

# AAPT 2020

## Anti-Racist and Pandemic Pedagogies



Wednesday, July 22 –  
Friday, July 24

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Wednesday, July 22: Panel Presentations

Wednesday, July 22, and Thursday, July 23: Small-Group Workshops

Friday, July 24: New Tools for Fall Teaching and Social Hour

# “AAPT 2020: Anti-Racist Pedagogy” Conference Proceedings

## Keynote Panel Presentation, Wednesday 7/22

Joanna Crosby (Morgan State), “Decolonizing Introduction to Philosophy”

Johnathan Flowers, (Worcester State), “Accessible Anti-Racist Pedagogy at a Distance”

Andrew Pierce (Saint Mary’s College), “The Problem with Privilege: Moral Transformation versus Structural Change Orientations to Anti-Racism”

## “New Tools for Fall Teaching” Presentations, Friday 7/24

Adam R. Thompson, Ariel Sykes, Cindy Spady, Giancarlo Tarantino, and Derek Carpenter: “White faculty teaching about race to mostly white students: Anti-racist accountability checklist”

Sara Purinton, Derek Carpenter, Philpa Friedman, and Dennis Earl: “White faculty teaching about race to mostly white students: Readings in philosophy of race”

Michael Mulnix, Joshua Anderson, Thomas Riley, Andrew Pierce, and Clarissa Busch: “White faculty teaching about race to mostly white students: Promoting racial dialogue in an online environment”

Rebecca Scott, Rhonda A. Amenu-El, Rob Loftis, and Thedra Bane: “Philosophical toolkit: Responding to high-profile racist events”

André de Avillez, August Gorman, Betsy Decyk, Claire Lockard, and David Sanson: “Creating conditions for honest class discussions of race and identity: Listening for and working with affect”

Joanna Crosby, Karl Aho, Kathryn Jones, and Fritz J. McDonald: “Creating conditions for honest class discussions of race and identity: Adapting privilege pedagogy”

Rebecca Millsop, Tim Fitzjohn, Jonathan Spelman, Kaija Mortensen, and Nicole Fice: “Toolbox for creating conditions for honest class discussions of race and identity”

Audrey Yap, Bailey Szustak, Carissa Phillips-Garrett, David Concepcion, and Katherine Brichacek: “Watering waterflowers: Developing anti-racist learning outcomes”

Shoshana Brassfield, Wes Furlotte, James William Lincoln, Madeline Martin-Seaver, Tracie Mahaffey, Merritt Rehn-DeBaal: “Anti-racist and anti-domination learning outcomes”

Christina Hendricks, Frances Bottenberg, Jenna L.A. Donohue, and Kristina Grob: “Decolonizing philosophy curricula (rethinking the major): Self-directed course audit”

Rory Kraft, Soon-AH K. Fadness, Janet Stemwedel, Kritika Yegnashankaran, Nate Jackson, and Catherine Homan: “Decolonizing philosophy curricula (rethinking the major): D.E.C.O.L.O.N.I.Z.E. self-assessment”

Alexandra Bradner, Amy Shuster, Claire Katz, David Spewak, and Doug Fishel: “*Towards* anti-racist learning activities and assignments”

Jonathan Flowers, Jennifer Mulnix, Jessica Davis, Katie Plaisance, and Kevin Graham: “Using pre-course surveys as part of anti-racist pedagogy”

Savannah Pearlman, Valerie Williams, Yvette Pearson, Sharon Mason, and Barbara Fultner: “Developing anti-racist learning activities and assignments: Philosophy as lived experience video assignment”

Jenna Woodrow, Alida Liberman, Cheryl Frazier, and Jeremy Fried: “Developing anti-racist learning activities and assignments: VoiceThread for collaboration”



## **AAPT 2020: Anti-Racist Pedagogy Panel**

Wednesday, July 22, 12:15-1:30 Eastern/9:15-10:30 Pacific

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### **Decolonizing Introduction to Philosophy**

*Joanna Crosby*

Morgan State University

In *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy*, Peter K. J. Park examines the development of Philosophy's origin story. Park traces this back to 18th century Germany, showing how the exclusion of African and Asian thought and the identification of Greece as the cradle of Western Civilization were developed and disseminated. Prior to the 18th century, however, Philosophers regularly looked to Asia and Africa.

Under this new development, the people of Africa and Asia were understood as having religion but not philosophy; this justified the evaluation of their cultures as 'primitive' and the people who lived there as not capable of rational, abstract thought. Much of what we call 'enlightenment' thought was racist justification for colonial invasion. To continue to teach philosophy in this way is to condone such practice. As I teach at an HBCU and my students are over 80% of African descent, I feel an extra ethical obligation to not teach racist philosophies.

Based on my examination of Intro textbooks over the last ten years, if non-western or feminist philosophy is included, it is tacked on at the end, and is usually represented by only one writer. In rewriting my Introduction to Philosophy syllabus I have sought to include many different philosophical traditions, including Greek, African, Asian, and Latin American philosophies.

### **Accessible Anti-Racist Pedagogy at a Distance**

*Johnathan Flowers*

Worcester State University

In the context of the ongoing pandemic, we must take account of the realities of distance education. To this end, any anti-racist and inclusive pedagogy during the pandemic must recognize the ways that students have different racialized engagements education through the technology that facilitates much of our pedagogy in the current moment. While educators have responded by framing this concern as an issue of "access" to distance learning, the concept of access is predicated upon an inherited understanding of "access" grounded in the assumption of a "default" white able-bodied student.

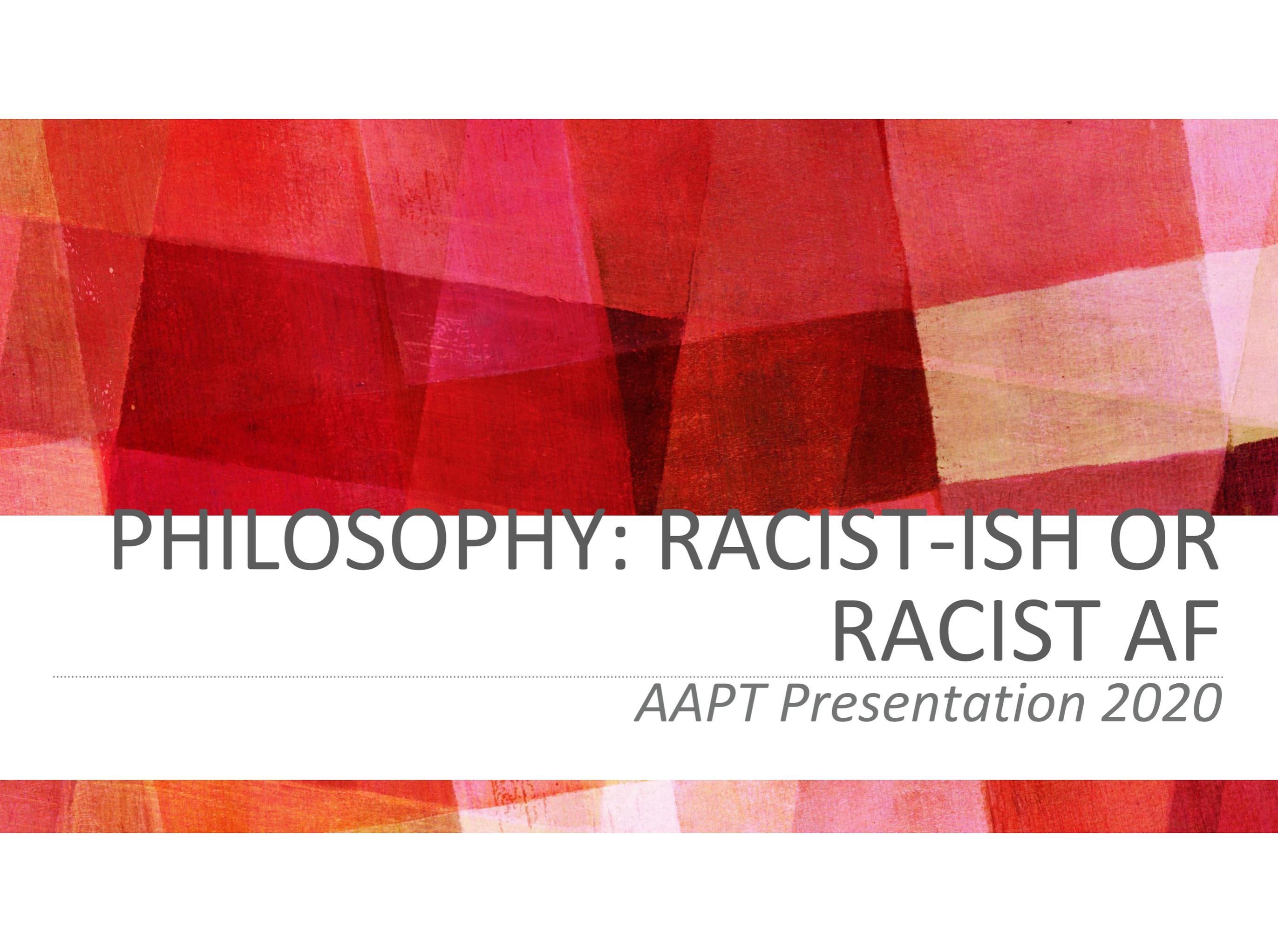
I intend to trouble the concept of "inclusion" and "anti-racism" as deployed in course design through reframing anti-racism and inclusion as ongoing processes in course design. Understanding both as processes allows for a course design that takes student experience of race and disability as its starting point and moves forwards. Thus, this proposal will seek to expand anti-racist and inclusive pedagogies through interrogating the ways that "accessible design," understood as access to educational technology and embodied in course policy, does not necessarily mean "accessible" when confronted with the reality of the intersection of race, disability, and technology.

## **The Problem with Privilege: Moral Transformation versus Structural Change Orientations to Anti-Racism.**

*Andrew Pierce*

Saint Mary's College

In my contribution to the panel, I will explore how various attempts to define racism bear upon anti-racist pedagogical practice. In particular, I will focus on the difference between individualist and structuralist accounts of racism, and how those accounts suggest different approaches to anti-racist pedagogy. While these approaches are complementary, I will argue that much popular anti-racist thinking overemphasizes the individualist aspects of racism, and thus the importance of personal/moral/psychological transformation over structural change. Perhaps most controversially, I will argue that approaches framed in terms of white privilege provide an example of this sort of overemphasis. Accordingly, I provide a critique of privilege-based approaches, and an alternative that begins in an Aristotelian vein by examining the function of institutions. I end with some concrete examples of teaching activities informed by this approach, related to policing, and affirmative action in education.



# PHILOSOPHY: RACIST-ISH OR RACIST AF

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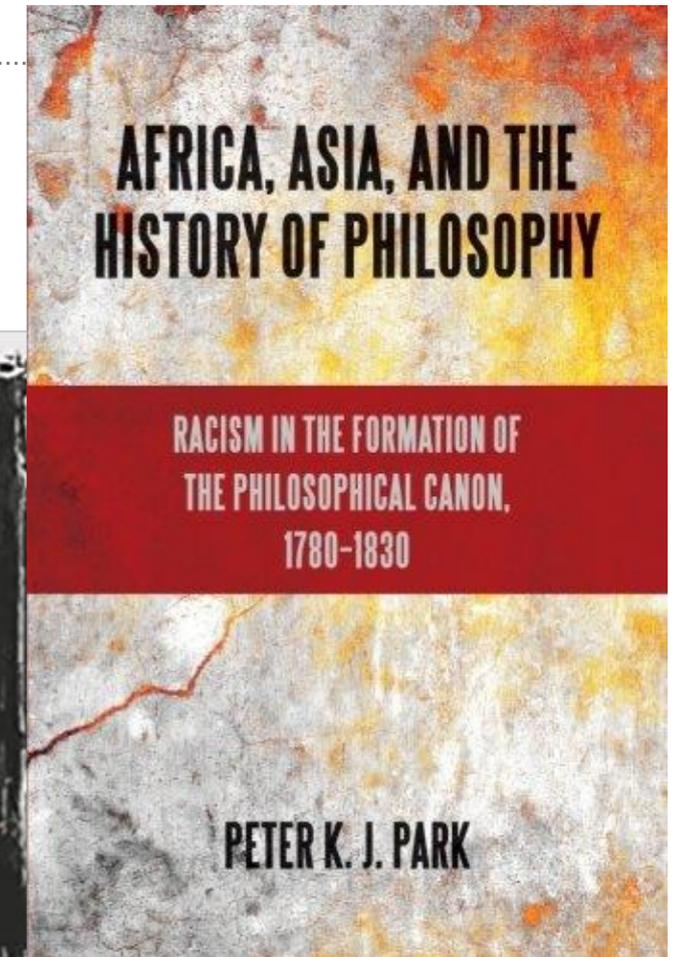
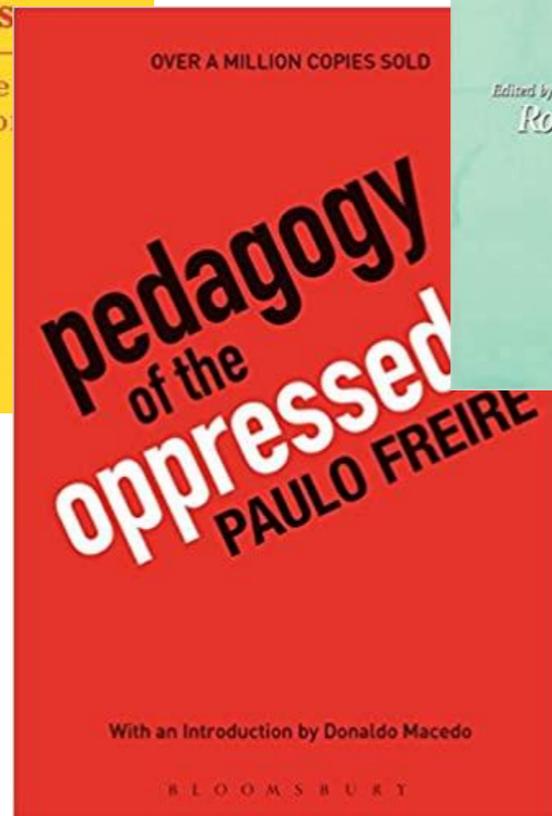
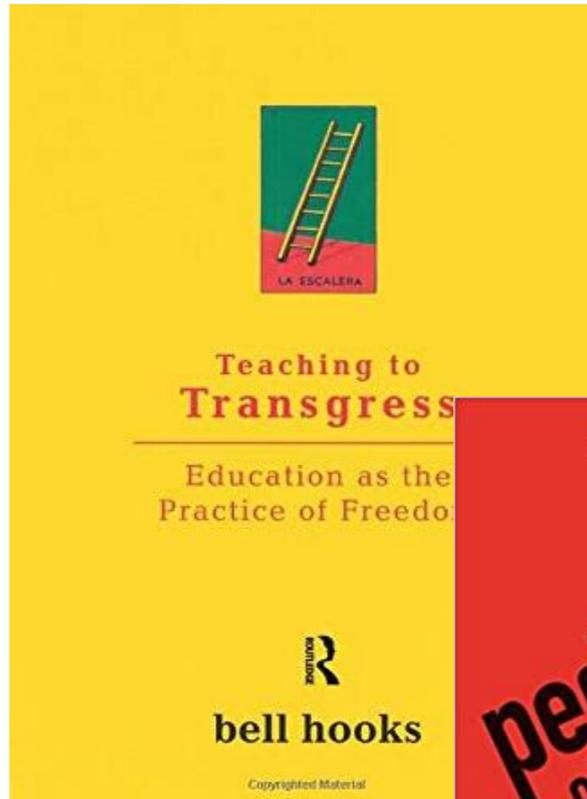
*AAPT Presentation 2020*

<b>Step Forward</b>	<b>Step Back</b>
1. If your family owned their own home.	1. If either of your parents did not graduate from college.
2. If you or anyone in your immediate family is a doctor, lawyer, minister, teacher, or professional.	2. If you did not vacation outside your home state before you were 18 years old.
3. If you grew up with people of color or working class people who were maids, servants, gardeners or baby-sitters in your house.	3. If you are black, Latina, Native American, Indian, Asian, Arab, or Middle Eastern descent.
4. If you studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary and secondary school.	4. If you have ever been denied a job or paid less for comparable work or had a less qualified man promoted over you because of your gender.
5. If you have ever written a letter to influence the outcome of a political decision.	5. If you are a survivor of incest, rape, or abuse.
6. If you are a man.	6. If you were raised by someone other than by both of your parents.
7. If, as a white person, you ever worked in a job where people of color held more menial jobs, were paid less or otherwise harassed or discriminated against.	7. If anyone in your family has had a problem with drug or alcohol abuse.
8. If your family had more than fifty books in the house when you were growing up.	8. If you ever felt an opportunity or experience was closed to you because you didn't know how to speak, dress, or act.

9. If your family told you that you could be or do anything that you choose.	9. If you have ever been unable to attend an event or gathering because it was not accessible to people with your disability.
10. If you were taken to art galleries, museums, or plays by your parents.	10. If you have ever felt judged or uncomfortable because of the size, height, or shape of your body.
11. If you ever attended a private school or summer camp.	11. If your family taught you that police were someone to be feared.
12. If you grew up expecting that your family would pay for your college.	12. If your parents told you that you were beautiful or pretty and therefore what you thought or did wasn't important.
13. If you believe that police would help you in an emergency.	13. If, as a child, you were ever hungry or worried that there would not be enough food.
14. If you ever inherited, or expect to inherit, money or property.	14. If your family was ever forced to move because they could not afford to pay their bills.
15. If you or one or both of your parents are or were members of unions.	15. If you or any member of your immediate family has ever been on welfare.
16. If most of your friends are the same race as you.	16. If you or any member of your family has been incarcerated for reasons other than political activism.
17. If people with power in your community look like you.	17. If you have ever lived somewhere that didn't feel safe.
18. If people that you see in the media, TV, newspapers, and magazines look like you.	18. If you have ever hesitated to reveal your or your family's religious tradition.
19. If, as a child, your family took you to a museum, historical site, concert, or play.	19. If you are queer, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender.

# READING LIST

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# DECENTERING EUROPE

- challenge and reverse the tendency to subsume non-Western philosophies under Western categories and intervene in the academic practices that continue to define the “new” on Eurocentric models alone

*Journal of World Philosophies*

Author Meets Readers/60

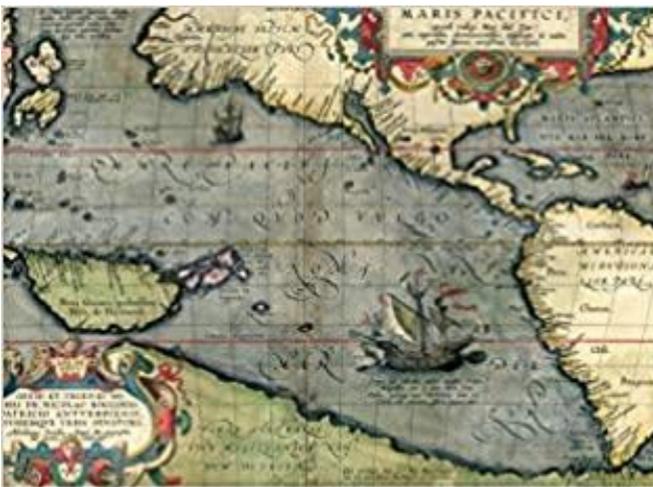
## *Decolonizing the Department: Peter K. J. Park and the Profession of Philosophy*

LEAH KALMANSON  
Drake University, USA (leah.kalmanson@drake.edu)

*Peter K. J. Park's book Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon is a call to action for academic philosophers. As Park shows, philosophical historiography, as we have come to know it, is a relatively recent invention indebted in large part to Immanuel Kant's adherence to a contentious theory of racial essentialism. Park argues that this racism undergirds Kant's work on the history of philosophy—it informs his arguments for the exclusion of African and Asian sources from the canon and his insistence that philosophy flowered spontaneously among the Greeks with no influence from the non-Greek-speaking world. Indeed, other philosophical historiographies available in Kant's lifetime traced the origins of philosophy to a variety of regions, such as India or Egypt, and contextualized the work of the Athenians accordingly. Today, presumably, few philosophers would agree with the notion that the history of philosophy is a record of European cultural ascendancy reflecting the natural superiority of the white race; yet, as the following essay argues, the degree requirements for our programs of study, along with other curricular and departmental structures, together serve to transmit this outdated teleology and the racist narrative regarding white supremacy associated with it.*

Key words: philosophy and race; racism; history of philosophy; African philosophy; Asian philosophy

I begin with a short story of the troubling classroom experience that prompted my commentary on Peter K. J. Park's book *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon*. In a class on philosophy and postcolonialism, my students and I were discussing the conclusion of the fourth chapter, which is one of the key points in Park's argument, where he makes the case that Immanuel Kant's (1724–1804) views on race are indeed *racist*. As Park asks, “Was Kant a racial thinker? According to Bernasconi, he was one of the founding theorists of race. Was Kant a racist? A first-time reader of ‘Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime’ may well be shocked and disturbed by Kant's racial stereotypes and racist remarks”



EDITED BY  
STEPHANIE RIVERA BERRUZ  
AND LEAH KALMANSON

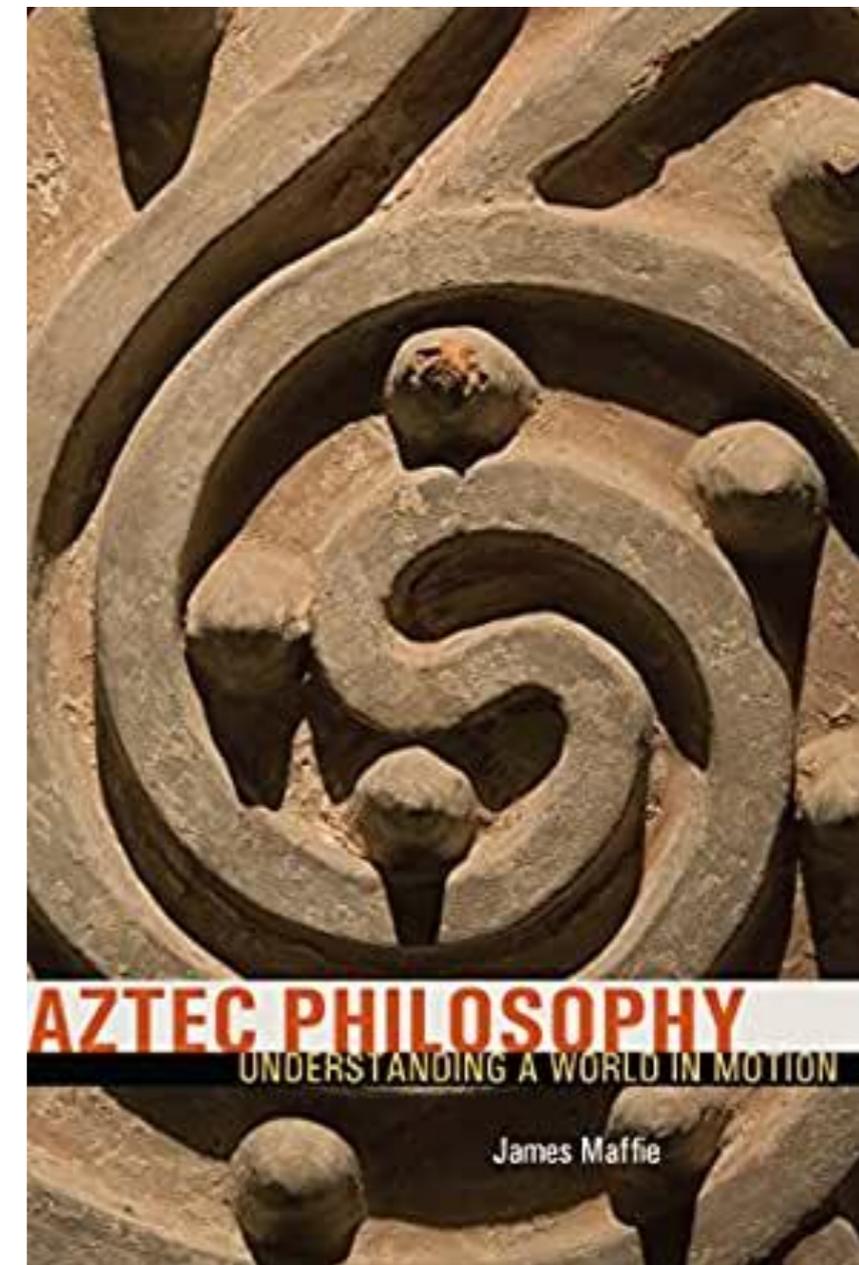
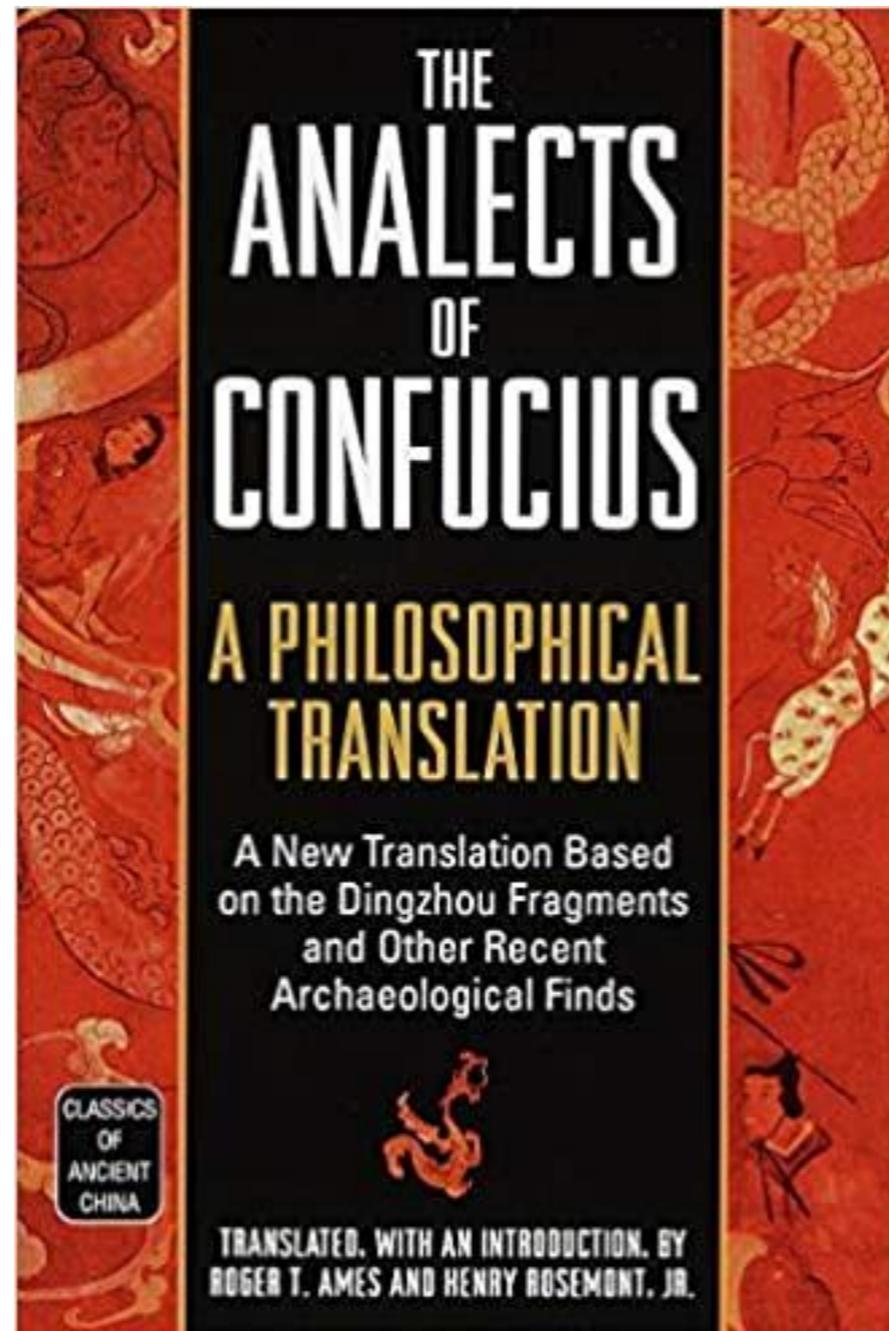
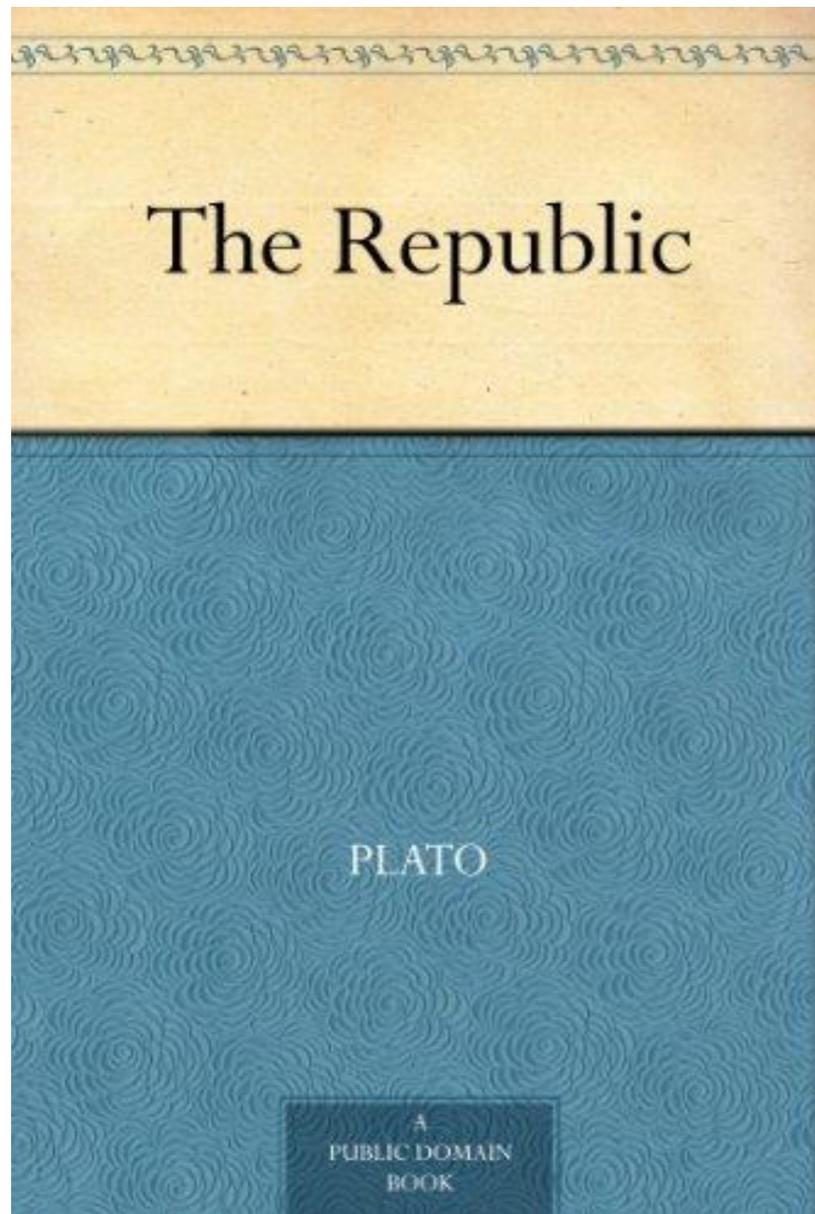
## COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN ASIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN PHILOSOPHIES

CROSS-CULTURAL THEORIES  
AND METHODOLOGIES

BLOOMSBURY

# PHIL 102: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

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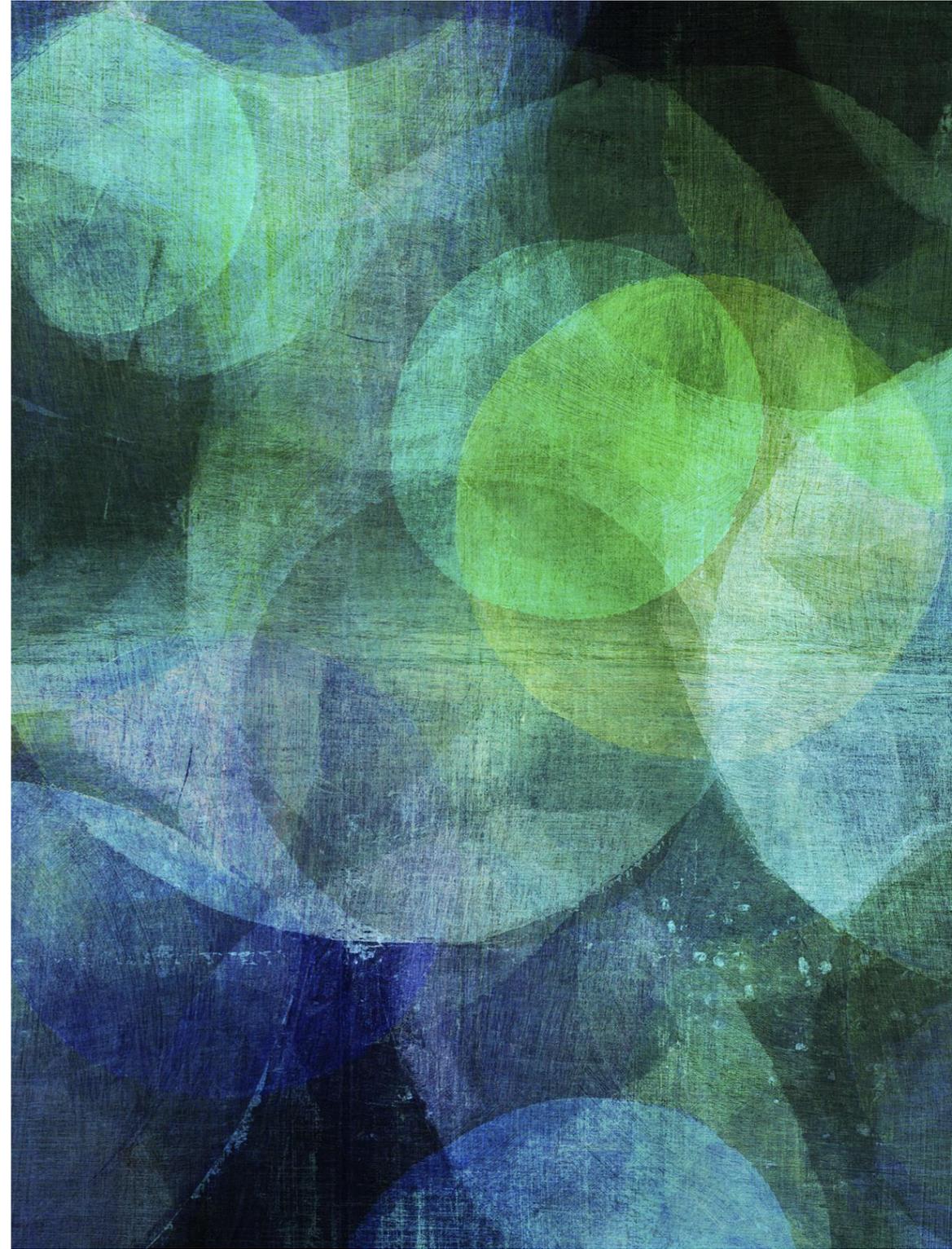
# JOANNA CROSBY

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*Morgan State University*

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# **THE PROBLEM WITH PRIVILEGE**

Moral Transformation versus Structural Change  
Orientations to Anti-Racism

Andrew J. Pierce

[apierce@saintmarys.edu](mailto:apierce@saintmarys.edu)

## Kinds of Definitions of Racism:

**Individualist** definitions see racism as a property of individuals; anti-racism is thus about changing people's minds (or hearts, or behavior).

**Structuralist** definitions see racism as a property of systems and institutions, not persons; anti-racism thus requires some level of structural transformation.

# White Privilege

“a constellation of psychical and somatic habits formed through transaction with a racist world”

- Shannon Sullivan, *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP: 2006): 63.

# An Institutional Module on Affirmative Action:

**Class 1:** Students work in groups to construct a mission statement for a college/university of their own design.

**Class 2:** Discussion focused on *Bakke* and *Grutter* decisions

**Class 3:** Discussion of philosophical analyses of affirmative action.



# Accessible Anti-Racist Pedagogy at a Distance

Johnathan Flowers  
Worcester state university

# Point of Departure.

Our anti-racist pedagogical practices have not kept pace with the increasingly technosocial context of our lives. COVID-19 has made this abundantly clear.

Therefore, this talk will not focus on teaching *students* to be anti-racist, but to provide an entry point for Anti-Racist Distance education.

# Troubling Access

- Access as Inheritance: concepts of “access” rely on a history that precedes a student into a learning space. A history of pedagogical and course design choices makes the course “ready” for some students and not others via the way they are at home in a course. Access is also shaped by an inherited history.
- Access as History: provision of access typically relies on a history to justify why a space should be made accessible or should accommodate a “deviation” from the assumed “norm” of access. Histories are interpreted by institutions which determine which means of access should be provided.
- How do you document what cannot be documented?

## Reframing Access as inheritance and history in Course Policy: two examples

From my accessibility policy:

- As someone who struggled with access throughout his educational career, I recognize that “accessibility,” as defined by the University, does not encompass all elements of “access,” up to and including language barriers, cultural barriers, economic barriers, or other “invisible” barriers to student learning. If you have trouble with any element of the course, the course materials, or my instruction, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss ways in which I can make my class more accessible or more inclusive to your learning.

From my excused absence policy:

- Excuses include but are not limited to: medical emergency broadly defined, mental health emergency broadly defined, personal emergency broadly defined, athletic or academic event, legal obligation, alien abduction, political protest broadly construed, participation in representative democracy (voting), or inclement weather. Documentation is not required.

# Troubling Access at a Distance

- Access as Inheritance in COVID: access conversations during COVID-19 have largely focused on providing access to education through technological means and only rarely consider the ways these technological means rely on the inheritance of a “default” image of the student.
- Access as Technosocial: Access as Inheritance in COVID assumes the inheritance of a “default” technosocial world predicated on assumptions not only about technological access, but about how students engage with the course in a digital space.
- How do we understand the technosocial world we inherit, that is made ready for some students and not others, and the ways that it structures pedagogy?

## Framing the “Default User” via André Brock

“Consider the archetype of the “default internet user” who is white, male, middle class, and heterosexual. Based on this default, interfaces were designed, content was created, and networks were structured, leading to the seemingly inevitable conclusion that minorities are on the “wrong” side of the digital divide. However, this reasoning ignores the deliberate environmental, geographic, educational, and economic discrimination underlying the deployment, decisions, and designs of internetworks and digital media (Straubhaar, 2012).” (Brock, 2020, 151)

## Point of Departure

The "default user" is an inheritance within our pedagogy that orients the ways that we design our courses. To this end, even those courses that "trouble" the canon, or are designed to include multiple voices and non-canonical features, still fall short as anti-racist pedagogies *because* of their organization around a specific experience of the classroom.

# Framing Blackness as an informational identity via André Brock

This term is meant to reconfigure Black discursive identity inclusive of Black digital practice—that is, the enactment of Blackness through the mediation of computational and digital technologies. These computational and digital aspects are not traits of Blackness per se; they are culturally inflected curatorial, archival, data, and metadata practices needed to build out and maintain Black digital spaces and communities. Informational identity differs from discursive identity in that it places the medium on a near-equal footing with the content of the discourse; in many ways, informational identity allows one to capture the nonverbal components of Black digitality (a la signifyin' discourse) necessary to evoke online Blackness. (Brock, 2020, 78 -79)

# Anti-Racist Pedagogy at a Distance as processes

- Processes, via Dewey, are integrations: they consummate in an integration of what has come before into what is for the sake of an open and tensive future. Anti-Racist Pedagogy needs to be reframed as a process, especially when enacted at a distance.
- Inclusion and Anti-Racism as processes require the integration of the unique ways that “excluded” students arrive in the classroom, specifically the digital classroom, in order to create a pedagogical space that enables their participation.
- Inclusion and Anti-Racism as processes require educators to recognize the historical processes that have consummated in their specific course design choices. It requires them to recognize the inherited histories of “access” and “inclusion” as predicated on a “default” standard.



# **AAPT 2020: Anti-Racist and Pandemic Pedagogies**

**Wednesday-Friday, July 22-24, 2020**

# **Workshop Presentations**

**Anti-Racist  
Pedagogy**

# White faculty teaching about race to mostly white students

## *Team A*

Adam R. Thompson

Ariel Sykes

Cindy Spady

Giancarlo Tarantino

Derek Carpenter

# Anti-Racist Accountability Checklist

Rather than focus on specific issues involving white faculty teaching about race and racism during a course, we are focusing on what can be done *before* the course. It is also our hope that the checklist serves as a self-assessment tool before, during, and after a course. Specifically, as a way to combat a tendency of white persons to avoid consistent engagement in anti-racist work or thinking about racism, we thought it might be helpful to have an “accountability checklist” for instructors to consult during their course-design and reflective preparation.

## **Anti-Racist Accountability Checklist** *Developed during the 2020 Virtual AAPT Conference*

*Authors: Cindy Spady, Carlo Tarantino, Ariel Sykes, Adam Thompson, and Derek Carpenter*

**Rationale for Checklist:** Rather than focus on specific issues involving white faculty teaching about race and racism during a course, we are focusing on what can be done *before* the course. It is also our hope that the checklist serves as a self-assessment tool before, during, and after a course. Specifically, as a way to combat a tendency of white persons to avoid consistent engagement in anti-racist work or thinking about racism, we thought it might be helpful to have an “accountability checklist” for instructors to consult during their course-design and reflective preparation.

*How to use the tool:* While there are several ways (listed below) to use the tool, we recommend that to prevent burnout or feeling overwhelmed professors select just a couple pieces of the checklist to actively work with during a term.

1. Personal Reflection
2. A collaborative accountability partner
3. There is also a pedagogical opportunity here for teachers to share the checklist with students as part of the course if they wanted.

### **CATEGORIES:**

1. Self-Assessment and Reflection
2. Student Population
3. Course Design, Goals, and Pedagogy
4. Accessibility (technology, student services, etc.)
5. Course Content Resources (institutional/departmental; literature; new media/local organizations)
6. Assessment

### **Self-Assessment and Reflection**

We think that these questions will have an important impact on how you might approach the categories and questions that follow.

1. Internal identifiers: What parts of my identity might be invisible to students, but that I might choose to bring up in the class? When, why, how?
2. External identifiers: What sorts of power dynamics might be in play in my course given how I present to my students?
3. Accountability questions: For the following, fill in the blank based on what particular anti-racist issue you hope to work on.
  - a. When was the last time I had a conversation with...
  - b. When was the last time I have actively thought about...
  - c. When was the last time I educated myself on...

- d. When was the last time I questioned my assumptions about...
4. Add your own question here! What did we miss?

### **Student Population:**

1. What do I know about the student population I am likely going to be working with?
2. Do I have access to demographic data, and course design reflecting this information? If not, who can I contact to get that information?
3. Based on what (I think) I know, what might I be assuming about students?
4. How can I use this information about students to create “mirrors” and “windows” in my classroom? (mirrors: to see themselves, and windows: to see other perspectives)
5. Add your own question here! What did we miss?

### **Course Design, Goals, and Pedagogy:**

1. What am I doing to learn more about anti-racist and cultural competency pedagogical practices?
2. How will I use anti-racist or culturally competent pedagogical practices while teaching X, Y, Z?
3. How am I going to use my reflections on this checklist to design and align my course goals this term? (*See Appendix below for example*)
4. What power-dynamics and knowledge-dynamics are embedded in my teaching practices and classroom structures?
5. Do I actively work to not replicate the history of discrimination within the cannon?
6. From what lenses do I present material?
7. Add your own question here! What did we miss?

### **Accessibility Concerns**

1. Do I know what offices/who specifically/literally where to connect students to various support services? (Basic needs, learning accommodations, health resources)
2. What do I feel equipped to handle in terms of student concerns that might come up about course topics, modes of engagement, assessment, language, etc.?
3. What are the pathways in which students can share their accessibility concerns with me?
4. What accessibility concerns do I name in my syllabus? What am I leaving out?
5. Is there regular communication (as a conduit between) department and students about available resources?
6. Add your own question here! What did we miss?

### **Course Content Resources:**

1. Does the course reading include content and authors from under-represented groups? Am I avoiding tokenism in my treatment of these topics and authors?
2. Does my treatment of course content acknowledge power dynamics and master narratives in a critical and meaningful way?
3. How familiar am I with materials and resources about anti-racism that exist?
4. How current are my sources that I use about anti-racism?

5. When was the last time I saw an insightful resource (written, video, audio, etc.) about anti-racism? What are those resources? How do I incorporate those resources into the course?
6. Do I ask the students to share resources about anti-racism that they have found to be helpful?
7. How do I plan to handle racist or offensive thought, language, actions present in any of the authors, texts, or other materials that I am assigning?
8. Add your own question here! What did we miss?

**Assessment:**

1. Self-Assessment: What structures have I set up to hold me accountable to my anti-racist goals for this class?
2. Student-Assessment: How do I assess student growth in my course? Do any of these approaches raise concerns around bias, discrimination, and exclusion?
3. Student Feedback: What will I do to gather feedback from students about any racist and anti-racist aspects to the course, and how will I gather that feedback?
4. Add your own question here! What did we miss?

**Appendix:**

A template for building an aligned checklist for reflection of practice:

Objectives:	Course of Action:	Feedback Device:
<p>Be more trustworthy, especially to those most likely to regard me as suspect/threatening due to my perceived position, gender, or race.</p>	<p>Allow classroom/course authority to be less centered on myself</p> <p>Research ways to gain trust of students prior to entering the classroom</p>	<p>Ask students to assess the extent to which they felt authority resided with them as opposed to me</p> <p>Ask students to write a short narrative about how suspicious they were of my approach to them/the course/topic/etc.</p> <p>Keep a field journal throughout the course that tracks my week to week thoughts about my interactions with students and experiences with letting go of authority, in which each entry incorporates an idea or two from the research.</p>

# How to use this tool

While there are several ways (listed below) to use the tool, we recommend that to prevent burnout or feeling overwhelmed professors select just a couple pieces of the checklist to actively work with during a term.

1. Personal Reflection
2. A collaborative accountability partner
3. There is also a pedagogical opportunity here for teachers to share the checklist with students as part of the course if they wanted.

# Categories & Examples

1. **Self-Assessment and Reflection:** What sorts of power dynamics might be in play in my course given how I present to my students?
2. **Student Population:** Based on what (I think) I know, what might I be assuming about students?
3. **Course Design, Goals, and Pedagogy:** What am I doing to learn more about anti-racist and cultural competency pedagogical practices?
4. **Accessibility:** Do I know what offices/who specifically/literally where to connect students to various support services?
5. **Course Content Resources:** How do I plan to handle racist or offensive thought, language, actions present in any of the authors, texts, or other materials that I am assigning?
6. **Assessment:** What structures have I set up to hold me accountable to my anti-racist goals for this class?

**Contact: Carlo Tarantino - [gtarantino@luc.edu](mailto:gtarantino@luc.edu)**

# White faculty teaching about race to mostly white students

*Team B*

Sara Purinton

Derek Carpenter

Philipa Friedman

Dennis Earl

# **A way to empower students and educate white instructors about race**

**One problem facing white faculty teaching race is that oftentimes we ourselves do not have the requisite expertise or experience with philosophy of race texts to teach philosophy of race effectively.**

**We understand that our own learning about philosophy of race is important and urgent, but it is also an ongoing process.**

**We also understand that empowering students to choose some of their own educational path fosters intrinsic motivation and respects their autonomy.**

# Readings in philosophy of race

**We have compiled a “list of lists” of intro-level philosophy of race texts.**

**We propose that, following an already robust course section on philosophy of race, students may collectively choose among a short list of readings to pursue as a course. We can read along with them, thereby educating ourselves while also empowering and engaging our students.**

# Anticipated challenges

- **Already requires significant prep and self-education in order to scaffold choices of readings.**
- **Requires us to negotiate conversations with our students about our own lack of knowledge or experience.**

**Contact: Derek Carpenter [derekrpnr@gmail.com](mailto:derekrpnr@gmail.com).**

# White faculty teaching about race to mostly white students

## *Team C*

Michael Mulnix

Joshua Anderson

Thomas Riley

Andrew Pierce

Clarissa Busch

# Promoting Racial Dialogue in an Online Environment

- Inspired by Johnathan's presentation, we attempted to address the issue of different modalities of access, and especially the task of creating modes of access consistent with smartphone usage.
- We also discussed how to integrate technology in order to promote and sustain meaningful dialogue by reimagining the traditional discussion board.

# Video discussion board

Flipgrid is a tool for recording short video responses, which can be grouped together by course and topic.

Free for educators and students. Easy access from smartphones. Easily integrated into various LMS.

It allows the instructor to moderate the discussion.

# Possible discussion prompts:

- How do you know what race you are?
- How does race manifest in your life, or the life of someone you know?
- Are races biological, metaphysical, social constructions, something else; do they change over time or stay fairly stable?
- What does privilege and/or disadvantage look like?
- [More can be found here](#)  
(also inserted below)

# AAPT 2020 Workshop Guide: White faculty teaching about race and/or teaching mostly to white students

Team C: Michael Mulnix, Joshua Anderson, Thomas Riley, Andrew Pierce, Clarissa Busch

## **Group no. C/3 Accessibility/Technology/White faculty reaching to White students**

### **Problem:**

Inspired by Johnathan's presentation, we attempted to address the issue of different modalities of access, and especially the task of creating modes of access consistent with smartphone usage.

We also discussed how to integrate technology in order to promote and sustain meaningful discussion/dialogue by reimagining the traditional discussion board.

**Technologies:** Flipgrid: <https://info.flipgrid.com/> (other tools?)

### **Purposes:**

Alternative to traditional discussion boards. Alternative mode for presentations/discussion leading.

### **Prompts:**

Political Compass quiz: <https://www.politicalcompass.org/>

Systemic racism video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO\\_bdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO_bdQ)

Watch a video of "privilege walk" and discuss strengths/weaknesses/alternatives

### **Questions for promoting discussions of race and racism:**

1. How do you know what race you are?
2. How do you determine what race someone else is; what makes someone a member of a racial group?
3. How does race manifest in your life, or the life of someone you know?
4. Have you ever "misidentified" someone's race?
5. Are races biological, metaphysical, social constructions, something else; do they change over time or stay fairly stable?
6. Must everyone within the same racial group share the same beliefs, background, goals, aims, expectations, traits, et cetera? If not, must they share at least some? If so, are some essential or is it that there just must be some combination of traits and so forth that some but not all putative members may or may not have? Can one be more or less authentically Asian, Black, White, et cetera? (who decides?)
7. We are all members of a variety of groups and communities that shape our identity and how we exist in the world – e.g., you're Black or white; you're Christian or Buddhist; you're a citizen

or non-citizen; you're cis- or trans-gender; you're a Yankees or Red Sox fan; you're LGBTQ+; you come from a "working class" background; a dog person; a vegetarian; a member of a sorority/fraternity... Are some groups or communities more central to your identity or life experience than others; are some essential; are some *types* of community more central to an individual's identity than others and are those the same for everyone?

8. What is racism?

9. Is there a difference between racism and discrimination based on race? (Is there a difference between discrimination, discriminating and making a distinction?)

10. Are all stereotypes or representative heuristics always harmful or bad (at least when it comes to things like race), or can they be beneficial or useful? Should difference (racial or otherwise) be celebrated and promoted or eliminated and rejected – pluralism, the melting pot or absorption? Is that question actually racist?

11. Why is racism bad? Must it be? Is racism wrong in itself/inherently, or is it wrong because of the consequences?

12. Do you think society is more or less racist than people think – e.g., is White Supremacy more or less prevalent in the United States than people think, and what does that even mean?

13. Does racism require racial animus? Can there be racial animus but racism doesn't obtain? Can individuals/institutions/structures/systems discriminate based on racial categories and not be racist? Is there a difference between racism and bigotry?

14. Can a member of a racialized group that is oppressed be racist? What is the appropriate response to being treated in a racist manner or suffering from racism?

15. Is a "color-blind" society a solution to racism? Is it possible to be "color-blind"? Would it be a virtue or a vice or have unforeseen consequences? Is even discussing "color-blindness" indicative of some sort of racial privilege?

16. Is it possible to act in racist ways, or promote racist systems, institutions, policies, and so forth (intentionally or not) and not be a racist? Does indirectly or unintentionally promoting or benefiting from uneven racial power dynamics make one morally culpable? Is being unaware of or engaging unintentionally in or benefiting from racist policies or institutions a valid excuse?

17. What sustains racism? Is it exacerbated by, or sustained by, or caused by something else – e.g., classism or Capitalist modes of production? Does eliminating one form of oppression require getting rid of another first, or would getting rid of one form of oppression mean that a different form of oppression would just get worse?

18. Is racism just an unfortunate aspect of human nature or psychology and the best we can do is ameliorate the most destructive or harmful aspects of it? Are human societies necessarily hierarchical and there will always be a dominant group(s) and groups that are dominated or at least subordinated? If so, does that mean that equality is a fool's errand?

19. Are ideas like equality, fairness, justice already racially tinged such that policies and actions that treat everyone "equally", "fairly" or "justly" are actually racist or exacerbate oppression based on race? Alternatively, are actions and policies that on their face appear unequal, unfair, et cetera actually just, appropriate and necessary for overcoming racism?

20. What does privilege and/or disadvantage look like?

**Concerns:** student data usage...

## **Integrating into your LMS:**

How to integrate into other course learning systems: Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas...

<https://help.flipgrid.com/hc/en-us/articles/360013196414-Embed-Flipgrid-in-an-LMS-or-Web-site>

1. Access your educator account at [admin.flipgrid.com](https://admin.flipgrid.com) to visit your main *My Grids* page.
2. Select the **Share** option (if on mobile, select Actions and then Share). You can do this for an entire Grid, a specific Topic, or a single student Response.
3. You will see the blue embed option. Click that to copy the HTML embed code.
4. Visit your LMS, blog, or other website. When editing/creating, there should be an option to edit the HTML code. Paste the Flipgrid embed code into your page.

Now your students can watch and record from within your LMS, website, or blog!

**NOTE:** If you use Mozilla Firefox as your web browser, when you click on the “Share” option, it may not work.

## **Canvas Specific instructions:**

Follow the same steps as above. Then while editing a page in Canvas select the “Insert/Edit Media” option:

Flip Grid Discussion

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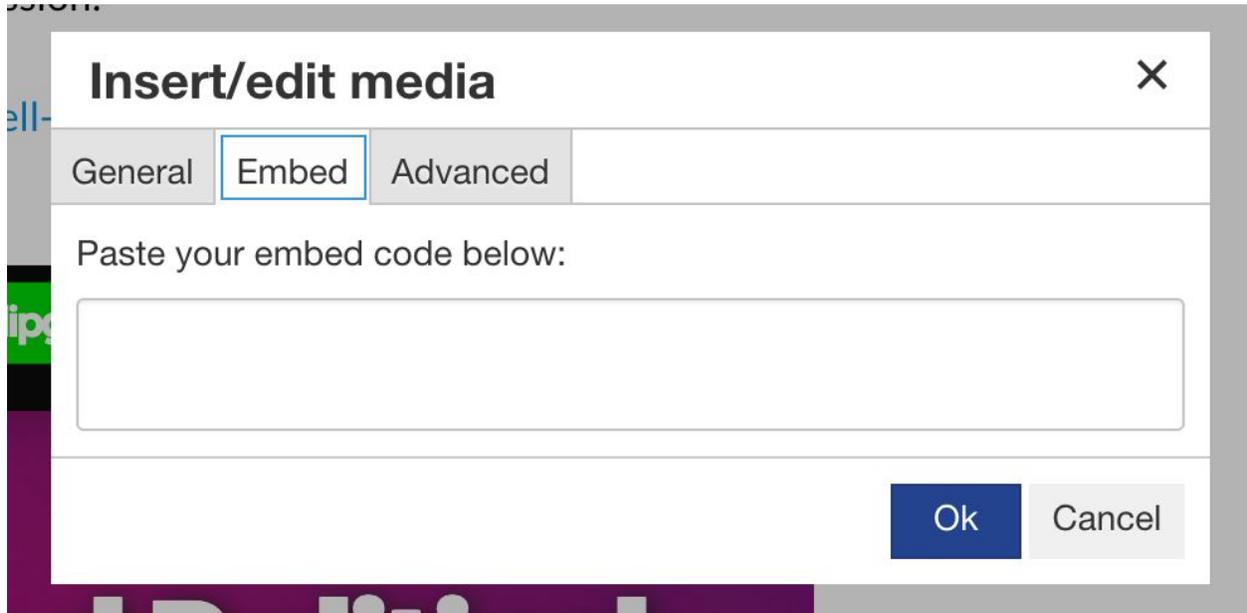
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**Insert/edit media**

Follow this link to go to your video discussion:

[Discussion Two: Justice and National Well-Being](#)

Then use the “Embed” tab to paste the embed code you copied from the FlipGrid site:



**Instructions for students to complete flipgrid assignments via canvas:**

- Flipgrid instructions for students using a smartphone
  - 1. Download Flipgrid app
  - 2. Select "student" when asked to select your profile type
  - 3. Enter the Flipgrid code you've received from your instructor
  - 4. Sign in with your school email address (- this will depend on how the instructor has set up the sign-in procedure)
  - 5. Click on the assignment in the canvas app
  - 6. Click "submission" tab
  - 7. Click "launch external tool"
  - 8. Click the green "+" to post your response
- [YouTube tutorial for students](#)

# Anticipated challenges

- Learning new online apps
- Worries regarding over using students' cell data (although one advantage of Flipgrid is that is it lighter on data usage than other video apps)

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# Responding to the George Floyd Uprising



*Team D*

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# Philosophical Toolkit: Responding to High- Profile Racist Events



The Pedagogical Method, Theoretical Content,  
and Activities for Students to assist in classroom  
discussion of the George Floyd Uprisings  
and Beyond

# Pedagogical Method

## → Setting the Context

- ◆ Teacher as model for discussion
- ◆ Own your social position
- ◆ Set up shared history and facts of the case
- ◆ Define terms

## → Connecting Current Events to Philosophy

- ◆ Consider multiple philosophical tools that may be relevant
- ◆ Connect theory and practice

## → Vary Methodologies/Order

## → Pedagogue Self-Care



# Theoretical Content

## Connecting to Your Course Topic

- Analytic Tools
  - ◆ Critical Thinking
  - ◆ Argument Analysis & Fallacies
- Theoretical Tools
  - ◆ Philosophical Subfield Thematic Questions
  - ◆ Reference to Specific Philosophical Texts
- Social and Historical Context
  - ◆ Civil Rights then and now
  - ◆ Systemic Racism vs Individual Attitude



# Activities for Students

## → Processing Initial Event

- ◆ Anonymous Comments
- ◆ Think-Pair-Share

## → Getting the Facts

- ◆ Crowdsourc student knowledge, professor corrects
- ◆ Practice evaluating credible sources

## → Setting the Context

- ◆ Consider resemblances to other events within students' lifetime
- ◆ Pop-Culture Media connected to the event

## → Making Connections to Course Material

- ◆ Journaling, Reflection, or Assessment

## → Taking Philosophical Response Beyond the Classroom



# Anticipated challenges

- Student Resistance
- Content Unfamiliarity
- Pedagogical Misalignment
- Lack of Administrative or Faculty Support



Further Resources: available below or via the link:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YRfEEzhuzNuc\\_0ZU3c60cPN0hrn0VGAgg4s1accklsg/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YRfEEzhuzNuc_0ZU3c60cPN0hrn0VGAgg4s1accklsg/edit)

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# Philosophical Toolkit for Responding to High-Profile Racist Events

## *Pedagogical Method*

### Setting the context:

- Teacher as model
  - Demonstrate vulnerability but acknowledge the power dynamic and your own expertise
  - Model non-judgmental listening
  - Be explicit about your social position (race/gender/class/disability/sexuality etc.)
- Establish the basic facts of the event, including all the evidence students need to recognize the event as racist. Don't assume students have full or accurate knowledge
- Connect immediate context to larger historical and social context
- Define terms

### Connecting current events to philosophy:

- Consider multiple philosophical tools that may be relevant:
  - Theoretical tools
  - Analytical tools
  - Historical tools
  - Practical/ Experiential Resources--student & teacher experiences
- Connect theory and practice/philosophical content and student experience
  - Focus on practical application of theory--Utilize practical methods to bring students into the experience using everyday examples and commentary to elicit feedback and involvement
  - Incorporate relevant branches of philosophy as the basis for student engagement and involvement & exploration

### Other things to keep in mind

- Vary methodologies to reach diverse learners--ask yourself who is your "default user"? Who might be excluded?
- Don't forget self-care!

## *Philosophical Content (What the instructor might provide)*

Possible Connections to traditional philosophical sub-disciplines [FEEL FREE TO ADD]

- Ethics/Moral Philosophy
  - Duties to promote the common good
  - Responsibilities to friends and loved ones vs political responsibilities
  - Protest as the cultivation of virtue
- Social & Political Philosophy
  - Social Contract Theory
  - Foucaultian power relations
  - Democratic theory
- Epistemology
  - Rationalism vs. Empiricism
  - Testimonial injustice
  - “Fake news”
  - Echo chambers
- Free Will/Determinism
  - Individual responsibility
  - Causality
- Metaphysics/Ontology
  - Human nature
  - The nature of the soul/mind
  - Ontology of race/identity
- Critical thinking and logic
  - Argument analysis
  - Fallacies
- Existentialism
  - Limitations of freedom
  - Self-definition and justification
- Religious Philosophy
  - The value of human life (across religious traditions)
  - Immortality and memorialization
- Language and Discourse
  - Pragmatics and meaning
    - The implicature of “All lives matter”
    - Focus on irrelevant or unlikely interpretations (“Maybe the swastika is a Hindu good luck symbol!”) importance of context in establishing meaning.

Social and Historical Context

- Police brutality, abuse of power
- White privilege
- Slavery--long history of injustice.

- Civil Rights then and now (Dr. Martin Luther King & Black Lives Matter)
- Systematic racism vs. individual attitudes

#### Textual Resources [FEEL FREE TO ADD]

- Traditional
  - Social & Political Philosophy
    - Plato's *Republic* (question of the authority of the state-- other Socratic dialogues are also important here, such as *Apology*, *Crito*, *Euthyphro*, *Phaedrus*-- questioning baseline assumptions of the social order as praxis)
    - Machiavelli (the obligation of the power of rule-- one can be cruel, but must have justification, or the people will rise up)
    - Locke (questions of personal liberty)
    - Rousseau (the social contract-- what happens when it is broken, who is included) \*supplement Charles Mills *Racial Contract*
- Non-Traditional
  - Social and Political Philosophy
    - Franz Fanon "On Violence", *Wretched of the Earth*
    - Aime Cesaire *Discourse on Colonialism*
    - Sara Ahmed "The Phenomenology of Whiteness"
    - Linda Martin Alcoff "Sotomayor's Reasoning"
    - Iris Marion Young "The Five Faces of Oppression"

#### Other Media (podcasts, videos, news articles, etc.) [FEEL FREE TO ADD (INCLUDING NEW CATEGORIES)]

- Protest and collective action
  - *The Onion* Parody article: time is not inherently neutral or progressive  
<https://www.theonion.com/baltimore-residents-urged-to-stay-indoors-until-social-1819577746>
  - Kimberly Jones, "How Can We Win"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmCmdM5HCTc> (full speech no edits @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llci8MVh8J4>)
- History of race/racism
  - "The Case for Reparations," Ta-Nehisi Coates--history of red-lining in Chicago  
[https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_campaign=share](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share)
  - *1619 Project*  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>
- Privilege, power, social identity
  - George Yancy, "Dear White America", *NYT*  
<https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/12/24/dear-white-america/>
- History of policing and state violence

- Social imagination, narrative, media criticism
  - Kimberly Jones interview with Trevor Noah  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1k9APedIUY>
- Prison/police abolition
  - Ruth Wilson Gilmore, “Is Prison Necessary?”, *NYT*  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/magazine/prison-abolition-ruth-wilson-gilmore.html>
  - 8 to Abolition platform <https://www.8toabolition.com/>
  - *The Prison in Twelve Landscapes*--film about how prisons extend beyond their walls into communities. <https://www.prisonlandscapes.com>
  - *Vision for Black Lives*--policy platform of the Movement for Black Lives  
<https://m4bl.org/policy-platforms/>
- School segregation, school to prison pipeline
  - *This American Life*, “The Problem We All Live With” about school integration in Ferguson, MO after the Michael Brown killing.  
<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with-part-one>
  - “Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City,” Nicole Hannah-Jones.  
<https://nyti.ms/1TXcq5c>
  - *Nice White Parents*--podcast about school desegregation in New York City.  
<https://art19.com/shows/nice-white-parents>
- Social construction of criminality
- Ontology of race
  - “Does Race Exist?”--clip from Charles Mills lecture about social ontology of race.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epAv6Q6da\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epAv6Q6da_o)

## *Activities (What students might do)*

- Initial processing of events--dealing with emotional fallout
  - Discussion circle--everyone has a chance to speak if they want
  - Anonymous notecards--everyone writes down their reactions and exchanges notecards. Students read anonymous reactions of other students aloud.
  - Shared google doc where students can all contribute their reactions either anonymously or non-anonymously
  - Polling/word-cloud app that students can sign into with their phones (e.g. Poll Everywhere)
  - Leave the room and let students discuss without you present
  - Invite students to tell you what they need from you
  - Think-pair-share
  - Provide student support resources
  
- Getting the facts
  - Give students an opportunity to state what they think is true. Firmly (and compassionately) shoot down any misinformation.
  - Practice gathering information and evaluating the credibility of sources
    - Have small groups research different questions, discuss reliability of what they find, and present to the class
  
- Setting the context
  - Help students to identify recent events---within their lifetimes---that this event most strongly resembles.
  - Steer people away from trying to guess the inner mental states of the participants and show how actions were driven by context.
  - Discuss the social construction of the various identities involved.
    - Give small groups a piece of media (image, ad, news clip, article, etc.) to analyze and present to the class
  - Expert Q&A panel
  
- Making connections to other course material
  - Journal reflections to connect recent events to the course material
  - Invite students to make connections on asynchronous discussion forums
  
- Taking the philosophical response beyond the classroom
  - Name local authorities and groups involved in the conflict and what their interests are
  - Give students space to share ideas, information, and resources
  - Organize a trip to a local museum, historic site, etc.
  - Have students develop a “code of human practice”

# Creating conditions for honest class discussions of race and identity

*Team E*

André de Avillez

August Gorman

Betsy Decyk

Claire Lockard

David Sanson

# Listening for and working with affect in discussions about race and identity

**Problem: The role of unacknowledged and/or unaddressed affective responses to conversations about race and identity**

e.g., anger, defensiveness, exhaustion, fear, shame, guilt, embarrassment

**These responses can help one discover one's own philosophical commitments. But when unacknowledged they can hinder or derail conversations.**

This is true for students as well as faculty

# Affective Growth in Conversations on Race



1. Developing a vocabulary for affective responses (e.g. emotional color wheel; emoji discussion, etc...)

2. Reflecting on the basis of our affective responses

A . Self-reflecting: Why am I feeling this way? Where is this coming from?

What are my stories and experiences, even if not shared

Giving expression to what can be shared (voice, writings, art, etc...)

B. Listening for, and seeking out, alternative responses.

What stories or experiences do those responses come from?

3. Exploring/Questioning the response

A. Clarifying, adding context, adding nuance

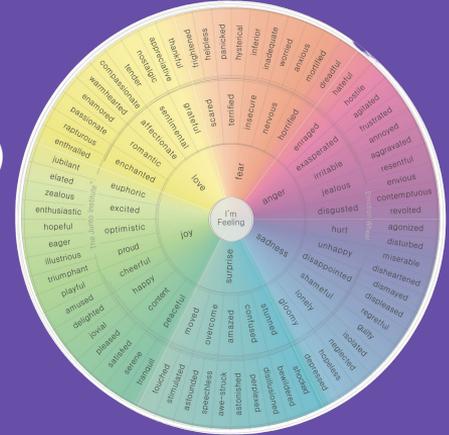
B Identifying assumptions; questioning assumptions

C. Questioning its relationship to justice

D. Discovering more about one's values and commitments and other values and commitments

E. Evaluating: Is it productive? Should it be honored and kept? Should it be owned, but set aside

4. Using what we have surfaced to design a way to move forward



## Why does it work?

Sets the stage for metacognitive reflection about affective responses and for moving from these responses toward action

## Who can use it and when?

- Instructors can use this framework when designing a course
- Can share with students so they know what the goals are
- Students can work on them together

## What are the virtues of this tool?

- Adaptable to various teaching contexts and assignment types
  - Resources for lesson plan: [\*Affective Growth in Conversations on Race: Additional Resources\*](#)
- Oriented toward action, imagining a different future

# Affective Growth in Conversations on Race: *Additional Resources*

## Developing an Emotional Vocabulary

[Technically white: Emoji skin-tone modifiers as American technoculture](#)

[Mood Meter App, designed to help build emotional intelligence](#)

[Physical-sensation-oriented emotional color wheel \(accessibility note: alexithymia friendly\)](#)

[The Impact of Race and Racism on Students' Emotions: A Critical Race Analysis](#)

[Impossible Burdens: White Institutions, Emotional Labor, and Micro-Resistance](#)

## Suggested Essays and Narratives

Anzaldúa, Gloria. "La conciencia de la mestiza / Towards a New Consciousness," in *Borderlands/La Frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987. 99-113.

— — —. "How to tame a wild tongue," in *Borderlands/La Frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987. 75-86.

Fanon, Franz. "The Lived Experience of the Black Man," in *Black Skin, White Mask*. Trans Richard Philcox. New York: Grove, 2008. 89-119.

Jemisin, N. K. *How Long 'till Black Future Month*. New York: Orbit, 2018.

Kristie Dotson, "Concrete Flowers: Contemplating the Profession of Philosophy," *Hypatia*, Vol 26, Issue 2, 10 March 2011.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2011.01176.x>

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, New York: One World, 2015.

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *The Water Dancer*, New York: One World, 2019.

["I could have been Mike Brown..."](#)

[Black Women Oral History Project Interviews, Interview Transcripts & Audio](#)

[All the Weight of Our Dreams: On Living Racialized Autism](#)

Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, Respect, New York: Basic Books, 2000.

## **In-the-moment Strategies for Addressing Emotions When They Arise During Conversations**

[Re-railing the Conversation on Race](#)

[Myisha Cherry: On Conversations](#)

[Race talk and facilitating difficult racial dialogues - Counseling Today](#)

## **Emotions and Race in the Classroom: Deeper Dives**

[Feeling Power: Emotions and Education](#), Megan Boler

[Re-conceptualizing complicity in the social justice classroom: affect, politics and anti-complicity pedagogy](#)

[\(Un\)happiness and social justice education: ethical, political and pedagogic lessons](#)

[Reimagining Critical Race Theory in Education: Mental Health, Healing, and the Pathway to Liberatory Praxis](#)

[Anger, Affective Injustice and Emotion Regulation](#)

[Myisha Cherry, The Errors and Limitations of Our "Anger-Evaluating" Ways](#)

[Love, Anger, and Racial Injustice](#)

[Hilary Malatino, Tough Breaks: Trans Rage and the Cultivation of Resilience](#)

[Sara Ahmed, Happy Objects](#)

[On Anger, Silence and Epistemic Injustice](#)

## **Pedagogy**

In our slides, we introduced a tool for facilitating affective growth in conversations on race:

## Affective Growth in Conversations on Race

Acknowledging/  
Naming → Basis → Exploring/  
Questioning → Designing a Future

1. Developing a vocabulary for affective responses (e.g. emotional color wheel; emoji discussion, etc...)
2. Reflecting on the basis of our affective responses
  - A. Self-reflecting: Why am I feeling this way? Where is this coming from?  
What are my stories and experiences, even if not shared  
Giving expression to what can be shared (voice, writings, art, etc...)
  - B. Listening for, and seeking out, alternative responses.  
What stories or experiences do those responses come from?
3. Exploring/Questioning the response
  - A. Clarifying, adding context, adding nuance
  - B. Identifying assumptions; questioning assumptions
  - C. Questioning its relationship to justice
  - D. Discovering more about one's values and commitments and other values and commitments
  - E. Evaluating: Is it productive? Should it be honored and kept? Should it be owned, but set aside
4. Using what we have surfaced to design a way to move forward



Here is a possible scaffolding for using this tool:

1. Using the arc for one's own responses  
Starting from where the students are (and starting with more systematic issues)  
These examples are questions about education, but could be other types of questions  
E.g., What do they feel about learning experiences during this pandemic?  
E.g. What do they feel about collaborative learning?
2. Using the arc when considering affect in the works of others
3. Using the arc when in discussions with classmates (and others)

# Anticipated challenges

- Not all students will have the same challenges, and these challenges won't be evenly distributed
- Need to avoid designing solely around a default (e.g. white) student's likely responses (e.g. fragility, defensiveness)
- Avoid activities that force students to share the basis of their emotional responses
  - This will make it difficult to assess metacognitive growth in some cases.
- Some emotions deserve to be centered during class conversation; others need to be processed, but without the labor of students of color. (potential solution: leave room for silence)
- Risk of tokenizing individuals or individual narratives as representative of a group (potential solution: make use of multiple examples)
- Concerns about whose responses are likely to receive uptake in class discussions
- Ensuring that students are able to connect their experiences to broader systems of oppression

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# Creating conditions for honest class discussions of race and identity

*Team F*

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# Adapting Privilege Pedagogy

**Problem: Students are sometimes uncomfortable thinking and talking about race.**

# **Brian Obach's identity activity**

**Send some students out, teach a new concept, reintroduce outsiders, quiz all on that concept, then discuss the quiz's fairness.**

**Purpose: Giving students a new identity (insider/outsider). Talking about this identity may facilitate discussing other identities.**

# Anticipated challenges

- **Pierce on Obach: these identities are trivial**
- **The ‘quiz’ may create the appearance that the professor may grade unfairly**
- **Difficult to do online**
- Pierce article: <https://philpapers.org/rec/PIEIC-2>
- Obach article: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ640084>

**Contact: Karl Aho (kaho@tarleton.edu)**

# Creating conditions for honest class discussions of race and identity

## *Team G*

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Tim Fitzjohn

Jonathan Spelman

Kaija Mortensen

Nicole Fice

# Toolbox for Creating Conditions for Honest Class Discussions

## The Problem:

We've all have had difficult discussions that unexpectedly arise that lead to anxiety & discomfort on the part of both instructor & students



anxiety  
vulnerability  
discussion  
openness  
honesty  
collaboration  
transparency  
trust  
discomfort

# Toolbox for Creating Conditions for Honest Class Discussions

[Google Doc \(link\)](#) with the following Tools:

(also inserted below)

- Instructor Self-Reflection
  - Surveying Students
  - Creating Guidelines for Discussion
  - Practicing Discussion
  - Sustaining Honest Discussion throughout the course
- 
- The toolbox encourages both instructors and students to practice honesty and self-reflection in a variety of ways.
  - All instructors can use this toolbox, regardless of discipline or speciality. The toolbox can be used throughout the semester.



# Toolbox for Creating Conditions for Honest Class Discussions

AAPT Workshop on Anti-Racism Pedagogy

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**Our goal in creating this toolbox was to create resources both for instructors and students for navigating discussions.**

Here you will find five sections for some suggestions on how you might approach having conversations in your classroom, both on “hot topics” like race/racism, identity, etc. and in other philosophy classrooms.

The five suggested tools in the toolbox are as follows:

1. Preparing for Honest Class Discussions
2. Surveying Students
3. Creating Guidelines for Discussions
4. Practicing having these Discussions on day-one
5. Sustaining Honest Discussion throughout the Course

Using the tools suggested below together will help to create the conditions for having honest class discussions.

Here is a wordcloud that represents some principles we had in mind in creating this toolbox. They might help to guide some of your thoughts as you review the suggestions below.



# 1. Preparing for Honest Class Discussions:

Facilitating honest discussions in the classroom begins with introspective work carried out by the instructor prior to the start of class. Naming our own histories, biases, and experiences allows us to 'embrace' the social realities that are often ignored or oversimplified because they are uncomfortable for instructors to think about both inside and outside of the classroom. Engaging in self-reflection, naming these uncomfortable truths (especially as members that are, broadly, benefactors of oppressive structures) 'models' for students how to embrace these truths and discomforts.

Another way to phrase the point is that by working on exploring one's own history, one is better able to be appropriately vulnerable as an instructor in the classroom. Expressing vulnerability in the classroom for the purposes of facilitating honest discussions does not mean baring one's soul. Rather, cultivating a kind of vulnerability prior to engaging in the classroom means to think about how to 'sit with' the truth, or acknowledge the nuance and significance of complex social issues and one's own relation to those issues.

The questions below that prompt self-reflection are not meant to be evaluative or to search for 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Instead, these questions are focused on being truthful about one's own experiences and 'comfort-levels' in relation to topics that might be met with apprehension when they are broached in the classroom.

## **Questions:**

What is the space and place where I engage in teaching? In other words, what are the truths that I should be familiar with about the very land upon which these discussions are to take place?

What is my social location and history? What aspects of my own history and social location that have contributed to my self-identity outside of the classroom?

What histories or social locations do I have little to no familiarity with?

Drawing on my own social location and history, what biases am I bringing into the classroom prior to engaging with students?

What feelings or states-of-mind arise for me when I explore my own biases? How do these feelings or states-of-mind impact my role in facilitating classroom discussions?

What are some 'moves to innocence' or defensive reactions that arise when I reflect on my role in problematic histories and social locations? (For example, a 'move to innocence' is to diffuse one's own role in perpetuating oppressive structures and norms by resting on a phrase like 'well, I didn't know any better at the time.')

What are ways in which my teaching and my presence as an instructor is 'non-neutral' or already immersed in narratives that affect the classroom environment?

## 2. Surveying students

### **Why Use the Survey:**

Although many courses do not *directly* address “difficult” or “uncomfortable” topics about race and identity, students often connect their own experiences of identity to the topics we discuss in class. When students connect their own lives and experiences to course material, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated to learn. As instructors, we want to be ready to facilitate these conversations when they come up and, if possible, anticipate and plan for these discussions ahead of time. This survey is designed to help you as an instructor find out what types of connections your students might make to the topics that you will be covering in your class so you can be prepared ahead of time to create inclusive and productive conversations.

### **Delivery Suggestions:**

We recommend that you employ the survey towards the beginning of the semester and use the feedback when implementing the “Guidelines for Discussions” activity in the next section. Give students time outside of synchronous meeting time to complete the survey and have it with them for the “Guidelines for Discussions” activity. Provide an in-depth introduction to the topics you will be covering in class as students often, understandably, don’t understand the topics beforehand. For example, you may have a unit in your class on “Environmental Justice.” When students read that title they may not know that you will be discussing the value of human life, racial inequity, indigenous rights, impoverished communities, and other potentially triggering issues. If you will be holding your class F2F then you could provide an in-depth discussion of each topic at the beginning of the semester. If you are holding your class online in some format, you might consider making a video introduction to the content where you explain the types of questions and topics each unit will cover. This will provide the students with more information which will, hopefully, result in better survey responses.

A typical F2F scenario might involve handing out a paper survey along with the syllabus to have students hand in the following class when you hold the “Guidelines for Discussions” activity. For online scenarios you use Google Forms or a similar tool through your LMS to send to students to receive anonymous feedback. Choosing anonymity is up to you though it is likely to engender more honest responses. If you choose anonymous responses, we recommend that you put significant effort into explaining the importance of the survey to the students so they are more likely to complete it. You could emphasize that you want this course to be meaningful to their actual lives and that this survey will help in that effort.

### **Suggested Survey Questions:**

Spend some time reading through the course schedule and consider the topics we will be covering. While you are reading through, answer the following questions. Note that your responses are anonymous so please be as open and honest as possible.

1. Which of the topics that we will be discussing are the most exciting to you? Describe why in a few sentences.
2. Which of the topics that we will be discussing are the least exciting to you? Describe why in a few sentences.

3. Do you think that any of the topics we'll be discussing in class could lead to "difficult" or "uncomfortable" conversations regarding race, identity, class, gender, or other personal issues? If yes, describe what kinds of conversations might come up when covering specific topics.
4. Difficult and uncomfortable conversations almost always lead to heightened emotions and feelings and this is absolutely normal! How do you think you would feel if/when we have one of these difficult discussions in class (excited, nervous, worried, anxious, etc)? Why do you think particular topics would lead to these feelings? For example, if you think a topic will make you nervous, what is it about the topic that might lead to your feeling nervous?
5. Use the space below to write down any other thoughts, questions, or concerns you have about the topics we'll be covering in class.

### 3. Creating Guidelines for Discussions:

Establishing expectations for open, honest, and critical discussions on the first day of class is important for creating a good learning environment for students.

One way in which expectations can be established on the first day is to ask your students to come up with "guidelines" or "principles" for class discussions together. These activities are useful in all kinds of philosophy and other classrooms.

One option is to co-create these guidelines or principles with your students, allowing them to have choice and collaborate with each other to build their classroom, whether in-person or online.

- Choice and collaboration are key principles of some trauma- and violence-informed approaches to teaching (see Mays Imad <http://heltasa.org.za/trauma-informed-teaching-learning-teaching-in-time-of-uncertainties/>).

One suggestion in creating guidelines with your students is to set clear expectations (e.g., answer the question 'why are we doing this' to establish transparency) and scaffold the activity with clear instructions.

You can prompt students to reflect on a) how they can set personal goals for participation, b) what they expect from their peers in order to have good discussions, and c) what they expect from the instructor in terms of discussion facilitation.

- Synchronous option for the activity:
  - Ask students to reflect for a few minutes in their notes on their previous learning experiences in having discussions in class/online. Prompt them with questions like "what was a positive experience you had in a class discussion?", "what made that experience helpful for your learning?", "what did you / your peers / the instructor do to help?"

- After the private reflection, consider assigning small-group work, using for example the break-out rooms feature in Zoom, to bring students together to tell each other about those experiences, again using the questions above.
  - After several minutes of small-group work, bring things back to the collective and ask students to share what their groups discussed.
  - Use this discussion as a springboard to brainstorm guidelines for how, in your class, everyone can work together to create positive (and honest) discussions.
  - Keep track of the suggestions and make them available for follow-up.
- Asynchronous option for the activity:
    - Again, ask students to reflect on their previous positive learning experiences in terms of discussions. Consider having them anonymously submit these reflections to you.
    - Using options like VoiceThread or a collaborative Google doc, with clear instructions, ask students to contribute their thoughts on having discussions based on those previous experiences.
    - Prompt students to add to the guidelines and build off of the suggestions of one another.
    - Synthesize the information and report back to students to make sure these guidelines are communicated. Make the guidelines available.
  - Making guidelines available:
    - Make the guidelines document available for students to reflect on in the future. Post to your LMS, etc.
    - This might require you (or your students) to synthesize their contributions in a separate document, e.g. in a Google doc, word/PDF doc, etc. Consider whether you want to finalize the guidelines document or have it act as a living document students can continue to contribute to throughout the class.
    - Also think about where the guidelines will be visible: you might consider adding a link to or reminder of them in forums, VoiceThreads, etc., or use short verbal reminders during synchronous sessions prior to discussions.
    - Also see the section on “sustaining honest discussion throughout the course” below.

## 4. Practicing having these discussions on day-one

Getting good at having honest conversations about sensitive issues like race and identity requires practice. If you're going to enable students to be open and honest, you'll need to create a community where they trust one another (and you).

With that goal in mind, we've created three sets of questions. We encourage you to use some of these questions to practice the kind of open, safe discussion that promotes trust. Each set asks students to do something different. The first set of questions asks students to share something personal about themselves. The second set of questions asks students to weigh in on a low-stakes issue. The third set of questions asks students to weigh in on a higher stakes issue.

Rather than focusing on which particular question you want to use, we would encourage you to first think about which *kind* of question you want to use. There's no secret formula here.

You know what will work best given your class goals. [The first set of questions are nice in that they allow students to share something personal without opening the students up to questioning. The second and third sets of questions require students to take positions that they could, in principle, be asked to justify. You might even want to highlight this distinction for your class.]

### **First Set of Questions**

Some of these questions are adapted from [7 powerful team-building questions to help you build trust and connections at work](#) and [12 Non-Awkward Team Building Activities That Build Trust](#).

- What is one of your favorite childhood memories?
- What is one of the best presents you've ever received?
- Who was your role model growing up?
- What was the best birthday of your life?
- What is one of the highlights of your life?
- What is the furthest you've been from home?
- What is one of your most embarrassing moments?
- What is something you were afraid of when you were younger?
- What is something you worry about?
- What is something you'd love to do someday?
- What is one skill you have always wanted to learn?
- If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- *Another option is to make time for a show-and-tell activity where students share something that is meaningful to them with the class. Maybe they can even bring their objects to the (virtual) classroom to share.*

### **Second Set of Questions**

- What is the best game?
- What is the best sport?
- Who is the best athlete ever?
- Who is the best [insert sport here] player ever?
- What is the best "piece" of art ever?
- What is the best kind of music?
- Who is the best artist/composer ever?
- What is the best band ever?
- What is the best song ever?

### **Third Set of Questions**

One way to improve the quality of these discussions is to use cases from either the [Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl](#) or the [National High School Ethics Bowl](#). These cases give students the basic background information they need to be an informed participant in the discussion. When I (Jonathan) do this at the beginning of the semester, I usually give students a couple cases and corresponding prompts and let them choose which one they'd like to discuss.

One final note about these questions is that most of them are framed as questions about what the law should be. Sometimes these are easier for students to get a handle on than questions about ethics, but if you'd prefer, you can convert them into ethical questions about the morality of the acts in question.

- Should vaping be outlawed?
- Should recreational marijuana use be legalized?

- Should the drinking age be lowered?
- Should the death penalty be abolished?
- Should active euthanasia be legalized?
- Should parents be allowed to genetically enhance their children?
- Should plastic straws be outlawed?
- Should trophy hunting be legal?
- Should people be allowed to eat dogs (or horses)?
- Should people be required to wear face coverings in public?

No matter what questions you ask, we would encourage you to use the [Think, Pair, Share](#) strategy for your discussion. Giving students time to think for themselves and then an opportunity to share their thoughts with a small group, you're helping them get the confidence they need to share their own thoughts with the class.

## 5. Sustaining honest discussion throughout the course

Once you've established the conditions for honest class discussion detailed above, it is important to engage students in continual self-reflection throughout the course. We recommend a pattern of checking in with your students, both individually and as a group, throughout the course.

### When introducing a new text/unit/issue

Consider using an anonymous polling tool for gathering initial reactions from students to class topics **at the beginning of a unit**. This can help students get a feel for the range of responses to a given topic without making it personal.

- Padlet.com
- Polling software
  - <https://oedb.org/ilibrarian/polling-classroom-4-free-polling-tools-keep-students-engaged/>
  - <https://www.mentimeter.com/>
  - <https://www.sli.do/>

### In preparation for new topics or in the aftermath of an unexpectedly difficult conversation.

- A possible prompt: “What do you need from your classmates and teacher to have an open and honest dialogue about the information we will encounter in ...”
- A possible activity: “Have students write a letter to themselves in which they discuss their fears and hopes for talking about ... with their teacher and classmates. What are they thinking that wasn't said today in class? What do they know that others might not? What do they want to learn? What do they want to share?”  
(<https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/talking-about-race-and-racism>)

### Dealing with emotions in the moment

- Equip students with strategies they can use to persevere during difficult conversations.
  - See section “Plan for Students” in this document:  
<https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/TT-Lets-Talk-December-2019.pdf>
- Make a plan for responding to strong emotions as they arise.
  - Strategies for responding to strong emotions:  
[http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/Responding\\_to\\_Strong\\_Emotions.pdf](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/Responding_to_Strong_Emotions.pdf)
  - How to make the most of “hot moments” in the classroom:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tuMuMVnI7soHLcTNxzCTqcpkunoASHW\\_WvNuxphyxxA/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tuMuMVnI7soHLcTNxzCTqcpkunoASHW_WvNuxphyxxA/edit)

## **Additional Resources**

Many teaching and learning centers have developed similar toolboxes for addressing the many elements of creating conditions for honest class discussions. These three include a series of general considerations and specific strategies and tools.

- [Difficult Dialogues | Center for Teaching | Vanderbilt University](#)
- [Guidelines for Discussing Incidents of Hate, Bias, and Discrimination](#)
- <https://equity.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CreatingaPositiveClassroomClimateWeb-2.pdf>

# Anticipated challenges

- Will this work for all classes?
- Will my students be able to anticipate which issues will be difficult or make them uncomfortable?
- A lot to add into a classroom
- Not a panacea!

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# Anti-racist learning outcomes in philosophy class

*Team H*

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Bailey Szustak

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David Concepcion

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# Watering Wildflowers: Developing Anti-Racist Learning Outcomes

Thinking about learning outcomes through the question of who philosophy is **for** (cf Dotson 2011).

How do we generate learning outcomes that won't force students to be concrete flowers?

Note: learning outcomes won't be anti-racist on their own! But some lend themselves better to anti-racist pedagogy.

Access Dotson's "Concrete Flowers" [here](#)

# Characteristics of anti-racist learning outcomes

1. Measure each student's gain rather than whether a student reaches a single, faculty-fixed endpoint
2. Allows for the greatest number of paths to achieve the gain
3. Encourages students to engage their full selves
4. Offers opportunities for students to experience wide ranges of personal connection

# Examples

1. Students will *improve* their ability to identify and problematize unstated assumptions
2. Students will *experience* and *develop* a sense of themselves as a philosopher
3. Students will *expand* their capacity to formulate their own coherent and creative philosophical positions
4. Students will *improve* their ability to apply philosophical tools to other contexts

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For more examples: see the following pages, also available via the link:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s2vrVN5m7Z67afockhZ5aRtA\\_CMfwB6QkXQVrhRi0Ql/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s2vrVN5m7Z67afockhZ5aRtA_CMfwB6QkXQVrhRi0Ql/edit?usp=sharing)

## Sample Learning Outcomes for Anti-Racist Pedagogy

Here's a list of sample learning outcomes that could be used in connection with anti-racist and inclusive pedagogical practices. Most of them are things that we think would be suitable for a philosophy class at any level.

Some of the key verbs are highlighted here to note that students will all be starting from different places in their development of these skills. In other cases, the outcomes refer to things that students will be doing.

1. Students will *develop* epistemic humility, meaning that they will *improve* their ability to see their own view as one among many, imagine good reasons why other people believe what they believe, imagine powerful but ultimately insufficient reasons to think their own view is mistaken, etc.
2. Students will *become less* provincial/more cosmopolitan, e.g. increase their knowledge of the massive number of views and ways of being that are unlike their own.
3. Students will *become more* comfortable with ambiguity/more able to sit (longer) with uncertainty.
4. Students will *improve* their ability to identify and problematize unstated assumptions.
5. Students will *improve* their ability to ask questions that shake their foundations.
6. Students will *improve their ability* to critically analyze and evaluate philosophical arguments.
7. Students will *practice* formulating and defending philosophical positions.
8. Students will *develop* careful and charitable listening skills.
9. Students will *practice evaluating* what makes an argument strong, including how to evaluate the strength of supporting evidence.
10. Students will *expand their capacity* to formulate their own coherent and creative philosophical positions.
11. Students will *improve* their ability to articulate philosophical ideas, positions, and questions.
12. Students will *improve* their ability to apply philosophical tools (i.e. concepts, argument logic, etc.) to other contexts (applied issues, other disciplines, social contexts)

But remember! A lot depends on the *implementation* of these learning outcomes. These are intended to work in conjunction with other inclusive and anti-oppressive pedagogical practices, instead of being a substitute for these practices.

## References

Kristie Dotson, "Concrete Flowers: Contemplating the Profession of Philosophy," *Hypatia*, 26/2 (Spring 2011): 403-409. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/23016554.pdf>

# Anti-racist learning outcomes in philosophy class

## *Team 1*

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# **Anti-Racist and Anti-Domination Learning Objectives**

**What does the process of determining learning outcomes look like for anti-racist classes? How do you determine and implement them?**

Sub-problem: how do you generalize objectives for diverse philosophy classes?

## Reflection Questions to Prepare for Anti-Racist & Anti-Domination Learning Objective Development

- Do my learning outcomes allow students to build on their prior learning and life experience, regardless of background?
- Or am I asking them to learn things that are totally disconnected from their life experience?
- How can I make the connections to what they already know?
- Do students have ways of bringing their whole identity and personality into the learning experience?
- Or am I asking them to ignore or set aside the expression of their identity in order to be part of the intellectual community?
- Is there a "default student" that the list of outcomes assumes? If so, how narrow/open, inclusive/exclusive, accurate, etc. is this vision of the default student?
- What do the tone, language, and presentation of my learning objectives implicitly convey?
- Is my tone personal or impersonal? Am I inviting students to learn or am I issuing orders?
- Am I conveying that I have high expectations or low expectations of my students?
- Am I welcoming students into a community, or am I confirming students' fears that they don't really belong in college?

A philosophical solution to a philosophical problem:  
**reflective practice**

Questions to get you started and keep you going

### A Pilot Process for Learning Outcome Evaluation & Revision

- Why do I think anti-racist learning objectives are important?
- How do my existing Learning Outcomes compare to anti-racist learning outcomes?

**STEP 01**

#### Reflection



#### Picking a Path



**STEP 02**

- What are my students like?
- What are my strengths as a teacher?
- What new anti-racist learning objectives will improve the course for me? For my students?

### Anti-Racist & Anti-Domination Learning Objectives do the following:

#### DECOLONIZE

Decolonize course practices to create spaces for identity-based forms of knowing & expression thereby enabling new subject formations.

#### EMPOWER RESISTANCE

Empowers students to resist forces of oppression, brutalization, and domination.

#### DECENTRALIZE

Decentralize disciplinary & historical narratives away from the white patriarchal neoliberal economic standards

#### DIVERSIFY

Diversify what counts as demonstrable forms of academic performance, course content, and philosophical methods.

**STEP 03**



- Which of these new objectives can support existing objectives?
- Which existing learning objectives can support my new objectives?

**STEP 04**



- What features of myself and my students will affect my implementation of these objectives?
- What else do I need to know in order to effectively implement anti-racist learning objectives?

**STEP 05**



- Why is it important to work with others on anti-racist projects?
- Who can you talk to about your anti-racist learning objectives?

**Examples of Anti-Racist Learning Objectives**

<p><b>E1: ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Understanding the logical relationships between theories, individual cases, and counterexamples.</p>	<p><b>E1: REVISED</b></p> <p>Understanding the relationships between theoretical reasoning and lived experiences, historical narratives, and ways of thinking.</p>
<p><b>E2: ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>You will develop awareness of the experiences and perspectives of people of another culture, ethnicity, or race.</p>	<p><b>E2: REVISED</b></p> <p>You will expand your awareness of the experiences and perspectives of people of different cultures, ethnicities, and races.</p>

**Challenges to this Process**

- There are several barriers to this process:
- Racial Battle Fatigue & Undermining Survival and Wellness
  - White Ignorance (see work by C.W. Mills)
  - Performative Allyship, White Fragility, and Virtue Signaling
  - Feelings of risk aversion in the classroom

**Some Anti-Racist Resources:** [NYIT Anti-Oppression Resources](#) [An Anti-Racism YouTube Playlist](#)  
[Chicago Beyond](#) [Critiquing 'Good' Writing as a White Practice](#)

Our infographic: <https://bit.ly/3hBmfZw>

**Challenges we met:** flexibility; responsiveness; reflection and practice  
**Challenges we didn't:** few existing resources; whiteness; fatigue

**Madeline Martin-Seaver**  
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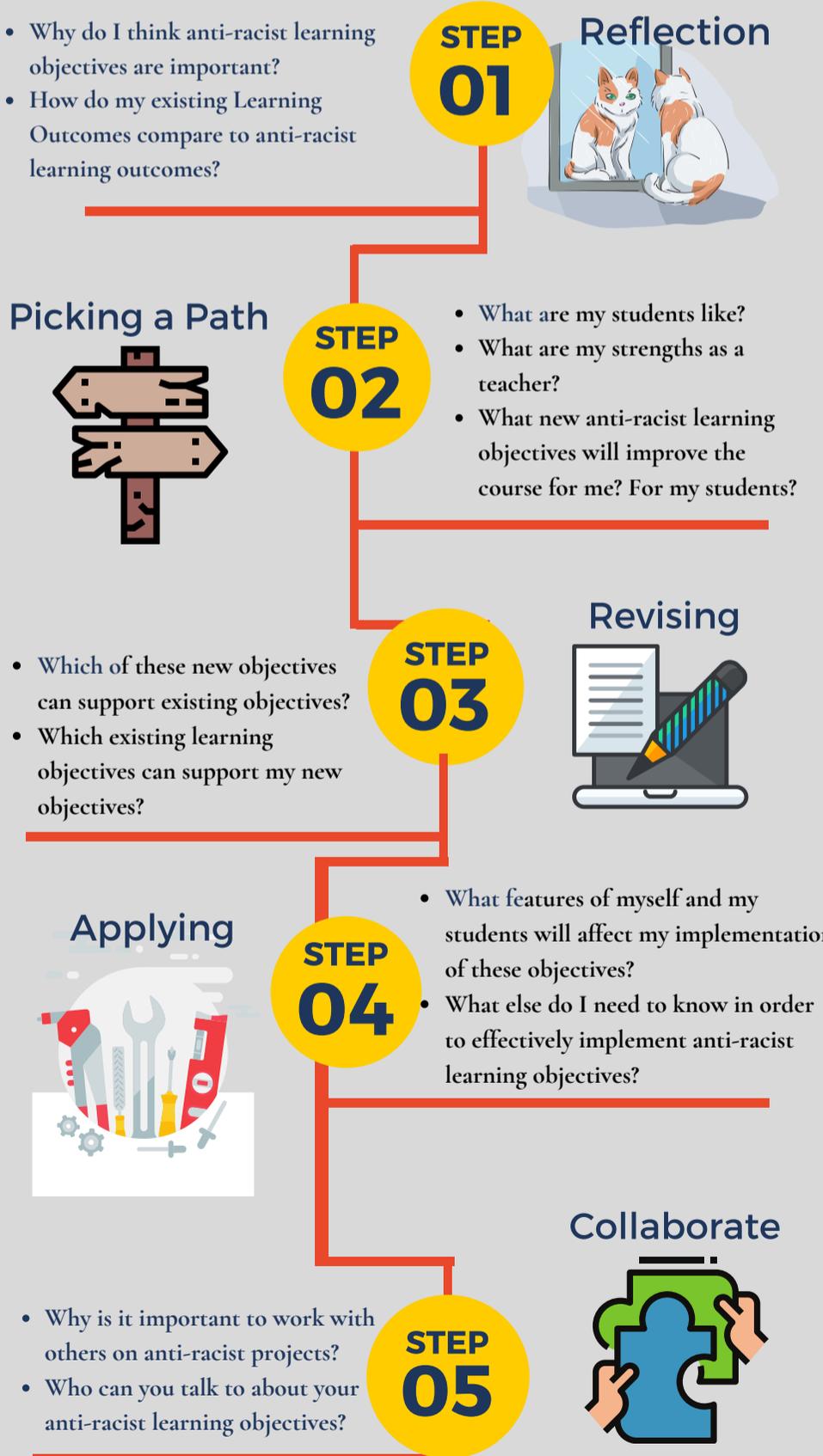
# Looking at Learning Objectives Through an Anti-Racist & Anti-Domination Pedagogical Lens

The purpose of this document is to serve as a resource for philosophy instructors to reflect on learning objectives at all levels of instruction (i.e., course, module, or lesson plan). It is our understanding that this document is imperfect, provisional, and non-exhaustive. We invite feedback for further refinement. Comments, suggestions, and collaborative inquiries can be emailed to [James.Lincoln@uky.edu](mailto:James.Lincoln@uky.edu)

## Reflection Questions to Prepare for Anti-Racist & Anti-Domination Learning Objective Development

- Do my learning outcomes allow students to build on their prior learning and life experience, regardless of background?
- Or am I asking them to learn things that are totally disconnected from their life experience?
- How can I make the connections to what they already know?
- Do students have ways of bringing their whole identity and personality into the learning experience?
- Or am I asking them to ignore or set aside the expression of their identity in order to be part of the intellectual community?
- Is there a “default student” that the list of outcomes assumes? If so, how narrow/open, inclusive/exclusive, accurate, etc. is this vision of the default student?
- What do the tone, language, and presentation of my learning objectives implicitly convey?
- Is my tone personal or impersonal? Am I inviting students to learn or am I issuing orders?
- Am I conveying that I have high expectations or low expectations of my students?
- Am I welcoming students into a community, or am I confirming students’ fears that they don’t really belong in college?

## A Pilot Process for Learning Outcome Evaluation & Revision



### Anti-Racist & Anti-Domination Learning Objectives do the following:

<b>DECOLONIZE</b> Decolonize course practices to create spaces for identity-based forms of knowing & expression thereby enabling new subject formations.	<b>EMPOWER RESISTANCE</b> Empowers students to resist forces of oppression, brutalization, and domination.
<b>DECENTRALIZE</b> Decentralize disciplinary & historical narratives away from the white patriarchal neoliberal economic standards	<b>DIVERSIFY</b> Diversify what counts as demonstrable forms of academic performance, course content, and philosophical methods.

### Examples of Anti-Racist Learning Objectives

<b>E1: ORIGINAL</b> Understanding the <u>logical</u> relationships between theories, individual cases, and counterexamples.	<b>E1: REVISED</b> Understanding the relationships between theoretical reasoning and lived experiences, historical narratives, and ways of thinking.
<b>E2: ORIGINAL</b> You will develop awareness of the experiences and perspectives of people of <u>another</u> culture, ethnicity, or race.	<b>E2: REVISED</b> You will expand your awareness of the experiences and perspectives of people of different cultures, ethnicities, and races.

### Challenges to this Process

There are several barriers to this process:

- [Racial Battle Fatigue & Undermining Survival and Wellness](#)
- [White Ignorance](#) (see work by C.W. Mills)
- [Performative Allyship](#), [White Fragility](#), and [Virtue Signaling](#)
- Feelings of risk aversion in the classroom

# Decolonizing philosophy curricula (rethinking the major)

*Team J*

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# Self-Directed Course Audit

We want to assess the extent to which our courses replicate dominant power structures and legitimate colonial ways of thinking so we can transform our courses & discipline...*but how?*

This tool is designed to make an honest and far-reaching assessment more manageable for instructors and focuses on *both* CONTENT *and* METHODS.

# Self-Directed Course Audit

**This tool helps uncover implicit values & assumptions motivating our course design.**

- Major question/theme groupings help conceptualize
- Long list of example questions to get everyone started
- Serves as both reflective tool and regulatory ideal for future course design

**By offering structure and explicit examples, the audit removes an obstacle to starting the work.**

[Link to TEMPLATE](#)  
(also inserted below)

## **Step-by-Step Self-Directed Course Audit TEMPLATE**

### **Link to sample questions:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uN2IW881DR-D2UCvauhR0a6myXs4EZV1Ps0z54cevco/edit?usp=sharing>

### **Context:**

We should all take a step back to consider how our courses replicate dominant power structures and legitimize colonial ways of thinking.

That process can feel daunting, though, especially for those who are not already experts in post-colonial and anti-racist theory.

A self-guided course audit tool aims to make honest and far-reaching assessment more manageable by chunking questions into types and inspiring further questions to ever more deeply explore the underlying mental models and considerations we cleave to, perhaps without having ever questioned them critically or having seriously entertained alternative approaches.

It is important to understand that this tool is meant to be iterative and expresses a life-long commitment to decolonizing our courses. The questions we ask will change as we work on this process and as we encounter the changing world around us.

We recommend starting this process by generating authentic questions that arise in critical reflection on your course, but believe that inquiring and learning with peers, both expert and non-expert, is a crucial next step that will support genuine anti-racist transformation.

### **A step-by-step way to organize this exercise:**

1. Choose a specific course to audit.
2. Identify overarching categories you associate with this course, e.g. "Agents" and "Relationships," or "Artifacts," and "Events."
3. Create sub-categories that are identified by broad questions of concern. Some examples:
  - under "Agents," identify the sub-category of "Student" with a broad concern such as "Am I imagining a "default student" in my course?"
  - under "Relationships," link the sub-category of "Peer Relationships" with a question such as "What assumptions do I have about my students' relationships with each other in class and outside of class?"
  - under "Artifacts," target the "Syllabus" with a question such as "What features of this syllabus are implying (or dictating) what a philosophy course 'should(n't) be like' or 'should(n't) cover'?"
  - Under "Events," home in on "Small group work" with a concern such as "Is the set-up and support I offer to small groups sufficiently welcoming to students who feel marginalized?"

*TEMPLATE: Self-Directed Course Audit for De-Colonizing One's Courses*  
*Christina Hendricks, Frances Bottenberg, Jenna L. A. Donohue, Kristina Grob*

- More examples here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uN2IW881DR-D2UCvauhR0a6myXs4EZV1Ps0z54cevco/edit?usp=sharing>
4. Respond to the questions and sub-questions you have generated.
  5. Reflect on overlaps between your responses: Do they indicate broader entrenched assumptions?
  6. If you have at this point identified aspects of and assumptions about your course that may be excluding or marginalizing particular student groups, select a few concrete modifications you would like to make to address this.
  7. Explore online resources and communities for revising or re-imagining those aspects of your course.

# Anticipated challenges

- **Am I the best person to do this? Are my questions the right ones?**
- **Sitting with range of unpleasant feelings without centering own discomfort.**
- **Learning how and when to share this work with your colleagues.**
- **Staying in perpetual learner mode.**

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# Decolonizing philosophy curricula (rethinking the major)

## *Team K*

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# D.E.C.O.L.O.N.I.Z.E. Self-Assessment

This tool provides 10 steps towards ‘decolonizing’ or diversifying the way instructors teach their Philosophy courses. The tool prompts self-reflection and consideration of instructional practices to explore further or commit to implementing the next time the instructor teaches.

[Link to Template](#)

(also inserted below)



# 'DECOLONIZE' YOUR (PHILOSOPHY)

## COURSES

### Table of Contents

*Below are 10 steps towards 'decolonizing' or diversifying the way you teach your Philosophy courses. Engage in the prompted self-reflection, and mark instructional practices that you would like to explore further or commit to implementing the next time you teach.\**

**D: DETERMINE WHY**

**E: EDUCATE YOURSELF**

**C: CHOOSE HOW**

**O: OPEN UP OPTIONS**

**L: LEVERAGE OUTSIDE EXPERTISE**

**O: OWN YOUR IGNORANCE**

**N: NAVIGATE WITH YOUR STUDENTS**

**I: INTEGRATE COURSE ETHOS AND PRACTICE**

**Z: ZEALOUSLY MONITOR POWER DYNAMICS**

**E: EVALUATE**

**Resources**

***\* Make a copy of this document to edit it for your own use.***



## D: DETERMINE WHY

*Why is it important to you to diversify your Philosophy courses? Are you trying to comply with external directives or expectations? Do you want to attract a greater diversity of students into your courses? Would you like to help students receive a broader philosophical education than perhaps you yourself did? Is it important to you to see more traditions represented in the discipline?*

- Are you looking to show similarities between the various traditions (i.e. Aquinas commentary on Aristotle and Talmudic commentary on the Mishnah)? Or expose to ideas that might be new to typical American college students (i.e. Jainism)?
- You could critique the canon (i.e. point to Kant's racism, Aristotle's disdain for women, etc.) or shift to texts not in the Western canon (i.e. *The Maxims of Ptahhotep*). Or both.
- Can your student population "see themselves" in the range of philosophers and questions included in your course? Does your focus connect to the big concerns students may be grappling with in their lives?
- Are you seeking to listen to and learn from more voices and experiences? Are you looking to challenge or re-think what "counts" as philosophy?
- What sorts of pedagogical decisions do you want to make regarding content, assessments, or policies?



## E: EDUCATE YOURSELF

*Especially if you received your Philosophy education in the United States, you are unlikely to have been guided through many philosophical texts outside of European and Anglo-American traditions. How will you get up to speed on the diversity of thinkers, texts, and methods that you might want to start including in your courses?*

- Consider what will “count” as broadening the spectrum. Islamic-influenced commentary on Aristotle is “Western” in both content and conception. Hypatia of Alexandria was Egyptian. Do including these really move beyond the Greek-centered approach?
- Don’t feel like you need to do it alone. Consider working with colleagues (not necessarily at your institution!) to work together to find resources. Start a reading group to become familiar with materials that are new to you and to develop strategies to engage with them responsibly. (See Glowacki-Dudka, et al. and Anderson, et al. in the resource list for ideas.)
- Look to texts like Peter Park’s 2013 *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780–1830*.
- Consider participating in AAPT workshops or NEH summer seminars.

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## C: CHOOSE HOW

*There are many different places in your course design and teaching practice where you can work on diversifying. Rather than overhauling your course entirely, you might want to introduce small changes, see how they go, and continue to diversify from there. Which avenues of diversifying your course seem most exciting and feasible for you to begin with?*

- Introduce 2-3 texts from traditions you have never covered before.
- Find ways that pairing a text from a tradition you have not covered before with a “canonical” text could broaden the conversation and/or provide new insights about what is at stake in the conversation.
- Include explicit statements in your syllabus and course site, expressing why it is important to you to represent diverse philosophical traditions and perspectives in your courses and what you hope the students will get from the experience.
- Consider if it is the text or the problem that is important for the students. Could you use Chuang-Tzu's butterfly dream in place of Descartes' radical doubt? If not, why?

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## O: OPEN UP OPTIONS

*Dismantling received views of who counts as a philosopher, or what legitimate Philosophy looks like in terms of the questions asked, answers given, and methods used, requires opening up the horizons of how philosophy is conducted and how students can engage with it. How can you increase the options your students have for encountering, engaging, and expressing their philosophical learning?*

- Consider that much of what is “non-Western philosophy” is thought of by philosophers as religion. Could a Taoist text on non-being serve as a co-text along with Heidegger’s “What is Metaphysics” and Carnap’s “Elimination of Metaphysics...”?
- Don’t just add readings, curate. Consider shifting more standard/widely assigned texts to “recommended” reading and making the less-widely assigned texts required reading.
- Allow students to express what they are learning through formats other than an analytic essay, e.g., creative writing, a podcast, or curation of other materials.
- Embrace the collaborative nature of African philosophy or Talmudic commentary. Have students move from marking up a provided text with commentary and questions in one round to a second round where they are engaging in the commentary of their peers in the prior round.

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or challenges do you anticipate?



## L: LEVERAGE OUTSIDE EXPERTISE

*While it's important for you as the instructor to have some grounding in the material you guide your students through, leveraging outside expertise has multiple benefits: it eases your workload, enables you to learn from other experts, and models the need to diversify whom we turn to for philosophical guidance and insight. How can you locate and leverage outside expertise?*

- Invite colleagues from allied departments to guest lecture or lead discussions.
- Trade Zoom sessions with an AAPT friend.
- Within your department or pedagogical community, develop a list of personnel with expertise in teaching particular texts or traditions. Perhaps develop some shareable modules (readings + discussion questions + assignments) to assist in decolonizing a range of courses.
- 

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## O: OWN YOUR IGNORANCE

*While instructors are often reluctant to reveal to students that their knowledge is incomplete, being transparent with students and acknowledging your limited familiarity with other traditions and methods models intellectual and epistemic humility and can introduce explicit discussion of how disciplinary boundaries are policed and transmitted through education. How can you convey to students that you are an experienced philosophical guide, but not an ultimate authority?*

- Include a statement in your syllabus about the limitations of your training and how you are trying to expand horizons in the courses you are teaching.
- Use your status as a fellow-learner-of-unfamiliar-material to model and explicitly discuss strategies for learning with your students and to acknowledge challenges of reading and writing outside a familiar context.

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## **N: NAVIGATE WITH YOUR STUDENTS**

*'Decolonizing' or diversifying courses is ultimately about recognizing and breaking down power structures. The best way to do that pedagogically is to invite your students in as partners and agents in co-creating a diverse class with you. How can you work collaboratively with your students?*

- Hire a few as course assistants who help you do research for and design the course.
- Invite students to contribute readings or other course materials.
- Have students crowdsource exam or paper questions based on what they have learned.
- Involve the class in a discussion/examination of the assumptions being made. (See Kristen Schaupp's article in the references.)
- Involve the class in a discussion/examination of the conditions that may have made it easier or harder for different voices to be part of the philosophical discussion. (This may require additional digging into history, sociology, etc.)

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## I: INTEGRATE COURSE ETHOS AND PRACTICE

*A course has many different moving pieces: policies and language in course materials such as the syllabus, the readings and assignments chosen, the class activities conducted, how feedback and grades are determined and expressed, what the instructor verbally says and does, what students say and do. How can you ensure that the ethos of the class as one valuing diversification is expressed and integrated into all aspects of the course?*

- Incorporate periodic reflection: Whose standards (e.g., for what counts as an important question, a compelling argument, “good philosophy,” etc.) dominate the discussion? Whose voices or concerns are centered and whose are left out of the conversation? What seems to “count” as a philosophical method? Are we applying the same dominant view of philosophy to different texts, or are we broadening our understanding of what philosophy can do and reasonable methods for achieving those ends?
- How will differences of positionality/opinion/thinking be handled in the classroom? How can you create safe spaces for both visible and invisible minority students?
- How are voices outside the traditional canon presented? Are figures presented in ways other than influences of/responses to Western “anchors?”

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## Z: ZEALOUSLY MONITOR POWER DYNAMICS

*Research on stereotype*

*Because we are often habituated into implicit power dynamics, it can be hard to recognize and push back against them. How can you ensure that your relationship with your students, their relationships with each other, and all of your relationships to the course content and methods rebalances power equitably?*

- Co-create class norms with students (e.g., how to contribute, how to voice disagreement, how to raise concerns, how to participate equitably in discussions and group work).
- Discuss community responsibilities in enforcing shared expectations and dealing with violations of class norms before they are big violations (e.g., via “bystander intervention” strategies)
- Invite students to ‘grade’ you, the instructor, and to devise a rubric in advance for doing so.
- Use anonymous surveys and other tools to periodically check in with your students about how empowered they feel to participate, how prepared they feel to succeed in the work of the course, how connected they feel to the material, whether they are experiencing feelings of “destabilization,” etc.

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## E: EVALUATE

### *Research on stereotype*

*The best way to assess and improve your efforts to 'decolonize' or diversify your courses is to evaluate those efforts frequently and elicit multiple perspectives in doing so. How can you evaluate your efforts, and who can help you?*

- Develop a rubric for yourself on what success in diversifying looks like, against which you and others can evaluate your efforts. If possible, get feedback on the rubric.
- Maintain a teaching journal and write quick notes to yourself about how class sessions went.
- Solicit frequent feedback from students on their course experience (thumbs up/down, exit tickets, midterm feedback).
- Develop an assessment rubric for assignments that allows you to gauge student reflection on decolonization.
- Invite a colleague to observe one of your courses and give you feedback.

What other ideas can you think of?

What would you like to try, and what next steps will you take?

What questions do you have, or what challenges do you anticipate?



## Resources

### [American Association of Philosophy Teachers](#)

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# D.E.C.O.L.O.N.I.Z.E. Self-Assessment

D: DETERMINE WHY

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Z: ZEALOUSLY MONITOR POWER DYNAMICS

E: EVALUATE

# Anticipated challenges

- How do I get started when there is so much to cover?
- How do I know if I've done “enough”?
- But I don't know this material!

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# ***Towards* anti-racist learning activities and assignments**

## ***Team L***

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**David Spewak**

**Doug Fishel**

# How to design in light of racism in history of philosophy?

**Old solution:**

- Ignore it.

**New Dilemma:**

- Name it..
- Get rid of it.

**We discovered this is a false dilemma.**

# Anti-racist design embraces reflective, iterative process.

Document student experiences of our assignments.

After students complete an assignment, ask for their feedback.

- *How* did the assigned materials contribute to your achieving the goals of the assignment?
- *How* were the assigned materials unhelpful, counter-productive or insufficient to those goals?

Revise materials as appropriate. EG Share those student responses with future students.

# Anticipated challenges

- **Treating students as consumers.**
- **Feedback may require further revision.**
- **Does not address formal issues with assignment design.**

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# Developing anti-racist learning activities and assignments

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## **Using Pre-Course Surveys as Part of Anti-racist Pedagogy**

**A pre-course survey circulated to all students enrolled in a course before the course begins**

**The survey asks students about:**

- Preferred name and pronouns
- Students' technological resources
- Preferences about how to engage with course content
- Anticipated challenges

**It also invites students to share any other information that they would like you to know in order to support their learning**

## Using Pre-Course Surveys as Part of Anti-racist Pedagogy

Using the Pre-Course Survey should decenter instructor expectations about who their typical students are.

For instructors, the survey should:

- Illuminate existing instructor assumptions about students.
- Allow instructors to make pedagogical changes in line with de-centered assumptions.
- Permit collaborative learning in a student-centered learning environment

It also enables students to have a sense of ownership over the organization of the course.

# Where you can find more information

## **Google Doc Overview** (the link is live, the doc is also inserted below)

- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sLyf-GmerTs9cfk1uHZ0k-wN8Jde9QGp8cdjHbczi7M/view>
- **This doc provides an overview for three types of student surveys:**
  - a. Pre-course survey about students' learning context**
  - b. Beginning of term survey about students' beliefs and attitudes around race-related issues (or other course content)**
  - c. Brief, anonymous feedback surveys used throughout the course**

## **Google Form Template** (the link is live, the doc is also inserted below)

- <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1iDecWBeoYmn5vohJGKfqkxuwtcN0e1kZ5dNeTqsP5fU/copy>

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## **Anti-Racist Pedagogy Tools: Pre-Course and Regular Student Surveys**

### **(1) Pre-Course Survey**

#### **What is this?**

- Our recommended tool is a pre-course survey designed to gather information about the students taking your course and their particular learning contexts in order to decenter our inherited assumptions about students.
- *(See below for additional ways of using surveys, including asking students about race-related attitudes, previous knowledge about course content, and soliciting ongoing anonymous feedback from students about the course.)*

#### **Why is it useful?**

- A pre-course survey can help us figure out the informational identifies of our students
- It can help us assess student preferences for general engagement with the course
  - It allows us to challenge our implicit assumptions about our students (both at an individual level and an aggregate level) and ask, how does this data contradict my image of my students?

#### **How does it relate to anti-racist pedagogy?**

- Provides a better understanding of our students that can inform our anti-racist pedagogies and decenter our assumptions about our students
- We can use the data to desettle our assumptions that drive our pedagogical decisions

#### **Guiding principles:**

- Surveys should be used to indicate the kinds of barriers that students encounter in class, to illuminate the assumption of the “default user” that organize our courses. The results should be used to make invisible barriers visible when integrated into course design.
- The results of the surveys should be used to desettle our assumptions about our students. When reviewing the results, it is important to ask “how do these results conflict with my assumptions about students” and “how are my assumptions reflected in my course design.” It is important to integrate the results into the course design, rather than treat them as pure information.

#### **Google Forms template:**

- We have created a “Pre-course Survey” template in Google Forms. Please feel free to COPY this template and make changes to it as you see fit. (Be SURE TO COPY the Form BEFORE making changes to it, otherwise everyone who has the link will see your changes and will no longer be able to access the original template.)

- Link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1iDecWBeoYmn5vohJGKfqkxuwtcN0e1kZ5dNeTqsP5fU/copy>
- For more information about how to use Google Forms, including how to view student responses, see:
  - <https://zapier.com/learn/google-sheets/how-to-use-google-forms/>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtoOHhA3aPQ> )

### **Other possible tools**

- Quiz in LMS
  - Blackboard: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcrOzK-G\\_-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcrOzK-G_-k)
  - Canvas: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzMY35wISa8>
- Qualtrics
  - How to use Qualtrics: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_hSo-ldj19k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hSo-ldj19k)

## **(2) Beginning of Term Survey on Race-Related Attitudes**

### **What is this?**

- A start-of-term survey about our students' initial attitudes about issues related to course-related content and/or race and racism prior to the beginning of the course.
- (See below for questions that could be asked related to anti-racist beliefs in particular.)

### **Why is it useful?**

- A start-of-term survey can inform us about our students' initial attitudes about issues related to race and racism prior to the beginning of the course.
  - Students may be willing to express attitudes in an anonymous survey that they would be unwilling to express in the classroom (in-person or online)
  - It can expose diversity of attitudes that would not become apparent only through non-anonymous class discussion (in-person or online)
- It can also help us determine where students are at in terms of knowledge bases of course content

### **How does it relate to anti-racist pedagogy?**

- Better understanding our students can inform our anti-racist pedagogies and desettle our assumptions about our students
- Allows us to take account of students' previous knowledge and experiences and meet students where they're at
- See bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress* for a more detailed discussion on the importance of incorporating students' previous knowledge and personal experiences in your teaching

### **Guiding principles**

- We recommend allowing students to answer these questions anonymously (you will get more honest responses)

### **Potential survey questions**

- Questions you might ask your students in advance when racism and anti-racism are course topics:
  - How comfortable are you with the concept of white privilege?
  - Have you heard of the term ‘implicit bias’? If so, what do you understand it to mean?

## **(3) Regular Feedback Surveys**

### **What is this?**

- An opportunity for students to provide anonymous feedback throughout the course
- If you’re new to online teaching, or if your course is taught over a shorter period of time, we recommend sending these out earlier on and more frequently (e.g., every 3 weeks)

### **Why is it useful?**

- Surveys throughout the course provide instructors with “just in time” feedback for the instructor
- Creates a collaborative learning environment that values student experience

### **How does it relate to anti-racist pedagogy?**

- Provides a platform for all students to share their feedback (not just those who feel comfortable reaching out to you)
- Enables you to make sure you’re being responsive to all students’ needs
- Sends the message that you care about students’ experiences and learning, and that you’re there to support them

### **Potential survey questions**

- Feedback surveys can be very short, with just a few open-ended questions, such as:
  - “What’s working well for you?”
  - “What isn’t working well for you?”
  - “Is there anything I can add or change to better support your learning?”
- Or you can set it up with specific questions that will allow you to collect useful aggregate data
  - e.g., regarding the amount of synchronous class time students prefer, suggestions for additional class discussion norms, how much time students are spending on the course each week, etc.

# Developing anti-racist learning activities and assignments

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# Philosophy as Lived Experience Video Assignment



**Goal: To develop an experiential philosophy assignment that is anti-racist in both form and content.**



An experiential philosophy assignment asks students to **explore a philosophical theory by living it out** for some period of time (e.g. 1-3 days). The assignment requires students to understand a theory well enough to apply it and includes a critical analysis of the theory and usually a presentation to the class.

# The video version of this assignment:

- Requires deep reflection and understanding of the theory, but doesn't privilege writing
- Can be done easily with a phone
- Generates learning-directed discomfort as students disrupt their ordinary habits



## Consider how to:

- Normalize diverse content (theories, philosophers, etc.)
- Analyze Western content from an anti-racist perspective

just an  
**Example**

- ❑ Implement some aspects of a Buddhist, Confucian, Ubuntu, Aztec, Islamic, or other philosophical theory and discuss your experience
- ❑ Consider how social identity (race, gender, ability, etc.) is relevant to achieving happiness while living as a hedonist
- ❑ Ask: Would a Stoic participate in the Black Lives Matter movement? If so, how?
- ❑ Explore how certain biomedical principles may uphold or dismantle racial hierarchies in the health-care industry
- ❑ Analyze some discourse on race, disability, etc. through an epistemic justice/testimonial virtue lens

### Anticipated Challenges:

- **Need access to video recording (smartphone, webcam, etc.)**
- **Consider that some students may have constraints on implementing a theory in their circumstances (jobs, childcare, etc.)**

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# Developing anti-racist learning activities and assignments

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# VoiceThread for Collaboration

Our focus is on trying to foster collaboration among students, particularly in an online teaching environment.

- Difficulties arise because students have:
  - Different backgrounds and beliefs
  - Different levels of understanding
  - Different susceptibility to harm
  - Different ways of transmitting knowledge
  - Different accessibility to technology

# VoiceThread

- VoiceThread is an interactive tool where groups can engage through a variety of methods—using written comments, voice recordings, videos, images, PowerPoint slides, and more.
  - Decenters Western knowledge transmission
  - Accessible via various technologies
- Available through free registration and through many institutions
- **Sample Thread:** <https://voicethread.com/share/14903166>

# Anticipated challenges

- Safari issues, buggy app
- Possible harms to students from peers
- Instructor time management
- Challenge of learning new system

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# The end.

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