**RACE, RACIALIZATION, AND RESISTANCE IN THE UNITED STATES**

**MELLON GRANT PROPOSAL (ABBREVIATED VERSION)**

**SEATTLE UNIVERSITY**

**2/1/2023**

GRANT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

The overall aim for this project, “Race, Racialization, and Resistance,” is that all undergraduate students at Seattle University will have a scaffolded educational experience that (1) deepens their understanding of the long and complex processes of the construction of race as a concept within a global historical framework, (2) analyzes the profound impacts of racialization, and (3) explores the interconnected political, cultural, and social processes by which marginalized groups have resisted their subordination and thereby participated in changing the fabric of the US experience. By understanding the complex constructions of race and racialization and interrogating the varied methods of resistance, this project builds solidarity with those who resist by listening to rarely heard voices, perspectives, and memories, and imagining more just and equitable futures. It thus seeks to embed the study of race, racialization, and resistance in key sites of Seattle University’s undergraduate curriculum: from the University Core (UCOR), to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) History requirement, to the University Honors Program, and all humanities and humanistic social science departments and programs. All these programs will have the opportunity to develop courses and interdisciplinary partnerships around race, racialization, and resistance. The signature features of this program will include:

1. Multi-disciplinary and intersectional foundation: This project will operate from a multi-disciplinary theoretical foundation with a strong emphasis on intersectionality that will underscore the complex relationship of race, racialization, and resistance with other dynamic historical, cultural, social, and political formations, such as gender, sexuality, and class.
2. Global and transnational contexts: Through new and revised courses, students and faculty will investigate changing concepts of race and distinct processes of racialization and resistance for different communities in the US within a global historical framework. This framework will broaden the range of sources of American concepts and practices.
3. The overlap of race and ecology: Some courses will incorporate an ecological perspective that analyzes environmental racism and the inequitable distribution of environmental harm, and examines manifold conceptions of nature and landscapes, re-centering skeins of knowledge and practices that have resisted domination.
4. A focus on the practices and methodologies of resistance: New and revised courses will interrogate the formal and informal expression of resistance among marginalized groups, paying attention to their voices as they have found purchase over time. This approach will highlight the interplay between the creation of varied cultures of resistance and more formal efforts to challenge oppressive structures.

The curricular changes resulting from this project will not only enable students to analyze the historical construction of race and the complex processes of racialization, but also to honor rarely heard voices, center minoritized perspectives and memories, and explore how individuals and collectivities have sought inspiration from the past, present, and imagined futures. Our conception of resistance is capacious: acts of resistance find purchase in formal political expressions such as in building protest movements and political coalitions, and in formal writing that seeks to articulate the ideology of defiance; but resistance also finds an informal utterance in the enslaved person who slows their work down or breaks a tool, musical expressions that speak to the sorrow, anger, and joy of marginalized groups, the convict who feigns sickness to avoid work, the artist who imagines new, once-thought-impossible worlds. Students will explore the impact of race, racialization, and resistance on everyday practices, imaginaries of social and national bodies, public and private institutional policies, and ecological and geographical spaces. They will investigate the broad range of articulations of resistance, including marginalized or “alternative” ecological, spiritual, cultural, and medical practices, exploring the ways in which oppression has been countered every step of the way. This is just as important as teaching the wide range of mainstream oppressive concepts and practices that have been all too often based on pseudo-scientific and anti-modern belief systems, rooted in fear, and powerfully backed by national and local institutions.

The project aims to directly challenge a central pedagogical problem: how to teach race, racialization, and resistance to students who often enter college having been taught a triumphalist narrative of American history. While students are attuned to the problems embedded in racialist ideologies and the histories of racial oppression, they have simultaneously been taught that the United States is an exceptional nation, one that has always embraced core values of democracy, “freedom,” and equality. By interrogating the multiple ways that race and racialization have functioned to structure national identity and bodies politic, our project will question and complicate the foundational assumptions undergirding American exceptionalism.

The triumphalist narrative also has further implications for how we fit the American experience into a global context. The notion of the powerful “West,” with the US as its current epitome, is not only a historically inaccurate interpretative frame, but it hinders the dismantling of racist ideologies. The history of modern empires shows that Western colonizers often initially hovered on the peripheries of local powers, borrowed from indigenous practices in order to project images of power, and frequently left local practices in place rather than attempting to change them. This goes against the notion of the “West” providing modernity’s benefits to the “Other.” Additionally, the belief that our environmental crisis will be resolved through technological solutions is another recurring example of “Western” hubris that serves as a wake-up call for education for human responsibility.

Through the Seattle University’s Reignited Strategic Directions and LIFTSU as well as through the College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan, Seattle University is currently taking strategic steps toward a wider and deeper incorporation of diversity, equity and inclusion work in all areas, from curriculum to student, faculty, and staff recruitment and retention. As the university as a whole works toward these goals, this project will provide Seattle University faculty with an opportunity to further leverage the power of the humanities. For the humanities, indeed, should play a crucial role in order to ensure that the work of inclusion is thoroughly informed by a profound understanding of the legacies of racism and white supremacy in higher education, and of the ways in which those legacies have been and continue to be resisted. With the support provided by the grant, Seattle University faculty will create an educational foundation on which to build forward-looking, imaginative dialogs that will empower our students to take on the challenges their generation will encounter.

GOALS

Curricular Goals:

Coordinating with and amplifying the strategic work just beginning at the university and CAS levels, this project seeks to embed the interdisciplinary, humanistic study of “Race, Racialization, and Resistance” in several key areas of the education we offer our students:

1. In the University Core Curriculum (UCOR): All Seattle University undergraduate students will have a foundational encounter with the study of race, racialization, and resistance in the US. This project plans to coordinate with the Racial and Economic Justice (REJ) Working Group and the UCOR Working Group to propose a new Core requirement on race, racialization, and resistance understood intersectionally and through multiple disciplines. Since all undergraduates take 7-8 humanities courses as part of their foundational education, this project aims to expand the humanities offerings through the development of new courses and revision of existing courses on “Race, Racialization, and Resistance” topics.

2. In the CAS Core History Requirement: All students in the College of Arts and Sciences will examine the historical, cultural, social, and political impact of historically distinct kinds of racialization as well as resistance in the US and world as they intersect with gender, sexuality, and class. This project will support and amplify the revision of the College Core History requirement that is underway. The revised HIST 1210 *Constructing Past & Present II* courses will strengthen students’ abilities to evaluate the influence of the past on present realities, with an emphasis on the historical roots of inequality, African history, colonial history, and the comparative history of slavery and migration. The revised HIST 2310 *US in the World* will include more content on indigenous cultures, settler colonialism, racial slavery, white supremacy, attitudes toward immigration, human rights, contested ideas of US citizenship, and social justice movements.

3. In the University Honors (UH) Program: This project will also contribute to the University Honors program’s effort to “decenter the west” and incorporate antiracist pedagogies. The Mellon grant will support the design and development of a series of courses in all three tracks on “race, racialization, and resistance in the U.S.” from a global and intersectional perspective in a coordinated and interdisciplinary manner.

4. In All Humanities Majors and Minors at Seattle University: This project will expand the curricular offerings in all humanities programs, including History, African & African American Studies, Asian & Asian American Studies, English, Philosophy, and Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies, among others, and support strengthening our pedagogy on race, racialization, and resistance through the development of new courses, revision of courses, and curricular projects. By providing financial resources for course development and revision, we hope to encourage an expanded range of course topics that build on current strengths and existing interests as well as open into new areas.

5. A new certificate program on “Race, Racialization, and Resistance”: Building on the new UCOR requirement, as well as on the creation of new courses in numerous humanities programs, we hope to develop a certificate program that will complement but not compete with existing majors and minors, and be open to all students across the entire university, regardless of their major. This certificate will be designed to allow all Seattle University students the opportunity to deepen their humanistic education.

This project envisions the revision and creation of courses on numerous topics, including, for instance, courses on the histories of racialization; movements for racial justice and debates in African-American history; history of slavery, racial capitalism, and poverty in the US; voting, citizenship, and race in the US; eco-criticism and environmental ethics highlighting race; black feminist literature; representations of race, racial anachronism, and racial futures; US imperialism and resistance; honoring and amplifying marginalized voices and practices; landscape, geography, and race; and built environments, segregation, and the livable city.

Conference & Publication Goal:

The Mellon grant will also fund the organization of a conference on “Race, Racialization, and Resistance” in 2025 and the publication of a co-edited volume or a special journal issue based on presentations at the conference. Both the conference and the publication will be centered on curriculum development and pedagogy and will include sections aligned with the four signature features of our curricular project: multi-disciplinary theoretical and intersectional foundation; changing concepts of race and processes of racialization for different communities in the US within a global historical framework; overlap of race and ecology; and a focus on the practices and methodologies of resistance. A number of internal organizations will be invited to participate in this project: Seattle University’s Center for Community Engagement, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Indigenous Peoples Institute, Center for Faculty Development, among others.

Institutional Goal to Strengthen the Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences & the University:

Through all these initiatives, the project will support strengthening an inclusive and equitable humanities curriculum across the university in a myriad of ways: by embedding the study of race, racialization and resistance and supporting new and revised courses in the College of Arts and Sciences and in university-wide programs such as the Core or Honors; by offering a variety of workshops and talks on curriculum and pedagogy; by increasing collaboration among faculty in different humanities disciplines; by bolstering current efforts in the College’s five-year plan, such as the reimagination of Asian Studies into an Asian and Asian American Studies Program; by fortifying the African and African American Studies program; by supporting new opportunities for curricular programming at the Indigenous People’s Institute; by expanding collaborations with the award-winning Center for Community Engagement; and by hosting a national conference as well as publishing an interdisciplinary volume.

Seattle University understands the importance of the humanities and of humanistic thinking and their role in raising critical questions about oppression, justice, and resistance. At a time when their value is questioned, the humanities, in fact, should be central to these discussions. The Mellon grant project will strengthen the place of the humanities at our university and enhance the education of our entire, diverse student body, the second most diverse in higher education in the state of Washington.

TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

Winter 2023

* Formation of an Advisory Committee: This committee will work on envisioning the processes and details of the project, publicity, and interacting with various colleges and offices within the university.
* Formation of the Proposal Review Committee: This committee will design a proposal form and application process for faculty to receive funding to revise or develop new UCOR, College Core History courses, University Honors, or any other humanities or humanistic social sciences courses on race, racialization, and resistance. The committee will also design a proposal form for departmental and inter-departmental curriculum-revision initiatives (e.g., for workshops, reading groups, and other relevant activities). All new courses are subject to the established approval process via the Curriculum Committees of the College or UCOR.
* Funds for External Speakers on Race, Racialization, and Resistance: This project will co-sponsor events featuring external speakers. Up to $500 will be available as stipend for each speaker throughout the grant period, budget permitting. Faculty organizing events are asked to contact the project director.
* Collaboration with Seattle University’s Race and Economic Justice Working Group in the *Reimagine and Revise the Curriculum* initiative

Spring 2023

* The Proposal Review Committee will begin to solicit proposals and select proposals to be funded. This process will remain open through the end of the funding period.

Fall 2023-Spring 2024

* Presentations and workshops on funded projects in order to share knowledge and excitement about course and curriculum development around Race, Racialization, and Resistance
* Some revised courses will begin to be taught, and new UCOR sections can be implemented; new courses will be implemented into the AY 24-25 catalog through our established review and approval process.
* Workshops on course development and on inclusive pedagogy
* Preliminary discussions on themes of the conference and publication

Fall 2024-Spring 2025

* Organization of conference
* Assessment of several new or significantly revised courses
* Workshops on course development and inclusive pedagogy
* Conference will be held in April 2025

Fall 2025

* Work on the publication
* A report on the outcomes of the project will be submitted to the Office of the President
* Work on the certificate program