

1-19-2023

Centering Community: Engaging Faculty in Critical and Asset-Based Theory and Practice

Elaine Ikeda
LEAD California

Julia Van der Ryn
Dominican University of California, julia.vanderryn@dominican.edu

Emily Wu
Dominican University of California, emily.wu@dominican.edu

Survey: Let us know how this paper benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Ikeda, Elaine; Van der Ryn, Julia; and Wu, Emily, "Centering Community: Engaging Faculty in Critical and Asset-Based Theory and Practice" (2023). *Center for Community Engagement | Presentations*. 4.

<https://scholar.dominican.edu/center-for-community-engagement-presentations/4>

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Community Engagement at Dominican Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Center for Community Engagement | Presentations by an authorized administrator of Dominican Scholar. For more information, please contact michael.pujals@dominican.edu.



Centering Community: Engaging Faculty in Critical and Asset-Based Theory and Practice

Elaine Ikeda, LEAD California

Julia van der Ryn & Emily S. Wu, Dominican University of California

LEAD CALIFORNIA

DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY
of CALIFORNIA





Download pdf

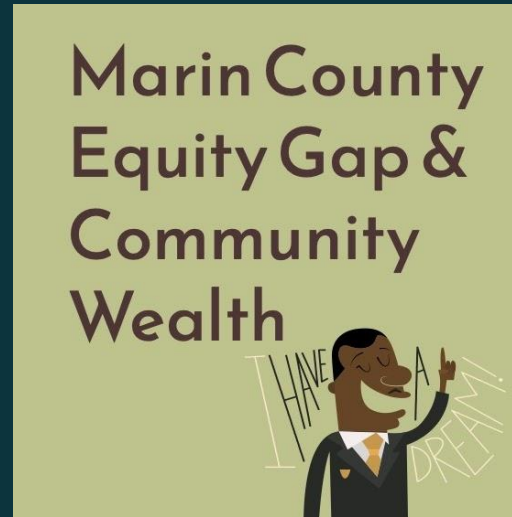
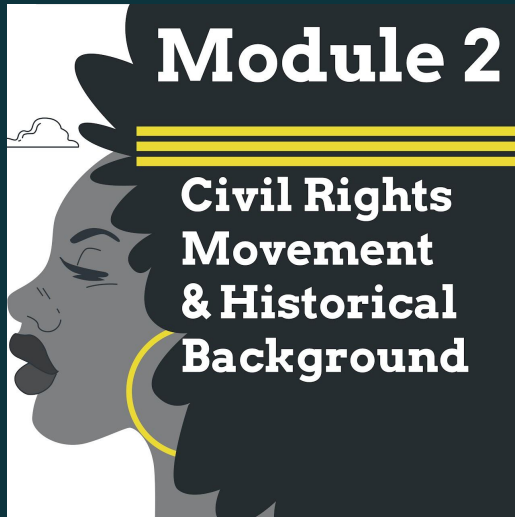
LEAD
CALIFORNIA

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA



- Service-Learning Program with **18** years of community-engaged experience and long-term partnerships focused on equity.
- **15-20** SL-designated courses each semester, mostly in Core Curriculum (GE).
- **500+** students in the community working with **25+** community partner non-profit orgs, schools, government agencies each AY.
- Social Justice major
Community Action & Social Change minor,
Latino Studies minor
- **Critical & Asset-Based Approach to community engagement**

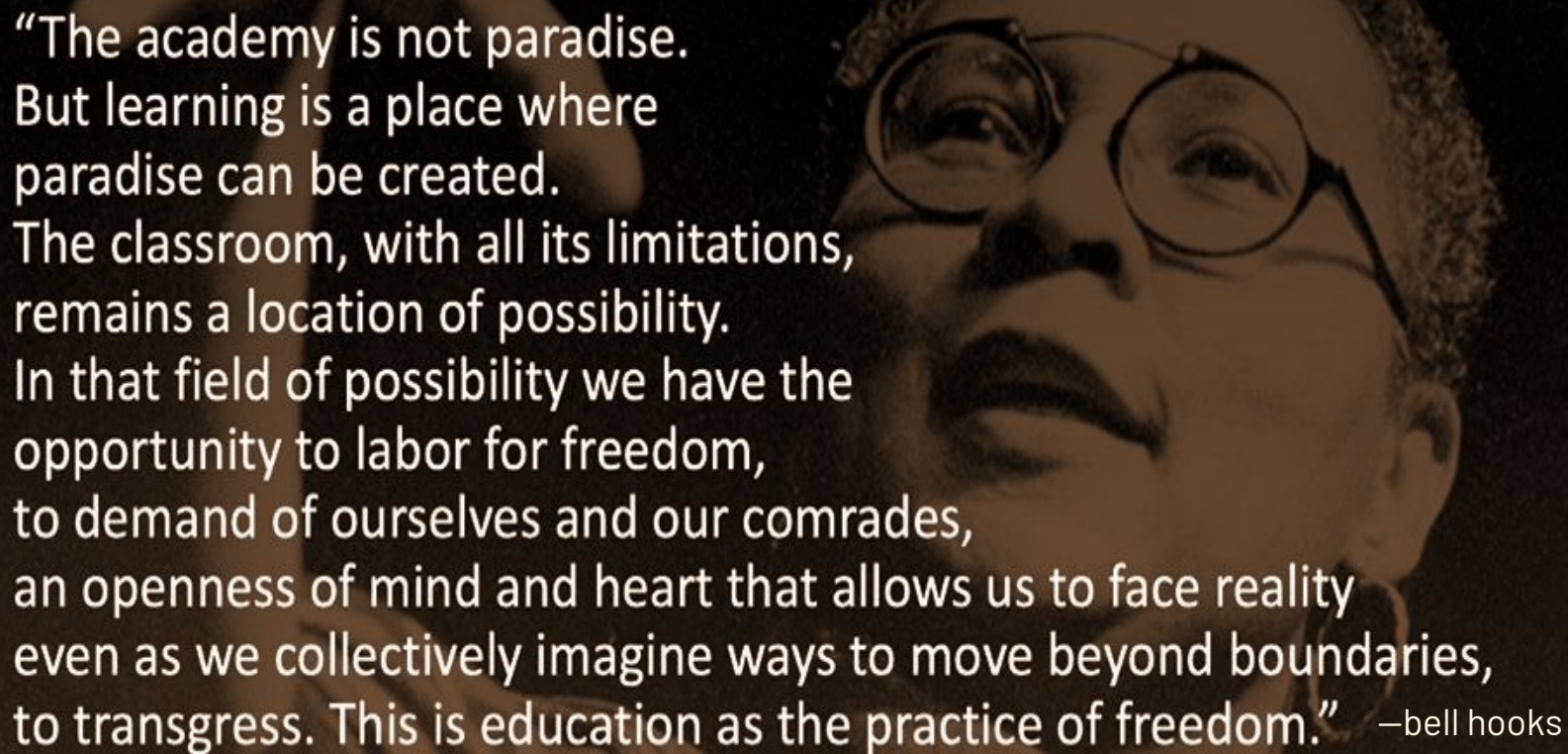
Modules on Racial Equity & Cultural Humility Site





**FACULTY
DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP
SERIES**

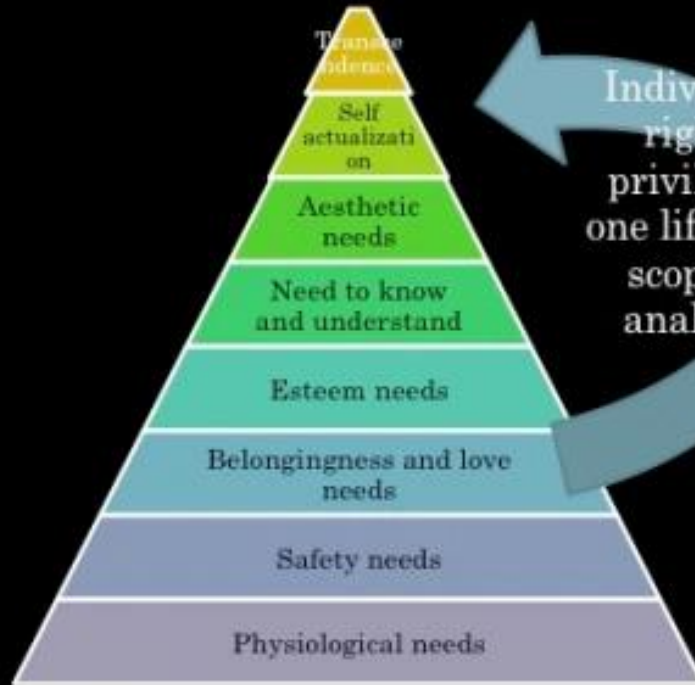




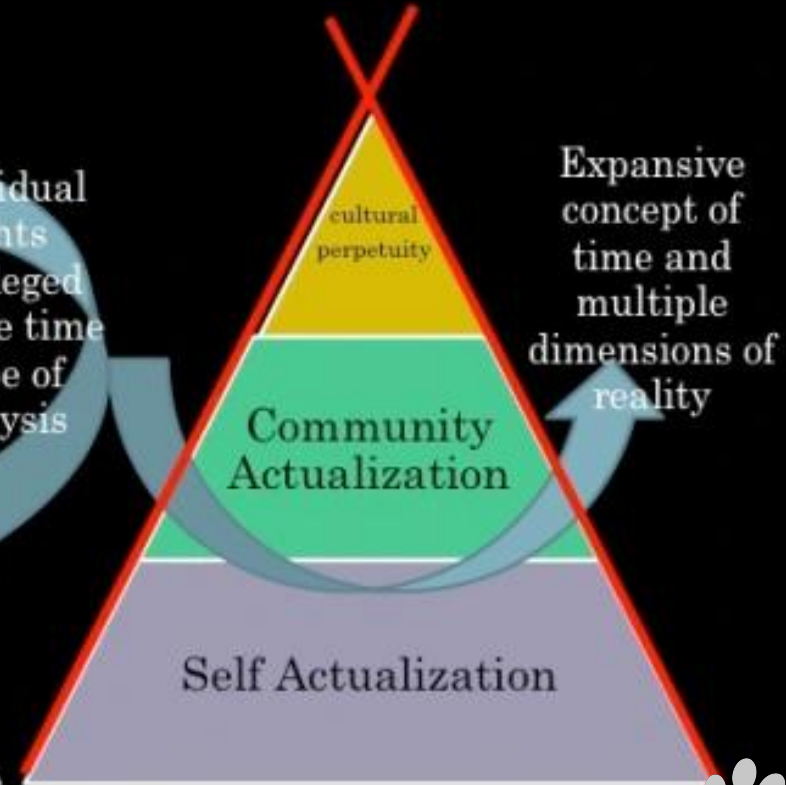
“The academy is not paradise.
But learning is a place where
paradise can be created.
The classroom, with all its limitations,
remains a location of possibility.
In that field of possibility we have the
opportunity to labor for freedom,
to demand of ourselves and our comrades,
an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality
even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries,
to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.” —bell hooks

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (INFORMED BY BLACKFOOT NATION (ALTA))

Western Perspective



First Nations Perspective



How to shift from individuals to the collective?

[Article Link](#)



The background is a warm, orange-toned collage. At the top, there are sketches of a stack of books, a spiral notebook, a paper airplane, and a pencil. In the center, the main title is written in large, bold, dark blue letters. Below the title, the subtitle '(context and framing matter)' is written in a smaller, bold, dark blue font. The bottom of the image features a large, stylized illustration of an open book with a purple cover and white pages. Dashed white lines and paper scraps are scattered around the book and text, suggesting a process of learning or discovery.

FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES & CONCEPTS

(context and framing matter)

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

1. Race is socially constructed
2. Racism is normalized and institutionalized
3. Racism is condoned by laws & public policies
4. Interest convergence
5. Recognition of BIPOC experiential knowledge
6. Commitment to social justice



“Starting with CRT for the Faculty Development Workshop was a relief for faculty of color as we knew that this was a space where hard truths about racial dynamics could be shared.”

-Faculty participant





CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

“I am involved with others in making history out of possibility, not simply resigned to fatalistic stagnation.

Consequently, the future is something to be constructed through trial and error rather than an inexorable vice that determines our actions.”

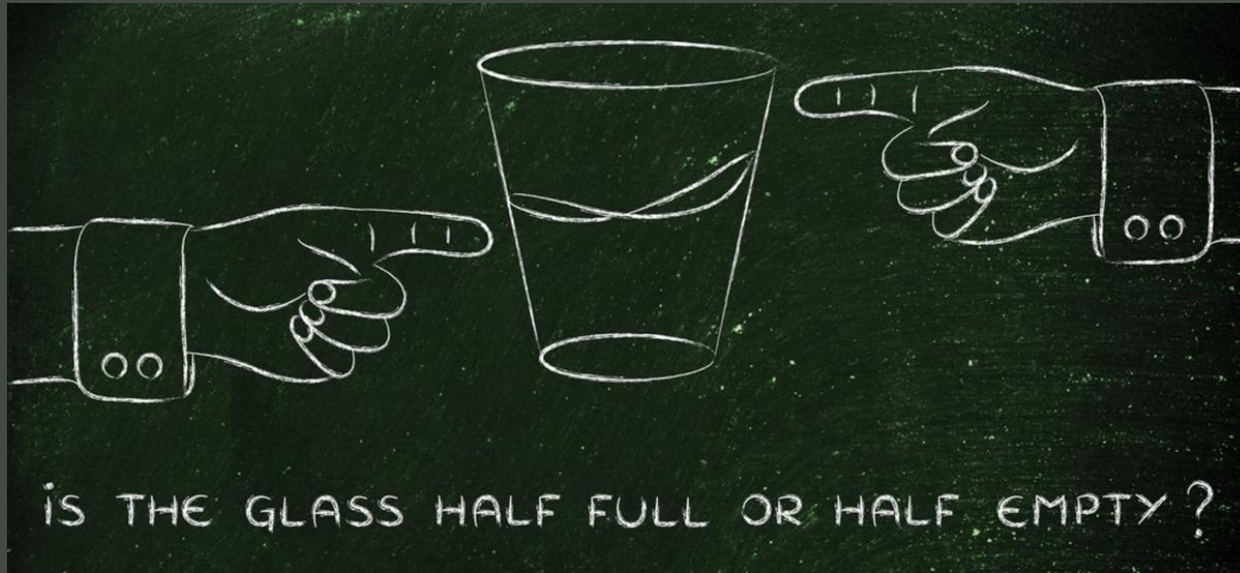


The more people participate in the process of their own education, and the more people participate in defining what kind of [knowledge] production to produce, and for what and why, the more people participate in the development of their selves. The more people become themselves, the better the democracy.

— Freire and Horton, *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*, p.145,

Why community needs to be in the center?





When we talk about **EQUITY GAPS**,
it's easy to see the communities in terms of **DEFICITS**,
or what people don't have (and don't have access to).



Community Cultural Wealth

Seeing the glass filled with Awesome Juice

Family Capital

Cultural knowledge developed through family (immediate, extended, or chosen)

Aspirational Capital

Maintain hopes and dreams in the face of barriers

Linguistic Capital

Intellectual & social skills attained through communication in more than 1 language



Resistant Capital

Knowledge & skills developed through challenging inequity

Navigational Capital

Skills of maneuvering through institutions

Social Capital

Networks of stakeholders within your community that can provide resources and support

The combined wealth from the different types of capital becomes the community's **Cultural Capital**



WHAT IS APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY?

PROBLEM-SOLVING

1. Identify problem
2. Come up with solution
(mostly externally)
3. Fix the problem

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

1. Ask what's worked well—and
listen to what's being said
2. Identify assets and strengths
3. Explore possibilities



APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What do you like best about your community?
- What do you want more of in your community?
- What do you most value about yourself as a member of the community?
- What do you most want to preserve about the community even as it changes?
- What are your best hopes for our community?
- What common ground do you see among longtime residents and newcomers?
- What resources does your community have to bring people together?
- What would it look like if people came together in mutual partnership?
- What might you do in your personal life to bring about the change you want to see?



CULTURAL HUMILITY PRINCIPLES



1. Life-Long Learning and Critical Self-Reflection: Understanding that **we are all complex, multi-dimensional beings.**
2. Recognize & Challenge **power imbalances** within [racialized] dynamics
3. Build **Institutional accountability** and **mutually respectful partnerships** based on trust.



Accountability: Program Learning Outcomes & Backward Design



Cultural Humility Principle 1

Service-Learning Program Learning Outcomes

Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection understanding of how each of us is a complicated, multidimensional human being.

1. Practice principles of community engagement and social responsibility
2. Apply learning in social context(s)
3. Value community voice and knowledge
4. Critically reflect on root causes of systemic social/environmental issues

Prompts for Students

- How do you understand your positionality and role within the society context?
- Within the community context which which you are engaging?
- How have community members informed your understanding of belonging within the societal and specific community contexts?
- What does it mean to express and navigate the world as a multidimensional human being?
- Does everyone get to automatically be seen and understood as a complex, multidimensional individual?
- What have I learned about the cultural wealth and strengths of the communities and people I work with?

Cultural Humility Principle 2

Service-Learning Program Learning Outcomes

We must recognize and challenge power imbalances.

1. Practice principles of community engagement and social responsibility
2. Apply learning in social context(s)
3. Value community voice and knowledge
4. Critically reflect on root causes of systemic social/environmental issues

Prompts for Students

- What power dynamics, structures, false narratives and myths make it difficult for non-white people to be seen and have the freedoms associated with being a complex, multi-dimensional human being?
- What are the larger contexts that condition the lives of the communities with whom we engage?
- Why, in social change work, is it crucial to center the knowledge and voices of people most impacted by power imbalances and structural racism and inequities?
- What have you learned from community members about how they confront, advocate, persist despite or in spite of structural racism and inequities?

Cultural Humility Principle 3

Service-Learning Program Learning Outcomes

**Institutional accountability:
how organizations model these
principals**

1. Practice principles of community engagement and social responsibility
2. Apply learning in social context(s)
3. Value community voice and knowledge
4. Critically reflect on root causes of systemic social/environmental issues

Prompts for Students

- With the knowledge gained about social inequities and oppression, how do we move towards collective action and structural change?
- What did we learn from community partners and community members about organizing?
- What did we learn about the organization structure of the community partners?

CONSIDERATIONS



- What is community knowledge?
- Why is community knowledge crucial to liberal learning, and in addressing the challenges we face?
- How do we guide students to learn, document, and co-create community knowledge?

Contact Us

Elaine Ikeda | elaine@leadcalifornia.org |
650-242-5940

Emily S. Wu | emily.wu@dominican.edu

Julia van der Ryn | julia.vanderryn@dominican.edu



