



**Jill Gatlin**

## **CEB Faculty Think Tank Project**

**NEC Role:** Liberal Arts Faculty

**Title of Project:** Diversity and Social Justice Pedagogy: Student Positionality and Engagement

**Define:** What is the goal of the project?

Revisit and explore new frameworks for teaching diversity-related subjects to privileged *and* underrepresented students. Lessons on privilege/disadvantage are central to the following courses (and others); do I have adequate materials focused on minority empowerment?

**-Diversity & Difference First-Year Seminar:** an introduction to concepts of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and other societally significant categories of difference through lenses including oppression, discrimination, inequity, privilege, social justice, identity, intersectionality, and allyship.

**-Reading, Writing, Race: 20th Century U.S. Minority Literature:** an exploration of minority literature from the perspective of readers' expectations of writers, writers' expectations of readers, and writers' expectations of each other. Conceptual lenses include privilege, otherness, cultural and linguistic translation, authenticity, literary tourism, identification, appropriation, pleasure, passive empathy, reflexivity, responsibility, action, reception agency, literary violence, and representation.

I'll approach this project by investigating specific **lenses/narratives for teaching CEB-related subjects**. I would like to expand and potentially refocus the lists above; new lenses to foreground many include **healing, joy, empowerment, vision, visibility/representation, action, belonging, and community-building**.

**Discover:** Your "why"? What is this project a solution for/to?

Student demographics and political awareness have shifted somewhat since I designed these courses over a decade ago. As Dr. Carmen Cruz said in a CEB workshop on "Trauma-Informed Engagement through a Social Justice Lens Workshop," it can be "hard for someone who's been through [racism or oppression] to sit through [lessons] with those learning about it for the first time." Discussions of privilege are crucial to these courses, but so are conversations that will contribute to the learning of students who are already well aware of—and have experienced the consequences of—these inequities. Students are also continually interested in reading not just about problems but about possibilities for change and models for action.

This project as a whole is also a “discovery”/exploratory project, much of which will take place during the '22-23 school year when I teach these courses. I will ask: Are my current course materials working? Am I serving all students in the best possible ways?

**Dream:** Naming the change. Once complete, what will this project bring about or change? What does that look like?

I aim to develop course materials and facilitate conversations that not only seek to present a framework as described above but also ask students these questions. The ultimate dream is for students to feel seen, supported, equipped with relevant knowledge, and empowered to work for social justice.

**Design:** What steps did/will you take? Any research or workshops or conversations engaged with?

I have attended CEB Workshops on “Supporting Students of Color and Understanding Anti-Racism” and “Trauma-Informed Engagement through a Social Justice Lens,” begun reviewing my current course materials, and begun researching this subject.

Next steps include continuing my research and redesigning syllabuses, assignments, and/or activities, which will require navigating the challenges of adding new materials to 2-credit interdisciplinary courses that must teach specific academic skills and cover a wide range of material for students new to the subject (who may take only a single course in the subject area).

**Derive:** What are the ways that you are incorporating a cultural equity and belonging lens in this project?

Cultural equity and belonging are central subject matter in these courses; I’m reassessing course content to account for shifting student experiences, identities, and interests.

**Delivery:** Final resource (syllabus, paper, collaboration).

Because this will be an ongoing project as I teach these courses, assess my materials, and engage students in these questions, I won’t have “results” until 2023, so for now my delivery is this plan. However, I will make some syllabus changes before the semesters begin and provide those initial resources in September/January. The final resources I deliver will include a reflection; syllabuses, assignments, and/or activities; and a bibliography of related resources. As a starting point, I have attached two workshops for my Diversity & Difference class:

- NEC Diversity Initiatives Workshop
- Musical Careers and Social Justice Workshop

**Deepen:** *I'd like to add this word here, to think about the ways I could continue or expand this project.*

What I've described above seems reasonable to complete in the next year, but this project could extend well beyond that, including:

- Similar assessments for other courses
- A think tank with students on this topic
- Social justice/identity/career workshops for students
- Collaboration with other faculty and students to develop a shared list of CEB lenses/narratives
- Workshops for faculty interested in thinking about their courses through these lenses
- NEC Diversity Initiatives Workshop and Musical Careers and Social Justice Workshop adapted from my Diversity & Difference class and hosted in collaboration with CEB/EM?

**Hyperlink syllabus, reflective write-up, paper or collaboration ideas or paste below:**

See two emailed Workshops to link (**NEC Diversity Resources and Initiatives Workshop; Musical Careers, Diversity, and Social Justice Workshop**).

**New Research/Resources: General**

Bowman, Nicholas A. "College Diversity Courses and Cognitive Development Among Students From Privileged and Marginalized Groups." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 2.3 (2009): 182-194.

"D.C. Area Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action." *Teaching for Change*, 2021.  
<https://www.dcareeducators4socialjustice.org/black-lives-matter/resources/older-children>

Love, Bettina L. *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and The Pursuit of Educational Freedom*. Beacon Press, 2020.

Lykes, Jonathan and Fresco Steez, "The Black Joy Experience Resource Guide."  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15bRR8abMgmu6AyHxrrqej0A2d7Pj5cnX/view>  
\*song/chant culture

Ransby, Barbara. *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-First Century*. U of California Press, 2018.  
\*order & put on reserve at library  
\*look at intro as a possible assigned reading

Social justice pedagogy journals?

<https://www.vul.edu/index.php/more/journal-of-education-and-social-justice>  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/esj>  
<http://www.educatorsforsocialjustice.org/academic-journals.html>

Sokolower, Jody. "Space for Young Black Women: An Interview with Candice Valenzuela." *Rethinking Schools*.  
<https://rethinkingschools.org/articles/space-for-young-black-women-an-interview-with-candice-valenzuela/>

Stearns, Sarah and Edith Fraser, "Working with Affinity: The Journeys of White Students and Students of Color in Anti-racism Courses." *AFTA Monograph Series: Expanding Our Social Justice Practices: Advances in Theory and Training*. American Family Therapy Academy, 2010.

Watson, Dyan Jesse Hagopian, and Wayne Au, eds. *Teaching for Black Lives*. 2018.  
<https://rethinkingschools.org/books/teaching-for-black-lives/>

"The Year of Purpose." *Black Lives Matter at School*.  
<https://www.blacklivesmatteratschool.com/year-of-purpose.html>

### **New Research/Resources: For Reading, Writing, Race**

Larkin, Lesley. *Race and the Literary Encounter: Black Literature from James Weldon Johnson to Percival Everett*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2015.

\*esp. last chapter on teaching

Levy-Hussen, Aida. *How to Read African American Literature: Post-Civil Rights Fiction and the Task of Interpretation*. New York: NYU Press, 2016.

Palumbo-Liu, David. *The Deliverance of Others: Reading Literature in a Global Age*. Duke UP, 2012.

**Please share thoughts about implementation.**

### **Preliminary Plans for Diversity & Difference:**

*-Developed new NEC Diversity Resources and Initiatives Workshop questions*

*Conceptual Lenses: healing, joy, empowerment, visibility/representation, action, belonging, social justice, allyship, and community-building.*

*-Developed new Musical Careers, Diversity, and Social Justice Workshop questions*

*Conceptual Lenses: healing, joy, empowerment, vision, visibility/representation, action, belonging, social justice, allyship, and community-building.*

-Incorporate the Social Change Ecosystem map into these activities?

-These activities could intersect with the Final Paper option of exploring a local diversity-related issue—build that into proposal assignments, paper instructions

-Add a short article on Black Lives Matter and/or black joy to the race unit (perhaps in place of Lydia Lum's article refuting the concept of colorblindness since we can address that through the points about post-racialism in Franklin's article).

-Highlight action/activism as a part of the conversation in each unit (even though I already run out of time with each as we are defining and exploring fundamental concepts; still, this probably already comes up implicitly if not explicitly in each unit, so it may just be about foregrounding it and shaping the narrative)

-Consider discussing Blumenfeld's framework of individual, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural homophobia/heterosexism sooner since it outlines different levels of discrimination and thus intervention. We distinguish between racial prejudice (bias) and racism (systemic/institutional) in the first unit, so I can at least emphasize individual/interpersonal and institutional levels of change at that point. Maybe I can also introduce the Social Change Ecosystem map from the "Trauma-Informed Engagement through a Social Justice Lens" CEB workshop to facilitate thinking about action and intervention throughout the semester.

-Another possibility: students research an activist/organization profile once during the semester and give a 2 minute presentation: what problems the organization addresses, what they do, how you could get involved, how you could link to musical activities.

### **Preliminary Plans for Reading, Writing, Race**

- Review current materials on ideologies, assumptions, and ethics behind reading
- Read Larkin, Levy-Hussen, and Palumbo-Liu with this course in mind