Reflections on Decolonial Pedagogy and Antiracist Teaching: Assessments as Resistance in Pre-service Teacher Education

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Abstract: It's not enough to tell students about the value of antiracist teaching/decolonial pedagogy. Students must feel that value in their own educational experiences. The final project in "EDU 310: The American School" (affectionately known as "3tenlab") gives students opportunity to feel the worth of antiracist/decolonial teaching. Three themes identified in analysis of final projects point to 3tenlab's framework of antiracist teaching/decolonial pedagogy: student meaning-making, generating resources/tools, and de-centering epistemic power. Final projects not only inculcate deep engagement with course content; but compel students to confront the foundational backgrounds of systems of schooling. 3tenlab challenges Social Foundations to find ways to communicate to students: Foundations is not *about* education. Foundations is *in* education.

At the end of each semester of "EDU 310: The American School," a course rooted in the Foundations of Education (which we, the authors, collaboratively teach), we come together as a teaching team to discuss student final projects, excitedly talking about photography slideshows, children's books, or podcasts undergraduate students created as a reflection and extension of their learning from the semester in 3tenlab. Topics range from educational equity and the future of technology to critical understandings of students in ELL programs to culturally relevant pedagogy in a first-grade classroom. Rather than a final test or required final essay, students propose projects that speak from and back to the course. The goal of this undergraduate course is to introduce students to the long durée of educational movements and to critical issues currently affecting educational structures. It is the only required course for all education majors in the School of Education at Syracuse University. Thus, pre-service teachers make up the bulk of our enrollment. Based on our reflections of teaching this course as a collective, the purpose of this article is to show how we attempt to reframe systems of oppression in our teaching — particularly those systems that shape how we assess student learning — to a more relational practice of assessment rooted in decolonial and antiracist teaching.

While research around pre-service teacher education attends to the inclusion of decolonial pedagogy and antiracist teaching (Arneback, 2020), we find that an extension of this work contributing to adequacy of instruction must include assessment practices in pre-service teacher education as well. Across many courses, assessments still consist of traditional tests or final essays that require students to demonstrate a specific line of knowledge and restrict them from applying what they have learned to real world scenarios or generate new knowledges and applications. As a result, traditional assessment practices can promote individualism, reproduce ableist and racist notions of knowledge (even with accommodations and modifications), and tend not to engage students in more just and equitable considerations of the education and schooling systems (Ketonen & Nieminen, 2019). Traditional assessments can also reinforce static models that future educators may replicate in their own classrooms, further entrenching white supremacist, capitalist, and positivist notions of knowledge and merit (Paris & Alim, 2017; Reese, 2013).

Decolonial pedagogy and antiracist teaching, when applied to assessment analysis, can disrupt traditional assessment practices by using more holistic, creative, and generative forms of knowledge production and resources for pre-service educators. As a result, we anticipate two potential outcomes: 1) interruption of traditional assessment in pre-service teacher experiences in

favor of a more meaningful engagement with course content, and 2) a model of assessment for our students' future classrooms and educational spaces to make their students' educational experiences more meaningful, too. With these potential outcomes in mind, we discuss offering creative final projects in a pre-service Foundations of Education course as an extension of decolonial and antiracist pedagogy to counter and resist oppression associated with traditional assessment practices. To situate our work conceptually and experientially, we provide a brief literature review of decolonial and antiracist pedagogy and a discussion of the context of the course. Then, utilizing a reflective methodology, we discuss our own experiences guiding students in completion of final projects. Finally, we consider implications for other pre-service education courses — particularly those rooted in a Social Foundations of Education tradition.

Decolonial Pedagogy

We draw on decolonial pedagogy to help us develop new assessments in the course that will promote critical reflection and challenge western notions of knowledge production. Decolonial pedagogy is part of a growing body of research and scholarship that focuses on challenging the colonial legacies in educational systems by fostering more empowering and equitable learning spaces. It emerged as a response to the perpetual and ongoing effects of colonialism on global and national education systems. Generally, the framework aims to decenter western ways of knowing and being, thus empowering marginalized voices and promoting social justice within educational settings (Grande, 2004).

One of the most prominent themes of decolonial pedagogy is the urgent call to depose Eurocentric and western epistemologies that perpetuate colonial educational practices (Smith, 1999). Paulo Freire and Frantz Fanon laid the groundwork for decolonial pedagogy by highlighting the role of education in reproducing colonial hierarchies (Fanon, 1963; Freire, 1970). Fanon and Freire promoted liberation through critical consciousness-raising and resistance to banking methods of education that perpetuated hierarchies of race and class. Their work underscores the need to reexamine curriculum, instructional methods, and assessment practices to challenge dominant narratives and empower learners to engage critically with their histories and identities. In our teaching, we take up the task posed by Freire and Fanon by reexamining our course's inherited curriculum (the course has been taught by numerous instructors over the past 40 years), as well as the course assessments. We are interested in students' ability to synthesize the foundations of American education, as well as make sense of their own role and social position as educators within the contemporary educational context.

Since its inception, decolonial pedagogy has grown to emphasize the importance of centering Indigenous knowledges, land, and perspectives in educational spaces. Indigenous scholars like Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Sandy Grande, and Shawn Wilson have advocated for decolonizing methodologies that prioritize Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Grande, 2004; Smith 1999; Wilson, 2008). Their work underscores the importance of recognizing and respecting diverse knowledge systems and challenging western epistemologies that marginalize Indigenous voices. Decolonial pedagogy intersects with other critical frameworks such as critical race theory, tribal critical race theory, and feminist pedagogy (Brayboy, 2005). Scholars like Gloria Ladson-Billings and bell hooks have explored the intersections of race, gender, and power in educational settings, highlighting the importance of addressing systemic inequalities and centering the experiences of marginalized groups in the curriculum (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Recent literature on decolonial pedagogy also explores practical strategies for implementing decolonial practices in the classroom, which include incorporating Indigenous perspectives into curriculum development, engaging in dialogue with local communities, and critically examining power dynamics within educational institutions (Maldonado-Torres, et al, 2023; Maluleka, 2023). Additionally, scholars have highlighted the role of technology and digital media in decolonizing education, providing opportunities for students to share their own narratives and challenge dominant discourses. This body of work underscores the importance of recognizing and confronting colonial legacies within educational systems. By centering Indigenous knowledges, challenging dominant narratives, and promoting critical consciousness, decolonial pedagogy offers a transformative framework for creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments. However, further research and reflection are needed to examine the effectiveness of decolonial practices in different educational contexts and to address challenges such as resistance from dominant groups and institutional barriers to change.

The Material Practice of Antiracist Teaching

The revisions we make to our syllabus, and the policies and practices we employ in the course are drawn from pedagogues who are interested in centering the educational experiences of historically marginalized communities (Gillborn, 2006; Hamer & Lang, 2015; Tomlinson & Lipsitz, 2013; Yancy, 2019). In our teaching, we aim to actively challenge narratives that view students of color through a deficit-based lens and sustain damage-centered narratives (Tuck, 2009). Our antiracist pedagogical approach considers the content we include in the syllabus, how we teach and apply policy, and how power is conceptualized in educational practice. Throughout the semester, we center critical histories and discuss contemporary social conditions and possible futurities for communities of color that are relational and intersectional (DuBois, 1935; Kelley, 1990; Collins, 2019; Molina et. al., 2019). Given that most of the students who enroll in our course are white women and will likely teach students of color after they graduate, it is paramount for us to include content that is not only about communities of color, but also promotes antiracist teaching (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Drawing on intellectual traditions of critical theory and community-oriented pedagogy, we are in constant dialogue as a teaching team about the content we present. We make weekly adaptations to our course material and teaching methods to ensure that all our students are critically engaging the content, and we adjust our teaching methods during lectures and discussion sections accordingly. Despite being an upper-level course, our course enrolls a range of students from first year to nearing graduation. It is not uncommon for us to have teacher education students enrolled in the course who are adept in antiracist educational teaching practices while simultaneously having students enrolled who have never had critical discussions about race or racism. Being attentive to our students and their broader contexts and histories gives us a sharper perspective on how to integrate contemporary racial issues into our instruction and address possible gaps in our students' understanding of racial justice (Parks, et. al., 2022).

Being conscious of our students' social identities, in addition to including content that challenges white supremacy and messianic narratives of education (Anderson, 1988; Marquez, 2024) we draw on scholarship that conceptualizes antiracist teaching as a pedagogical strategy. Recent scholarship has provided useful guideposts for college instructors wanting to center antiracist pedagogical practices in their classrooms (Sonn, 2008). In addition to integrating content written by scholars of color, an antiracist classroom requires instructors to be critically

self-aware and self-reflective about how their social position informs their ideas of merit, learning, and teaching (Kishimoto, 2018; Browne & Jean-Marie, 2022).All these ideas taken together, we find that antiracist teaching must actively challenge how power is conceptualized in the classroom. Although it is essential for antiracist instructors to interrupt racial narratives through the content they include in their classes, we argue that it is also necessary to integrate assessments that challenge and subvert the ways in which knowledge and power are conventionally produced and shared in the classroom. Developing creative final assessments for "EDU 310: The American School" is one way we implement these critical approaches.

Situating Antiracist and Decolonial Assessments

Course Context: In recent years, EDU 310: The American School" has been under the leadership of a Foundations of Education professor and three graduate teaching assistants who mentor between 50 to 75 students each fall and spring semester (Rodriguez, 2009; Scully & Romo, 2022). The context of our course of study is heavily influenced by the demographic profile of the student population that cycles through the course. Like most education programs found in research-extensive universities and liberal arts colleges in the United States, the majority of pre-service educators enrolled in "The American School" are white. For this reason, we find it imperative to embrace antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogy and weave those two pedagogical strategies into the fabric of our course to adequately address ongoing inequities and injustices in US schooling. And, given the increase of students of color in public schools and the recent racial justice movements on college and university campuses, we constantly evaluate our curriculum to reconsider how our course centers educational justice in theory and practice. It is critical to go beyond introducing students to educational justice movements and issues by also incorporating equity-based pedagogies into our practice. It is *prima facie* hypocritical to teach about educational justice, equity, and inclusion, if we do not exercise those ideas in our own teaching, in our course materials, policies, practices, and assessments. We design our course curriculum to offer students the opportunity to learn from decolonial writers, antiracist scholars, and teacher-activists like Bettina Love, bell hooks, and James Baldwin (Baldwin, 1963; hooks 2009; Love, 2023). The curriculum also offers pathways to learn how Indigenous, queer, disability, Black, and ethnic studies are foundational fields for educators who are interested in challenging deficit-based practices. Informed by scholars like hooks, the project-based assignments and assessments we include are based in educational philosophies and research that draws on decolonial and antiracist pedagogies (hooks, 1994).

Process of Final Creative Assessments: The final, project-based assessment of the course was born from the pedagogical influences of the educators, activists, and scholars we teach about in the course. Project-based assessments provide students the opportunity to explore their positionality and educational philosophy by expressing, in any media they feel comfortable***, their*** understanding of course topics that resonate with them. Thus, the final project provides a level of intellectual access and (inter)personal engagement traditional assessments do not.[1]

The process for final projects begins in the last third of the semester, at which point we review and edit instructions from previous semesters. This provides us opportunity to collectively review and make edits, ranging from more specific guidelines for proposing creative projects to offering directions, based on how students conceived their projects in preceding

[1] Although we only focus here on the final project, 3tenlab integrates other non-traditional assessments throughout the semester.

semesters. For example, in fall 2023, we asked students to consider their final project as an educational resource of sorts, either a piece they could draw on as part of their future portfolios of work or as a resource that could be utilized by current pre-service or classroom educators, communities, or students. For self-generated projects, students were asked to include an explanation statement detailing connections to course content and specific materials from the class they were drawing on, be it lectures, course readings, videos, or podcasts. While there is the option of submitting a traditional final essay with a provided prompt, students have increasingly opted to develop creative projects as their final assessment. In fall 2023, 53% of students chose the creative project for their final. Below, we detail the final project process as well as provide examples of student work.

The initial instructions for the final creative project are intentionally broad, so projects can take several forms. Students choosing a creative project are required to meet with their assigned teaching assistant to develop expectations of the project, flesh out ideas for the final product, and talk through any additional support ideas that will help them create their work. While these typically are not long and belabored meetings, they are a space where teaching assistants and students can engage in a different type of power dynamic in the creation of the project. Rather than the professor or teaching assistants dictating the detailed terms of the final project, students come prepared with a brief presentation of what they hope to accomplish and, together with their teaching assistant, discuss the capacity of time and materials necessary to reach their goal. For example, as students propose working with partners on a podcast, teaching assistants might help students narrow down the focus or talk through how long the podcast needs to be to fully accomplish the goals of the project. As teaching assistants, this can be a generative space of looking to students as the experts of their own experiences and assessment, learning what their greatest takeaways are from the course, and genuinely serving as midwives to this final project as we constructively guide student creativity. Through initial instructions and in one-to-one meetings, students and teaching assistants agree on a set of criteria for final projects. Rather than providing a standard traditional essay and expectations on an A-F scale, these meetings afford the opportunity for students and teaching assistants to work together in discussing what a project demonstrating student knowledge will look like and be assessed on.

Completing a creative final project, students often also have the opportunity to work with a partner or group, either in their same discussion section or across another section. When students across sections choose to partner for a final project, this is also a chance for teaching assistants to consult together on the expectations to communicate to students as well as how collaboratively to grade the project. While students are not required to work with a partner or in a small group, we encourage them to collaborate on the final project with at least one other classmate as a way for them to generate knowledge together, locating this in an act of "commoning" and co-creation rather than in an individual act (Chapman, 2023; Korsgaard, 2019). Creative final projects include a range of possibilities as each semester brings fresh and innovative ideas. To date, students have developed scripts for plays or films, collections of poetry, several audio formats including a podcast-style project or musical composition, video interviews with peers or colleagues, and a range of visual media including photography, graphic novels, children's books, paintings, digital artwork, and more.

Many students opt to do a podcast-style project with several episodes in which they explore and extend a class topic. International students have chosen the final creative option to compare the educational system in the US to the system in their home countries, interrogating the goals of

schooling in social, political, economic, and cultural ways. Sometimes, students who are in the midst of, or have completed, their student teaching semester(s) will use course concepts and ideas to produce a podcast exploring the realities of US education as revealed in their experiences. And, still others use this project as a space to interview current classroom teachers or administrators — or even students — to discuss challenges in US schooling around issues of school discipline practices, EL (English Learner) programming, teacher preparation; to name only a few. In a recent podcast project, a student chose to interview a local EL teacher and one of the teacher's students who had arrived through refugee resettlement. They talked about their experiences, including the challenges of teaching and learning in US schools as well as how EL programming provides culturally relevant support to students. In all their many forms, we have found taking the creative project option has given students the space to critically analyze the foundations of education while also engaging in antiracist and decolonial pedagogies.

Children's books have also been a popular mode for the final project, challenging students to take nuanced and complicated concepts and communicate them to children anywhere from elementary to middle school age. Students have created children's books focused on welcoming classroom spaces, diversity and disability, and equitable and just practices in educational spaces. With this project, students must not only write the kids' book, but they must also provide the illustrations. While some students create these images by hand using drawing utensils or at a workstation designing digital art, other students use websites like Canva or My Story to design the images for their picture books. A student in a previous year chose to draw on her experiences visiting Mt. Rushmore with a friend who is a citizen of an Indigenous nation. During this visit, the student learned about the Indigenous histories and memories around Mt. Rushmore and the colonial effort to claim and alter the space by using it to honor presidents of the US settler colonial nation state. In her children's book, the student offered the reader two pathways up the mountain, one that followed the white-washed colonial history of Mt. Rushmore and the other that pioneered the more complicated and violent history of settler colonialism, including Indigenous resistance and activism to reclaim the area. While children's books can seem a simple medium, we find that putting larger concepts such as white supremacy or settler colonialism in terms and examples meaningful for children is a powerful exercise for our students, one that prepares them for conversations around these and other curricular topics in their own future classrooms.

A growing number of students are also using this project to redesign a curriculum unit or lesson plan focused on the grade level and content they wish to teach. For example, one student planning on teaching fifth-grade social studies reimagined a curriculum unit on Westward Expansion, renaming it Colonial Expansion. The content and questions of the unit focused on interrogating traditional histories of US Manifest Destiny from the experiential perspectives of Indigenous nations. The experiences the student chose to focus on included both the structural genocide Indigenous peoples experienced as well as resistance to and agency in service of US settler colonialism. In another example, a student reworked a lesson on family for a first-grade classroom. Taking a culturally relevant approach to the topic the lesson included various family structures to provide racial, gendered, religious, and ethnic representations of family. The lesson taught appropriate vocabulary to ensure first-grade students who engaged in the lesson not only saw themselves there, but also saw each other.

Art and other visual projects make up a portion of creative final projects. These have included comic panels, painting and drawing, and photography. As we have asked students to

consider their work as a resource, we have been intrigued by the ways in which students use visual media as a teaching tool or as supplemental material for instruction. For example, in a recent semester one student chose to photograph staff members from the Center of Disability Resources (CDR) on campus as part of his final project, creating a photography portfolio. As part of the work, the student asked staff to write out by hand what their roles meant to them and how they thought about disability pride. The student then imposed images of the staff's own handwriting onto the photographs. The purpose of this portfolio, the student argued in their explanatory statement, was to show the human faces behind CDR emails and the accommodations section often included in course syllabi. The student shared that, through creating this portfolio, he also hoped it could be utilized as a future resource for students unaware of CDR or intimidated in approaching the space to acquire necessary accommodations. Emails and accommodations statements do not always have space to show the office is filled with dedicated staff who care deeply about supporting student success.

Students have also taken these projects in other directions. One student wrote a "Teacher's Oath" based on the Hippocratic oath taken by medical professionals in which educators pledge to interrogate their biases, create safe spaces, prioritize student well-being, and protect students from harm. Another student wrote a musical composition based on their teaching experiences. In a recent semester, a student created a set of ten poems based on readings from James Baldwin and bell hooks, interrogating the need for schools to focus on the goal of democratic equality in curating present and future classrooms. Through projects like these, we continue to be impressed and excited by the work students are developing and co-constructing. Our guidelines evolve and change in each successive semester, serving as a living document to provide students the appropriate guidance while also providing them the space to create their own projects. We continue to find the project to be not only generative and exciting for students themselves, but also an opportunity for myriad interests, knowledges, and experiences to unfold.

Reflections on Student Projects

We find three themes that arise out of the final creative projects that point back to the course framework of antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogy: student meaning-making, generating resources and tools, and de-centering epistemic power. In the following subsections, we discuss our reflections on each of these themes as well as the possibilities they hold for continuing antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogy. We identified these three themes from our shared conversations on the final project process. However, many more themes unfold as we reflect on student work. Certainly, we can consider additional themes around universal design learning, accessibility, learning theories for adult learners, and practices of epistemic justice. For the present analysis, though, we focused on the themes that most often came up in our reflections and conversations most closely related to the work we try to do as antiracist and decolonial pedagogues.

Making Meaning in Course and Life: Common through many student projects are 1) the connections they make to their own lives, experiences, and work outside of the course, and 2) that the projects are curated through modes connected to students' own interests and/or skill. Through these pieces, students often engage in deep processes of meaning-making through the course content by connecting to their own lives and practices of knowledge engagement and production. As a result, the course continues as *living* through student perspectives and experiences. Additionally, as we reflect, we also see how students utilize passion, skill, and

knowledge to make meaning with their final projects. Unlike traditional essays, creative final projects continue to allow students space to bring in their own modes of knowledge production — such as screenwriting, film- or podcast making, or visual arts — to convey how they are making meaning with course content.

For example, in the photography portfolio of the Center for Disability Resources staff discussed on the previous page, the student drew a connection between a course theme, examining the history of dis/ability in US schooling, to his own lived experiences in higher education as a person with a disability. Appreciation of the people at CDR who channeled the resources that made learning more accessible to him prompted him to create a project encouraging other students in situations similar to his to access the support available from the CDR staff. Through this project, the student made meaning of the course material in his own lived experience, drawing connections between the history of US schooling and his own education. In his reflection, the student spoke about making meaning of the world through photography rather than just words. The meaning-making the student participated in is not to be found solely in course material and/or his own experience, but also, perhaps as a *sine qua non* of the degree of meaningfulness the project achieved, in how he *conveys* this meaning-making through a mode of knowledge production most meaningful for him (Kuh, 2016).

In another example, three students chose to jointly create a podcast to reflect on their educational experiences around inequity. The students first highlighted their own experiences — all from more privileged schooling backgrounds — followed by their experiences as students in a teacher education program located in a predominantly white institution (PWI) and as student teachers in the (not quite so privileged) local city school district. Throughout their podcast, the students focused on the inconsistencies of equitable messaging they received as K-16 students and what they saw students in the surrounding city school district experiencing. The students also paid attention to *who* can afford to receive teacher certification through traditional education programs. College coursework and student-teaching schedules often prohibit undergraduate students from holding outside jobs, resulting in a need for more student loans or greater support from family. The connection these students made was, while teacher education programs and US schooling can claim to be promoting more equitable and diverse classrooms, teacher education was often only available — financially and temporally — to students from more privileged backgrounds who can afford the costs of the college experience, thus reproducing a white, female teaching workforce. At the end of this project, we found students engaging in antiracist reflection and considering how white supremacy not only orchestrates how students of color experience K-12 education, but also how teachers are produced for K-12 classrooms in the United States. Critical to the meaning-making involved in this project is the fact that students collaborated on it. Course material was conversationally and synergistically mediated through multiple experiential lenses to generate the educational energy that fueled this powerful project.

Generating Resources & Tools The second theme we see in student work is how students generate and employ their projects as resources for antiracist and decolonial learning (Arneback & Jämte, 2020). We encourage students to think about their projects as living beyond our class by asking them what audience they are creating the project for, the purpose of the work, and how the work might be used. In recent semesters, several students have turned to infographics as a mode for their final project to present complex information in a more digestible format (Charsky, 2023). Infographic topics have included differences in the medical and social models of disabilities, the rights of LGBTQ+ educators, and addressing environmental racism in schooling.

Some students have distributed their infographics projects to fellow educators as a resource for their classrooms. Other students have rewritten curriculum units and lesson plans for their student-teaching or teaching portfolios with particular interest in culturally sustaining pedagogy. And yet other students tend to think of the broader community to which they can connect by using their projects as support resources, such as study guides for local plays targeting K-12 students and podcasts for classrooms to educate school attendees and the general public on the experiences of newcomer students in US school systems. By asking students to consider their audience, the purpose of the work, and how it might be used, the final projects become a meaningful site of engagement between the classroom and communities. Students can respond to needs they have become aware of through volunteering, working, or student-teaching. This is yet another way we see the course as living beyond a semester.

As instructors, we also find 3tenlab is a place which has challenged us to support students in thinking at deeper levels about antiracist and decolonial work. As students and teaching assistants conference to co-create project expectations, we ask students to consider what structural inequities they are addressing in their work and what they hope an audience will learn through the final project. For example, many students share that they hope to focus on themes of diversity or equality in their final project, which becomes a place for teaching assistants to prompt students to think more deeply — "*But why is this important, and why does it matter? What histories are you thinking about? What structures are at odds that need to be aligned? How will you talk about these structures? What are you asking for this audience to think about differently?"* Students nearly always refine their responses into themes of addressing dis/ability, white supremacy and racism, settler colonialism, or cisheteropatriarchy, allowing for development of more concrete and clearer ideas and language in crafting a podcast, children's book, or video slideshow that is audience-appropriate for teaching these topics (Ohito, 2016).

Decentering Epistemic Power: Central to decolonial pedagogy is an ongoing set of questions around structures, discourses, and dynamics of power. In our weekly team meetings, we discuss grading calibration, informal check-ins on students and student work; as well as how we are functioning together as a team. What we hope to do through this series of practices — despite all structural limitations — is to de-center power in an institutional sense of changing a potential professor *vs*. teaching assistant situation into a teaching team or collegial collective, dispersing power to decide what knowledge demonstrates learning and engagement. In traditional academic epistemologies, knowledge is tested through written essays or tests which ask students to memorize information and repeat it back to the professor. Even when students are asked to critically engage with course materials, instructors often grade students' work using traditional methods such as standardized rubrics or benchmarks curated without student input. In utilizing a decolonial pedagogical approach, we look to assessments and grading as a power structure of traditional academia often rooted in white, colonial epistemologies. So, we are considering not only the content students learn but also the ways in which they begin to think about power structures and how power might be less centralized in schooling.

Reflecting upon the final project process, we see more of a reach to *work with* students on the development of final projects rather than merely testing their learning. By meeting with teaching assistants to share their ideas and help develop grading benchmarks, students are invited to co-construct the assessment process. In thinking through this process of co-creating benchmarks, students offer what they conceive is possible for the mode in which they hope to address their topic of choice. Teaching assistants offer feedback and guidance on refining and

sharpening the topic and idea. After these meetings, students and teaching assistants continue to communicate on expectations and any adjustments that need to be made. In our experience as a teaching collective, talking projects out with students provides a space in which neither party is a true expert on a project or topic. Rather, students listen to the teaching assistants for guidance and teaching assistants listen to students on how a particular mode and topic might function together. As students submit final projects of music, visual art, graphic novels, etc., teaching assistants may not be experts in or even familiar with these modes of knowledge and thus must rely on student knowledge to co-curate final project expectations.

Implications for Foundations of Education

We offer three implications of the practice of antiracist/decolonial assessment for practitioners, scholars, and teacher education programs, particularly those rooted in Foundations of Education. First, creative assessments present the possibility of de-centering power dynamics within rigid academic systems so that students play a part in generating new knowledge and contributing to the field of Foundations. Students are not merely learning *about* cultural and social foundations of education but are *finding* cultural and social foundations *in* education. Second, creative assessments prompt students to engage in critical theory and praxis by relating their own experiences as students and as educators to foundational questions about what schooling is, who schooling is for, and what differences exist between schooling and education. Implementing similar practices can strengthen cultural and social foundations of education programs' commitment to critical work in addressing democracy, social justice, histories of inequality, and the colonial logics of education (Tozer, et. al, 2011). Finally, creative assessments offer space for students to engage and understand their current educational context. Assessment of local, place-based contexts of educational issues such as inequality, environmental racism, dis/ability, and resistance to colonial structures, positions students to address experiences that may be hidden from the public eye. Creative projects hold space for students to *reveal* the presence of racial and colonial logics in schools; and to understand how the master narrative in US schooling omits, silences, and contorts other perspectives on the meaning of education and the structure of schooling.

As we look to future iterations and evolutions of this course and the final project, we are considering how student self-assessment might be part of this process, what it would look like to expand public and school of education engagement in student work by incorporating creative final projects as core texts of the course, and additional pathways of formal research to understand the implications of student engagement with creative projects as a contribution to the aliveness of 3tenlab. Whatever transformations we foster and experience, we remain focused on practicing antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogies that address power dynamics in assessment, break-down classroom-community binaries, and cultivate critical classroom engagement with personal experience and socio-cultural positionality.

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