Community Learning Collaborative: Practicing Partnership
Bryn Mawr/Haverford Education Department
Course Facilitator: Dr. Alison Cook-Sather
Fall 2023
Haverford College

Class Meetings: Stokes 104 on Mondays 7:30-9:55pm
Partnership Work: 3-5 hours per week, per partnership schedule
Alison's Student/Office Hours: by appointment (acooksat@haverford.edu)

Weekly Class Notes - to be created
Course Padlet - to be created

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Learn more about the Education Department options and processes from the Student Guidebook:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_CLx8XPJ2nNekj2XOtoOTmxjwjqfQLpLM6A3I8RbzG4/edit?usp=sharing
Introduction & Context

The Community Learning Collaborative (CLC) was developed by a teaching collaborative—a group of educators in different positions in school and community contexts. The goal of the course is to engage in and work towards educational justice by deepening knowledge, skills, and inquiries into the practice of relationships, facilitation, and change in in-school and out-of-school educational contexts. To meet this goal we work to dislodge from a settled concept and set of practices, into unlearning—peeling back inherited assumptions to make room for unfamiliar, unknown, and creative potentialities. By way of power analysis, freedom dreaming, and collective practice, we move into new knowledge and questions.

This is an entry-point course (one of four) for the major and minor in Education Studies. We have noticed students expect it to equip them very quickly with a group of answers that swiftly resolve big challenges and questions. Please know that this is not the style of the course. CLC, while it will give you new skills and understandings, is not designed to speed up or simplify what it means to be prepared to teach, study, or intervene in systems of education. Rather, we hope it will strengthen your capacity to inquire, to hold tension, to build relationships and community in order to work creatively in uncertainty, and to facilitate your own and others’ learning and changing with difference as a resource.

The course is organized into three phases:
1. Reflection on self and past educational experiences
2. Engagement with teaching and learning theory and practice; and
3. Articulation of practices learned and commitments to move forward.

We live and work on Lenni Lenape land, land that is currently and temporarily called Haverford and Bryn Mawr, which we believe should and will be restored to self-sovereignty. In our study together, we hold this temporary, not stable, context in mind, and try to not drift from it. We are in a social/political moment of movement with potential to disrupt oppressive “business as usual”; education has a role in this liberation. New and long-standing forms of organizing (of movements and knowledge), community-creating, trauma-informed relating, and decolonization are needed—and welcome—in the Education Department. As described by la paperson (2017), these decolonizing approaches include: (1) forwarding of Black, indigenous and queer futures, (2) rematriation of land, and (3) regeneration of relations.

Course Outcomes & Goals

Through active partnership with course collaborators, you as students in the CLC will:

- Examine your own educational experiences, past and present
- Distinguish and describe varying purposes and standards for education, and practice assessing and supporting them in partnership contexts
- Build capacity to promote educational justice in Philadelphia and its suburbs
- Author an educational statement of purpose: as a student within the BiCo, as an aspiring educator, as a community member
- Develop a set of skills and commitments that facilitate learning—your own and others’—and align with their purpose

Course Co-Educators
Course Facilitator
- Alison Cook-Sather, BiCo Education Department, acooksat@haverford.edu

Course Collaborators (on course creation, syllabus and partnership design—bolded are current partners for this semester)
- Tasnim Aziz, Columbia Teachers College
- Kamau Blakney, International Capoeira Angola Foundation; Mestre of Capoeira Angola and Teaching Artist across Philadelphia
- Shira Cohen, Feltonville School of Arts and Sciences; Caucus of Working Educators, of the Philadelphia Federation of teachers
- Carolyn Cavaness, Bethel Academy, Director
- Ivana Gasiorowski, KIPP Philadelphia Elementary Academy
- Brian Harrison, Vaux Big Picture High School
- Jules Martel, Welsh Valley Middle School
- Amy McCann, Common Space
- Samyuktha Natarajan, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Kathy Rho, University of Pennsylvania GSE
- Emile Sorger, Institute for the Art of Movement
- Katie Tsai, Lower Merion High School
- Julia de la Torre, Moorestown Friends School
- Alexandra Wolkoff, Puentes de Salud
- Alice Lesnick, BiCo Education Department
- Margo Schall, BiCo Education Department
- Chanelle Wilson, BiCo Education Department
- Kelly Gavin Zuckerman, BiCo Education Department

The partnership work through CLC is called Internship 1: Orienting
The purpose of the educational internship is to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for relationship, facilitation, and change.

Feedback, Assessment, Self-Assessment, and Grading
Assessing progress towards goals is an important mode of accountability. In order to be so, it needs to engage learners as active agents in this process. This course addresses your standards for your learning and supports you in discerning how you are defining and meeting those standards as well as those of the instructor/facilitator and the Colleges. We aspire to create learning experiences that de-center the drive to perform for a grade, while at the same time acknowledging that so far we are working in a context that employs grades.

For these reasons, assessment in the course takes the form of portfolio-style grading. Your weekly journal entries, PCD document and partnership presentation, and class community contribution will receive credit, if complete, and feedback, but not be graded individually. Grades will be given to partnership assignments (PCD document and final presentation) and final portfolios, to include
a final self-assessment, with a mid-course assessment conference designed to support reflection on your progress. The final course grade will integrate the credit/no credit pieces as a contribution grade together with the graded elements.

The feedback we offer regularly along the way will grow out of the following considerations:

- you are present for embodied contribution
- your work done on time (or with explicit extension)
- your work shows power to connect (past and current) experience with a range of frameworks to generate insights and questions
- your work shows clarity and depth in unlearning and recommitting to standards—imposed and self-authorized—or education
- your work shows a deepening degree of specificity, creativity, and depth (going beyond description and narrative to analyze and integrate those with new thinking through engaging with a range of discourses, readings, and encounters)
- your work demonstrates imaginative engagement with course goals, themes, and processes
- your work contributes to others' learning (in class and partnership)
- you take initiative to communicate your needs, questions, and goals in order to make the course meaningful and effective for you and in order to share responsibility in this process

You are invited to add to this list criteria you are using to measure your own learning.

**Departmental Statement on Use of AI**

The proliferation of generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Bard, Dall-E, Claude) and non-generative forms (e.g., Google Translate, Grammerly) offer opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to revisit the purpose of education broadly conceived and of learning in any given course. The Education Department takes and advocates an inquiry stance on the ways in which the proliferation of AI can inform thinking, attribution, research, and sharing in the production of knowledge with integrity. AI, like all technologies, can be put to positive/productive or harmful/detrimental use, and its various forms re-raise both new and age-old questions about creativity and ownership in knowledge production. Individual faculty members in the Education Department will explore particular uses of AI in individual courses. As with all scholarly work, appropriate citation is expected. See a useful resource with issues to consider and question to ask yourself about generative AI from the University of Michigan: [https://genai.umich.edu/guidance/students](https://genai.umich.edu/guidance/students)
Assignments
For detailed discussion, please see: CLC Fall 2023 Assignments in Detail

1. Embodied Engagement & Community Contribution
At our first meeting and continue throughout the semester

2. Weekly journal
DUE: Weekly, on Sundays by 6 pm

3. Partnership Group Work
   - Partnership Commitments Document DUE: for mid-semester conference, week 8
   - Group Presentation DUE: to share during final class

4. Final Project: Portfolio
DUE: end of finals week

Course Policies
For detailed discussion, please see CLC Fall 2023 Course Policies

Weekly Plans (subject to revision)

Phase I: Reflection on self, positionalities, and past educational experiences

[Class 0]: September 4 [No class meeting]
   ●  Between September 5 (the first day of classes) and September 11 (our first in-person meeting), complete a reflection in pairs. Guidelines here.
   ●  Complete Interests, Access, and Well-being Survey by Thursday before Class 1

[Class 1] September 11: Introductions and Context
Central question: What ideas do I already have about education and where did they come from?
Text (we will revisit in class):
   ●  Mia Mingus, Dreaming Accountability
   ●  course syllabus—read in full

[Class 2] September 18: Community Learning Collaborative Gathering
Central question: What is a learning community?
In class:
   ●  Partner Educator Conversation

Texts (to read in advance of class):
   ●  bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress, Introduction and one chapter of your choosing
[Class 3] September 25: Educational Debt, Study, and Achievement off the Grid
Central question: What is educational achievement outside of deficit-based or comparative definitions? What ways can you see racism and racially biased structures having shaped the educational landscape? How is liberatory education described and envisioned, in contrast?

Texts (to read in advance of class):
- Ladson-Billings, “From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in US Schools”

Also (not required reading, just for your interest):
- Black Lives Matter Week of Action in Schools

[Class 4] October 2: Decolonial & Equity Frameworks for Education
Central question: What is liberatory education? How can I orient with respect to oppressive (colonial, racist, other dimensions) systems in education to foster learning and disrupt harmful practice?

Texts (to read in advance of class):
- Ia paperson, A Third University is Possible, Introduction, Chapter 1 (& more if you will)
- Leia Robinson’s Student Teaching Anti-Racist Inquiry Project

[Class 5] October 9: Relationships as Teaching and Learning
Central question: What kinds of relationships have I experienced in settings of teaching and learning? What desires, power positions, assets, and questions do I bring to such relationships now?

Texts (to read in advance of class):
- Eve Tuck, “Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities”
- Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools

FALL BREAK

Phase II: Engagement with teaching and learning in theory and practice

[Class 6] October 23: Bridging Self to Partnership
Central question: What do I bring to educational partnership? What skill sets, identities, and histories/legacies? Which of my inheritances serve my purpose?

Texts (to read in advance of class):
- Alison Cook-Sather, “Perpetual Translation: Conveying the Languages and Practices of Student Voice and Pedagogical Partnership across Differences of Identity, Culture, Position, and Power”
- FACTS publication

Also:
- Journal entry due either the Sunday at start of break or the Sunday at end, not both
• Alice Lesnick, "What Is Language Justice?" (in class)

[Class 7] October 30: Assessment & Self-Assessment
Central questions: What am I learning in this course? Am I meeting my standards for my work in this course? How do I know?

Texts:
• Self directed learning

Also:
• Mid-semester Conferences with Alison take place this week

[Class 8] November 6: Transformative Justice and Abolitionist Teaching
Central question: What do abolition and transformative justice look and feel like? Where do they belong in our education system? What practices support them?

Texts (to read/watch in advance of class):
• Abolitionist Teaching Network video (2020)
• Education Theory Handout
• No More Police (2023)

Also:
• PCD due
• Portfolio Examples (to read in class)

[Class 9] November 13: Organizing and Collectivity
Central questions: What is the relationship between organizing and education/learning? What kind of work does each take?

In class:
• Caucus of WE partnership group leads

Texts (to read/watch in advance of class):
• Givan & Lang, (2020), Strike for the Common Good: Fighting for the Future of Public Education, Intro and Chapter 11 -- available as an e-book on Tripod or viewable here
• Self directed learning
• CLC activity roles
• Temple University Administrators Have Declared War on Striking Grad Workers

[Class 10] November 20: Flipping the Frame on Barriers to Learning
Central question: What gets in the way of "natural" states of teaching and learning, exchanging?

In class
• Bethel Academy partnership group leads

Texts (to read in advance of class):
• Dewey, John, (1938), Experience and Education, chapters 2, 5, 6
Freire, Paulo, (1996) *Pedagogy of Freedom: Introductory Reflections, There is NO Teaching Without Learning, Teaching is Not Just Transferring Knowledge* (first three sections) - to p. 64

- Self directed learning
- 📚 Education Scenarios

**Phase III: Articulation of practices learned and those to move forward**

**[Class 11] November 27: Theories of Change**
*Central question: What are the ways that I most enjoy/that come most naturally to me to invoke teaching, learning, and change?*

**In class:**
- Science Leadership Academy at Beeber partnership group leads
- Common Space partnership group leads

**Texts:**
- Self directed learning

**[Class 12] December 4: "Make the road by walking" (and otherwise moving)**
*Central question: What commitments do I have to my own learning and teaching, in community? How do they forward justice? In what ways can I implement, play, and experiment with them further?*

**In class:**
- Fundação Internacional de Capoeira Angola partnership group leads

**Texts:**
- Self directed learning

**[Class 13] December 11: Evolutions, Continuity, Celebration!**
*Central question: How does CLC carry on to the next cohort? What would you like to leave for them?*

Partnership groups will reflect on and share highlights and learnings from partnership work

**Texts:**
- Self directed learning
“Hope in the dark” — synchronicities, absurdities, potentialities, the delicate yet strong weaving of our lives...

Community Learning Collaborative
26 Oct. 2020