



HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST

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BOOK CLUB REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION: DISCUSSION GROUPS

Listed here are some of the reflections submitted by book club facilitators from their individual breakout groups. The event included thirteen group discussions.

1. Reflection 1

- To give merit evaluation and continuation service evaluation credit to those doing diversity work. This includes people who are supporting underserved students as well as those supporting historically underserved faculty.
- Faculty who do DEI work should also be considered as doing particularly important service as a part of promotion and tenure decisions.
- Actively encourage junior faculty to share the way that their work identifies racist policies even when those items are criticisms of DePaul, because DePaul has racist policies. This is an issue because junior faculty are often warned not to “make waves”.

2. Reflection 2

Themes and areas to focus on:

- Social justice
- Policy, gov’t policy
- Disrupt the system and make it equitable
- Do the hard work. Show up.
- Student work needed, i.e. to overcome their challenges to finish their degrees
- Law: justice, equity, and racism: teach all or focus on one?
- Acknowledgement

3. Reflection 3

- COVID may have mitigated hierarchies somewhat; makes certain conversations easier, maybe more effective; think about how we can capture that and maintain it once pandemic is over.
- Allows better communication between levels, may make leaders more aware of issues that they would not otherwise see.
- Continue the conversations that have been spurred by recent events; ask continually about whether/where racism might be present, but not seen by everyone.
- Be candid about where we might be racist as an institution, think about what an antiracist institution might look like and how hard this might be to imagine.
- Think about how we create pathways to the institution, for students not here yet; who do we reach, and why.
- Admissions must think about how they recruit, who is selected, etc.
- Think about the environment we create for students, and how we may not be aware of all the things that are shaping that environment and experience.



- Consider the differences between students, what they need, how well they can adapt to, or deal with, the environment.
- Help students understand how they can better respond/deal with issues that they experience, incl. off campus.
- In the classroom, both center race and racism in classes more often/more consistently, and be aware of how differences in students' experiences may be affecting how they behave/respond in the classroom.
- Work on giving each other tactics/vocabulary/approaches for challenging racism when we see it; provide tools for doing this effectively.
 - Not only so we are more comfortable doing it, but also so that these interventions are productive.
 - Recognize that it takes *practice* to learn to do these things; first responses may not be the best ones; must forgive each other's mistakes, and our own.
- Implement an Anti-Racism Pause every month. It could be a particular day of the month every month (third Tuesday? First Friday?) and every department and program stops for an hour on that day and time to discuss anti-racism and where we all are, issues that have come up, ways we see ourselves making an effort, making good change. Once a quarter it could be within our departments, once a quarter within peer groups across campus (all the deans, just the department assistants, all student workers), and once a quarter it could be a mixed bag of students, faculty, staff and administration. We could work our way through topics or adjust as current events warrant.

4. Reflection 4

- Policy: Take a position on National Policies use our positionality. Lending our voice to antiracist policies on student loans.
- Faculty and staff Orientation should have an antiracist discussion and continue university training.
- Community College partnerships and articulation agreements.
- Retain students. If we enroll them, they need to graduate.
- Teaching evaluations continue to be biased revise with persisting racism.
- Create cross collaborations in DEI work.
- Have a diversity showcase to highlight the good work being done at the university.
- Plan another book club on this topic.
- Continue the discussion with monthly drop-ins. Diversity cybercafé.

5. Reflections 5: The Impact of the Book:

- Kendi's candidness made the experience of racism real and personal. It helped us understand that it is something we are all working on, with a need to constantly reexamine ourselves and acknowledge moments of racism.
- Made us reflect and better understand our own journey in dealing with racism and internal biases.
- Provided intelligent content to reflect on, share, and discuss in meaningful conversations with colleagues, family, friends, and others, especially when discussing internalized racism.
- Made us realize the need to be honest and vulnerable if change is to happen.



- Reminded us of the urgency of the dialogue on antiracism, which needs to happen, especially now.
- The silver lining of COVID is that it highlighted the racist structure we exist in. Reading the book forced us to examine the masks we wear and recognizing that too much of what props up the systems is white masks as well.

Toward an Antiracial Culture: Faculty Members and Staff:

- Explore racism and antiracism in our work, teaching, service, and research to create a safe space for us and others.
- Think of ways to decolonize curriculum in design, pedagogy, and implementation.
- Celebrate multicultural identities and examine the degree to which the curriculum honors diverse voices and ensures inclusion in the classroom.
- Explore ways we see antiracism in our immediate space and treat our students and colleagues with fairness and equity.
- Advocate for an evolved concept of activism, moving away from few actions to continuous commitment to change based on internal understanding of the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Engage in meaningful conversations about the difference between being racist and antiracist with the understanding of the importance of action that includes examining and calling for the change of policies that perpetuate racism, and the inclusion of new ones that celebrate diversity and ensure equity in treatment, compensation, recognition, and rewards.
- Change requires empathy, and empathy is produced through understanding the historical dimension and the root causes of racism in the United States to establish a core perspective regardless of background, ethnic, and cultural diversity.
- Becoming aware and share with our students the importance of not only having good intentions, but the impact of what we say on the listener (to avoid unintentional micro aggressions).
- Create a culture that celebrates recognizing our unique experiences, embraces diversity, and values differences.
- Recognize that a quest for white assimilation is not the way and replace it with celebrating the unique contributions of each of the different racial, cultural, religious, age, sexual orientation, and age groups, among others.
- Find ways to help students develop cultural competencies to survive in an increasingly global and ever-changing workplace, realizing the organizational demand to assimilate.
- Provide strategies on how to navigate the workplace culture and expectations while remaining true to ones' own identity.
- Recognize our cultural and experience limitations as faculty. Through innovative approaches, ensure engagement such as utilizing speakers with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Toward an Antiracial Culture: Administrators and Decision Makers:

- Create opportunities, programs, and platforms that help build trust with students and encourage faculty to get acquainted with students, understand their perspectives and challenges, and develop strategies to assist them in celebrating self and others.
- Create policies, procedures, and approaches to ensure an inclusive and antiracist work environment and culture.



- Create safe workplaces where all feel included and welcomed the way they truly are, especially students.
- Recognize that a diverse faculty is a key component to decolonize the curriculum.
- Explore how to attract more people of color to faculty positions and retain them through sound marketing, recruiting, and retention practices.
- Explore ways to unveil and remove systemic barriers for people of color obtaining faculty and leadership positions.
- Realize that people co-habit multiple spaces based on DuBois (1908) – double consciousness with respect to assimilation, in some cases propelled by the longing to maintain both, in a quest for better understanding the self.
- Recognize that the idea of allyship is complex. Find ways to encourage “white” people to navigate seeing themselves as a part of the process of combating racism, and convince minorities to see them as allies, without seeming overbearing.
- Build trust through creating safe environments by using gender pronouns, names, and recognizing individuals' choices.
- Provide safe space for younger generation who seem more resistance to assimilation and seeking diversity to enrich the classroom and the work environment.
- Modify programs and curriculum goals to include fostering civic understanding among students and demonstrate that through action.
- Focus more on institutional community engagement with diverse populations, including donors with less of a power dynamic.
- Recognize, at the university level, authentic self among administrators, faculty members, staff, and students.
- Be more intentional in the way we help students from marginalized communities by setting clear priorities for assistance.
- Encourage research and scholarly work in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

6. Reflections 6

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- Everyone will go about it differently, work within your sphere of influence and mindset.
- Prompt question: Is it possible for us (individual, DePaul, Chicago, etc.) to become anti-racist? What will it take to move us in that direction? What barriers will we need to mitigate?
- Need to think about dynamics in the classroom as a faculty member, even if the subject/topic does not directly relate to race.
- Everyone will go about it differently, work within your sphere of influence and mindset.
- Work to find points of connection with those who are approaching anti-racist work from a different perspective than your own.
- How do we strive to work in community and form collations across difference?
- Move from feelings of despair/“is it too late.” Push for hope because what is the alternative? This is not a question of logic but a question of faith.
- Work within the mission of the University, center anti-racism in the current revisions to the University mission statement.
- Promote sessions, trainings, discussions (held by Mission and Ministry and other areas) to identify racism within ourselves and between us.
- Remember that there is not a definitive end point to be reached on a given day, week, etc. Anti-racist work must be ongoing on the personal and institutional levels.



- Engage in anti-racist work as a staff team, lean into recognizing ways that we are upholding and perpetuating racism (as white people and as people of color).
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