

Edited and Compiled Chat from “Anti-Racist Course Design” (July 14, 2020)

Presenters:

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Aana Vigen, Associate Professor, Department of Theology

Kristin Krueger, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology

Thea Strand, Advanced Lecturer, Department of Anthropology

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Susan Haarman, Associate Director, Center for Experiential Learning

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Note: The following transcript has been edited for length and clarity and organized by overarching topic. Participants’ names have been made anonymous.

Logistical questions or concerns? Please email [Jack Nuelle, Program Manager, Faculty Center for Ignatian Pedagogy](#).

Disciplinary Questions

Participant A: I teach at the law school. Do you have any recommendations for balancing the need for holistic flexibility with the need for students to develop the skills needed to operate within a very rigid professional system? For example: A practicing attorney who misses a deadline has committed malpractice and failed their client. I worry about how to model the importance of deadlines in legal practice, while also maintaining flexibility to accommodate students' needs.

Sasha Adkins: This tension is very real, I'm sure, for many of us who teach. I wish we could have a longer conversation about how to balance the need for job-ready skills and content with flexibility and time for processing material

Kristin Krueger: Has the legal profession made accommodations during these times? I'm curious if certain circumstances would allow for greater flexibility in deadlines?

Participant A: It depends. Some judges may be flexible if a party asks for an extension; others may flat-out reject them. But when it comes to regulatory deadlines (SEC filings, etc), there is VERY little room for accommodation.

Participant B: It is also not just about job skills or the legal profession-some of our students will be pursuing graduate studies and will need to take standardized exams including multiple choice—certifications in Human Resources, Project Management etc. are all multiple choice-so there is also that to consider.

Participant C: School of Education's teacher preparation and principal preparation programs have similar issues in that grades and report cards must be submitted on time, for example.

Jessica Mansbach: Perhaps there are some assignments and activities that you can be more flexible about. others, though, have hard deadlines that must be met

Jessica Mansbach: How would you apply some of these ideas to your discipline and in your course design?

Participant D: One assignment option I use in UCLR, Exploring Poetry, and Women in Literature is attending a Live Lit event. I share a list of live lit events sponsored throughout the Chicago area. There's more to the assignment, of course, but the idea is to "get proximate" but also to make this an option because, in terms of universal design, it can be very difficult for many students to attend even free events off-campus. There are lots of online live lit events right now, many of which foreground intersectional concerns in relation to lit

Elizabeth Webster: Thank you for this example and for the reminder that it's difficult for students to attend extracurricular events. Perhaps now in the age of Zoom events we will actually have more access.

Aana Vigen: This info on classic vs canon is helpful for those of us who feel we must cover some terrain - how to do it in some different ways

Participant E: Yes, very helpful. It also matters in what order you organize readings/topics. Do you start with the “classics” (of liberal feminist theory for example) or with the marginalized voices (POC, black feminist thought, etc.). Makes a huge difference, I’ve found.

Frederick Staidum: We all have to deal with deadlines, certainly. We wouldn’t have these jobs if didn’t effectively meet deadlines. By flexibility, we are not advocating completely throwing out all deadlines or standardization. I would advocate both/and. I would suggest that you let your Learning Outcomes lead you; if central to your course is professionalization and building skills related to deadlines and successfully completing multiple choice exams, then you should remain true to that. However, if there is room for infusing flexibility and taking into consideration the systemic obstacles facing students from differing socioeconomic classes and racial backgrounds, then infuse those policies and practices within. It can be in the minutiae—as simple as changing words like “purchase” or “buy” to “acquire” textbooks, so that it normalizes interlibrary loan or cost sharing, so that students don’t feel “stereotype threat” because they can’t afford the textbooks. Start with the minutiae and start where you can.

Accessibility

Relevant Links: [Loyola Accessibility Guidelines](#)

Contacts: [Betsi Burns, Director, Learning & Student Success](#)

Participant F: In terms of accessibility, do we have universal access to captioning/ASL for our classes/? What about access for students with physical disabilities? How does this conversation extend to people with disabilities?

Jessica Mansbach: There is a captioning capability in Panopto

Jessica Mansbach: You can also work with the Student Accessibility Center to discuss some of these needs

Jessica Mansbach: It is so important to be thinking about people with disabilities. And even when we think about that, we want to be mindful about all of the disabilities people might have (visible vs invisible, etc)

Susan Haarman: Betsi Burns, head of the Student Accessibility Center is a tremendous advocate for our students with physical disabilities and has a real gift for helping you look at your course and think critically about access. I'd encourage you to connect with her!

Trying to Not Privilege English as Primary Language of Instruction

Relevant Links: [“Decolonization is Not a Metaphor” \(Tuck, Eve and Yang, K. Wayne\); Decolonizing Your Syllabus Checklist](#)

Participant G: We have to realize that POC (People of Color) is very much a US phenomenon especially as it is utilized in the XXI. Race/Ethnicity-Racism-Privilege Studies change across space, time, and national paradigms. Post-De-Colonial Studies is a good way to rethink these discussions. Bartelomé de las Casas and BIPOC is proof of this.

Participant H: Using multiple languages in the classroom, even if only for greetings, can really make speakers of English as a second language feel recognized

Sasha Adkins: I encourage students to use sources in languages other than English and allow them to submit work in other languages as well to try to destabilize the idea that English is THE language of knowledge creation.

Thea Strand: Yes, sources in non-English languages are welcome for me too! I just ask for a title translation in the reference entry.

Learning Outcomes and Rubrics for Creative Assessments

Relevant Links: [Teaching to Transgress \(hooks, bell\)](#); [“The Unessay” \(O’Donnell, Daniel Paul\)](#); [VALUE rubric](#)

Contacts: [Kristin Krueger](#)

Frederick Staidum: Thea, grade only the skills you teach or outlined in your learning objectives... This is it! This needs to be today’s affirmation.

Susan Haarman: Thea, your insight, especially around reflections, is so important. Looking for things like connection to life, chains of logic, and growth mindsets changed the way I read - and assigned - reflections to great results!

Participant I: Grading artistic work products can be tricky. What’s “compelling” and “viewable” to some people is not to others, and these perceptions can also be wrapped up in biases and assumptions.

Participant J: When I give students a creative option, they accompany it with a reflection on their work: how they chose their topic, what their process was, etc. I find that helps with grading as you can see how much effort they put into it, how much they thought about their work, etc.

Participant K: Participant I, you’re certainly correct—though we can also provide rubrics to articulate these ideas which may sound completely subjective. We confront this challenge in the DFPA consistently.

Jessica Mansbach: The task of reflecting too, to your point Leanna, also helps them deepen their learning

Participant L: Adding interdisciplinary and international/global perspectives for the essays FROM the students' perspective, i.e. their major or career path and culture, etc., greatly enriches the student, class, and faculty's perspective

Frederick Staidum: Participant I, absolutely. I ran into that challenge before. What I ended up doing was to ask the student group to come into the office to have an informal conversation about their project. I wanted to assess comprehension and analysis, and the conversation helped. The flexibility allowed their ideas to come across without me evaluating only the “viewability” since I wasn’t teaching them who to perform.

Susan Haarman: If folks are looking for a jumping off point in terms of rubrics around development of things like Inquiry and Analysis, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Written Communication, Oral Communication, Quantitative Literacy, Information Literacy, Reading, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Civic Knowledge and Engagement—Local and Global, Intercultural Knowledge and Competence, Ethical Reasoning and Action, Global Learning, Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning, and Integrative Learning, might I suggest the AAC&U's VALUEs rubrics

Kristin Krueger: I have students break down the development of their Unessay too - it gives them a chance to work through it piece by piece, and helps me help them if questions/problems arise. When they submit their Unessay, they also include a 1-2 page statement that connects it to class topic, etc.

Representation

Relevant Links: [“What We Learn From 50 Years of Asking Children to Draw Scientists,” *The Atlantic* \(Yong, Ed\)](#); [“How to Have Better Political Conversations” TED Talk \(Willer, Rob\)](#)

Participant M: My 6th grade math teacher had us draw a mathematician! (Everyone drew a white man)

Participant N: So interesting! I bet if you all were asked to draw a scientist, it would also have been a white man...

Frederick Staidum: That is a very good variation of the drawing prompt!!!

Jessica Mansbach: If students were asked to draw a teacher, we can guess that they might all draw women

Participant N: Yes. Likely a white woman since most K-12 teachers are white.

Frederick Staidum: Then, we can get into a discussion about how we arrived at those assumptions about how Jesus, a mathematician, or a scientist looks like. This is awesome!

Participant A: Aana, I love the anonymous healthcare related social location survey. Could you share?

Participant O: RE: the draw a scientist... children are more likely to draw a woman now than in the past (*per Atlantic article, linked above*)

Frederick Staidum: What would it look like to teach the Tuskegee Syphilis Study in the courses where we also first teach IRB to students?

Participant A: Frederick, in my health law courses, I use the Tuskegee study to introduce IRBs and the Common Rule - the revelations about Tuskegee were the driving force in creating these legal changes.

Thea Strand: Yes, it should be required reading for teaching IRB processes! For both grads and undergrads—helps too to make sense of why they have to deal with an application process that many find annoying at best

Participant A: Thea, yes! You can't understand the IRB requirements unless you understand the WHY