate its purpose, and objectives. The guide should also offer pertinent information about the topic—history, tactics and strategies for change, possible activities to help organizers, and a list of resources.

Develop a legislative campaign:

Your team will draft a piece of legislation on a topic of your choosing. You will then draft a plan to implement your policy. This will entail devising a virtual campaign that entails outlining a strategy and tactics for getting legislation passed and devising a power analysis of the federal government—identifying possible lawmakers who could support your policy and those in important positions who may oppose your legislation.

Produce a zine:

Many activists also produce zines to educate people on relevant political topics. This often entails trying to find creative and artistic way to present a complex idea or subject in a more accessible manner.

All final projects should include a bibliography.

Suggested Reading List
*Topics are not limited to those listed below. Instructors could use all or portions of texts for class preparation and/or class discussion.

Theory & Methodology

Settler Colonialism, Racism, Heteropatriarchy, and the State

- Bill of Rights (Especially amendments 4–8).
- Andrea Smith, "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy".
- Anthony J. Nocella, II, Mark Seis, and Jeff Shantz, eds., *Classic Writings in Anarchist Criminology*.
- Dean Spade, *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*.
- Jackie Wang, *Carceral Capitalism*.

Doing Histories of State Violence and Resistance

- Heather Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," *Journal of American History* (2010): 703–734.
- Kelly Lytle Hernandez, "The Rebel Archive," in *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965*.
- Eddie Glaude, "Value Gap," in *Democracy in Black: How Race Still Enslaves the American Soul*.
- Heather Thompson, "Writing the Perilously Recent Past: The Historian's Dilemma," *Perspectives on American History* (2013).

History
Debating the 13th Amendment and Mass Incarceration

- *13th* (Documentary).
- Dennis R. Childs, "Slavery, the 13th Amendment, and Mass Incarceration: A Response to Patrick Rael," *Black Perspectives* (2016).
- Patrick Rael, "Demystifying the 13th Amendment and Its Impact on Mass Incarceration," *Black Perspectives* (2016).
- Frederick Douglass, "The Convict Lease System" (1893).
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- Marie Gottschalk, *Caught: The Prison State and the Lockdown of American Politics* (2015).
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Appendix B

Sample Organizing Labs

After settling into organizing teams, students will devote a portion of weekly class time to discussing topics related to organizing. Some seminars will encourage students to engage in movement building while some will ask students to respond to particular hypothetical crises. While the

lessons for each topic can apply to in-person organizing, they will focus on how to conduct these activities virtually and think about its efficacy.

Organizing Lab #1: Organizing Virtually/Organizing Technologies
Before thinking about creating social justice projects, students need to learn the basics of political organizing and activism. In this seminar, students will discuss issues pertaining to community organizing and begin the process of developing their teams.

Each student should introduce themselves to the rest of the group, talk briefly about why they decided to take the course, and discuss some of the class-related issues they are most interested in and would like to address. Students should also use this seminar to think about the process of team-building: Who will take notes and how will they distribute labor? What kind of final project would they like to pursue? When will they meet outside of class?
Suggested Readings:

- Saul Alinsky, "The Education of an Organizer," in *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*.
- Charles Payne, "Slow and Respectful Work: Organizers and Organizing," in *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*.
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- Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*.
- Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*.
- Chris Dixon, *Another Politics: Talking Across Today's Transformative Movements*.
- Cait McKinney, *Information Activism: A Queer History of Lesbian Media Technologies*.
- Lala Wu and Neal Morgan, "Creative Organizing During a Pandemic," Sister District Project (2020).

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you define organizing? What is the role of an organizer?
2. What are some issues that your team is interested in addressing throughout the semester?
3. What is the difference between organizing in-person and organizing virtually?
4. What can groups gain by organizing online? What is lost?
5. How should organizers handle security?

Organizing Lab #2: How to Protest?
Since students will spend considerable time thinking about various forms of resistance, the class should also introduce them to the mechanics of protest. The goal of this seminar is to illustrate how protests are often the product of strategic thinking and to show that they are part of the political process. Democracy and citizenship are not just about voting in presidential elections every four years.
Why Protest? Why March?

- Draw attention and dramatize an issue.
- Protests are a form of communication. Protesters communicate grievances and demands.
- People also can use protest to show solidarity and expand support.

What are the types of protest?

- Demonstrations and marches.
- Strike.
- Boycott.
- Petitions.
- Occupations and Sit-Ins (or Die-Ins, "Love-Ins," etc.).

Social movements develop out of sustained protest and organizing. What is a social movement?

- A social movement is a sustained and collective action aimed at achieving social, cultural, and/or political change by groups who lack power in the political process. Groups organize around a particular idea to achieve a set of goals, which may include enacting or resisting policy. Social movements that are able to force those in

power to adopt particular reforms, overturn social, economic, or political arrangements, or topple a sitting government, are often deemed successful.

Activity: What does it take to organize a successful protest?
Ask class to outline elements of protest:

- Need to define tactics, strategy, and goals.
- Need to do a power analysis and identify a clear target (leader, institution, policy, etc.).
- What is your group trying to communicate? What are your demands? How will you determine whether or not your demands have been met? What are your talking points?

What makes a protest or movement a success or failure?

- Did it achieve specific goals?
- Did the protest force their targets to implement positive changes?
- Did the protest change conversation?
- Did the action build capacity and morale among protesters?
- How did authorities respond? Did they ignore the protesters' demands? Did the police suppress the protest?

Suggested Readings:

- Albert Einstein Institution, "198 Methods of Nonviolent Action," https://www.aeinstein.org/nonviolentaction/198-methods-of-non violent-action/.
- Mark Engler and Paul Engler, *This Is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-First Century*.
- Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why they Succeed, How They Fail*.
- Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*.
- adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*.
- Amber Joy Powell, "Political Protest and the Call for Law and Order," *The Society Pages* (2017).

*Organizing Lab #3: Building Culture and Engaging the Public
Virtually*

Engaging the public through popular media is vital for any activist and
political organization. It is important for organizers to engage the public
for two reasons:

1. To further educate those who are not familiar with particular issues
   and the organization's approach to advancing solutions.
2. Organizers must engage in framing—developing and articulating
   arguments and narratives to support their politics, but to also chal-
   lenge dominant understandings of the issues you seek to address and
   to confront the arguments of those institutions and spokespersons
   who will oppose your organization's political work.

Activist organizations have engaged the public by using various forms of
media such as blogs and webpages, social media platforms, art (music,
posters, infographics, etc.), podcasts, as well as illustrated pamphlets,
zines, and comics. Groups also participate in discussions and debates in
traditional media sources. Organizations and activists will publish opinion
pieces in print and digital sources such as the *New York Times*, *The
Washington Post*, and *Time* and designate representatives to talk to the
media at protests and to appear on news programs. And for groups who
seek support from very specific groups of people, or individuals such as
lawmakers, they may organize letter-writing campaigns.

Activity:

Your team will envision a media resource that you will use to engage the
public. You can develop a series of posters, infographics, a zine, or any
form of media that you believe would best communicate your group's
stance on any particular class-related topic.

Questions to consider: Who is your audience? Are you trying to intro-
duce readers/viewers to an unfamiliar issue? What do you believe is the
best way to raise awareness about an issue? Do you try to tell a story
about an individual circumstance that best reflects the point you are trying
to make? Do you want to educate the public about the history of the
problem your team is trying to address?

Suggested Readings and Sources:

Toolkits:

- Critical Resistance, Abolitionist Toolkit, http://criticalresistance. org/resources/the-abolitionist-toolkit/.
- Project Nia, "Building Accountability Communities Toolkit", https://project-nia.org/building-accountable-communities-toolkit.
- 8 to Abolition, https://www.8toabolition.com/.
- Project Nia, *Plight of the Girl*, https://issuu.com/projectnia/docs/ dorothy_young_zine_complete_final_draft_9.29.20.
- *Racial Capitalism and Prison Abolition*, https://issuu.com/racial capitalism/docs/racial_capitalism___prison_abolition_lr.

Podcasts:

- Rustbelt Abolition Radio.
- The Red Nation Podcast.
- The Dig Podcast.
- Code Switch: NPR.
- Louder than a Riot.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do organizers and activists engage the public? How do they use social media?
2. Is it still important to use traditional media to engage the public about your issue in the age of social media?
3. How do you feel about the piece your team developed? How did you decide on the issue to focus on and the form of cultural project?

Organizing Lab #4: Political Education: Building Online Curriculum

Political education is a vital part of organizing and movement building. It serves as an entry point for new participants and allows organizations to introduce them to the group's histories and norms, theories for understanding power, social change, and other important issues. Political

education projects also encourages new members to participate in knowledge construction as activists should incorporate new insights that arise in discussions into the project.

Your team will build an online political education curriculum around a topic or issue of your choosing. Your team will need to develop a syllabus (five sessions and one webinar) with readings, videos, and other relevant sources.

Suggested Readings:

- Charles Payne, "Transitions," in *I've Got the Light of Freedom*.
- Robin Kelley, "Black Study, Black Struggle," *Boston Review* (2016).
- Zinn Education Project, https://www.zinnedproject.org/.
- Center for Political Education, https://politicaleducation.org/political-education-in-a-time-of-rebellion/.
- Study and Struggle, https://www.studyandstruggle.com/.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which topic or issue are you addressing in your political education program? Why?
2. Who is your target audience?
3. What are the components of the program? (website, discussion boards, social media, etc.) How will you conduct sessions virtually?
4. Will you have guest speakers? If so, who is on your wish list?
5. How much money will you need to build and sustain your project? Create a budget estimating costs.

Organizing Lab #5: Mutual Aid
With the onset of the novel coronavirus, and the ensuing economic crisis accompanying the pandemic, mutual aid has emerged as a vital initiative for many organizing and activist groups. However, mutual aid has also become a mainstream initiative for charity groups. Your team will explore the meanings of mutual aid in the context of political organizing by developing your own mutual aid effort in response to a hypothetical crisis.

Your team has to a crisis of your choosing (environmental disaster, pandemic, failed infrastructure, police killings, attack on reproductive

justice, urban uprising) by developing a mutual aid program. Each group will have to respond to the following discussion questions:

1. What kind of crisis are you responding to?
2. Who are you delivering goods and services to?
3. Can you identify necessary tools and resources to conduct this effort virtually?
4. How does mutual aid fit in with movement building and resisting state violence?
5. What's the difference between mutual aid and charity?

Suggested Readings:

- Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During the Crisis (And the Next)*.
- Ashley Dawson, "Disaster Communism," *Verso Blog* (2017), https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3461-disaster-communism.
- "Mutual Aid in the Rustbelt," *Rustbelt Magazine*, March 27, 2020, https://beltmag.com/coronavirus-covid-19-mutual-aid-rust-belt/.
- Mutual Aid Disaster Relief, https://mutualaiddisasterrelief.org/.

Organizing Lab #6: Defund the Police: Envisioning and Participatory Budgeting
"Defund the Police" emerged as a demand in the wake of the protests against the police killings of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd in the spring and summer of 2020. Many activists have seen the demand as a move towards abolishing police and prisons while some view it as shorthand for redistributing resources from law enforcement to other areas of need such as social service programs, education, mass transit, etc. In this lab, students will engage this issue by imagining alternative forms of public safety in communities. They will participate in a visioning session to brainstorm specific institutional reforms and transformation. They will also develop their own budget that reflects their proposed changes, values, and desires. They are encouraged to get as creative as possible.
Suggested Readings:

- Austin McCoy, "Against State Capture," *Toward Freedom* (2020).

- Peoples' Budget Los Angeles Website, https://peoplesbudgetla.com/.
- Participatory Budgeting Project Website, https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/.

Scenario:

- You all are members of a popular assembly who has the authority to determine your small city's budget of $100 million dollars. Activists and organizers have been calling for cuts to your city police department.
- You all will work in your teams to develop your budget proposal during the first half of the seminar. After each group presents their budget proposal, we will convene as a larger group to try to create a city budget in the whole class.

Discussion Questions:

- What would you all need to feel safe in a community with either a drastically reduced police force, or none at all?
- What infrastructure, public safety, welfare, and economic programs can you envision devising and investing in?
- What comes to mind when you think of the word, "justice"? How is justice achieved and how will that be reflected in your budget(s)?
- What are reparative and transformative justice and how do we build programs and cities reflecting those values?

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Four Keys to Unlocking Equitable Learning: Retrieval, Spacing, Interleaving, and Elaborative Encoding

Alyson Froehlich and Elizabeth Bond Rogers

Key Terms and Definitions

Elaborative encoding:	The act of enriching learning content with detail during the learning process.
Equitable learning:	A classroom environment in which learning outcomes are equitably achieved by students of all identities and backgrounds.
Interleaving:	The mixing of related topics during the learning process. This is in contrast to blocked

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	learning, where each topic is learned in its entirety before moving on to the next topic.
Retrieval practice:	The act of recalling from memory what has been learned in order to strengthen that memory.
Spacing:	The inserting of time in between study episodes. This is in contrast to massed learning in a single study session.

Cognitive Learning Principles for More Equitable Learning

Due to systemic inequities in education, many student populations, particularly those who are historically underserved such as students of color, first generation students, and students coming from low-income households, have lower completion rates in comparison to white students (Banks & Dohy, 2019; Shapiro et al., 2017). Higher education institutions are becoming increasingly diverse (Espinosa et al., 2019), necessitating an ever-increasing urgency to address inequities. While interventions aiming to close this equity gap often focus on raising achievement in underserved students to match that of their white peers, this has often resulted in a deficit-thinking approach (McNair et al., 2020) that assumes the problem lies with the students and that interventions need to be applied to these students. A different approach is to examine the contributions of the learning environment in creating inequities and applying interventions to the learning environment itself.

For example, Winkelmes (2017) has argued that "unwritten rules" of how to be successful in college are a driving force of inequitable outcomes. Knowledge such as what a high-quality lab report might look like or the steps and skills needed to write one, for example, are rarely communicated to students. This lack of transparency, or hidden curriculum, in what it takes to do well or even in what an instructor's expectations are can create inequitable outcomes because a student's background, such as having parents who attended college, can largely determine how likely that student has already been exposed to the tricks of the trade, so to speak (Berg, 2010). Winkelmes and colleagues (2016)

have demonstrated that making more transparent to students an assignment's purpose, steps to complete the task involved, and criteria for success not only benefits all students but has an even greater benefit for first-generation, low-income, and non-white students. Often, successful teaching interventions aimed at improving the learning environment have even greater benefits for underserved groups (see also Haak et al., 2011; Lou & Jaeggi, 2020; Pennebaker et al., 2013; Schoenfeld, 2002).

Another feature of the learning environment critical to college success is how the learning process can be structured in a manner that is consistent with how the brain learns best. The field of cognitive psychology is rich with research on the process of learning, but only recently have the learning principles arising from this research been implemented in the classroom. Students and instructors alike are typically unaware of these learning principles or how to utilize techniques based on them. In fact, some of the most common study techniques used by students (and promoted by teachers), such as re-reading course materials, highlighting and underlining, summarizing learning material, and massed studying the night before an exam are techniques that have shown some of the lowest efficacy (Brown et al., 2014; Dunlosky et al., 2013). A growing body of research supports the effectiveness of teaching and learning techniques based on cognitive learning principles such as retrieval practice, spaced learning, interleaved learning, and elaborative encoding (all to be discussed in this chapter; see Dunlosky et al., 2013 for a review). One study by Pennebaker et al. (2013) demonstrated that incorporating retrieval practice in two higher education classes reduced the equity gap among students of different social classes by 50%. Despite this, implementation of these techniques in the classroom has been slow, not only due to lack of awareness, but also to the counter-intuitive nature of some of the techniques (Kornell & Bjork, 2008). In fact, as discussed in the sections below, many instructors may be presenting material in a way that runs *counter* to research on how the brain learns best.

If learning in higher education does not involve attention to the *how* of learning, learning outcomes are going to depend less on the aptitude of each student and more so on each student's prior experience with college success strategies. To the contrary, learning that is structured in accordance with how the brain learns best should result in greater access to a successful learning experience for students regardless of background.

The lack of focus on the process of learning likely arises from a tendency in higher education to focus on the content to be delivered.

In fact, a "gatekeeper" mentality can prevail that espouses that students who cannot master the content do not belong in the field (Mervis, 2010). Even for instructors not holding this view, there may still be a sense that the role of the instructor is to be the provider of the content without necessarily being involved in the learning process itself. This thinking leads to inequities in learning because it requires students to figure out the rules for success, giving an advantage to students who come from backgrounds and experiences that have exposed them to what it means to be successful in college.

In an aim to promote a greater focus on the process of learning, this chapter presents four of the most heavily researched and empirically supported cognitive learning principles: retrieval practice, spaced learning, interleaved learning, and elaborative encoding, and suggestions for how they might be incorporated by instructors into online higher education classrooms to enhance more equitable learning outcomes.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Every instructor has experienced a frustrated student who, despite faithful reviewing of the lecture notes and assigned text, has not done well on an exam. It can be argued that the dominant model for learning in higher education is for instructors to impart information through lecture and assigned reading and for students to commit that information to memory by re-reading their notes and assigned readings (Freire, 2011). In fact, as Brown et al. (2014) explained in *Make It Stick*, *re*-reading as a study method can create a false sense of understanding, leading students to believe they have learned the material when really they have just gotten good at reading it. Fortunately, research has identified a much more effective method than re-reading for making newly learned information stick in memory: retrieval practice.

What Is Retrieval Practice and How Does It Work?

Retrieval practice, as the term suggests, is when students practice recalling from memory information they have learned. Instead of re-reading the material to commit it to memory, students practice the act of remembering the material (without peeking at the material as they do it). Retrieval practice, as a learning mechanism, arose out of the very robust "testing effect"—the finding that taking a test on learning material

strengthens memory for the material (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006a). Researchers attribute this testing effect to the fact that tested individuals must retrieve the material from memory in order to complete the test - in essence, taking a test engages the test-taker in retrieval practice.

Retrieval practice has shown to outshine re-reading for facilitating long-term memory of what has been learned. A classic example of this comes from a study by Roediger and Karpicke (2006b). These researchers pitted re-reading and retrieval practice against each other by asking participants to learn written passages (topics included "the sun" and "sea otters") using each method and assessing how much participants remembered about each passage. In one condition, participants were asked to study one of the passages, and then a few minutes later they were given a second opportunity to study the same passage. This "study/study" condition is akin to students reading a passage in a textbook and then studying the material by re-reading it- the traditional study method. In a second condition, participants were given a different passage to study, but this time instead of receiving a second opportunity to study the passage, they were given a test on it. The test involved a blank sheet of paper with only the title of the passage along the top, and the participants were asked to write down everything they could remember about the passage. This "study/test" condition incorporated retrieval practice directly in place of a re-reading session. After these two conditions, participants were given a retention test to assess how much they had learned about each passage. The retention test was just like the test received in the second condition- participants were given a blank sheet of paper for each passage, with just the title of each passage along the top, and were asked to write down everything they could remember about each passage (see Fig. 10.1). As you might have guessed, Roediger and Karpicke found that, generally, participants remembered more about the passage they had been given retrieval practice on than the passage they re-read.

Longer Lasting Memory

The finding of better memory for learned material that has been tested/retrieved from memory versus re-read is not the only interesting finding from Roediger and Karpicke's (2006b) study. When they tested participants' memory for the passages, they did so at three different delay intervals. Some participants were assessed five minutes after learning, some two days after learning, and some one week after learning. The
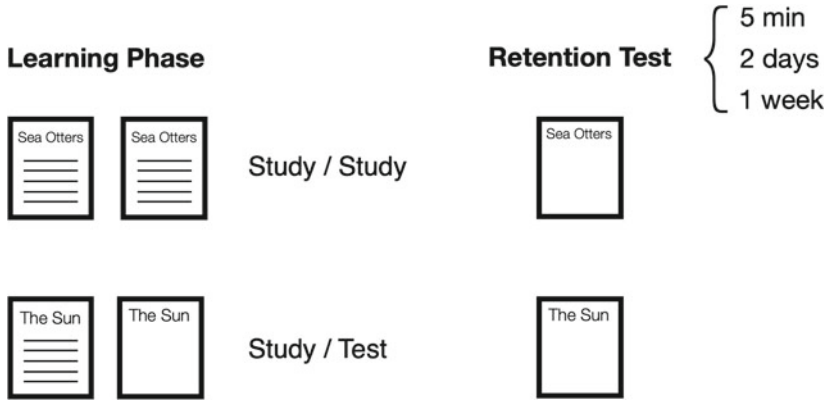
Fig. 10.1 Conditions and task structure for Roediger and Karpicke (2006b, Exp 1) (*Note* This figure displays the conditions and task structure for Experiment 1 of Roediger and Karpicke [2006b]. For both conditions, a learning phase preceded a retention test. In the learning phase of the *Study/Study* condition, participants read a passage and then had a second opportunity to read that passage. In the learning phase of the *Study/Test* condition, participants read a passage and then took a test in place of re-reading. Participants completed retention tests at one of three different delay intervals: 5 minutes after the learning phase, 2 days later, or 1 week later)

results can be seen in Fig. 10.2. What is interesting to note is that when participants were assessed immediately after learning—five minutes later— they did just a bit better for the passages that they got to study twice. However, when there was a delay, they remembered more about the passage that they had received a test on during the learning phase.

The finding of increasing benefits of retrieval practice over restudy as the delay between study and test increases is a common one (see also Abel & Roediger, 2018; Wang & Zhao, 2019). Generally speaking, retrieval practice is no better than re-reading when students are assessed shortly after learning. In fact, when students study for an exam by "cramming" the night before (a massed study session), they can generally do well on the exam. However, research shows that material learned in this manner does not tend to stick around for very long. Certainly, no instructor intends for their students to learn the course material only for
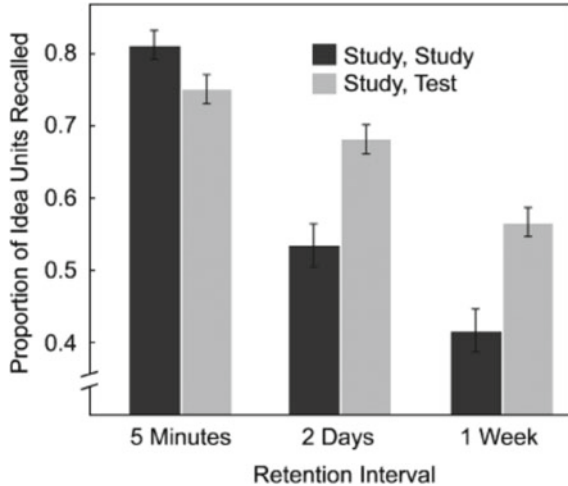
Fig. 10.2 Results for Roediger and Karpicke (2006b, Exp 1) (*Note* This figure displays the retention results for Experiment 1 of Roediger and Karpicke [2006b]. Participants' memory for what they had learned was assessed after two different learning conditions: *Study/Study* and *Study/Test*. The benefits of taking a practice test after initial studying [*Study, Test*] over simply restudying after initial study [*Study, Study*] may not show up in immediate assessment [*5 minutes*] but they increase as the delay between learning and assessment increases [*2 Days* and *1 Week*])

an exam. Retrieval practice promotes long-term memory for material that has been learned.

How Retrieval Practice Unlocks Equitable Learning

Most every student and educator has wondered at some point about the value of committing material to memory when it can simply be looked up in a Google search. However, this becomes clear as soon as one is asked not just to access knowledge but to actually *do* something with it. It is a matter of how much effort it takes to hold it in mind and to engage in higher level thinking tasks such as applying, reasoning, problem-solving, and other forms of critical thinking. These are the necessary skills sets for real-life application and are resonant with Freire's (2011) critical approach to education. Rather than a traditional emphasis on content mastery,

students can engage more deeply with the material and connect their own experiences to the learning process, an important component to equitable learning.

The amount of effort students can exert at one time is limited (Cowan, 2001; Sweller, 2011). Retrieval practice as a learning technique reduces the effort it takes to think about the material, allowing students more brain space to engage in higher level thinking processes. If the step of helping students to improve their memory for what they are learning is skipped, they struggle to deepen their learning or to think critically about the material. Teachers may assume that these students "just do not get it," but, in fact, they have not been given this prerequisite step for higher level thinking. Making assumptions about students when they do not easily master content is problematic as it often stems from a deficit-thinking perspective; rather, instructors can reframe their approach by utilizing techniques such as retrieval practice to assist students of all backgrounds in more readily engaging in higher level thinking practices.

Implementing Retrieval Practice in the Virtual Classroom

It may appear that the onus is on students to incorporate retrieval practice into their study routines. While students do share that responsibility, retrieval practice is also something instructors can implement in how they teach. Below are some ideas for what instructors can do in their virtual classrooms.

Ask Questions

The simplest and most straight-forward method for instructors is to ask students questions that get them to practice recalling what they have learned from memory. These questions can be posed at the beginning, during, or end of a lesson. Questions asked at the beginning of a lesson can focus on getting students to recall what was learned in a previous lesson or a recently completed assignment (James Lang refers to these types of questions as "opening questions" in his book Small Teaching; Lang, 2016, pp. 29–32). During the lesson, instructors may be thinking that this is too soon to be testing students' memories, but any instructor who is in the habit of checking in with students during a lesson will know how amazingly fast information is forgotten. Finally, questions asked at the end of a lesson help to highlight and reinforce those key concepts

that students may have difficulty identifying from the sea of information presented during a lecture. For classes with a synchronous video meeting component, the instructor can ask for volunteers to share what they remember or, even better, can ask for everyone to write down what they remember. For asynchronous online courses where lessons are in a video or multimedia format, the questions can be incorporated into the lessons, and if the instructor likes, students can be asked to submit their responses to an assignment within the learning management system (LMS). Students will have to be reminded of the purpose of these questions. Their inclination will be to pull out their notes or readings, so remind them that doing so would defeat the purpose, which is not to get the answer right but rather to strengthen memory.

Brain Dump

In a similar vein to asking retrieval-promoting questions, students can simply be asked to write down or type out everything they can remember about something learned in the past or something just learned. In the book *Powerful Teaching*, Agarwal and Bain lovingly refer to this activity as a "brain dump" (Agarwal & Bain, 2019, pp. 56–61). The related "pause-and-summarize" activity occurs when an instructor pauses a lecture and asks students to write down everything they just learned. Further, these retrieval practice sessions can be modified as a "main points" activity so that instead of students writing down everything they just learned, they just write down the top three or five main points of what was learned. Once again, these retrieval prompts can be incorporated into synchronous video meetings as well as asynchronous lessons posted to the LMS and students can be asked simply to complete the activity or to submit their retrieval practice as an assignment.

Practice Quizzes

As mentioned before, testing was the original retrieval practice. Consider creating opportunities for students to complete practice quizzes not only to assess their learning but also to strengthen it. Some LMS's, such as Canvas, can allow the instructor to require practice quizzes to be completed before the next module of the course unlocks. Practice quizzes with unlimited attempts are a bonus, because each time students retake a practice quiz they are engaging in retrieval practice. An instructor may even consider allowing students to retake graded quizzes by incorporating question banks so that students see different questions on each attempt.

SPACING

Another learning principle from cognitive psychology is called spacing. It is well-known to instructors and students that cramming before an exam is not an ideal learning approach. However, few understand why this is the case, and students, therefore, continue to use it.

How Does Spacing Work?

Inserting time in between study episodes benefits learning in multiple ways. One way in which it does this is by creating opportunities for retrieval practice. With every new learning session, students will inevitably be reminded of what was learned previously, assuming the new material builds off or in some way relates to the previously learned material. Bringing to mind what was learned previously reinforces those memories, making them stronger through retrieval practice.

A second way in which spacing benefits learning is that it leads to more effective memory consolidation (i.e., making memory more permanent) as well as more effective organization of those memories (Brown et al., 2014). The brain does not consolidate every new piece of information that is learned because much of what is experienced daily will not need to be remembered in the future. For example, what one ate for breakfast or where one parked the car at the grocery store is information that will likely not be consolidated as the brain does not need to retain that information for the future. However, the information a student learns in the classroom typically is something that instructors and students hope will persist in memory. Much of the organization and consolidation of memories happens during sleep (Muehlroth et al., 2020). The more opportunities for sleep while learning something, because learning sessions are spaced apart, the more solid the foundation will be for those memories.

It should be mentioned that consolidation and organization of new learning does not just happen during sleep. It also happens while learners are awake and taking a break from their learning (Tambini et al., 2010). Oddly enough, learners' brains continue to work on what they are learning even when they take a break and stop thinking about it. In fact, part of the learning process can *only* happen when learners take a break and stop consciously thinking about what they are learning (Oakley, 2014, ch. 2). So, breaks actually facilitate the learning process.

Finally, spacing works because new learning depends on prior learning. Whenever students learn something new, they make sense of it by relating it to what they already know (Brown et al., 2014). For example, if a learner is shown a new abstract painting, they will make sense of what they see given what it reminds them of. Learners will make assumptions about the contents of the painting given what they know about other similar visual images. In other words, a learner's understanding of the painting is deeply dependent on what they already know. The more existing knowledge a learner can to relate to the new learning material, the richer the memory for that new learning material will be and the more interconnected the new learning will be with their existing network of knowledge. From an equity standpoint, it is important that instructors acknowledge students' diverse backgrounds and prior knowledge when choosing content (Addy et al., 2021). By integrating culturally diverse perspectives, students whose experiences are often not represented in courses have more capacity to access their prior knowledge and benefit from spacing as a learning technique.

In this way, knowledge builds upon previous knowledge. For example, let us say a learner has three chapters worth of material to learn. If the learner spaces out the study of the chapters and takes a break (preferably with sleep) after studying chapter 1, chapter 2's learning session will benefit from what they have learned about in chapter 1. Inserting a break after studying chapter 2 will allow that new information to begin the consolidation and organization process so that the chapter 3 learning session can draw from and utilize what was learned from chapters 1 and 2. So, saying that knowledge builds upon previous knowledge means that previous knowledge acts like a sticky web for the new information to stick to. Without that sticky web in place, it is difficult for new learning to persist in memory.

Building a Solid Foundation

Spaced learning is all about building a solid foundation as students learn. It is kind of like laying down a brick wall. Spacing is the mortar in between the bricks that supports the integrity of the wall. If learning occurs in a massed fashion—all at once with no spaced sessions—then there is no mortar to hold the brick wall in place, and it will not last long.

There are many studies demonstrating the spacing effect (Cepeda et al., 2006), but one by Bloom and Shuell (1981) is most striking. In their

study, two groups of students were asked to learn 20 new French vocabulary words. Both groups studied for a total of 30 min. Group 1 did all their studying in one day in one single study session. Group 2 broke up their studying across three days at 10 min per day. At the end of the study periods, all participants were given a vocabulary test. Both groups averaged about 16 words correct. One week later, both groups were given a surprise test on those same words. Group 1 averaged 11 words correct. Group 2 averaged 15 words—significantly higher than Group 1.

So, what does this experiment reveal about spaced learning? It demonstrates that it pays to space out learning, but it also shows that learners do not necessarily have to study *more*- they just need to insert breaks (preferably with sleep included). By building a more solid foundation in this way, what is learned is more likely to weather the test of time.

How Spacing Unlocks Equitable Learning

Spacing is about studying smarter, not harder. With retrieval practice, we talked about how memory for course material becomes the building blocks of higher-level thinking. Instructors who do not spread course concepts over time short-change students in their efforts. The brain learns best those things that are spread across time. By simply incorporating time in between learning sessions, students' memory for the course material is deepened. Spacing supports equitable learning because it relies on accessing students' prior knowledge. Students who see themselves in course content and whose voices are represented and heard in classroom spaces can take more ownership of their learning and help co-create their learning experience (Addy et al., 2021).

Implementing Spacing in the Virtual Classroom

Instructors can explain the benefits of spacing to their students and encourage them to incorporate it into their studying, but instructors can also incorporate spaced learning in their classes.

Return to Topics
The typical approach to structuring lectures is to cover each topic once and to move on, never to return. Instead, consider returning to topics-especially those key, foundational concepts—multiple times throughout

the semester. It can be especially helpful to introduce all or most of the key concepts of the course early on in the term and to then return to them in more depth as you move through the term.

Frequent Assessments
In place of assigning just one or two major exams for course, consider frequent, smaller assessments. Students tend to study right before an assessment, right? By having frequent assessments, instructors increase the number of times students are likely to study throughout the term.

Multi-part Projects/Scaffolding
Related to the previous point, consider breaking up larger projects into smaller parts with multiple due dates-so that students submit parts at different times- rather than just a single due date when students submit everything all at once. Another way of approaching this is through scaffolding, where each part of the project builds on and is supported by the previous part. Projects are major learning opportunities for students, so encourage them to space that work out. The next learning principle encapsulates spacing, so more ideas for incorporating spacing in the virtual classroom will be listed in the next section.

Interleaving

The next section begins with a story. Years ago, I (Alyson) got fed up with the textbook I was using for one of the online courses I teach. I noticed that earlier chapters would introduce some concepts and then, chapters later, those concepts would reappear in richer detail. At the time I thought "How confusing! Why not just place everything there is to know about a given concept in one location of the text? Why spread it across the textbook?" So, I ditched the textbook and redesigned my online course so that everything there was to know about a particular topic was covered all at once and in that one area of the course. My thinking was that this would facilitate learning by keeping the material tidy and organized. Well, it turns out that, according to research (some of which is presented below), that approach was *not* the more effective method. Another learning principle from cognitive psychology reveals that it *benefits* learning to mix related topics during the learning process versus having students focus on and learn just one topic at a time—this approach is called interleaving.

What Is Interleaving and How Does It Work?

The above is an example of interleaving, or the interleaving effect. It is the observation that mixing related learning activities and topics supports long-term learning, deeper understanding, and transfer to new contexts. Interleaving is counterintuitive, right? In fact, students will likely argue that they learn best by blocking material (learning all there is to know about a topic before moving on to the next topic). Research has even documented the counterintuitive nature of interleaving (Kornell & Bjork, 2008). However, following are a couple of studies that illustrate how interleaving works.

In one study, Rohrer and Taylor (2007) asked two groups of participants to learn to solve math problems involving geometric shapes. Specifically, the participants learned how to calculate the volume of four different solids. There were four tutorials provided to participants—one for each solid—and then four problems to solve for each solid so that participants could apply what they learned from the tutorials and practice with some problems. For the group called the Blockers, participants were given one tutorial on a solid and then four problems before moving on to the next tutorial and its associated problems. So, Blockers would see one tutorial and its four problems, then the next tutorial and its four problems, and so on.

For the group called the Mixers—those learning in an interleaved fashion—participants were presented with all four tutorials together, back-to-back and then all 16 problems in a random order. During the initial test phase, Blockers solved 89% of the problems correctly and the Mixers only solved 60% correctly. However, one week later, both groups were given eight new problems to solve, in a random order. Blockers were only able to correctly solve 20% of these new problems. Mixers, on the other hand, maintained their performance and solved 63% correctly. What do you think happened here? What did mixers learn that blockers did not?

As Rohrer and Taylor explain, it is likely the case that mixers learned not only how to solve each kind of problem but also how to identify the appropriate formula to use for each kind of problem. Blockers only needed to "plug and chug." When they were solving the initial problems, they already knew which equation they needed to apply; it was the one they just received the tutorial on. Mixers, on the other hand, could not work on autopilot. By learning about the formulas in an interleaved fashion, they were able to compare and contrast the formulas and

to develop a deeper understanding of when each would be appropriate to use. So, the benefits of interleaving support not only long-term retention of new learning but also a deeper understanding that contributes to an ability to transfer what has been learned to new problems and situations.

In another study, Kerr and Booth (1978) asked children to practice throwing bean bags at a target on the floor. Half did all their practicing throwing to a target at a fixed distance, which was three feet for the eight-year-olds in the study, and the other half threw to targets that were closer or further away—in this case, two feet and four feet.

After the learning sessions and a delay, all the children were tested at the distance used in the fixed-practice condition—at three feet. Now, which group would common sense suggest would do better when tested at three feet? Those who practiced at three feet or those who practiced from other distances? Likely, most would surmise that children who practiced at the tested distance would perform better, but the opposite was true! The group that practiced from two different distances outperformed the group that practiced at three feet. They did not just perform *as well*—they performed better! This study shows the benefits of experiencing variations when learning something new. In this case, it may be that the children in the varied practice group learned something about how to make slight throwing adjustments for differing targets and that this outweighed any benefits of being tested at the practiced distance.

A Broader Understanding Facilitates Transfer

So, what are the underlying mechanisms that make interleaving work? Interleaving does two things for learning. First is that it aids in the ability to *discriminate* related concepts and that awareness of those discriminating features contributes to a richer understanding of what is being learned. Second is that it appears that varied practice improves the ability to transfer learning from one situation and to apply it successfully to another one. In the bean bag study, varied practice allowed the children in that group to develop a broader, more flexible understanding of the relationship between distance and the required movement to accommodate change in distance. In other words, knowing alternatives gives learners the opportunity to observe similarities and differences—to observe defining characteristics that they would otherwise take for granted.

How Interleaving Unlocks Equitable Learning

An equitable learning objective is to make learning relevant to students' lived experiences (Addy et al., 2021). When students learn to transfer knowledge from one context to another, especially from classroom to real world applications, students engage in higher level critical thinking. Interleaving supports equitable learning by providing students of diverse backgrounds the structure to engage in this process of transferring learning to make course content more relevant and meaningful. Some instructors may think they are supporting students and making learning easier by focusing on one topic at a time when in fact this puts students at a disadvantage. As with spacing, interleaving does not require providing *more* information or *more* time studying—just a different order of learning. In return, students are afforded a deeper understanding of the course material and a better ability to apply what has been learned to other contexts.

Implementing Interleaving in the Virtual Classroom

In the following section, several ways in which instructors can incorporate interleaving into the virtual classroom are discussed.

Do Not Ditch Blocking
First and foremost, do not completely remove blocking–just add in interleaving. As James Lang argues in his book Small Teaching (Lang, 2016, pp. 81–82), interleaving works best when each concept or topic is given a solid introduction, so it is perfectly fine to have focused sessions on a concept/topic. It is the returning to it, within new contexts, that really matters.

Return to Topics
Do be sure to return to course concepts/topics multiple times throughout the semester—especially those key concepts that you want to make sure students walk away with once the course is over. And, yes, this was the same recommendation given for spacing that we talked about earlier. That is because interleaving inherently involves spacing, so the benefits that come with interleaving AND those that come from spacing are addressed when interleaving. An instructor can return to topics both in lessons and in assignments and activities. Every time, students will see the concept in new light because of the change in context—the change

in what they have learned about other related concepts of the course. Also, absolutely do be sure to point out to students when an earlier concept from the course relates to current content. Do not assume they will see the connection. Students often need explicit help in making these connections and comparisons.

Cumulative Tests and Assignments

Give students cumulative tests and assignments. In other words, do not base quizzes and assignments only on the most recent lessons. Make sure they incorporate everything students have been learning from the very beginning of the semester. Think back to the study where participants had to learn how to solve geometric solids. The Blockers who were given problems that were ONLY based on the recent tutorial they received did not learn nearly as much as the Mixers. And, yes, generally speaking students dislike cumulative tests—because they have to work harder, right? But that harder work equates to deeper learning.

Provide Agendas and Previews

Consider providing students with an agenda or preview of what is to come, whether that be for a given unit of the course or for an individual lesson. Doing this helps to provide some of that larger context upfront. Then when students encounter those concepts and topics during the lesson, they will have a better understanding of how they fit within a larger scheme of things- how they are going to relate to everything else to be learned. This is in line with recommendations for reading a long paper or text chapter. Before sitting down to read something from start to finish, it can be helpful to skim all of the headings and subheadings, to look at tables and figures, the table of contents, to read any questions posed at the end of a text chapter, etc. All of this helps to provide context in which to make sense of the topics as they are encountered in the reading.

Multiple Examples of a Concept

Finally, be sure to provide multiple examples of a concept. As was demonstrated with Kerr and Booth's (1978) bean bag study, one example is not enough to give students a sense of the core features of a concept.

ELABORATIVE ENCODING

To get started with the final learning principle, please meet Poinine the cat (pictured in Fig. 10.3). Now, Poinine has a very unusual name—one that would typically be very difficult to remember. Chances are a person would not remember it if they were quizzed at the end of this chapter. However, learning about how Poinine got his name may help with remembering it. Poinine was named by the young girl he belongs to. When the girl got her new kitty, she told her mom that she wanted to name the cat Poinine. The mom was confused by the unusual name but went along with it. Time went by and one day the mom was listening to the radio. Eventually the station's little jingle came on and sang "107.9" (imagine

Fig. 10.3 A cat with an unusual name (*Note* You are more likely to remember the name of this cat after hearing the story of how he got his name. Photo by Nancy Ripley)

the dramatic increase in pitch for the "point nine" at the end). It was then that the mom realized that her daughter had named the cat after the jingle. The daughter had been hearing the *point nine* at the end of the jingle as *Poinine* and decided it was a good name for a cat. The point of this story is that now that the name of the cat has been elaborated on, a person is much more likely to remember his name.

What Is Elaborative Encoding?

The story above is what elaborative encoding is all about. Elaborating on—adding something to—material as it is being learned leads to stronger memories and to a deeper, richer understanding. Deep, meaningful processing at the time of learning is believed to better connect what a learner already knows with what is being learned, leading to better memory, and making it easier to remember the information.

Elaborate Learning for Stickier Memory

When learners can connect or, in some way, relate what they are learning to something they already know, they learn it better. It should be easier for you to remember the name Poinine after relating it to the radio station jingle since many are probably familiar with those catchy little jingles. That existing knowledge that a person already has acts like a sticky web. So, if learners can activate related knowledge that they already have, simply by bringing it to mind and relating it to the new material, the new material will stick better—students will learn it better.

Another way to describe elaborative coding is enriching learning material with meaning by contextualizing it within a framework of existing knowledge. The new information is integrated and organized with what is already known. For true understanding to happen, it needs to be connected to pre-existing knowledge.

Smith et al.'s (2010) study illustrates how elaboration can help facilitate learning. They gave two groups of participants a passage to study on the topic of digestion. Like in one of the studies mentioned before, Group 1 was given the opportunity to read the passage and then to study it one more time by re-reading it. Group 2 was asked to answer "why?" questions while reading the passage (e.g., Saliva must mix with food to initiate digestion. Why is this true?). The "why" questions appeared about every 150 words. This is a teaching technique referred to as "elaborative

interrogation." It involves asking students "why" questions to encourage them to engage in this elaborative encoding. The researchers administered a series of post-test questions designed to measure comprehension of the passage, not only memorization, and found that Group 2, the elaboration group, outperformed Group 1.

How Elaboration Unlocks Equitable Learning

Because instructors are experts in their fields, they can fall victim to the "curse of expertise," which is difficulty estimating the effort it takes for novices to learn what the expert already knows (Hinds, 1999). Because of this, instructors are likely to underestimate the amount of elaboration students need in order to make sense of a new concept. When a concept has only been shallowly introduced, students' understanding and memory for the concept will be limited. Conversely, when concepts are elaborated on with detail and related to what students already know, deeper understanding and more persistent memory will follow. Elaboration utilizes what students show up to the classroom with already—their prior experiences—to help make sense of course material and to help it stick in memory. A theme arising in connecting cognitive learning principles and equitable learning is the importance of acknowledging and valuing the prior knowledge students bring to the classroom. Accessing students' prior knowledge can create a sense of belonging and encourage students to share their voice (Addy et al., 2021); from a cognitive learning perspective, accessing prior knowledge can also help students retain course content. By falling back on the instructor-as-expert mindset, or givers of knowledge, rather than co-creators of knowledge, students lose the opportunity to share their lived experiences with the class. The elaboration technique can be used as a tool to support equitable learning by helping students of diverse backgrounds more easily access and retain course content.

Implementing Elaboration in the Virtual Classroom

Many of the ideas below involve engaging students in elaborative encoding during instruction. For virtual classrooms, this can occur during a live video conference class session, in written lesson materials, or in video lessons prepared by the instructor.

Instructor Can Elaborate

Incorporating elaboration in the classroom can be as simple as the instructor elaborating on concepts during instruction. For example, let us say an instructor is teaching about gardening and wants students to remember that Tardiva is a type of Hydrangea. The instructor could elaborate by adding that tardy means late, so a tardiva hydrangea is a *late* blooming hydrangea.

Use of Analogies

Another way to encourage elaborative encoding is to use analogies. For example, an instructor teaching a course on pedagogy could explain that teaching is like gardening- the students are the seeds, and if the instructor provides the right environment, the seeds will grow and blossom. This is an excellent opportunity for instructors to utilize a range of analogies that reflect a diversity of cultural experiences.

Highlight Relationships

Consider making use of relationships that can be drawn between a course concept and something that is already known or even two course concepts. For example, an instructor teaching a Sensation and Perception course could point out the similarities between the information contained in the stimulus for vision (a light wave) and the stimulus for hearing (a sound wave). The frequency of a light wave determines the color or hue that is seen while the frequency of a sound wave determines the pitch that is heard.

Elaborative Interrogation

As in the Smith et al. (2010) study, instructors can incorporate some elaborative interrogation by getting students to answer questions that encourage them to elaborate on a topic. Remember to ask students "why?" and "how?" questions and not just the usual "what?" questions. For example, "*Explain* how lightning works" rather than simply asking what lighting is. Also ask students how concepts relate to one another and what distinguishes them. Elaborative interrogation can occur during live video conference sessions or can be incorporated as assignments where students are asked to submit answers to prepared *why* and *how* questions as they read or view class material. As students elaborate, they make connections between old and new knowledge, which makes the new knowledge easier to remember and leads to deeper understanding.

Give Students Teaching Opportunities

Consider giving students teaching opportunities- whether that be via a live video conference class session or a prepared multimedia lesson that is shared with the rest of the class. Ask your students to make a video lesson on a key course concept and to post it to a class discussion board.

Connect Material to Students' Lived Experiences and Existing Knowledge

These tips so far involve getting students to relate material to existing knowledge—that is what elaborative encoding is all about. This final tip is about *explicitly* asking students to *purposefully* relate material to existing knowledge. By asking students to connect a concept being learned in the course to an experience they can relate to in their own lives, they are more likely to find meaning and relevance in the material, and can increase their knowledge retention of the concept. This is particularly important for students of diverse backgrounds, whose lived experiences have often been overlooked or are absent in curriculum (Lawrie et al., 2017; McNair et al., 2020; Nelson Laird, 2014). Ask students to come up with ways that material relates to their own lives, such as other things they already know about, pop culture, current events, or an aspect of their cultural heritage. One of our favorite activities to incorporate into a course is to have students answer "thought" questions. These thought questions are writing prompts that generally have no right or wrong answer but get students to elaborate on what they are learning and to relate it to something from their lives. A few examples of thought questions one author posed to students are listed in Appendix 1. These are asked in the discussion board, but they could be made into an assignment as well or used to launch a synchronous discussion in a video conference class session.

Before leaving the topic of elaborative encoding, can you remember the name of the cat in Fig. 10.3 without peeking at the answer?

Conclusion

Typically, when teachers plan out their courses, the focus is almost always on the learning content, or what teachers will be teaching and what students will need to know. Seldom is any attention paid to the *process* of learning and how to make learning happen. As a result, few teachers present content in a manner that is consistent with how the brain learns best and may even be engaging in teaching practices that run counter

to effective learning. As Mary-Ann Winklemas, founder of the Transparency in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education project (tilthighered.com), has argued, some students are able to navigate higher education despite this, but many, particularly underserved students, have not been made privy to the "secret, unwritten rules" to be successful in such an environment (quoted in Berrett, 2015; see also Winkelmes, 2017). By structuring the learning environment in accordance to how the brain learns best, students will not need to decipher unwritten rules of higher education to succeed. When teachers and students are empowered with insights about how the brain learns best, successful learning is more accessible to students of all backgrounds.

While further research is needed to fully develop the connection between cognitive learning principles and equitable learning, this chapter supports concepts within equitable learning including transparency in teaching (Winkelmes et al., 2016), and accessing students' prior knowledge and lived experiences (Addy et al., 2021). Students bring a wealth of diverse cultural knowledge to the classroom (Yosso, 2005), and it is imperative that instructors help students access this knowledge to create a more inclusive learning environment. When instructors use the cognitive learning techniques described in this chapter, students can move beyond content mastery as the sole purpose of learning and engage in higher-level thinking that is more meaningful to their lives.

While research on the impact of cognitive learning principles on student learning in the classroom is growing, how these principles might contribute to more equitable learning is still largely uninvestigated. Additional research is needed to investigate how cognitive learning strategies can enhance equitable teaching and learning environments and support all students in successful learning outcomes.

Appendix 1

Example Thought Questions to Engage Students in Elaborative Encoding

Thought Questions for a Psychology Course on Sensation & Perception

- *Speculate why you think it is more difficult to program a computer to see than to play chess. Why do you suppose it is easier for us to see than to learn to play chess?*

- *Speculate why you think taste and smell are more highly developed at birth than vision.*

Thought Questions for a Psychology Course on Research Methods

- *Which characteristic of a good scientist (skepticism, open-mindedness, objectivity, empiricism, creativity, or communication) is most important and why?*
- *Think of an interesting psychology research question that you would like to ask (e.g., Are pet owners more empathic than non-pet owners?; Do music genre preferences change with mood?). Tell us your question and whether you think a qualitative or quantitative research approach would be better to answer your question. Explain why.*

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Teaching Empathy in Virtual Settings Through an Ethic of Care

Laura Parson and Sara Kitsch

Empathy is a vital piece of the human condition. Often described as "putting oneself in another's shoes," to demonstrate empathy is to experience the emotional state of another and in doing so, formulate an appropriate response. This process requires an awareness of someone else's uniqueness and particularities and offers the potential to appreciate those differences (Boske et al., 2017). As such, empathy is responsible for fostering "prosocial behavior," defined as behaviors performed to help or benefit others, and "providing the affective and motivational base for moral development" (Decety, 2011, p. 92; Krebs, 1982). Empathy is negatively correlated with aggression (e.g. Carré et al., 2013), whereas a lack of empathy is associated with bullying, aggression, and exploitation

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277

of others (e.g. Sentas et al., 2018). For these reasons, empathy is well suited to promote social justice behaviors.

At a basic level, empathy fosters social justice by encouraging perspective taking. As Cutright (2019) notes, empathy calls forth vulnerability in the empathizer that allows for even a "minimal degree of solidarity," (p. 282), despite larger cultural differences. Some of our worst moments as humans can be traced to a lack of empathy (e.g. the Holocaust) and some of our best pro-social behaviors are linked to an abundance of empathy (e.g. social work). As Gerdes and colleagues note, "Empathy is a metaphorical compass, guiding the engine toward social and economic justice" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 123). Likewise, Doehring (2018) posits that social empathy, or thinking about unjust social systems when considering others, is an important aspect of facilitating social justice. Indeed, studies find that when empathy is actively taught, people "approach individual and social well-being and social justice with more sophisticated understanding" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 126).

Teaching empathy is vital to sustaining the social contract and furthering social justice, but it is also crucial to various career fields. From healthcare (e.g. Mercer et al., 2016) to teaching (e.g. Meyers et al., 2019), empathy facilitates safe and inclusive environments (Borba, 2018). In turn, Boske and colleagues (2017) found that social justice pedagogy, which prominently features empathy, prepared teachers and educational leaders to better understand what students from marginalized backgrounds face as well as how to shape their emotional responses towards these students. Additionally, studies find that teaching empathy is effective in both face-to-face and online settings (e.g. Kelley & Kelley, 2013; Sentas et al., 2018; Stepien & Baernstein, 2006). Online training of empathy is especially important because it increases accessibility and affordability, which means that online education will continue to be necessary even after acute phases of COVID-19 social distancing end.

In this chapter, we adapt a framework for teaching through the theoretical lens of an ethic of care for teaching empathy, online, in various content areas and settings. An ethic of care is an ethic that "emphasizes interconnectedness, relationships, nurturing, and responsibility towards concrete embodied others" (Antoni et al., 2020, p. 450). Discussed as a moral theory by Carol Gilligan (1982) and applied to education settings by Nel Noddings (2003, 2005) and Carol Gilligan (2014), an ethic

of care in education settings is an empathetic approach to teaching. It allows for authentic knowledge construction while emphasizing mutual respect: "Care ethics is a relational ethic that recognizes the social and moral implications of all educative experiences. It provides an alternative to traditional moral education that separates ethical content from other subject areas and from experience" (Rabin & Smith, 2013, p. 164). Teaching through an ethic of care "highlights the cost of carelessness" (Gilligan, 2014, p. 103) and views moral education as "inextricably linked to each individual's influence since moral growth occurs in relationship" (Rabin & Smith, 2013, p. 164). Because of an ethic of care's emphasis on relationships and perspective taking, we view it as an appropriate lens through which to view the social justice classroom and to teach empathy at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, and global level.

In this chapter we begin by defining empathy and exploring its importance to different content areas. Second, we discuss approaches to teaching empathy in different formats and mediums. Third, we discuss what it means to teach through an ethic of care and discuss the framework for teaching through an ethic of care. Finally, we present several ideas for applying an ethic of care framework to teaching empathy in virtual settings.

Empathy

As much of the literature on empathy suggests, empathy can be a difficult concept to define. Recent origins of the term in the English language can be traced to Titchener in 1909 who used it to refer to a kind of kinesic imitation through which an individual learned about the consciousness of another (Wispé, 1986). It has been developed primarily in the fields of developmental and social psychology (e.g. Berger, 1962; Hornblow, 1980). On a basic level, empathy refers to "a willingness or tendency to put oneself in another person's place and to modify one's behavior as a result" (Hogan, 1969, p. 307). In defining empathy, Cutright (2019) is quick to point out that empathy is not the same as sympathy noting that sympathy is caring or concern for another whereas empathy refers to "a form of understanding" (p. 267). Cutright (2019) adds that empathy is the "experiential understanding of *what* another feels or thinks, not just a propositional, or theoretical understanding *that* the other feels or thinks

a certain way" (p. 275); this includes both lower and higher empathy, or raw sensory input plus cognitive processing.

Empathy has been conceptualized to account for both emotional processing and social interaction (see for example Davis, 1983; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). In other words, empathy requires both attention to the emotional and mental states of another but also appropriate response to those states (Carré et al., 2013). While previous measures of empathy accounted more for the emotional aspects, Spreng and colleagues (2009) notes the significant overlap between the affective and cognitive processes, concluding that feeling and responding are likely a shared process. Bell (2018) notes that a "balance between the types of empathy is critical to maintaining healthy emotional boundaries" (p. 108) and to prevent empathetic burnout, which can occur during perspective taking.

As noted previously, empathy involves emotional perspective taking. This requires an awareness of one's own emotions and the emotions of others, as well as the ability to remain aware that another's feelings are not one's own (Carré et al., 2013). This distinction between self and other also facilitates social perspective taking which encourages an individual to experience another person as they exist within their own systems of privileges, disadvantages, as well as cultural and political realities (Doehring, 2018); this requires significant effort. As Zaki (2014) argues, although empathy can be an automatic activity, it is not always. Often, we fail to empathize with outgroups who are not like ourselves, and at times we can even take pleasure in the misfortune of others. As such, empathy can be conceptualized as a motivated phenomenon (Zaki, 2014).

In the mid 1990s empathy began appearing not only as a psychological concept that described behavior but as a scientific phenomenon in neurological studies. In particular, the discovery of mirror neurons elevated empathy beyond behavioral perspective taking. Mirror neurons are found in the premotor cortex; they "fire when people watch others do something as if they were doing it themselves" (Bell, 2018, p. 108). Given this discovery, neuropsychology supports three components of empathy: developmentally, one first "feels" emotion of another through emotional contagion (using subcortical structures, including the limbic lobe), then both people understand and regulate, in tandem, with cerebral maturation (relying on, in part, the insular cortex which promotes emotional awareness and regulating emotions through a top-down network that includes, in part, the orbitofrontal cortex) (Carré et al., 2013). The expansion of

empathy as a behavior studies concept to one of neurological importance underscores its adaptability and importance across a multitude of fields.

Educational Leadership

In an educational leadership context, Meyers et al. (2019) define and advocate for "teacher empathy." This includes both interpersonal empathy (through which one person comes to know the internal state of another, responds with care/sensitivity) as well as social empathy (through which one comes to understand peoples' lived situations that offer insight on structural inequalities). Similarly, Boske et al. (2017) investigated how schools made sense of social justice leadership with results suggesting immersive social justice learning environments are not only transformational but also deepen empathetic responses towards students. The implication is that furthering empathy is critical to promoting social justice and equity-oriented work in schools.

Military Leadership

In military culture, Cutright (2019) notes that empathy "sits uneasily" (p. 265). Despite this, he advocates for empathy in soldiers as a way to maintain intentions towards peace and to reveal the humanity in others. Instead of dehumanizing enemies, as is often the case during wartime, Cutright (2019) proposes "a management of one's empathy that is similar to the management of one's senses" (p. 280); through this lens, one's empathy for their comrades will supersede that of their enemy. Alternatively, McDougall (2019) proposes that empathy allows soldiers to better understand their environments and notes that true leaders in the military go beyond surface level in terms of getting to know their soldiers and paying attention to the perspectives and feelings of others; in other words, they apply empathy.

Engineering/STEM

In STEM, a conversation about empathy is occurring on multiple levels. A longstanding critique of STEM centers around its inclusiveness as a field, with more recent studies suggesting that affects (e.g. interest, belonginess) not ability, are to blame for the lack of diversity in advanced STEM degrees and employment. Burns and Lesseig (2017) suggest infusing

curriculum with empathy can curb this effect. Likewise, Carter and Bruckman (2019) point to higher rates of mental health issues in STEM graduate students, similarly highlighting the importance of empathy in relationships between students and mentors. McCurdy et al. (2020) look to the future, arguing that in addition to fostering competencies, high school and college classes should also develop emotional connectedness between their students and the processes/products they work on to develop globally minded thinkers in science education. Given these issues in STEM and the importance of empathy in finding solutions, it is unsurprising that empathy is also a precursor to social justice.

The Relationship Between Empathy and Social Justice

Much of the research on teaching and empathy points to the close relationship between utilizing empathy to reduce social injustices (Neary, 2019). In particular, empathy can be used as a starting point for building alliances across lines of difference; learning about "the other" can be transformative. Goodman (2000) points to empathy as one avenue for motivating and engaging dominate social groups to promote equity and social justice. In particular, he argues that understanding what motivates individuals to support diversity and equity can help drive approaches to engage them, resulting in more effective personal and institutional changes. For teachers, Jordan and Schwartz (2018) argue, empathy can bring "basic civility" (p. 27) into the learning experience; they propose instituting "radical empathy" in classrooms. This version of empathy necessitates students sense their professor has been "touched" or impacted by their lived experiences, producing vulnerability in educators to facilitate growth and change (Jordan & Schwartz, 2018, p. 27). Cartabuke and colleagues (2019) argue that what is taught in the classroom impacts future outcomes on a larger scale. They propose teaching empathy as part of college business programs to combat social justice concerns on both college campuses and in corporate America writ large. Their findings suggest the effectiveness of empathy interventions in businesses courses as a critical tool for future organizational decision makers (Cartabuke et al., 2019).

Empathy as a Continuum of Understanding

In all of these cases, empathy is not a zero-sum game. The choice is not "empathize or don't"—which is why empathy should be described as

falling along a continuum. As McDougall (2019) argues, empathy does not require you to have shared experiences with someone; we do not have to walk a mile in another's shoes to recognize or think about what it might be like to do so. Commonalities can, of course, aid understanding, but we are productively challenged when we minimize those commonalities and instead become curious about the other. Conceptualizing empathy as a continuum fosters this experience.

On one end on the continuum, empathizing is easy—perhaps because we share similar or nearly identical life experiences with another individual. It is not difficult to imagine their perspective and respond appropriately. At the other end of the continuum empathizing is hard. We might not share anything in common and perhaps can never fully understand another's situation due to differences in race, class, or gender. However, as Cutright (2019) writes:

> Empathy, however, entails an appreciative understanding that recognizes another's experiences are genuine even if not the same as ours … We are not free to dismiss the other's experience as incomprehensible or impossible, because its possibility is instantiated in the other person and empathy reveals the person's experience to us. (pp. 281–282)

In these instances, it is a fair assumption that empathizing with someone very different from oneself is difficult. But it is not impossible, nor does it mean one cannot actively seek out knowledge and strategies to attempt to move upward along the continuum.

Teaching Empathy

To teach empathy training programs employ various methods including experiential training (role play), didactic (lecture-based), and skills (lecture, demonstrate, practice); results on the effectiveness of these methods is well documented. In one early study, Hatcher and colleagues demonstrated optimistic results in increasing empathy among high school and college students in their peer counseling skills, especially when opportunities were presented in school curriculum and developmental readiness was considered (Hatcher et al., 1994). Another study showing promise, a meta-analysis of training programs aimed at fostering empathy in medical students, pointed to successful outcomes with all but a single study reporting significant improvements in empathy in non-control groups

(Stepien & Baernstein, 2006). Importantly, Aggarwal and Guanci (2014) note that the improvements found in Stepien and Baernstein (2006) did not always create a lasting effect, prompting them to investigate the effectiveness of one hour reinforcement courses. More recently, a meta-analysis of nineteen studies determined the overall effect of empathy training had a moderate effect (van Berkhout & Malouff, 2015). In sum, current literature supports the notion that empathy can be taught (and maintained) at various ages and across numerous contexts. As such, strategies for teaching empathy are primarily discussed in face-to-face settings, though authors are starting to include online opportunities.

Strategies for Teaching Empathy

There are numerous strategies for teaching empathy. Many begin with building emotional literacy and social skills. This includes learning to read and recognize emotions in others (e.g., Borba, 2018; Johnson, 2019), as well as developing a moral identity whereas individuals come to "define themselves as people who value others" (Borba, 2018, p. 24). Such development is connected to the more affective side of empathy (Bell, 2018). Common activities for teaching affective empathy include the use of creative outlets such as movies, books, or theater. Specifically, by viewing films, plays, or reading literature in which the characters are different from ourselves can help us to appreciate the experiences of others; as the storyline develops, we become more attune to the character's high and low points (e.g. Batson et al., 1997).

To teach cognitive empathy it is important to engage in perspective taking exercises (Davis, 1983). Student generated role-playing and experiential activities, such as attending different cultural events, are some specific strategies that help us to accomplish this (Bell, 2018). These strategies are also founded on providing opportunities that promote service learning and volunteering which also facilitates empathy (e.g., Johnson, 2019). Additional strategies for teaching cognitive empathy include debating issues from various sides, self-reflection, and even the aforementioned creative outlets such as theater and literature which ask individuals to place themselves in a role outside themselves (Bell, 2018; Borba, 2018; Dow et al., 2007; Johnson, 2019). In all strategies, reflection, including guided reflection led by a facilitator, is crucial for processing the experience (e.g. Bell, 2018).

Teaching Empathy Online

The literature on teaching empathy in an online setting is somewhat limited, but growing. Preece and Ghozati (2001) found empathic communication is common in online communities, especially among support groups; Terry and Cain (2016) assert the importance of teaching empathy in the digital age of healthcare. Religious and pastoral studies, in particular, offers a fairly robust discussion of teaching empathy online. For example, McGarrah Sharp and Morris (2014) found that the physical distance fostered by online made some aspects of empathizing (e.g. thinking before responding) easier to accomplish. Doehring (2018) concluded this is due to the increased perception of space and time for reflexivity needed to respond to others. Likewise, naming shared anxieties (in the online environment), periodic anonymous evaluations, and check-ins all reduced anxiety in online learning and a reduction in anxiety led to greater empathy (McGarrah Sharp & Morris, 2014).

Online learning can pose a challenge, especially when it comes to more sensitive topics, due to is often impersonal (e.g. pre-recorded lectures or independent assignments) or asynchronous aspects (Cares et al., 2014). However, recent research has shown it to be effective. For example, Kemper and Khirallah (2015) evaluated a 1-hour mind–body skills training course that focused on mindfulness, resilience, and empathy. Modules in the online course began with a case study and were followed by self-reflection questions; links to academic references were provided. Additionally, each module included links to free, downloadable MP3 recordings of guided mind–body practices to facilitate experiential learning. The study's most significant findings included the popularity of the modules for health professionals who reported high levels of stress and burnout, as well as their effectiveness—participants reported acute, significant increases in stress relief, empathy, resilience, and mindfulness. More recently, Sentas et al. (2018) also evaluated empathy instruction in an online setting. Specifically, they looked at whether a brief, online training that consisted of written instruction, models, videos, quizzes, feedback, and assigned practice in natural settings could increase empathy among college-aged students. Their results, which included a two month follow up assessment, showed increased scores in empathy. Building off this growing body of literature which signals that empathy can indeed be taught online, this chapter seeks to add how empathy can be taught

in online settings to promote both the development of empathy and prosocial justice mindsets through an ethic of care.

Teaching Through an Ethic of Care

Care ethics were developed in response to traditional ethical theories that were viewed as devaluing virtues traditionally associated with women (Swanson, 2015). Although care ethics are often referred to as a *feminine* ethic, that does not mean that care ethics are limited to those who identify as women. Instead, through an ethic of care, caring is seen as fundamental to being human (Bergman, 2004). In contrast to previous models of ethics, however, care ethics asserts that feelings are appropriate sources of ethics in addition to rationality (Nazir & Pedretti, 2016). Care ethics does not reject rationality but sees emotions as the foundation of reason (Nazir & Pedretti, 2016). Care ethics requires what perspective taking, a fundamental component of empathy:

> we must receive the situation of the other as if it were our own. To do so requires emptying ourselves of attention to our own situation, at least for the moment, so as to make room to take in the existential condition of the other … A caring attention, receptivity, sympathy or disposability leads to engrossment, the other's situation taking over my consciousness, if only temporarily, which in turn leads to motivational displacement, as I join with the other in trying to respond to her needs. It is at this point that rationality, evaluation, judgement, something like Aristotle's phronesis, enters the picture. Concerted thinking, both with and on behalf of the other, will often be necessary if the caring response is to be completed effectively. (Bergman, 2004, p. 151)

Care is also contextual: how care is qualified, defined, and required differs from culture to culture and within cultures according to age, socioeconomic status, and gender, but care is universal (McKenzie & Blenkinsop, 2006).

Initially, care ethics focused the private sphere (McKenzie & Blenkinsop, 2006), defining caring as responding according to "what [was] best for one's immediate relational group based on feelings of attachment and the need to maintain relationships" (Nazir & Pedretti, 2016, p. 290). Noddings, as described in McKenzie & Blenkinsop (2006), extended caring to include the public sphere, breaking down care into "care for self," "care for close others," and "care for distant others" (McKenzie &

Blenkinsop, 2006, p. 100). Care for self is learning how to best care for oneself. Care for near others is about caring for those in one's immediate circles, such as family, friends, coworkers, or students. Finally, care for distant others is caring for those outside of one's immediate circle and is where teaching for social justice might focus within an ethic of care lens.

Keeling (2014) described the elements of acting within an ethic of care for others as consisting of:

- Paying attention; noticing with empathy others and their circumstances;
- Accepting responsibility to act on what is noticed, which recognizes human connectedness and interdependence;
- Assuring ability, capacity, and competency—that is, being prepared to respond, and respond effectively; and
- Responding, which accepts the principle of differential vulnerability (a richer concept than simple power differentials; it holds that not everyone is able to respond in the same ways) and does not require reciprocity (actions taken on behalf of another do not require equal or complementary actions in return) (p. 143).

As an ethic that "emphasizes interconnectedness, relationships, nurturing, and responsibility towards concrete embodied others" (Antoni et al., 2020, p. 450), an ethic of care is a viable and, we argue, vital lens through which to teach empathy for social justice, although we acknowledge the limitations of an ethic of care, theoretically, when it is premised on care for near others, which requires proximity and reciprocity (McKenzie & Blenkinsop, 2006). By expanding care to include distant others, the potential for an ethic of care to promote social justice and empathy is great, which is why it is the lens we chose to use when teaching empathy in virtual settings.

In the classroom, care is relationship-centered (Noddings, 2005), and the caring classroom focuses on creating an educational environment where caring for others (and, in this context, we argue also being equity-minded, inclusive, critical thinkers) is both comfortable and desired. Teaching empathy virtually requires more careful thought and attention to teaching methods and assessments and careful scaffolding of learning. According to Noddings (as summarized by McKenzie &

Blenkinsop, 2006), teaching through an ethic of care consists of four elements: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 102). Modeling often occurs through a teacher's instructional language, behaviors, and formative assessment techniques. Dialogue includes small- or large-group instruction but can also involve internal dialogue such as journaling or other reflecting writing. Practice involves working with or trying the knowledge, skill, or attitude (KSA) to be learned in a scaffolded and supportive environment. Finally, confirmation or summative assessment is any method that helps a student and teacher see if and how the student has learned the KSA of focus.

To help develop pro-social justice KSAs through learning empathy in online settings through intentional curriculum design, we have adapted McKenzie and Blenkinsop's (2006, p. 100) table where they outline how to implement Noddings' (1992) Curriculum of Care organized around "Centres of Care" (see p. 960; "care for self," "care for close others," "care for distant others," and "care for the natural world." This framework was originally developed by the authors to promote an ethic of care in adventure education to be implemented in a face-to-face teaching environment. We have adapted the table, which we refer to as the "Curriculum of Care Chart," as a framework to be used in planning virtual empathy courses that can guide an instructor in their selection of teaching methods that promote course-specific KSA development while also being intentional about developing empathy through explicit instruction on care for the self, near others, and distant others. To emphasize a focus on developing care as it relates to promoting social justice aims, we have revised McKenzie and Blenkinsop's (2006) categories "care for distant others" and "care for the natural world" (p. 100) to be "care for humanity," which we argue can and should include care for the natural world, because caring for the environment has long-term impacts on care for humanity. Additionally, because we focus on teaching empathy for leadership, we disaggregated McKenzie and Blenkinsop's (2006) "care for close others" (p. 100) into two categories, "care for students/subordinates" and "care for colleagues/peers," because although both are "close others", caring and empathetic behaviors might look different in each context. Further, and importantly, we see the level of responsibility and type of caring as different between those two groups. See Table 11.1.

The Curriculum of Care chart lists, on the left side, the levels of learning in an ethic of care (Modeling, Dialogue, Practice, and Confirmation), and the top line lists four components of care (self,

Table 11.1 Curriculum of care chart template

	Care for self	Care for students/subordinates	Care for colleagues/peers	Care for humanity (distant others)
Modeling				
Dialogue				
Practice				
Confirmation				

Adapted from McKenzie and Blenkinsop (2006, p. 100)

students/subordinates, colleagues/peers, and humanity). When the Curriculum of Care chart is used as an instructional tool, a teacher's goal is to ensure that each cell of the chart is filled with an instructional activity that promotes knowledge construction and care for the self, near others, and humanity. While the chart could be a place to start planning an empathy course, one could also use traditional backward design methods of course planning and then plug selected instructional activities and assessments into the table, using the table to identify gaps in the curriculum, then adding in additional activities or assessments for any missing aspect of care or levels of learning.

APPLICATION OF THE CURRICULUM OF CARE CHART

In this section, we describe how this framework for teaching empathy through an ethic of care, using the Curriculum of Care chart as an instructional framework, led to an online empathy course in two different content areas: Educational Leadership and Military Leadership.

Educational Leadership

The empathy for Educational Leadership course (see Appendix A for the syllabus) was designed as an asynchronous online professional development course for Educational Leaders in K12 and higher education delivered via Blackboard (a learning management system; LMS) over 7 weeks.

> Course description: The concept of empathy and the importance of empathy to leadership within educational settings. Topics covered included

the academic research on empathy, the relationship between empathy and leadership in educational settings, applied empathy in formal and informal educational leadership settings, and the relationship between empathy and creating more equitable educational settings. Leaders were prompted to create leadership philosophies and personal development that center around empathy and equity.

The student learning objectives for the course specifically identified four general areas of empathy knowledge. Students will be able to:

1. Define empathy and the body of scholarly literature that informs understanding of empathy;
2. Define the impact of empathy on educational leadership outcomes;
3. Take the perspective of another; and,
4. Demonstrate empathy in informal and formal leadership settings.

Achievement for each learning objective was measured through four summative assessments:

1. Leadership philosophy (SLOs 1, 2)
2. Professional development plan (SLOs 1, 2)
3. Perspective taking activity written reflection (SLO 3)
4. Role Plays (SLO 4).

See Table 11.2 for the Curriculum of Care chart for this course.

I (Laura) used the Curriculum of Care chart to develop this course. Indeed, the adaptation of the Curriculum of Care chart was a result of my literature search for appropriate philosophical frameworks and methods for teaching empathy online in this course. After I determined that an ethic of care was an appropriate theoretical framework through which to teach an empathy course online, I reviewed the recent literature to see how teaching through an ethic of care had been developed and conceptualized since I initially learned about the theory in graduate school. Through that research, I found McKenzie and Blenkinsop's (2006) "Centres of Care" and the framework they created to select instructional methods, which I adapted, as described previously, for a focus on promoting social justice and teaching empathy. I used the revised Curriculum of Care chart after developing course learning objectives and assessments to ensure that I was providing appropriate scaffolding and

Table 11.2 Curriculum of care chart for empathy for education leadership online course

	Care for self	Care for students/subordinates	Care for colleagues/peers	Care for humanity (distant others)
Modeling	Week 3 discussion	Syllabus and discussion boards	Discussion board interactions	Inclusive content (diverse perspectives, social justice focus)
Dialogue	Week 3 discussion	Week 2 discussion	Week 1 discussion	Perspective taking reflection
Practice	Week 3 mindfulness reading	Role plays	Role plays	Role plays
Confirmation	Personal development plan	Leadership philosophy	Leadership philosophy	Perspective taking reflection

adequate learning activities to allow students to learn empathy and its associated KSAs at each dimension (the "centres" of care; care for self, students/subordinates, colleagues/peers, and humanity).

Specifically, after identifying the learning objectives and the ways that achievement of each objective would be measured, I filled in the chart with the summative assessments and started adding in formative assessments and teaching strategies to ensure that each summative final assessment had the modeling, dialogue, and practice activities necessary to build the skills needed to complete it. Then, I outlined the knowledge or skills needed into an outline of content that began with foundational knowledge and finished with practical application to create a course outline organized into seven weeks (the length of the course):

Pre-work: Empathy Self-Assessment (1 hour)
Week 1: Defining Empathy (3 hours)

- Empathy in education literature

Week 2: The relationship between empathy and educational leadership (6 hours)

- Review of scholarly literature on the relationship between empathy and educational leadership

Week 3: Empathy and limiting factors (2 hours)

- Limits of empathy
- Mindfulness to mitigate empathy's limiting factors

Week 4: Taking the perspective of the other (10 hours)

- Implicit bias test
- Epistemology: Knowledge as subjective
- Relationship between empathy and equity

Week 5 and 6: Applied empathy (7 hours)

- Empathy behaviors in formal settings (students, subordinates)
- Empathy behaviors in informal settings (peer relationships)
- Empathy skills (listening, compassion, body and voice cues)

Week 7: Personal assessment and development (1 hour)

Finally, I found appropriate readings for each week and started building the course in our LMS.

Modeling

Because the course was delivered asynchronously, I (Laura) sought to provide modeling at each level of care through my instructional behaviors which included using inclusive language, including diverse content, modeling care in communications with individual students, syllabus content, and through interactions on discussion board. Aligned with Kemper and Khirallah's (2015) incorporation of mindfulness into course design, I incorporated mindfulness into the course design and provided examples of mindfulness in practice.

Dialogue

Dialogue was achieved through weekly discussions and written reflections that prompted students to reflect on and discuss course content and readings. One example was the Implicit Bias/Perspective Taking discussion and reflection. As with each week, students had scholarly articles available for reading that reviewed perspective taking as a concept. Then, students identified an identity group that they thought they might be biased

toward and one that they thought they might be biased against (using the list provided by the Implicit Bias Test; https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/). Then, they took the Implicit Bias Test and watched selected videos (see Appendix 11.1 for the full assignment description) to learn more about each group. Finally, they reflected on their experience taking the tests, watching the videos, and what they learned about perspective taking on the course discussion board. The discussion board created an interactive way to reflecton their learning, while the independent exploration and explicit instructions not to disclose which groups they identified as more or less biased toward was designed to create a safer environment to indepdently explore difficult topics that might have limited self-disclosure. Finally, as discussed by McGarrah Sharp and Morris (2014), the discussion board allowed for space before responding to peers, which also allowed for more thoughtful and empathetic responses to peer's posts.

Practice
Third, I provided practice assignments that allowed students to practice empathy KSAs with the scaffolded support of fellow students and the instructor. One example of an activity that allowed for pract was the Role Play assignment (see Appendix 11.2), which was designed to facilitate development of care for subordinates/students and colleagues/peers. Along with readings on practical empathy skills and behaviors, students participated in two to three role play activities. To ensure that the role play scenarios were applicable to the context of the students (and because I am not an expert in the day-to-day lives of the educational leaders in the course), I asked students to develop a scenario from their own context where empathy could be demonstrated; they could create a role play that was either one they had experienced or one that they anticipated experiencing. The next week, students acted out scenarios created by their fellow students and, following, wrote a written reflection on their experience in the discussion board. The creator of the respective role play then responded to the written reflections on the scenario they had created, reflecting on and extending the experiences and questions posed by their peers. The role play assignment allowed for real-world practice to occur at a time that was convenient for participation and the written reflection and discussion allowed for greater reflection and critical thinking that if participants had completed a role play independently and if they had completed

a role play that allowed them to demonstrate empathy in a context that was not specifically relevant to them.

Confirmation

Finally, I sought to assess at the confirmation level with final written papers. For example, I assessed development of care for self and care for near others (both students/subordinates and colleagues) at the confirmation level through the development of a Personal Development Plan. The Personal Development plan asked students to take the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire a second time (they took it the first time prior to beginning the course), reflect on their results, and to outline a plan to continue developing empathy personally and professionally through a specific plan. See Appendix 11.3 for the assignment description. The Personal Development Plan was the final assignment that sought to prompt students to reflect on their learning and demonstrate understanding of the content covered in the course to create a plan to addressed any perceived areas of improvement through continued development.

Through these assignments, I sought to help students develop their empathy skills and focus on the development of social justice KSAs in ways that scaffolded development and assessment. The Curriculum of Care chart helped me to organize the think about how to ensure that each level of care was developed and that no elements of learning were neglected.

Military Leadership

The empathy course for military leadership was designed for active duty and civilians taught by both of us (Laura and Sara). The course was a synchronous workshop that occurred over two consecutive days. Each day consisted of active learning synchronous sessions that occurred via Zoom for two hours (9–11, and 12:30–2:30 p.m.). The "Art of Empathy" course was marketed to students, who self-selected to take the workshop, as,

> Empathy has been called fundamental to meaningful human interactions. In a professional setting, empathy behaviors are related to improved feelings of belonging, engagement, care about work, and motivation. In a two-day, virtual workshop, this workshop will introduce you to the concept

of empathy, the important role empathy plays in the workplace, and help you to identify and develop competence in empathy.

Empathy Workshop Student Learning Objectives (SLOs):

1. Students will be able to define empathy;
2. Students will be able to recognize factors that limit one's own ability to empathize with colleagues;
3. Students will be aware that their own perspective is not universal; and
4. Student will be able to demonstrate empathy by showing compassion for disheartened, confused, or disgruntled colleagues.

Workshop summative assessments were a final short-answer quiz that asked students to define and describe, in their own words, their understanding of the learning objectives. The Curriculum of Care chart for the workshop (see Table 11.3) identified the synchronous ways we focused on teaching empathy through an ethic of care.

Unlike the Educational Leadership course, the empathy workshop activities were largely synchronous, the role play activity was similar, although it was adapted for the military context and to occur synchronously. We also discussed mindfulness as a method to address some of empathy's limitations, but the content and live, guided meditation were context-specific so that it would be relevant and accessible to the audience.

Modeling
At the modeling level, we focused on modeling care through instructional techniques likes the use of Brookfield's Critical Incidence Questionnaire (CIQ; see http://www.stephenbrookfield.com/critical-incident-questionnaire) at the end of the day to provide formative feedback on the workshop. We also sought to model caring interactions and self-care such as through taking regular breaks and a guided breathing meditation. For our strategies, especially the mindfulness, we sought to be explicit about those behaviors we modeled that were linked to empathetic skills.

Dialogue
At the dialogue level, we focused on collaborative group activities and discussions to allow students to develop understanding of difficult topics

Table 11.3 Curriculum of care chart for empathy workshop

	Care for self	*Care for students/subordinates*	*Care for colleagues/peers*	*Care for humanity (distant others)*
Modeling	Instructional techniques: regular breaks, guided meditation	CIQs Empathy overview lecture Caring interactions with students	Empathy lecture Mindfulness and empathy mini-lecture Empathy overview lecture	Danger of a Single Story video Sharing personal story of when I made a judgment based on a single story
Dialogue	Empathy's limiting factors Jigsaw	Empathetic behaviors readings (assigned at the end of day 1)	Empathy Think-Pair-Share	Perspective taking lesson/discussion
Practice	1. Block 1 exit ticket 2. Meditation	"Heard, Seen, & Respected" activity	What I need from you activity	Danger of a Single Story reflection and discussion
Confirmation	Block 4 exit assessments	Role Plays	What I need from you reflection and discussion	CIQs

through discussion with peers. Sara's lecture on the definition of empathy was interactive and all activities included some component of small- or large-group discussions. One example at Care for Colleagues/Peers level was the Empathy Think-Pair-Share. After Sara's lecture on the definition of empathy, the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) activity began by asking students to think about and jot down written responses to two questions:

1. Think about someone you admire, who you think has excellent empathy skills. Why do you think so? What have you learned from observing this person? Please provide concrete examples.
2. Think about someone you do not admire, who fails to exhibit empathy. Why do you think so? What have you learned from observing this person? Please provide concrete examples.

After students had 5–7 minutes to write down their reponses, they joined small groups of 3–4 to discuss their answers and identify themes in their

responses. Finally, the entire course met as a group to discuss characteristics of empathetic individuals. This activity helped students to understand how empathy looked in practice and apply the theoretical and scholarly components of empathy to real-world and military contexts.

Practice
At the Practice level, we prompted students to practice applying empathy knowledge and skills through group activities, discussion, and role plays. One example of practice at the Care for Colleagues/Peers level was the "What I Need from You," (WINFY) a Liberating Structure activity (see https://www.liberatingstructures.com/24-what-i-need-from-you-winfy/). In that activity we asked students to break into groups of 3–4 organized by role type (professional or managerial; students took roles that they may not occupy presently) and create a list of 3–5 things that people in their group need from the other groups. Following the WINFY activity instructions, students created lists of what members of their group needed from the other groups and reported their lists to those groups in a large-group discussion. After they had written down what the other groups needed from them, they went back to their small groups and decided, for each item created by the other group for them, if they could do, could not do, or could try to do what the other group needed (responding yes, no, or I will try to each item). Finally, each group came back to the large group and described their responses, only explaining the "I will try" items to the group). After the activity was complete, we asked participants to reflect on the activity and identify how the activity related to perspective taking in another Think-Pair-Share (first students reflected in a written format and then we discussed their reflection in a group discussion; see the Liberating Structures website for a full discussion of the activity and its implementation). This activity allowed students to practice perspective taking by learning about the perspectives of those they worked with and to practice empathetic communication skills in active listening and communicating around difficult topics such as vocalizing expectations in professional settings.

Confirmation
Finally, we reached the confirmation level through written assessments done after the fourth block. Those assessments included self-assessments and written responses to questions that asked participants to write in essay format their understanding of the content in each of the four learning

objectives. We also confirmed via informal formative assessments such as checking understanding in group discussions after activities and chat responses to verbal prompts that asked students to apply what they had learned in a lecture to their professional practice.

Other Applications

The activities described above are just a starting point for developing empathy in virtual settings and have their own limitations when it comes to addressing all of the elements of caring for self, near, and distant others. Instead, the goal is to think about how to teach empathy through an ethic of care in ways that are specific to different content areas. We see applications of this framework in various content areas including Communication and STEM fields.

Another example of developing Care for Others at the Modeling and Dialogue level is this Ethical Public Speaking Activity for a Communication Studies Course (see Appendix 11.4). The course itself is designed for first- and second-year college students at a four-year institution and can be taught in both synchronous online and face-to-face formats. It is a skills-oriented introduction to human communication, in particular public speaking. The goal of this course is to provide fundamental skills to prepare students to meet communication challenges encountered throughout their education and in their professional lives. The activity was designed by Sara to facilitate a semester of ethical public speaking practices and environment in an online or in person setting.

Early in the course, typically in the first or second week, a lesson is devoted to ethical public speaking. Students are introduced to the concept of ethics through a reading assignment and a brief lecture and discussion helps position public speaking in the context of ethics and empathetic consideration for oneself and one's peers. Using modeling, the instructor sets the tone for the activity by purposefully designating the classroom as a safe space for discussion, clearly defining and unpacking terms like "ethics" and "empathy," and asking for student input on what those concepts mean to them. This conversation is important as each student brings to the classroom their own fears and anxieties about public speaking which have the potential to overwhelm the learning process. To help attend to those individual needs (e.g., Rabin & Smith, 2013), the creation of a code of ethical conduct allows students to share, discuss, and adapt their unique needs into guidelines for ethical behaviors.

Next, the activity involves individual brainstorming on what makes someone an "ethical public speaker," and an "ethical listener," students working in pairs to share, clarify, and combine lists, and eventually a full class dialogue about what should guide speakers and listeners. Through these various dialogues, students come to share and understand a multitude of perspectives on what might make someone an ethical public speaker or listener. Allowing time to self-reflect helps students to acknowledge what makes them nervous (e.g. having all eyes on them) or vulnerable (e.g. sharing a speech on a topic that impacts them personally) and in turn more open to the concerns of their peers. Often, students are surprised what their peers add. For example, some students focus on the ethics of speech construction (e.g. citing sources and avoiding manipulative persuasive appeals) while others emphasize a "responsible" use of time through the selection of topics that are personally relevant.

The emphasis on co-construction of the final class list, having all students sign (digitally or otherwise), and ensuring it is "present" during all speaking activities (by sharing it digitally prior to online speaking days or hanging it in class when face-to-face) models Antoni and colleagues' (2020) call for an ethic of care that prioritizes responsibility to care for others. This foundation offers the possibility to facilitate social justice in the classroom when that responsibility is ever questioned or broken. Although this activity is by no means a "course requirement," the intentional development of the space to talk about ethics and empathy and the emphasis on shared responsibility helps to foster an ethic of care in this otherwise standardized curriculum. The goal, in using the Curriculum of Care as a framework for teaching empathy, is to both help to develop content knowledge construction in a way that promotes empathy both in content and in instructional methods.

Conclusion

We view empathy as fundamental to social justice and, therefore, teaching empathy as fundamental to teaching social justice. Yet, virtual settings create challenges for teaching empathy, as empathy, at its fundamental level, might seem to require in-person contact from a neurological perspective (e.g., mirror neurons) and to read body language and feel safe enough to share personal experiences and emotions. Teaching empathy virtually requires more careful thought and attention to teaching methods and assessments and careful scaffolding of learning, which is why we

view teaching through an ethic of care and, particularly, McKenzie and Blenkinsop's (2006) Curriculum of Care chart helpful for thoughtfully crafting courses that attend to each element of care in the classroom. We hope, and initial student feedback has confirmed, that this allows us to teach empathy in a virtual setting that still promotes true development of empathy.

Appendix A

Appendix 11.1 Assignment Description: Implicit Bias Test and Reflection

Follow the steps outlined in the assignment below, and then respond to the reflective discussion prompt. You should respond and engage with all of your peers; the minimum engagement is three responses plus your original post. However, to maximize our co-learning, please make this an ongoing discussion that lasts throughout the week.

1. Identify two groups different from you from the following list from the Implicit Association Test (link below): (1) One group that you have favorable attitudes toward and (2) One group that you think you might have a negative perception of.

   - Skin tone
   - Weight
   - Gender
   - Age
   - Sexuality
   - Transgender
   - Asian
   - Arab-Muslim
   - Disability
   - Black/African American (referred to as "Race" in the Implicit Association website)

2. Take the implicit bias test for each group you selected: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html.
3. Select from the following video clips/podcasts to watch according to the groups you selected (Please note that some links may use language that some may find objectionable, will share stories that

are uncomfortable, and may share views that you disagree with. The details of some stories may be triggering. Please reach out to me before viewing if you are concerned). *Author note: We did not include video links from the original assignment, as some links were broken and more links may be at publication. We suggest using YouTube to find links for each of the groups you include in your activity that are current, relevant, and appropriate for your student body.*

4. Respond to the discussion board answering the following questions (in your responses, please do NOT identify which groups you felt you were biased toward or against; that is not the purpose of this assignment):

   1. Reflect on the process of taking the Implicit Bias test? Did you agree with the results? Why or why not? How did taking the test make you feel?
   2. Thinking about the video clips that you watched, what did you learn about their experiences that was new information for you? How did that change how you perceived them?
   3. How did the implicit bias test and the video clips impact how you might work with someone who identified as a member of those groups as a subordinate? As a colleague? As a mentor? As a friend?

Appendix 11.2 Assignment: Role Plays

Part 1:

For your first role play assignment, create a role play scenario that you might encounter in Educational Leadership settings where empathetic behaviors could (or should) be employed. Your role play scenario should include, at a minimum, the following details:

1. The "players" and their roles (e.g., principal and teacher, superintendent and fellow superintendent)
2. The context of the case (e.g., Conference, counseling session, staff meeting, evaluation debrief)
3. Immediate situation (e.g., a fellow superintendent is struggling in their new role, a teacher needs help adjusting to new state standards).

Post your role play scenario by Friday at 5 p.m.

Part 2:

With a fellow student, colleague, friend, or family member, act out one of the role play scenarios created by your peers, taking care to practice the empathy skills you've learned in the course so far (and the skills and behaviors that you are already aware of and developing). After participating in the role play, post a discussion response that reflects on your experience. Your discussion post should do the following:

1. Include the name of the scenario (and the author)
2. Describe how the role play scenario went: What went well? What could have been improved?
3. Describe what you learned: What will you do in similar situations in the future?
4. Reflect: Is this scenario similar to others you have encountered in your role? What surprised you about this experience.

You should do this for two role play scenarios. Post a separate discussion post for each role play scenario.

After participating in and reflecting on your scenarios, you should respond to the discussion posts for the role play scenario you created. Did their experience surprise you? Was this scenario similar to a real one in your experience? What did you learn from this process?

Role play reflections are due by 5 p.m. on Friday at 5 p.m.

Appendix 11.3 Assignment Description: Personal Development Plan

Before responding to the following prompt, take the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (https://psychology-tools.com/test/toronto-empathy-questionnaire) again. Note any changes from when you took the questionnaire at the beginning of the course.

Create a personal development plan for your continued development as an ethical leader. Your personal development plan should, at a minimum, do the following:

1. Self-assess your current competency as an ethical leader
2. Define your leadership goals as they relate to empathy

3. Outline your plan for continuing to develop your empathy skills and behaviors
4. Provide a plan for how you will assess your development.

Your personal development plan is due by Friday at 5 p.m.

Appendix 11.4 Activity: Ethical Public Speaking Activity

Students will be able to:

1. Define ethical considerations of public speaking, including empathy
2. Co-create a "Code of Ethical Conduct" for public speaking in the classroom.

Pre-class reading: Chapter 2: Practical Concerns: Fears, Listening, and Ethics (Braden et al., 2018).

Activity Steps.

Step 1: Brief lecture/discussion on Empathy, Ethics, and Public Speaking; student input is encouraged when it comes to discussing connections between these topics in their lived experiences.

Step 2: Students are asked to reflect on their own (all ideas written down, none are critiqued or discounted at this stage): What qualities does an ethical public speaker have? What about an ethical listener?

Step 3: Think-Pair-Share: Students are paired at random to discuss their list in a "judgement-free zone"; the purpose is to share, clarify, and combine lists so that each dyad has one mutually agreed upon list of what makes an ethical public speaker and one list with what makes an ethical listener. Students are encouraged to share "why" they included (or let off) items.

Step 4: All pairs share their final list with the entire class (instructor is typing this list on a shared screen during the activity).

Step 5: Full Group Dialogue: Students use "I-language" to engage in a dialogue about any confusing, troublesome, or unclear criteria; critiques are limited to content, not individual contributions; a consensus is needed to add an item to the final code of conduct list. If a contribution is questioned, the student who contributed it is encouraged to share their perspective.

Step 6: The instructor generates a document with the final list, course title/dates, and leaves room for signatures at the bottom; the list is circulated the following class for all to sign and is either shared digitally prior to speeches starting or posted in the classroom if in a face-to-face setting.

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Queering the Classroom: Emancipating Knowledge(s) Through (Found) Poetry

Jessica A. Weise

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Found poetry:	A type of poem that consists of a collection of verbatim texts from a primary source (e.g., transcript, news article, essay) rearranged into a poem.
Queer:	A term that can be used as a noun, verb, and/or adjective to describe a subject that rejects binary positionings, challenges heteronormativity, and disrupts taken-for-granted meanings.
Alter/native knowledge:	Used to describe knowledge(s) that stand in opposition or outside of mainstream

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309

	thought; knowledge as a position that is innate to an individual.
Embodied learning:	A style of learning that occurs through the body whereby bodily reactions inform how a person learns and makes sense of the world.
Affective learning:	A style of learning where emotions inform how a person learns and makes sense of the world.
Cognitive learning:	A style of learning concerned with the neural processes that inform how a person learns and makes sense of the world.

Queering the Classroom: Emancipating Knowledge(s) Through (Found) Poetry

> to make a poem means to bring into the world new uses for language, new ways of describing physical existence, new ideas about what it means to be human. A poetics of teaching, then, privileges not only mastery but innovation – not only the transmission of existing knowledge, but also productivity and change. (Sword, 2007, p. 540)

Creative opportunities in the classroom encourage students and instructors to expand upon their knowledge and create artful portrayals of human experience. Through arts-based education, students are exposed to learning methods that engage affective (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Lawrence, 2008; Simecek & Rumbold, 2016), embodied (Freiler, 2008), and cognitive learning domains (Hummel & Holyoak, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Marshall, 2005; Zull, 2002). Arts-based strategies bring human experiences to life through a diversity of platforms like reader's theatre, poetry, drama, photographs, and film (Butler-Kisber, 2002) to show human experience beyond static representations (Rolling, 2010). Within arts-based educational methods, knowledge is constructed through literary, visual, and audial modes of poetic representation (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Marshall, 2005). Through poetic expression, students are agents of their own learning as they engage in personal reflection and expression to develop independent meaning-making pathways through

poetry (Marshall, 2005). In education, poetry is used as a form of expression for students, a tool to center social justice in the curriculum, and a tool to analyze research (Davis, 2019; Simecek & Rumbold, 2016; Stovall, 2006). In the classroom students have used poetry, like spoken word and performance poetry, to make sense of the world, critique systems of violence, and resist against oppressive, deficit-based ideologies (Biggs-El, 2012; Chappell & Cahmann-Taylor, 2013; Davis, 2019; Seltzer, 2020; Stovall, 2006).

In this chapter I described (found) poetry as an emancipatory instructional method to disrupt normative instructional and learning structures in the higher education classroom. A (found) poem consists of direct words and phrases from a primary source (e.g., a transcribed interview, literature) arranged in a poetic fashion (Butler-Kisber, 2002). In a (found) poem, direct text is chosen, omitted, and reconstructed to communicate ideas. (Found) poetry is a way for students to think and feel poetically, to "connect to what excites, outrages, inspires, and provokes them in the real world" (Gorrell, 1989, p. 34). In research, a (found) poem is used to investigate and (re)present the stories and lived experiences of a research participant (Patrick, 2016). One of the outcomes of (found) poetry is that it can provide researchers insight into a new interpretation of the original text and lead to new, unusual ideas (Butler-Kisber, 2002). (Found) poetry is typically written without parentheses around the word found. However, I purposefully wrote (found) to trouble what it means to find, locate, and extract information from a primary source and rearrange it in a new way. This chapter is guided by queer thought such that Butler (1993) suggested the "ownership over what one writes has an important set of political corollaries, for the taking up, reforming, deforming of one's words does open up a difficult future terrain of community" (p. 29). The instability of language is queered through my disruptive (found) poetry writing. (Found) poetry is guided by queer theory's poststructural onto-epistemological leanings that language is contextually driven, perpetually becoming, and reproduce power relations (Browne & Nash, 2010). Queer theory positioned (found) poetry as a tool to disrupt normative instructional practices and as an approach to uncover alter/native knowledges (Coloma, 2006) in the higher education classroom. The 'queer' in queer theory can be used as a noun, verb, and/or adjective (Shlasko, 2005; Weise, in press) to demonstrate that meanings are not fixed and contextually driven. In this chapter I mobilize queer theory as a political tool to challenge normative learning processes, position (found) poetry

as a tool to disrupt normative practices in the classroom, and queer how educators and learners in higher education conceptualize knowledge production.

The goals of (found) poetry as an instructional tool are for students to walk away with a better understanding of the primary data or literary source; offer students an alternative, creative method for synthesis and reflection; encourage a holistic approach to learning; and provide instructors with a tool to 'queer' their classroom. I will discuss how cognitive, affective, and embodied domains of learning support (found) poetry as an instructional method. In the following sections created (found) poetry from primary sources (Butler, 1993; Faulkner, 2017; Freiler, 2008; Jones & Adams, 2016; Lawrence, 2008; Marshall, 2005; Samayoa & Nicolazzo, 2017; Sedgwick, 1990) to introduce each section of the paper, show (found) poetry as an alternative form of conceptual synthesis and to provide examples of (found) poetry. At the end of the chapter I will describe the process I used to create a (found) poem using a section from Audre Lorde's (1984) essay "Poetry Is Not a Luxury".

Queer Disruptions

Complex and contradictory map of sexual and gender definition
has its own complicated history.[1]
Between minoritizing and universalizing,[2]
transitive and separatist,
homosexual gender definition will be plural.[3] ((Found) poem created from Sedgwick, 1990)

the term "queer" is
a site of collective contestation,
departure of historical reflections,
always redeployed, twisted, queered.
the critique of the queer subject is crucial,
critique of the exclusionary operations
between racial, ethnic, or religious affiliations,
sexual politics?[4]

[1] Sedgwick (1990, p. 89).

[2] Sedgwick (1990, p. 86).

[3] Sedgwick (1990, p. 89).

[4] Butler (1993, p. 19).

> queer politics constitutes a
> self-critical dimension within activism.
> "queer" ought to extend its range,[5]
> resist or oppose social form
> as well as
> occupy without hegemonic social sanction.[6] ((Found) poem created from Butler, 1993)

Queer theory interrogates dominant discourses that center heterosexual identities, disrupts structures that (re)produce heteronormativity, and rejects binary categorizations of identities (e.g., woman *or* man, gay *or* straight). Additionally, as a political position, queer theory is used to identify and disrupt ways that queer subject positions are marginalized as a result of heterosexual dominance (Atkinson & DePalma, 2009; Sedgwick, 1990). Queer theory rejects the stability of language because meanings are (re)shaped by discourse, are contextually driven and historically situated (Butler, 1993). In addition to the recognition of queer as a subject position, Shlasko (2005) argued that queer operates as a political disruption to the boundaries of normative, dichotomous identity positionings. Queer theory actively challenges accepted normalized knowledge(s), rejects the stability of identity categorization and "multiplies the possibilities of knowledge" (Shlasko, 2005, p. 128). Similarly, queer theory moves within, through, and beyond 'queer' as a subject position (e.g., sexual identity) to disrupt normative ways of being and to illuminate alter/native knowledge(s) (Coloma, 2006). Queer theory is a political tool both within and beyond queer subject positions to critique heteropatriarchal structures in society (i.e., capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy; Eng. et al., 2005). Within this line of thought, queer theory uncovers and critiques normative knowledge structures (i.e., objective, rational thought) that are (re)produced within heteropatriarchal structures.

Queer theory is used in this chapter to reject rigid, hierarchical learning styles and mobilize (found) poetry as tool to uncover alter/native knowledges. Incorporating arts-based activities and tools, like (found) poetry, into classrooms that reside outside of arts-based disciplines is a way to 'queer' instructional methods and classroom practices. In a virtual setting, (found) poetry as an instructional tool is a political tool to mobilize

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[5] Butler (1993, p. 20).

[6] Butler (1993, p. 18).

alter/native knowledges informed by affective, embodied, and cognitive processes. The meanings derived from texts and power structures reinforced through texts, are destabilized through (found) poetry as a queer tool. The boundaries of knowledge (re)production and the process students take to generate knowledge are queered through (found) poetry.

Domains of Learning

In the following section I will present (found) poems describing affective, cognitive, and embodied domains of learning. I outlined the three domains as integral aspects of the learning process and areas of learning that are engaged in (found) poetry making. I focused on affective, cognitive, and embodied learning to capture and suggest that learning is a holistic process.

Affective (Found) Poem

What if
we embraced creative projects,
gave up the need to be technically correct,
to produce value.
What if
we lived in the moment?
Art making is deeply emotional.
To suppress our emotions is not only unnatural;
it prevents us from expressing our full humanness.
Make space for sensory imagery,[7]
Work from emotional states;
tap into joy, grief, fear, or confusion.[8] ((Found) poem created from Lawrence, 2008)

Feeling is education for
furthering discourses of liberation.[9]
Those of us who are
queer, of color, trans*, undocumented, and/or dis/abled
feel,

[7] Lawrence (2008, p. 66).

[8] Lawrence (2008, p. 67).

[9] Samayoa and Nicolazzo (2017, p. 989).

heal,
resist
toward community liberation.[10]
Affective work, ongoing resistance in our classrooms
alongside
students, staff, and peers.
Resistance is in our bones
our blood
our collective memories
our tongues.
We must feel our way toward
liberation.[11] ((Found) poem created from Samayoa & Nicolazzo, 2017)

Affective learning is concerned with how learners feel and how those feelings inform healing, resisting, and liberatory educational practices (Samayoa & Nicolazzo, 2017). Feeling is a process that works alongside cognitive sense-making. Affective learning also helps to inform cognitive meaning making processes.

Cognitive (Found) Poem

Connections,
are at the core of cognition and consciousness.
Neural-network theory.
Parallel distributing processing.
Neural connections are connected
to the conceptual structures
of the mind,
the neural architecture in our brains.[12]
Creativity,
is rooted in finding or
making connections.
Discord in metaphor
challenges the mind,
learns through metaphorical processes.
The mind adjusts
to new configurations.[13] ((Found) poem created from Marshall, 2005)

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[10] Samayoa and Nicolazzo (2017, p. 990).

[11] Samayoa and Nicolazzo (2017, p. 991).

[12] Marshall (2005, p. 229).

[13] Marshall (2005, p. 230).

Creative processes, like creating a (found) poem, stimulate cognitive processes as the mind makes connections with pieces of information (Marshall, 2005). Learning is a complex process that occurs throughout the body. Together, affective and cognitive meaning-making domains make up an embodied learning processes.

Embodied (Found) Poem

Learning through the body[14]
as a source of constructing knowledge:
physicality
sensing -
being
in both
body and world.
Existential condition[15]
as a nongendered phenomenon:
perception
cognition
action
nature -
being
a body.
Knowledge
in bodily experiences
and inhabiting one's body,
connectedness and interdependence
of lived experiencing.
Complete humanness,
both body
and mind.[16]
Merging and balancing
dimensions of learning
across multiple levels
of knowledge construction.[17] ((Found) poem created from Freiler, 2008)

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[14] Freiler (2008, p. 38).

[15] Freiler (2008, p. 39).

[16] Freiler (2008, p. 40).

[17] Freiler (2008, p. 44).

Arts-based education transcends normative instructional methods through its attention to affective learning. Affective learning occurs when the learner has emotional responses to the learning material and is focused on how emotions generate meaning-making and knowledge systems alongside cognitive processes (Lawrence, 2008). Similarly, embodied learning posits that knowledge construction occurs not only in the mind, but in the "spiritual, affective, symbolic, cultural, and rational" domains of knowing (Freiler, 2008, p. 39). Affective and embodied learning present learning as a holistic process in which the mind, body, and soul are interconnected in the learning process. Thus, affective and embodied learning do not (re)produce dualistic, binary, concepts of knowledge production but position the mind, body, and soul as interwoven sites of knowledge production (Flax, 1993, as cited in Michelson, 1998).

Emotional evocations as a mode of learning are often overlooked and not considered a 'valid' form of learning. In poetic studies, researchers use think-aloud studies to understand how students comprehend poetry through metacognitive processes (Eva-Wood, 2008; Peskin & Ellenbogen, 2019). Students reported a deeper understanding and connection to the poem, its content, and the speaker through affective learning strategies. When an emotional response is evoked through poetry, the learner associated the material with a personal experience that built upon a prior experience or knowledge system (Eva-Wood, 2008); when emotions are involved, meaning-making is amplified (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Simecek & Rumbold, 2016).

According to cognitive psychology, learning occurs as neuronal networks build connections with new and existing networks (Zull, 2002). Analogous thinking is the process of organizing thoughts into categories in terms of something else (Hummel & Holyoak, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Marshall, 2005). Similarly, Marshall (2005) stated that the creation of a metaphor is "the primary principle of consciousness and cognition" (p. 230). When a metaphor is created, the learner connects one idea to another and the conflict of dissonance between two (or more ideas) generates a creative thought; authors make deeper connections to existing ideas. In poetry, authors make abstract connections of ideas to show themes across a phenomenon. Hanauer (2011) wrote that poetic writing occurs in four stages: activation, discovery, permutation, and finalization. Activation captures the artists desire to write, typically motivated by real world events. In the discovery stage, new meanings of the idea are uncovered. In permutation, revisions are made to the poem.

In finalization, the poet ends the poem. The writing process is cyclical as the poet moves and returns to the first three stages. Free-flowing engagement or playing with words and meanings (Peskin & Ellenbogen, 2019) is an integral cognitive process in poetic writing. Connections are made between ideas without a desired outcome in mind in free-flowing engagement. Poetry is a holistic learning process engaged in cognitive, affective, and embodied domains of learning. The cognitive psychology discussed supports poetry as an effective learning strategy because the learner artfully portrays abstract concepts and ideas. The added layer of emotional learning worked alongside cognitive processes to further student learning. Next I discuss poetry as a queer, political tool with (found) poetry as a practical example for disrupting normative classroom operations.

Poetic Disruptions

Poetry does not stop or end with queer.
Poetry does not stop or end
with radical historization,
with questioning categories
or normalization with colonizing hierarchies.
Poetry is *also* a chance to transform
noun – *queer* - into
verb – queering.[18] ((Found) poem created from Jones & Adams, 2016)

Poetry is
political, nuanced, sensitive.[19]
Poetry
confronts,[20] relates, embodies experience.
Poetry is
consciousness-raising, political activity.[21]
Poetry as a form of activism.[22] ((Found) poem created from Faulkner, 2017)

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[18] Jones and Adams (2016, p. 203).

[19] Faulkner (2017, p. 89).

[20] Faulkner (2017, p. 89).

[21] Faulkner (2017, p. 91).

[22] Faulkner (2017, p. 89).

The (found) poems above show the power of poetry as a political tool for personal and social change. Jones and Adams (2016) described poetry as a queer method to put language into action; transforming queer (*n.*) into queering (*v.*). Burford (2013) argued that poetry is a methodological, storytelling tool for "hope, survival, and change, spoken into existence through language" (p. 169) and used Beth Brant's (Bay of Quinte Mohawk) and Paula Gunn Allen's (Laguna Pueblo) poetry as examples of poetry that reveal the intertwined and dependent nature of heteropatriarchy and colonialism. In their analysis, Burford (2013) showed how Brant and Gunn Allen used "the erotics of the poetics" (p. 177) to offer poetry as sites of strength, resistance, and healing to generational trauma brought on by the colonization and erasure of queer Native people. Additionally, Burford (2013) suggested that poetry can "undo" heteronormativity within queer theory through its access to personal stories and knowledges. Heteronormativity can refer to both heterosexual (*n.*) dominance and heteronormative ways of thinking. Challenging and queering the functions of poetry allows us to consider poetry as a political tool to resist against heteropatriarchal knowledges and structures.

Poets such as Audre Lorde and Gloria Anzaldúa have used their writing to critique patriarchal, heteronormative, Western, and capitalist structures. In the poem "Power," Lorde (1997) documented the murder of a young Black boy at the hands of a white policeman. Lines from the poem such as: "I am trapped on a desert of raw gunshot wounds/and a dead child dragging his shattered black/face off the edge of my sleep/blood from his punctured cheeks and shoulders/is the only liquid for miles" (lines 5–9). Additionally, Lorde (1997) wrote "thirsting for the wetness of his blood/as it sinks into the whiteness/of the desert where I am lost" (lines 14–16) and "only the sun will bleach his bones quicker" (line 20). The image of a desert elicits white, barren, and dry imagery, a metaphor for the dominance of whiteness and white supremacy in the United States. In this poem, Lorde (1997) centered the politics of race in state sanctioned police violence to communicate how the death of Black people and violence instigated against Black people is a tool to uphold white supremacy. Lorde (1984) used poetry as a political tool to critique normative systems (violence, white supremacy) in the United States.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) also used their poetry as a form of resistance to oppressive structures. Throughout their writing in "Borderlands/La Frontera: A New Mestiza," Anzaldúa (1987) illuminated the effects of colonization on Chican@ culture, particularly how heteropatriarchal

violence toward queer Chican@ women stemmed from white colonizers. In their poem "Don't Give In, *Chicanita*," Anzaldúa (1987) referred to the ways that Chican@ people resist against the colonization of Indigenous people native to Mexico and the land that is now Texas:

> Yes in a few years or centuries
> *la Raza* will rise up, tongue intact
> carrying the best of all the cultures.
> That sleeping serpent,
> rebellion-(r)evolution, will spring up.
> Like old skin will fall the slave ways of obedience, acceptance, silence.
> Like serpent lightning we'll move, little woman.
> You'll see. (qtd. in Anzaldúa, 1987, pp. 203–204)

In this stanza Anzaldúa (1987) brought to life the strength of Chican@ people and resistance to oppressive forces because *Mexicana,* Chicana, and *tejana* (p. 202) culture is deeply rooted in the land. In this example, Anzaldúa used poetry as a tool to resist against normative power structures (colonization). Poetry has been used as a tool for critique, resistance, and healing and offers liberatory potentials.

Poetry is used in qualitative research to narrate a participant's story or particular experience related to a research topic. Faulkner (2007) created six elements to consider when using research poetry: artistic concentration, embodied experience, discovery and/or surprise, conditionality, narrative truth, and transformation. Cutts (2020) suggested that the purpose of poetry in research is to emote, inform, and transform. Additionally, research poetry troubles the intersection of art and science because of its interpretive trustworthiness. Cutts (2020) provided an alter/native use of research poetry:

> this intuition, right feelings, or innate connection to writing as a channeling of spirituality…facilitates the way I embrace memory, community, nature, and interconnectedness (West, 2011) as I explore and make sense of the world, in general, and my experiences as a BlackQueerWoman in/of the South, specifically. (p. 910)

Within research, poetry is a tool to show how people understand, make sense of, and interpret the world. In research, poetry is a queer method to (re)present the lived experiences of people and communicate alter/native knowledges (Coloma, 2006). Poetry has been used within and outside

of academia to show alter/native sites of resistance, knowledge, and lived experiences as people make sense of the world.

(Found) Poetry

Most often used in qualitative research with transcript data, (found) poetry is used to (re)present participant's narratives arranged in a poetic form (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Gude, 2007; Lahman et al., 2019; Patrick, 2016; Rolling, 2010). The participant's words are used verbatim in (found) poetry. Found poems are limited in the number of words an author can use to (re)present the participant's story. Similarly, the reader is limited in their understanding of the participant's story based on the author's selection. Larson (1997) raised critical considerations about the implications of (re)presenting someone's story in qualitative research, namely the depth accuracy of someone's story that is achievable through the lens of another author. Though it may seem that (found) poetry restricts a 'true' representation of the participant's experience because of its limited use of words, scholars argue that (found) poetry can present participant's experiences in new ways leading to new, 'different,' and emancipatory understandings (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Prendergast, 2006). Additionally, hierarchical power dynamics between the participants and researcher may be reinforced because pieces of the participant's story are chosen by the researcher in a poem (Lahman et al., 2011; Patrick, 2016). Lahman et al. (2019) suggested that choosing to represent human experience through poetry allows the reader to grapple with their interpretation of the poem, the writer's interpretation of the participant's experience, and the participant's narrative. The participant and their narrative are centered and brought to life in (found) poetry.

There is limited research on the cognitive effects of (found) poetry. Found poetry is unique compared to other poetic forms because the direct words from a participant are used to create a poem. Based on the cognitive literature that supported the use of poetry as an instructional strategy broadly, I propose that (found) poetry triggers the same cognitive process related to analogous thinking, metaphor, and imagination (Marshall, 2005) where the learner must build connections through related themes from the participant's story and present them in an artful way. Found poetry opens opportunities to explore our emotional meaning-making structures related to our understandings of human experience. Found poetry as an instructional strategy invites diverse ways

of thinking and learning into the classroom and allows students to explore how emotional, cognitive, and embodied processes inform their learning. Incorporating (found) poetry into the classroom as an instructional tool allows educators and students an alter/native approach to working with classroom material. In the following section I will discuss the use of (found) poetry as an instructional strategy in a higher education classroom.

Practical Example

Throughout the chapter I have provided a few examples of (found) poetry that I created as I synthesized/reflected on queer theory, poetry as a method, and cognitive, affective, and embodied domains of learning. Below I will provide my 'step-by-step' process for creating a (found) poem using Audre Lorde's (1984) essay, "Poetry Is Not a Luxury". In this example I will only draw from a small section of text from Lorde's (1984) essay (see Appendix A) but educators should require students to use the entire primary text when creating a (found) poem. As I outlined my (found) poetry making process, please note that it is just a starting point for other educators. There are a variety of creative processes (see Lahman et al., 2019) that educators can use to (re)arrange their found poetry beyond the process that I outline below. As I created (found) poetry, I incorporated a great deal of reflection as I played with the text, asking myself "why" to every decision made. Queer thought guided my (found) poetic sense-making as I aimed to queer (*adj., v.*) Lorde's (1984) original language into a poetic political tool. In some stanzas I kept original sentence structures. Other times I flipped a sentence and/or blended sentences from different paragraphs to offer a 'new' way to read Audre Lorde's (1984) message on poetry's multiple origins, purposes, and functions for liberation.

   To make a (found) poem, I considered Ulmer's (2018) composing techniques for writing which included 'playing' with the data. Playing with the data included techniques such as 'not writing,' folding, and cutting together-apart. During these playful practices, Ulmer (2018) suggested that the writer consider how playing with the text can shift their thinking of the data, and to consider what meaning emerged when words are played with. In the practical example using "Poetry Is Not a Luxury" (see Appendix A), I paid particular attention to my affective, embodied, and cognitive processes as I read through the text. I paid attention to my

emotional and verbal reactions to the text that made me say/think/feel "wow, dang, omg, respect, so true, I *feel* that." As I read and reacted, I <u>underlined</u> text that insinuated a cognitive stimulation (i.e., what does this mean?), *italicized* text that evoked an emotional response (i.e., why did this sentence empower me?), and **bolded** text that reminded me of embodied/personal experiences. Even though I attempted to parse out these three separate sites of knowledge stimulation/construction, these processes were not mutually exclusively. In fact, they happened simultaneously to inform my sense-making and interpretation of Audre Lorde's (1984) essay "Poetry Is Not a Luxury". As I felt, thought, and reflected on these moments, I asked myself "why?": Why did this sentence/word stand out to me? Why did this sentence make me stop, think, and reflect? Why did this passage make me feel annoyed, embarrassed, enlightened, and resilient?

After I identified parts of the text that evoked cognitive, emotional, and embodied responses, I then followed techniques of creating a blackout poem (see Appendix B). A blackout poem can be described as crossing out text and punctuation, and what is left is the writer's chosen text (Lahman et al., 2019) or poem. I reread and un/highlighted the passages **bolded**, <u>underlined</u>, and *italicized* until I felt that I was able to communicate my sense-making of Audre Lorde's (1984) text. In the final 'step' of my (found) poem, I rearranged the text into a poetic format (see Appendix C). I did not always put pieces of the text in the poem in their original order in the essay. For example, in the first paragraph the original text read: "living in the european mode/we rely/upon our ideas/make us free,/the white fathers told us were precious". To make that section flow while keeping Lorde's (1984) ideologies and onto-epistemologies intact, I rearranged the text to read: "living in the european mode/the white fathers told us/we rely upon our ideas/were precious/make us free." The 'final' step was cyclical as I re/arranged the text, returned to the highlighted text, and continuously reflected on the ideologies I communicated through the chosen text.

In the (found) poem, I communicated a thematical interpretation of Lorde's critique of "white," "european" knowledge generated through objective, positivist thinking. And that objective, positivist thinking is a dominant ideology in Western cultures. In the second stanza I used Lorde's (1984) text to show the influence of objective, positivist knowledge on poetry by highlighting the words "sterile," "desperate," and "distorted"; the adjectives used by Lorde to describe poetry through

a white, eurocentric lens stood out to me because the words them-selves convey deficiency; I felt emptiness or a lack of life when I read "I speak here of poetry as a revelatory distillation of experience, not the sterile word play that, too often, the white fathers distorted the word poetry to mean – in order to cover a desperate wish for imag-ination without insight" (Lorde, 1984, p. 37). Whereas words like "radical," "daring," "resistance," and "revolutionary," adjectives Lorde used to describe poetry written by women of Color, evoked feelings of strength and confidence. In the essay "Poetry Is Not a Luxury," Lorde (1984) challenged hegemonic knowledge generated in poetry written by heteropatriarchal subjects and suggested the radical, revolutionary possi-bilities of oppositional knowledge generated in poetry written by Black women. Reading Lorde's (1984) text through a queer theoretical lens allowed me to consider the political power of language that stands in opposition to 'normal' knowledge. In "Poetry Is Not a Luxury," 'normal' knowledge is constructed and reproduced by white, heteropatriarchal structures. The (found) poem was used to communicate Lorde's (1984) critique of normalized knowledge construction, the political and liber-atory potentials of poetry, and to show how queering poetry through (found) poetry can lead to alter/native knowledges.

(Found) Poetry in the Virtual Setting

The virtual setting will influence (found) poetry's use as an instructional tool but will only require slight modifications. In a virtual environment, (found) poetry could be used as an accessible collaborative tool among learners in the classroom. For example, in a virtual setting, learners may use a platform like a Google Doc to create a (found) poem together in real time. Virtual tools that are "live" offer an opportunity for students to collaborate or work independently in place of face-to-face collabora-tion. In a face-to-face classroom, one way to create a (found) poem is to take a physical, printed copy of a document (i.e., transcript data, journal article) and cut apart pieces of the text and arrange it into a (found) poem. Learners can apply the same cut-apart method in a virtual setting, but the virtual setting limits the instructor's ability to observe the students' creative process. To navigate that barrier, learners can adopt the demon-stration that I used with "Poetry is not a luxury" to make a (found) poem using Microsoft Word or a similar word processing program. Virtual tools Easily accessible and can be shared quickly with the instructor so that

they can observe students' progress in real time. Creating (found) poetry in a virtual setting presents some barriers, but it is still an instructional tool that is easily adapted to the virtual setting without limiting students' learning outcomes.

In Appendix D, I provide a lesson plan to show practitioners how they can implement (found) poetry in the virtual classroom. In the lesson plan, I used Lorde's essay "Poetry Is not a Luxury" as an example assigned reading for students to work with. Practitioners are encouraged to use a reading appropriate to their course. The purpose of the lesson plan is not to provide a lesson *on* (found) poetry but as an example of when (found) poetry can be used in the virtual classroom as an instructional tool. The lesson plan is designed for a small class size (approximately 10 students) and intended for collaborative learning. For classes with more than 10 students, practitioners are encouraged to modify the lesson plan to account for class time.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

In this chapter, I considered (found) poetry as an instructional method to 'queer' classroom practices. Through this lens, I approached arts-based methods broadly and (found) poetry specifically, as methods that disrupt normative learning processes, instructional strategies, and illuminate alter/native knowledges (Coloma, 2006). Traditionally, (found) poetry is used in qualitative research, here I proposed the use of (found) poetry as an instructional tool in the higher education classroom. Throughout the chapter I included (found) poems that I created based on my own interpretation of scholarly text on queer theory (Butler, 1993; Sedgwick, 1990), poetry as a method (Faulkner, 2017; Jones & Adams, 2016), and three domains of learning: cognitive (Marshall, 2005), embodied (Freiler, 2008), and affective (Lawrence, 2008; Samayoa & Nicolazzo, 2017. As a student I found that creating a (found) poem helped me better understand the original material because I was limited in the words I could use in the poem. The (found) poems captured my interpretation of the cited work and offered an alter/native conceptualization of queer theory, holistic learning styles, and poetic disruptions. Positioning the (found) poems alongside traditional syntheses of relevant information *both* reinforced normative ways of presenting information in a manuscript *and* offered an alter/native way of presenting information.

In the classroom, practitioners can incorporate (found) poetry created by students as an instructional tool. If students used the same primary source such as a required reading for the class, students can share their ideas and interpretation of the course material in a classroom discussion. In this discussion students can read-aloud their (found) poetry with the class. Through discussion, students begin to recognize how students come to alter/native or similar interpretations of the text. During class discussion, practitioners are encouraged to ask students reflective questions: "What does your poem convey about your racialized/(trans*)gendered/queer(ed)/classed, etc., identities and lived experiences? Whose voices are present in this poem? Conversely, whose voices are absent? What word, phrase, sentence, or image in the poem most resonates? Why?" (see Ohito & Nyachae, 2019, p. 847). By queering instructional tools and learning processes, students and practitioners consider alter/native approaches to learning about the world. Queering instructional tools like (found) poetry build possibility for classroom practices that transcend normative ways of learning and uncover alter/native ways of knowing.

Appendix A: Example of Creating Found Poetry from an Excerpt from Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider*

When we view **living in the european mode** only as a **problem to be solved, we rely solely upon our ideas to make us free, for these were what the white fathers told us** were precious.

But as we come more into touch with our own ancient, non-european consciousness of **living as a situation to be experienced and interacted with**, we learn more and more to *cherish our feelings*, and to *respect those hidden sources of our **power*** from where true **knowledge** and, therefore, **lasting action comes**.

At this point in time, I believe that women carry within ourselves the possibility for fusion of these two approaches to necessary for survival, and we come closest to this combination in our poetry. I speak here of *poetry as a revelatory distillation of experience, not the sterile word play that, too often, the white fathers distorted the word poetry to mean – in order to cover a desperate wish for imagination without insight*.

For women, then, poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of **the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change**, first made into <u>language</u>, then into <u>idea</u>, then into more <u>tangible action</u>. *Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought*. The farthest horizons of our hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, **carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives**.

As they become known to and accepted by us, <u>***our feelings and the honest exploration of them become sanctuaries and spawning grounds for the most radical and daring of ideas***</u>. They become a <u>safe-house</u> for that difference so necessary to change and the conceptualization of any **meaningful action**. Right now, I could name at least ten <u>ideas</u> I would have found <u>intolerable or incomprehensible and frightening</u>, except as <u>they came after dreams and poems</u>. *This is not idle fantasy, but a disciplined attention to the <u>true meaning of "it feels right to me."</u>* We can train ourselves to *respect our feelings and to transpose them into a language so they can be shared*. And <u>where that language does not yet exist, it is our poetry which helps to fashion it</u>. ***Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives***. It lays the <u>***foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before***</u>.

Possibility is neither forever nor instant. **It is not easy to sustain belief in its efficacy**. We can sometimes work long and hard to establish one beachhead of real <u>***resistance to the deaths we are expected to live***</u>, only to have that beachhead assaulted or threatened by those canards we have been socialized to fear, or by the withdrawal of those approvals that we have been warned to seek for safety. Women see ourselves diminished or softened by the falsely benign accusations of childishness, of nonuniversality, of changeability, of sensuality. And who asks the question: Am I altering your aura, your ideas, your dreams, or am I merely moving you to temporary and reactive action? And even though the latter is no mean task, it is one that must be seen within the context of a need for true alteration of the very foundation of our lives.

The <u>white father</u> told us: I think, therefore I am. ***<u>The Black mother within each of us – the poet – whispers in our dreams: I feel, therefore I can be free</u>***. Poetry coins the *language to express and charter this revolutionary demand, the implementation of that freedom*.

Appendix B: Example of Creating (Found) Poetry using the Blackout Method from Audre Lorde's Sister Outsider

When we view living in the european mode only as a problem to be solved, we rely solely upon our ideas to make us free, for these were what the white fathers told us were precious.

But as we come more into touch with our own ancient, non-european consciousness of living as a situation to be experienced and interacted with, we learn more and more to cherish our feelings, and to respect those hidden sources of our power from where true knowledge and, therefore, lasting action comes.

At this point in time, I believe that women carry within ourselves the possibility for fusion of these two approaches to necessary for survival, and we come closest to this combination in our poetry. I speak here of poetry as a revelatory distillation of experience, not the sterile word play that, too often, the white fathers distorted the word poetry to mean – in order to cover a desperate wish for imagination without insight.

For women, then, poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action. Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought. The farthest horizons of our hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives.

As they become known to and accepted by us, our feelings and the honest exploration of them become sanctuaries and spawning grounds for the most radical and daring of ideas. They become a safe-house for that difference so necessary to change and the conceptualization of any meaningful action. Right now, I could name at least ten ideas I would have found intolerable or incomprehensible and frightening, except as they came after dreams and poems. This is not idle fantasy, but a disciplined attention to the true meaning of "it feels right to me." We can train ourselves to respect our feelings and to transpose them into a language so they can be shared. And where that language does not yet exist, it is our poetry which helps to fashion it. Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before.

Possibility is neither forever nor instant. It is not easy to sustain belief in its efficacy. We can sometimes work long and hard to establish one beachhead of real resistance to the deaths we are expected to live, only to have that beachhead assaulted or threatened by those canards we have been socialized to fear, or by the withdrawal of those approvals that we have been warned to seek for safety. Women see ourselves diminished or softened by the falsely benign accusations of childishness, of nonuniversality, of changeability, of sensuality. And who asks the question: Am I altering your aura, your ideas, your dreams, or am I merely moving you to temporary and reactive action? And even though the latter is no mean task, it is one that must be seen within the context of a need for true alteration of the very foundation of our lives.

The white father told us: I think, therefore I am. The Black mother within each of us – the poet – whispers in our dreams: I feel, therefore I can be free. Poetry coins the language to express and charter this revolutionary demand, the implementation of that freedom.

Appendix C

living in the european mode
the white fathers told us
we rely upon our ideas;
were precious
make us free.
white father told us:

I think, therefore I am.

white fathers distorted poetry -
sterile word play
to cover a desperate wish for imagination
without insight

women carry survival
we learn with our ancient, non-european consciousness
to cherish
our feelings,
to respect
our power,
true knowledge.
living as a situation to be experienced and interacted with.

For women,

poetry
is not a luxury,
is a vital necessity of our existence.
is the way we help give name to the nameless
the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams
toward survival and change
poetry as a revelatory distillation of experience
carved from the rock experiences
of our daily lives.
the honest exploration
of our feelings
become sanctuaries,
safe-house,
spawning grounds
into language, idea, tangible action.
respect our feelings
transpose them
so they can be shared
our poetry helps to fashion
language that does not yet exist into
radical
daring
meaningful action.[23]

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[23] Lorde (1984, p. 37).

Poetry is
the skeleton architecture of our lives.
foundation for a future of change,
a bridge across our fears
of what has never been before.
dream.
vision.

Poetry is
resistance to the deaths we are expected to live,
revolutionary demand
freedom.

The Black mother within each of us
– the poet –
whispers in our dreams:
I feel, therefore I can be free.[24]

Appendix D

(Found) poetry lesson plan
Total Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Lesson Objectives
By the end of the lesson, students will:

1. Craft a (found) poem through collaborative learning
2. Engage in affective, embodied, and cognitive learning
3. Reflect on their meaning-making of the primary text

Lesson Steps
The purpose of this lesson is to provide students an opportunity to engage in a holistic learning process by creating a (found) poem from an assigned reading in class. The activities throughout this lesson will center multiple modes of learning and will challenge students to reflect on their own feelings throughout the lesson. The following lesson plan is intended for a virtual classroom space.

[24] Lorde (1984, p. 38).

1. Free-Write Reflection Activity—**4 minutes**

   a. Students are encouraged to "check-in" with themselves and briefly journal to prepare them for the lesson.
      i. *The purpose of this activity is to get students to start thinking about their emotions and help "ground" them before starting the (found) poem.*

2. (Found) poetry activity—**10 minutes**

   a. Individually, students will read "Poetry is not a Luxury" (Lorde, 1984).
   b. Students will identify 2 key phrases, lines, and/or sentences from the essay.
      i. *Encourage students to reflect on their chosen text. Why did they choose the text? What words and phrases from the text resonated with them? Describe the feelings evoked from their chosen text.*
   c. Students will copy and paste their excerpts into a shared Google Drive Document or other virtual, collaborative platform.
      i. *A virtual classroom setting may create barriers to students' and instructors' ability to collaborate "in real time." Using a virtual, collaborative, word processing program like Google Docs allows members of the classroom to work together "in real time" in place of face-to-face interactions. Instructors are able to watch students work and contribute to the (found) poem activity through a collaborative online platform.*

3. Collaborative (found) poetry activity—**10 minutes**

   a. Students will work together to create a (found) poem with their excerpts from "Poetry in not a luxury".
      i. *The purpose of collaborating on the creation of the (found) poem is to encourage students to discuss their rationale for their chosen text and how it resonated with them. Ideally, students will see the differences and overlaps in their interpretations of the chosen texts and witness how people come to their own understandings.*
      ii. *If the activity does not warrant a collaborative component, students can individually create their own (found) poem. To adjust for an individual activity, students will select 10 key phrases, lines, and/or sentences (or as many as they need) in the previous step.*

  b. Students will discuss their interpretations of the text.
    i. *Group reflection: Ask one of the students to volunteer to read the final (found) poem. Encourage students to discuss their interpretations of the primary text after the activity and any revelations they had along the way.*
    ii. *If this is an individual activity, ask students to read-aloud their (found) poem to the class. Encourage students to discuss their meaning-making processes throughout the activity.*

4. Critical reflection—**6 minutes**

  a. Students will reflect on their decision-making process when choosing excerpts from "Poetry is not a Luxury." Reflective questions:
    i. What language stood out to you? Why?
    ii. What feelings were evoked throughout the activity? How did they affect your sense-making of the text? Of the final (found) poem?
    iii. How did the collaborative activity effect your understandings of "Poetry is not a luxury"? (e.g., Did you learn anything new? Did your perception, attitude, and/or thoughts change?)

Suggestions for Further Reading

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Conclusion

C. Casey Ozaki and Laura Parson

As the fourth and final volume of the Teaching and Learning for Social Justice in Higher Education series, the focus on virtual settings was particularly timely in its intersection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the genesis of this chapter began before the pandemic changed higher education as we have known it, the world has been turned upside down—up is down, inside is out, and in-class is online. Virtually all of higher education shifted coursework and learning environments to remote and online modalities for significant periods of time. Although, prior to this shift, online and digitally-based learning was prominent, the near universal use in the last two years has almost certainly integrated and advanced online education faster than what we might have seen otherwise.

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337

In the Introduction of this volume, we introduced the argument that the push for online and virtual education was often motivated by neoliberal forces in higher education, yet the chapters in this volume demonstrate that virtual education settings have the potential to expand access and promote social justice in ways that traditional higher education settings cannot. Indeed, most efforts and ideas are more complex than a singular lens for understanding the world around us. Yes, online education is, and has likely been since near inception, a tool of the market and increasingly viewed as an institution's vehicle for greater profit and, also, a mode for financial stability in an increasingly unstable postsecondary economy. And, yet, this neoliberal claim does not negate the very real expanded access that online and virtual settings can provide to students historically underserved, in rural settings, older-than-average, working, and other characteristics and life circumstances that make the traditional brick-and-mortar learning environments challenging or a barrier to postsecondary success.

Within online education, there is both the potential for a contribution to inequities in higher education and potential to mitigate those inequities through greater access and opportunity. If virtual education expands to collect students, along with their tuition, but does not work equally hard to provide high quality instruction and support, then the potential to support equitable success for students turns quickly into a barrier and continued reinforcement and reproduction of inequities. The purposeful effort to create socially just, quality online teaching and learning environments is arguably even more critical given the population and growing numbers of online students. Yet, the resources available that address both teaching and learning efforts to support social justice in the online classroom are far and few between. This volume, Teaching and Learning for Social Justice in Higher Education: Virtual Settings, provides theoretical insights and applications to teaching and learning in online education while embedding strategies, tools, and materials in the chapters for readers to utilize and improve their virtual classrooms and programs.

About half of the volume chapters examine frameworks and theories that serve to support instructors and students in both developing their critical consciousness and creating course structures, strategies, and pedagogies that promote equitable learning and success. Some chapters focus on theory and pedagogies that emphasize instructional ways of being that promote relationships with students and content that are critical to multicultural growth. For example, in Chapter 12 the authors adapt a

framework for teaching through the theoretical lens of an ethic of care for teaching empathy; the emphasis on relationships and perspective taking is a critical element to developing empathy and contributing a social justice lens. A similar approach is described in Chapter 4 as Mulvihill and Swaminathan use "empathy, critical questioning, and ambiguity as important qualitative research stances and practices that can engage with the vulnerabilities faced by people while also interrogating power structures that give rise to inequities." Finally, the authors of Chapter 7 argue that the adoption of brave space and transformational teaching approaches can create "dynamic relationships between teachers, students, and a shared body of knowledge to promote personal growth and enhance professional disposition toward learning."

Other volume chapters chose to uplift existing frameworks to support equitable learning and success. In Chapter 5 the authors describe how the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments model of student retention, which highlights the importance of supporting students' different cultural identities, was used to structure a STEM summer bridge retention program to support marginalized students in their college transition. Quite differently but also focused on well-explored concepts, Froelich and Rogers, drew on the cognitive learning theories of retrieval, spaced learning episodes, interleaving, and elaboration to focus on how to maximize learning for all students. They argue that good learning is equitable learning.

While based on theories and concepts, there were also many chapters that focused on specific teaching strategies the authors showcased as useful tools for promoting social justice and equity in the online classroom. In Chapter 2, the skill and art of facilitating online small groups discussions for the "creation of a welcoming classroom culture, culturally responsive pedagogy, universal design for learning, and transformative learning" is suggested for better learning and student retention. And, in Chapter 8, the use of groups and communities of practices is described as a key approach to the disruption of systems in organizations and programs. In Chapter 3, Johnson takes one of the most well known and symbolic tools in higher education, the syllabus, and deconstructs it to demonstrate how it is used to marginalize students, as well as how it can be constructed to be learner-centered. In Chapters 6 and 9 a broad array of "curricul(ar) and pedagogical strategies for faculty and instructors to incorporate into their teaching to ensure underrepresented students' engagement and support to flourish in an e-learning

format" are described. Chapter 9 is even more specific with a focus on how student histories and organizing strategies can be critical to students' social justice education in a virtual setting. Finally, in Chapter 12, Weise presents (found) poetry as an instructional tool to queer the virtual classroom and engage in emancipating knowledge through discussion and collective sense-making. This is, perhaps, the most creative and risky of activities for a "traditional" classroom.

All of the authors and chapters in this volume dedicated to virtual settings seek to provide instructors and those who construct virtual environments with lenses and practices that make the online classroom more just and equitable. We conclude this chapter with the reminder that although online and virtual settings challenge quality learning, what the students need to succeed is not very different from traditional on-campus classrooms. Students need to belong and have connections to their class. They need to be challenged by the materials and content but also supported. Students need to see themselves in the content and materials. Instructors must examine and develop the orientation and philosophical approaches to teaching that challenge structural norms, oppressive practices, and long-standing biases about their students. And, leading with this lens, practices and strategies that will help all students flourish in an online setting.

Index