The University of Baltimore started a new class this fall semester — “Divided Baltimore” — in response to the spring’s riots and demonstrations around the death of Freddie Gray at the hands of police.

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Headline: "Uniting a Divided Baltimore"

The University FOR Baltimore: Knowledge That Works

> UB is a public, urban, city-centered, commuter institution
> Part of the University System of Maryland
> Historically upper division and graduate institution.
> Freshman were reintroduced in the fall of 2007, but UB remains primarily a transfer institution at the undergraduate level.

> Student headcount is roughly 6400
  > 55% undergraduate—mean age 28
  > 45% graduate (33 y) and law (28 y)
> Majority Pell eligible
> Plurality African American
> 87.8% in state
The course is a broad-based, multi-disciplinary approach to address the city’s long-standing issues regarding segregation, economic and racial inequalities, and untapped potential.

The overarching goal of the course is to explore the city’s problems from a variety of perspectives, and begin the process of positive change.
Divided Baltimore and LEAP Goals:

- Asking **Big Questions** and Developing Compelling Ideas
- Creating **Liberal Learners**
- Deploying Creative and **High Impact Pedagogy**—

All to ensure:

- **Equity**—for all students;
- **Inclusive Excellence**—through high impact practices;
- **Democratic Renewal**—preparing to solve problems in a fraught context.
We built the course around three questions, and phased the material in in that order—starting with history and moving toward imaging the future:

- How did we get segregated?
- What does that mean for wealth accumulation, housing, employment, transportation, education, health care, and access to the pursuit of happiness?
- What are we going to do about the situation?
Specific Learning Outcomes

- Explain the problem from the perspective of structural racism
- Present examples of transformational versus transactional change
- Demonstrate assessing a policy or proposal from an equity lens
Unique to the course was a weekly Community Forum—students and community members learning together.
How it worked--functionally:

Ted Talk Style Lecture Series Open to the public, streamed live one night a week, and then archived.

Speakers from UB’s law, business, public affairs, and arts and sciences colleges; community leaders; and government officials

Deep Dive – Following the forum, students met in their course-level sections to review presentations, develop their own responses through discussion, extend those via Sakai discussion forums, and then develop team presentations at the end of the semester.
The Community Forum was the source of content

- Over 150 people attended the opening night lecture on how Baltimore became a segregated city, including Baltimore City teachers, leaders of business, and community organizers.

- Throughout the semester there were 30 – 70 members of the general public in attendance, 20 of whom were regulars.
Community Forum participants continued the discussion and started an evening pot luck...
Course sections were tailored to student level:

- Graduate Sections—face-to-face and online—in Conflict Negotiation and Management; Public Affairs
- An Undergraduate Section—in Community Studies and Civic Engagement
- Dual Enrollment High School Section
Dual Enrollment students from Renaissance Academy

Captured on Twitter:
"I teach the #dividedbaltimore high school section. What they tell me over and over again is that nobody listens to them."

--Ron Williams
“Education is not about passively submitting to trivial and easily lost information, but about acting upon the world, working through a dialectical relationship between objectivity and subjectivity.”

“No matter how objective a subject might be, without some significance to the individual student’s subjective conceptual frame of reference, it will have little meaning.”
Authenticity—what we know about learning...--LEAP

"An emotional bond must be interwoven into the learning design for students to connect abstract theory with practical applications of any subject."

"The educator must find existential connections into the lifeworld of students in order for transformation to occur."

Engaging in Difficult Dialogues: Real Conversations about Race and Structural Racism

From the Twitter feed:
Tonight's #DividedBaltimore class could probably go for 3+ hours if we let it. Thanks to @WesMoore1 for helping us peel this onion.

Author Wes Moore with a community member and Baltimore Youth Poet Laureate and UB student Derik Ebert.
A Class Highlight—

https://panopto.ubalt.edu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=340830f4-46fa-4b11-8145-f01e0ff0b967
Social Media and the course:

- The Blog: blogs.ubalt.edu/dividedbaltimore
  - Communicating with the community
  - Maintaining constant flow of information
  - Setting out readings beyond the individual course syllabi
  - Encouraging feedback
- Twitter in the classroom
- Students’ own blogs
Using the blog to assign readings

Suggested Reading for 9/21:


Here Coates makes the argument for how segregation impoverished Blacks and why reparations is therefore something we must consider.


What happens in Baltimore is not unique to Baltimore. This very recent report compares a number of American cities.
A. Adar Ayira is Director of Programs for Associated Black Charities’ “More in the Middle” Initiative. Prior to her tenure, Adar was principal consultant for Core Concepts, a nonprofit-specialist consulting firm. For more than 20 years, Adar has been a facilitator and trainer on racial equity and has provided facilitation and training for corporations, community groups, nonprofit organizations, and individuals in the region (and nationally). A founding member of Baltimore Racial Justice Action — a network of Maryland professionals committed to the transformation of systems to achieve social and economic equity, with an emphasis on racial equity — Adar continues to work as a facilitator, trainer of trainers, and analyst for the network.

The 2011 recipient of the YWCA Baltimore’s Racial Justice Award, Adar is a popular speaker and presenter in nonprofit, business, community, and other forums regarding the need and strategies for breaking down the walls of silence regarding the current implications and impact of this country’s racial history. A Leadership Baltimore County Alumna, Ms. Ayira is also a frequent radio guest and was a contributing author to the teaching text “Lessons from The Color of Fear: Field Reports” (Volume IV).

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John C. Weiss III, a lifelong Baltimorean, attended public school in Baltimore, and graduated from Baltimore City College, earned his B.S. degree from Towson University and his MBA from Loyola University of Maryland. He has 45 years of leadership experience in venture capital, executive management, economic development activities and commercial banking in the greater Baltimore area. JC has over 35 years of leadership roles in Maryland’s higher education community, including positions of board chair, university designee to corporate boards, and chair of foundation audit and investment committees; he currently serves as president of the University Faculty Senate at UB. For the past 40 years he has been an active board member in corporate, civic, academic and professional organizations. Mr. Weiss is also a graduate of the Greater Baltimore Committee’s LEADERship program and of Leadership Maryland.

Kenneth Morrison is the author of “Blood, Bricks, and Dandelions”, the forthcoming book about the Waverly School's role in the civil rights movement. He is the CEO of the Waverly School and has been a public school administrator in Baltimore City for 27 years. Mr. Morrison is a member of the Maryland State Board of Education and a member of the Charlton and the Miller Honors Program at the University of Maryland. He is a member of the board of directors of the 2014 African American Literature Festival and the Citywide Coalition for Youth Programs in the Baltimore City Public Schools.
Pull out your smartphone and turn it on.

Part of the success of the course came from encouraging students and community members to tweet about what they were learning and what questions they had—and we captured the feed on the blog.
Presenter comments—captured on #dividedbaltimore:

- "I do not collude in my own oppression or the oppression of my community." - A. Adir Adaya, on refusing to call it a "riot" #dividedbaltimore

- If we're not talking educational equity, then I don't know what we're talking about @WesMoore1 @DividedBalt

- Rev Kevin Slayton: “It is vitally important not to "blindly disconnect from our history..."” quoting Frederick Douglass

- “When leadership doesn't look like the people it seeks to serve, outcomes often don't get embraced by the community”—Kenneth Morrison, Dew More.

- Leana Wen, Baltimore City Health Commissioner: “Is there any doubt that Baltimore is a segregated city & that government policies & private lenders all play a role?
“…until this class, she didn't realize that it was structured by someone to be that way.”

“…same problems, a bunch of solutions and a lot of inaction. Charles Glascoe speaking…”

“Nekia visited Seattle, where Trader Joe's was a 5-min walk away. In Baltimore, it would take her 3 hours by bus…”

“We'll have missteps; but if we aren't committed to trying new things, we'll always have systems where people r not engaged”

"Activism is everyday. Everyday there's an opportunity to teach someone, mentor, love someone who is different than you."
Final Project for Divided Baltimore Class

Tonight was the final Divided Baltimore class. What a terrific overall experience it was, and, now, at the end, I definitely feel like the class was an intriguing challenge and that I learned a whole lot. Our group project was about grassroots movements in Baltimore and how these groups -- including Leads of a Beautiful Struggle -- are impacting policy, specifically looking at changing the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights.

My individual project -- a proposal set to propose to my school's Curriculum Committee a high school version of the class -- was also due today, and I'm proud of the results. My school's Curriculum Committee already met for next year, but hopefully they meet again; even if it's not realistic to have a whole class in my school next year with this proposal, I'm going to put it out there in case some other school wants to adopt it.

Included below is a rationale (research based), description, and syllabus.

Requirements were to use at least 12 outside sources and for it to be at least 15 pages.

Proposal to Create Divided Baltimore Class in High School

Mark Miazga
Divided Baltimore Survey/Course Evaluation

Leave a reply

Hello Everyone,

We are writing to you as a participant in the UB Divided Baltimore course requesting your feedback on the community forum portion of the course. We would very much like to know how we can improve upon the course. Please take a moment to help us by responding to this brief evaluation.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JNGP8B8

This entry was posted in Uncategorized on December 9, 2015 by Sonce Reese.
What topics introduced in the course interested you most?
- structural racism—29%
- education—29%

What was something that you learned in the course?
- understanding racism—36%
- understanding history—36%

Do you think inviting the community to the course furthered the dialogue?
- Yes—79%

Did you use the social media parts of the course, such as blogs.ubalt.edu/dividedbaltimore/; how did it work for you?
- Yes—79%
- Most used the Blog to keep up on assignments and facts about the class
Student Survey -2

- Do you think the deep dive with your classmates provided a better understanding of topics?
  - Yes—71%

- How might the structure of the course be improved?
  - More time for students
  - Less redundant presentations

- Do you have a better framing of the issues facing Baltimore as a result of this course?
  - Yes—93%

- Did the course make you feel better about the future of Baltimore?
  - No or indifferent—71%

- Given what knowledge you brought to or learned at the community forums, what can UB itself do to work against structural racism?
  - Most responded to continue with this type course and community outreach
High School Teachers in the course

“The three of us agree that the course has already had a profound impact on our instruction at Baltimore City College High School, and will continue to do so in the years to come. As you may have heard, the three of us submitted final projects that directly related to both our being teachers and the course’s content, with one of us examining transportation issues of Baltimore City Public Schools students, another creating a unit for speech class based upon the course’s content, and another writing a proposal for our school’s Curriculum Committee to include a Divided Baltimore course in our school’s curriculum.”
Community Survey

- Only 7 community members responded; all but 1 consistently attended:
  - Do you have a better framing of the issues facing Baltimore as a result of this course?
    - 5 of 7 responded yes
  - Did the course make you feel better about the future of Baltimore
    - 5 of 7 % responded yes
On the Future of Baltimore

Do you have a better framing of the issues facing Baltimore as a result of this course?

Student Responses
93% responded yes

Community Responses
71% responded yes

Did the course make you feel better about the future of Baltimore?

Student Responses
71% responded no or indifferent

Community Responses
71% responded yes
“I've never had students go on and on like mine did about how much they learned or how much a course reoriented the way they see the world.”

--Lawrence Lanahan, graduate-level instructor
Student Charles Glascoe’s Presentation

https://panopto.ubalt.edu/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx#folderID=%22827f6206-b2e3-480c-9836-4113be16e026%22
Now what do we do??

With a mayoral election in the fall, following primaries in April, we will do a new version of the course built around what do we want the new mayor to know....using the same three questions:

- How did we get segregated?
- What does that mean for wealth accumulation, housing, employment, transportation, education, health care, and access to all sorts of elements of the pursuit of happiness?
- What are we going to do about the situation?
For more on Divided Baltimore, go to:

blogs.ubalt.edu/dividedbaltimore/