



image: [Black Legacy Mural](#) at UC San Diego by Erik Jepsen

Unpacking Anti-Blackness and Dismantling Systemic Racism in Educational Practices

Spring 2023 Learning Community Syllabus

“The heart of an anti-racist pedagogy is the intent to actively acknowledge and oppose racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life” (Blakeney, 2005).

"We need support in the cultivation of the ability to sit compassionately with and talk about our own particular experiences with race, race-related injury, and alienation. We need help developing the capacity to be able to listen to the very different stories of others with compassion; to have conversations across lines of real and perceived difference that help and heal, rather than hamper and hurt; and to exercise the will to come back for more, with increasing capacity for empathy and a deepening desire for others to heal and thrive in the world” (Magee, 2019).

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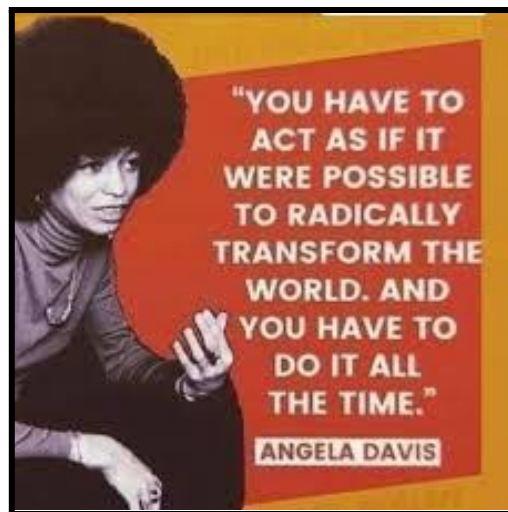
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Learning Community Foundations

Welcome to the learning community

We warmly welcome you to our learning community. We are so inspired by you and the projects you have proposed, and we are excited at the possibilities for change we will bring together to UC San Diego. We look forward to seeing our community take shape through our learning, contributions, and interactions over the next two quarters and beyond.

Times remain difficult, and we are coming together to face them together. Public images of police brutality have brought global attention to the way that race, racism, and violence, which have long existed in the foundational structures of America, continue to harm, traumatize, and take the lives of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other minoritized people. The COVID-19 pandemic has resurfaced and heightened the effects of structural and institutional racism on students, faculty, and staff on our campus. These times require commitment to creating systemic change. It is our hope that this learning community will connect us together, to support one another, and energize us to act urgently. If you are joining this community as a White ally, we ask that you especially consider how you can support members of our community whose lived experiences with racism mean that they are often asked to be educators of others, and, expected, disproportionately, to do anti-racist labor on our campus, in addition to experiencing the effects of racism themselves.

We are grateful to our first and second cohorts of the Anti-Racist Pedagogy Learning Community, from whom we learned so much. We deeply appreciate their engagement, feedback, and ongoing contributions to the first iterations of the program.

What is a learning community?

A learning community is an “intentionally developed community that exists to promote and maximize the **individual and shared learning** of its members. There is **ongoing interaction, interplay, and collaboration** among the community’s members as they strive for specified **common learning goals**” (Lenning et al., 2013).

What are the goals of this learning community?

Decades ago, activist and scholar Angela Davis said, “In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.” In higher education, enacting anti-racism requires that we not only unpack the historical roots that ground racism in our systems and practices, but also that we actively unlearn and move against those systems. It is essential that educators critically examine their own teaching practices in the context of anti-racism and adopt anti-racist teaching practices to support the well-being and learning of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, and other minoritized students on our campuses. This learning community for UC San Diego educators will be informed by established literature on anti-racist pedagogy led by the work of scholars of color. We will engage in readings, reflection exercises, and discussions designed to deepen our understanding and take action concerning the following topics:

- **Unpacking the historical roots of educational inequity.** *What is the historical context of anti-Black racism locally and in U.S. education? How does systemic racism contribute to educational outcomes we see today, particularly at UC San Diego?*
- **Understanding our personal relationships to anti-Black racism and white supremacy.** *How has our socialization in a racist society contributed (in conscious and unconscious ways) to our identities as people and our choices as educators?*
- **Enacting anti-racist pedagogy in our classes and roles as educators.** *How can we create classroom experiences that challenge racist ideologies and begin to dismantle existing structures of oppression? What actions will we take to support the well-being of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, and other minoritized students at UCSD?*

Session Logistics

Our meetings in Spring quarter will take place on Friday mornings from 10:00 a.m.-12 p.m. All meetings will take place remotely over Zoom, with the exception of the June 9 celebration which we hope to have in-person/hybrid. Please click here to access our Zoom link (same as last quarter):

Zoom Link to Access All Sessions: <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/91006713330>

If you have an accommodation request or if you have any other questions please email Joey Relaford-Doyle at jrelaford@ucsd.edu and we will be glad to assist.

Accessing Learning Community Materials

All materials linked below are available either freely online or licensed through our library's subscriptions. You might need to be signed into [UCSD's VPN service](#) to download some materials while off campus. For convenience, PDFs of articles are available in [this folder](#). If you encounter any issues with accessing materials, please email Joey (jrelaford@ucsd.edu).

What if you need to miss a session?

Attending orientation and each session is critical to our ongoing learning and community building, and we ask that fellows make every effort to attend all sessions. However, should unforeseen circumstances arise that will make it impossible for you to attend a session, please notify your small group facilitator as early as possible, cc-ing Joey (jrelaford@ucsd.edu; see [Facilitator Contact List](#) below to find your small group facilitator's email address).

Sessions Overview

Date	Session Details
4/7	<p data-bbox="428 1272 1349 1371" style="text-align: center;">Session 4: Disrupting Educational Norms and Fostering an Anti-Racist Climate</p> <p data-bbox="743 1434 1031 1465" style="text-align: center;">Session Outcomes</p> <ul data-bbox="381 1545 1442 1801" style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between inclusive and anti-racist teaching practices. • Articulate agreements of teaching and learning that are prevalent in our fields and institutions, and consider how these agreements impact racial justice in education. • Use an anti-racist lens to examine course design and syllabus. • Share and discuss strategies for interrupting racism and microaggressions in the classroom.

Preparing for the Session



Review: Rendón, L. (2010), Recasting Agreements that Govern Teaching and Learning: An Intellectual and Spiritual Framework for Transformation

Identify a specific course that you would like to explore more deeply over the next few sessions. This may be a course you've taught or TA-ed, or a course you'd like to teach. If possible, access the course syllabus and have it on-hand during our session.

Read: Establishing Community Guidelines for Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ARDEI)
(Workshop developed by Dr. Jennifer Cole et al. Northwestern University)

Read: Responding to Bias: Calling Out and Calling In
(short guide)



Read: Gardiner, W. et al. (2022) When "Nice" Isn't: Confronting Niceness and Whiteness to Center Equity in Teacher Education

4/21

Session 5: Anti-Racist Assessment and Grading Practices

Session Outcomes

- Evaluate your current grading practices to imagine what an equitable, anti-racist grading plan would look like.
- Identify discipline-specific anti-racist assessment and grading practices.
- Explore alternative and authentic assessments that center students' identities, experiences, and goals.

Preparing for the Session

Reflect/Investigate: How is learning commonly assessed in your classroom? (e.g., exams, essays, projects, etc.). Why? What are some examples of alternative and/or student-centered assessments in your field?

Read: [“San Diego Unified Changes Grading Practices to Be Equitable, Less Punitive”](#) (San Diego Union Tribune, Oct. 15, 2020)



Watch: Interview with Cornelius Minor: [“Antiracist” Grading Starts with You](#) (2020)

Reflection: For the course you've chosen to examine this quarter, take a look at the grading policy as communicated in the syllabus. Do you notice any ways that the grading policies may “penalize students for being human”?



Read: Inoue, A. (2022) [“What Labor-Based Grading Contracts Look Like”](#). From [Labor-Based Grading Contracts: Building Equity and Inclusion in the Compassionate Writing Classroom](#), 2nd Edition (whole book available [here](#))

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Session 6: Collaborative Project Workshopping

Session Outcomes

- Engage in a collaborative process of group problem solving around ARPLC projects.
- Identify the next step for your ARPLC project.
- Reflect on norms of academic collaboration and identify ways to support more equitable practices.

Preparing for the Session

Reflect: Use [this guide](#) to reflect on your ARPLC project, and how it connects to the themes we've explored in our learning sessions so far. Note any questions or uncertainties you have, as these can inform the question you bring to our session.

Read: [Description of Design Clinic Process](#)

&

Write: One question you'd like to explore with your group during the session.

5/19

Session 7: Using Data for Anti-Racism

Session Outcomes

- Explain the value of evidence in processes of institutional change.
- Imagine/identify opportunities for collecting data for anti-racist projects from your institutional position.
- Design an assessment plan for your ARPLC project.

Preparing for the Session



Read: Ahmed, S. (2019). [Why complain?](#)

Read/Skim: ARPLC [2021-2022 Executive Summary](#)

Start Filling Out: [ARPLC Project Assessment](#)

6/2

Session 8: Student and Faculty Activism at UC San Diego

Session Outcomes

- Engage with the history and current state of student activism in working toward racial justice at UC San Diego, with a focus on Black student activism.
- Recognize the intersections between national activism and our campus activism that promote students' whole lives, particularly Black students.
- Be co-conspirators with students to advocate for and implement anti-racist education.

Preparing for the Session



Read: Comeaux, E., Chapman, T., & Contreras, F. (2019). [The college access and choice processes of high-achieving African American students: A critical race theory analysis](#). *American Educational Research Journal*, 57(1).



Watch: Bettina Love (author of *We want to do more than survive*) shares the difference between ally and co-conspirator (CSPAN, 2020)

	<p>Read: Childs, D. (2010, February 24). Professor Dennis Childs, literature speaks out at teach-out. In L. Alvarez et al. (eds.) Another university is possible, p. 28-30. <i>*Note: PDF of excerpt forthcoming</i></p> <p>Read: Yang, K. W. (2010). The problem is not (just) the party. The problem is the party line. In L. Alvarez et al. (eds.) Another university is possible, p. 44-45. <i>*Note: PDF of excerpt forthcoming</i></p>	<p>View: Tell us how UC It: A living archive for student activism at UC San Diego</p>
	<p>Optional: Read more about student activism at UC San Diego</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Cops off campus (2021) Protest archives UC San Diego Guardian UC San Diego agrees not to fire Chinese postdoc (2022) UC San Diego students protest in support of abortion rights (2022) Timely archived: Black Lives Matter The TMC history project </p>	
<p>6/9</p>	<p>Session 9: Celebration and Commitment to Action</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Session Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connect with one another through sharing and learning from project reflections. ● Make connections and plans for supporting each other and sustaining ourselves in the work to come. ● Affirm, appreciate, and celebrate our learning and progress. 	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Preparing for the Session</p> <p>Details about how to prepare for this in-person or hybrid celebration will be shared as the date approaches!</p>	

References and Resources

Campus Support for Educators

We hope that our learning community acts as a space for connection, community, and mutual support, all of which are critically important to building and sustaining anti-racist work. We also wanted to highlight campus resources that are available to all educators for psychological support and well-being. Normalizing and/or modeling the importance of seeking support for ourselves as educators can also be an important way to support our students, encouraging them to feel comfortable seeking help as well.

- The [Faculty and Staff Assistance Program](#) is available for one-on-one counseling for faculty and staff, and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) are available to [consult with graduate students](#), and educators [who have questions regarding student mental health](#), and assist with connections to resources.
- CAPS also runs a number of [workshops, groups, and community forums](#) for connecting with those of similar interests or identities.
- Teaching + Learning Commons Engaged Teaching Hub staff are also always available for confidential individual [consultations](#), if you would like to discuss further how best to support your students in your class, and yourself in your teaching role.

Facilitator Contact List

Please [click here to view photos and bios](#) for our team on the Engaged Teaching Hub website.

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