Centralizing Racial Justice and Decolonization

ACPA Addresses Oppression in Scholarship and Practice

2019 AAC&U Diversity, Equity, and Student Success Conference
Pittsburgh, PA
Land Acknowledgement

Related to our mission of supporting and fostering learning through the generation and dissemination of knowledge, ACPA-College Student Educators International would like to acknowledge that the land we are meeting on today is the original homelands of numerous and diverse tribal nations.

We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. We honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather. We also acknowledge the ongoing struggle and challenge still experienced today by Native, Aboriginal, and Indigenous peoples and nations.
Introductions

Rev. Jamie Washington, PhD
President, Washington Consulting Group
President & Co-Founder, Social Justice Training Institute
2018-19 ACPA President (Currently Past President)

Craig Elliott, PhD
Assistant Vice President and Assistant Professor, Samuel Merritt University (Private, Special Focus Four-Year)
2019-20 ACPA President (Current)

Chris Moody
Executive Director, ACPA - College Student Educators International
Session Learning Goals

By attending this session, participants will be able to:

1) Articulate how one association is approaching the work of centralizing racial justice and decolonization in practice at the system level;
2) Identify opportunities for influencing system level, justice-oriented change in their own settings and environments;
3) Investigate how their work with and for college students and their success is critically linked with social justice and having a justice-orientation;
4) Assess their opportunities for reducing oppression of communities of color at the intersections of their identities, knowing and recognizing that all oppressions are linked.
Dimensions of Difference

Breadth of Awareness

- Individual
  - Prejudice
- Group
  - Discrimination
- System/Organization
  - Oppression

Courtesy of the Social Justice Training Institute
Social Justice
Social justice is both a process and a goal. The Goal of social justice education is full and equitable participation of people from all social identity groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.

The process for attaining social justice should be both democratic and participatory, respectful of human diversity and group differences, and affirming of human agency and capacity for working collaboratively with others to create change. Forming coalitions and working collaboratively across difference is an essential part of social justice.

Adapted from: Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, III Edition, Lee Anne Bell
Racial Justice

In conceptualizing racial justice, our lens is intersectional, intentional, and directed. The focus is on reducing the oppression of communities of color at the intersections of their identities knowing that all of our oppressions are linked and that the work is ongoing.
Decolonization

The long-term process of first recognizing and then divesting bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic, educational, and psychological power from colonizers.

As part of this process, it is essential to:

1) be self-aware of our words and practice in order to develop and nurture a mindset different from the dominant paradigm,
2) honor the land which has belonged to Indigenous people who were exterminated and/or removed against their will, and
3) not assume Indigenous people need fixing or to adapt to the currently dominant culture.
To understand Decolonization, we must first acknowledge that we exist in a Colonized world and culture.

**Colonization:**
The long-term process of divesting bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological power from Indigenous people; removing land from them without appropriate, or any, compensation (or removing people from their land); and systematically excluding, dehumanizing, gentrifying, objectifying, and practicing cultural misappropriation that increases power and advantages of non-Indigenous people.

In recent Millenia, colonization has been largely practiced by individuals who identify as White, Male, and of European dissent.
ACPA’s Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization

- Developed out of November 2016 Leadership Retreat
- Clarification that social justice, and racial justice at this particular time, is the work of college student educators – It is not ancillary or additive, it is the work
- Centering the Strategic Imperative as a featured document in higher education
Our Learning Around Decolonization

• Received feedback and input from leaders and members of ACPA’s Native, Aboriginal, and Indigenous Network (NAIN, at that time), that they did not identify as a racialized identity, but rather as tribal nations.

• The Strategic Imperative was expanded to reflect ACPA’s intent to also address the ongoing affects of settler colonialism in society and in higher education.
Making the Case for Members:

ACPA’s Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization

- At least 9 trans* femme/womyn of color have been killed in 2017. #SayHerName
- Black men were 9x more likely to be killed by law enforcement than other Americans in 2016.
- The failure to convict white police officer Darren Wilson for Michael Brown’s killing in Ferguson was the tipping point in the intractable history of distrust, racism and militarized policing of Black men.
- On Sept. 5, 2017, the current US President rescinded the DACA “Dreamers” program in which 800,000 students are enrolled as of March 5, 2018.
- 50.2% of Pacific Islander and 40.3% of Southeast Asian students between 25-34 have not attended college.

In 2013, 9.7% of degrees were conferred to Black women making them the most educated group in their cohort.

HBCUs account for 8 of the top 10 institutions graduating the most doctoral students in science and engineering.

The percentage of USA college students from underrepresented communities is increasing. Since 1970s, 4% to 17% in 2016 for Latinos, 2 to 7% for Asian/Pacific Islanders, 10 to 14% for Black and American Indian/Alaska Native 0.7 to 0.8%.

There is much work to do. Students and other stakeholders are demanding substantive changes in institutional policies and practices in all areas of operations and instruction with real remedies to asserted inequities both on and off campus.
Strategic Imperative Talking Points

1. All forms of oppression are linked.

2. Racism and colonization are real, present, enduring, intersectional, and systemic forms of oppression.

3. Racism and colonization have informed the experience of all of us in higher education.

4. Advocacy and social change require us to work to dismantle racism and colonization in higher education.

5. Our collective education, research and scholarship, advocacy, and capacity will create positive change in higher education.

6. We believe in and have hope for our individual capacity, desire, and drive to grow, learn, and change.
Our Goal: ACPA’s Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization

To provide leading research and scholarship, tools for personal professional, and career development, and innovative praxis opportunities for our members that will actively inform and reshape higher education.

We move towards this goal knowing that the roles and daily tasks of our job are vitally important to the functioning of our colleges and universities, and we also know that racial justice and the tasks of our jobs do not exist as dichotomous poles.

We believe racial justice is at our core; it underlies the work we each must do, everyday, in every way we can.
Initiatives (to Date)

- Learning Syllabi
- Race-alike Caucusing at Conventions
- Elder-in-Residence
- Virtual education
- *A Bold Vision Forward* framework document
- Presidential Symposiums
- Review of Nominations & Elections Process
- Stakeholder engagement
- *Upcoming*: Mission and tagline changes
- *Upcoming Institute*: Leading with a Racial and Social Justice Lens: SSAOs as Stabilizers in this Time of Culture Change (June 27-30, 2019)
Learning Syllabi

The Strategic Imperative Syllabus is a monthly series of recommended articles, blogs, videos, movies, and podcasts that supports participants’ development leading into the ACPA annual convention.

Topics by Months:
• November – Social Justice
• December – Decolonization
• January – Racial Justice
• February – Whiteness
• Engaging in Dialogue
• Your Role
• Engaging After Convention
December: Decolonization: A Primer

- Toward a tribal critical race theory in education by Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy
- Native American identity by Perry Horse* (Wiley)
- The act of claiming higher education as Indigenous space: American Indian/Alaska Native examples by Sweeney Windchief and Darold Joseph
- Decolonization not inclusion: Indigenous resistance to American settler colonialism by Erich Steinman* (Coming Soon)
- Pushing against the Margins: Indigenous Theorizing of “Success” and Retention by Michelle Pidgeon
- Decolonization is not metaphor by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang
- The Henceforward Podcast “Whose Land Interrupted” Episode 9
- The Henceforward Podcast “A Conversation Between Eve Tuck and Rinaldo Walcott” Episode 13
- Red Man Laughing Podcast “Decolonization > Reconciliation” Season 6, Episode 11
Learning Syllabi


Race-Alike Caucuses

- First implemented at ACPA 2018 in Houston; Offered again at ACPA 2019 in Boston
- Members meet in small groups with colleagues who identify similarly with regards to race, ethnicity, or tribal affiliation
- Guided questions and facilitators are provided for each group on the topics of racial justice and decolonization
Race-Alike Caucuses

As a result of caucusing, members should:

- Explore a deeper understanding of their own racial identities
- Connect with colleagues who engage in solidarity work toward racial justice and decolonization
- Engage with issues of power, privilege, and oppression in order to interrupt dominance
- Begin to individually and collectively develop strategies that move the self and field toward liberation and social change
Race-Alike Caucuses: Select Facilitation Questions

Day 1 – Select Guided Questions:
- What thoughts or feelings do I have about meeting in caucus groups?
- How does my identity affect the way I experience the world?
- In what ways do we, as individuals and as a collective, perpetuate racism and colonization in our institutions?

Days 2 and 3 – Select Guided Questions:
- What does my identity mean for how I interact with the field of student affairs (e.g., organizations, other professionals, students)? What areas of my own identity do I need to learn more about?
- How can I move from colluding with a system of racism and colonization to taking responsibility for my role as an agent of racism and a settler colonizer? To taking action to end racism and decolonizing the academy? What are the costs and benefits of becoming an ally to/with other people of color and doing anti-racism work?
Race-Alike Caucuses


Elders-in-Residence

- Special Advisor to the ACPA Executive Director (since 2016) and Special Advisor to the ACPA Convention Planning Team (since 2017) on native, aboriginal and indigenous issues
- Permission requested in advance from local tribal nation elder to bless ACPA’s meeting in that location
- Land Acknowledgement developed and implemented since 2016
- Local elder invited to perform smudging ceremony with Association leaders
- Local elder invited to offer blessings at Opening and Closing sessions
- Local elder is invited to participate throughout Convention
- Gifts of tobacco, monetary compensation, and other offered to elder
2019 Elder-in-Residence
Ramona “Nosapocket” Peters
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement: *Higher Ed Live!*

Free Webcast on HigherEdLive.com
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017 at 1:00 PM ET
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement: Higher Ed Live!
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement: Higher Ed Live!
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement: Facebook Live! with Leadership
Initiatives Beyond Convention

- Virtual Engagement: *Facebook Live! with Leadership*
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement: Facebook Live! with Leadership
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement: 2018 Presidential Symposium with ASHE
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Virtual Engagement:
  2019 Presidential Symposium with Various Associations
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Scholarship:  
  *A Bold Vision Forward: A Framework for the Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization*
• Scholarship:

Figure 1. Racial Justice and Decolonization Framework
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Scholarship: *Journal of College Student Development* will publish a special issue on Racial Justice and Decolonization in Higher Education in November/December 2020
Initiatives Beyond Convention

- Leadership: *Annual development training for all Association leaders*
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Leadership:
  Stakeholder engagement
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Leadership: *Review of Nominations & Elections Process related to access and equity*

• Leadership: *Open Call for all Association leadership roles*
Initiatives Beyond Convention

• Mission: Proposing mission statement change that directly names social justice as central to our work

• Identity: Using a new tagline – “ACPA is Boldly Transforming Higher Education”
Upcoming Initiatives

- New Event in June 2019: Leading with a Racial and Social Justice Lens: SSAOs as Stabilizers in This Time of Culture Change

June 27-30, 2019
Seattle, Washington
Contact Us

Rev. Jamie Washington, PhD
pastpresident@acpa.nche.edu

Craig Elliott, PhD
president@acpa.nche.edu

Chris Moody
cmoody@acpa.nche.edu