

Democracy in Crisis: A Pedagogical Response in the Legal Academy

Reckoning with Structural Racism in Legal Education Methods Toward a Pedagogy of Antiracism

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Plan

- 1) Goal
- 2) Thesis
- 3) Five-part methodology
- 4) Conclusion

Goal

Drawing from **existing literature**,
identify **inflection points**;
use them to develop a **holistic methodology** of antiracist pedagogy
that is **replicable and adaptable**.

Thesis

Pedagogy of antiracism should have two goals:

- Racially minoritized students learn and thrive, free from traditional harms
- All students equipped to contribute to dismantling structural racism

Accomplishing the pedagogy requires attention to:

- A. Who we are
- B. What our students experience
- C. What we teach
- D. How we teach
- E. How we hold ourselves accountable

(A) Who we are

Barriers to the pedagogy

- Lack of cultural proficiency
- Discomfort and lack of practice talking about race and racism

Strategies toward the pedagogy

- Know about racialization and racism
- **Pursue and practice cultural proficiency**

(B) What our students experience

Barriers to the pedagogy

- Solo status
- Stereotype threat

Strategies toward the pedagogy

- **Conduct formative assessment**
- Re-envision class participation grades
- Get to know students
- Make expectations explicit
- Give critical feedback honestly; paired with optimism
- Teach growth mindset—adopt it, too

(C) What we teach

Barriers to the pedagogy

- Decontextualization
- False neutrality

Strategies toward the pedagogy

- Think & talk about how cases, doctrine, etc., are shaped by racialization
- Identify disparate impacts
- **Provide context about people and policies through lecture or readings**
- Welcome critical responses from students, including emotion

(D) How we teach

Barriers to the pedagogy

- Racial microaggressions
- Socratic method

Strategies toward the pedagogy

- Pursue and practice cultural proficiency
- Be knowledgeable about microaggressions
- Practice attunement and authenticity in the classroom
- **Add active learning to Socratic method, e.g. think-pair-share**

(E) How we hold ourselves accountable

Barriers to the pedagogy

- Lack of systemic mechanisms to assess progress toward antiracism

Strategies toward the pedagogy

- **Make a plan; partner to execute it accountably**
- Apologize when you do harm, if appropriate
- Seek interim feedback from students
- Own your responsibility; don't rely on students

Conclusion

- The sampling of concrete tactics strive to helps us move from the diffuse world of the current literature to a more coherent, holistic methodology.
- Articulating objectives and strategies bolsters our chances of success.
- This superstructure has something to offer every law teacher.