

EDUC 310A: Racial Capitalism and Education Policy
Spring 2021
Monday/Wednesday, 2:00-3:15pm

Instructor: Laura Jaffee
Email: ljaffee@colgate.edu
Office Hours: Monday 12-1pm, Thursdays 1-3pm,
Schedule here: <https://calendly.com/ljaffee>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The first part of this course focuses on the concept of racial capitalism. What is the utility of racial capitalism as a theoretical framework? How does it make legible the development and maintenance of capitalism through racialized social relations, material conditions, and ideology? How have various scholars and activists defined racial capitalism? What does the framework of racial capitalism make visible; what possibilities and imaginations does it enable, and what might be its limitations?

For the remainder of the course, we'll analyze shifts in education policy over the last several decades through the lens of racial capitalism. We'll explore how recent education policies have enabled the accumulation of capital for a largely white, ruling elite at the expense of poor, working-class, disabled, and racialized communities. Throughout the course, we'll consider historical and contemporary instances, practices, and strategies of oppressed people collectively resisting racial capitalism as it manifests in education policy.

I realize that some of you are not on campus and may be in different time zones/countries, may be sick or caring for others who are sick, are working or looking for work, have unreliable access to internet or quiet study space, or are feeling generally anxious/depressed and struggling to focus on much of anything. I've tried to plan our semester with these varied experiences in mind. My hope in including lots of small group assignments is that we can build some virtual community and connection as we collectively navigate learning during a global health and economic crisis, the impacts of which are felt unevenly. During class discussions, breakout room activities, and asynchronous group work, let's remind ourselves that folks are feeling the pandemic in different ways and be generous with one another.

This syllabus is a living document. If we need to make adjustments as things in y/our lives and the world develop, we will do so as we collectively deem appropriate.

REQUIRED TEXT

Mayorga, E., Aggarwal, U., & Picower, B. (Eds.). (2020). *What's race got to do with it: How current school reform policy maintains racial and economic inequality* [2nd Edition]. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

For written assignments: double-spaced, 12-point, 1" margins. Proofread, edit, and cite. Please use APA (American Psychological Association) style for citation. **Do not email me questions about how to cite.** You have plenty of resources at your disposal to find answers to citation questions. You can consult google, library resources, classmates, etc. See the Purdue OWL website for guidance: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Attendance and Participation (25%)

Learning and knowledge production are collective processes. Showing up having read and being prepared to thoughtfully contribute is essential for both your and your peers' learning in this class. Readings should be completed by the date listed on the syllabus *before* class. Because #ZoomFatigue, **we will meet synchronously via Zoom once per week** (usually Wednesdays, but get in the habit of checking the syllabus schedule each week). To supplement our once weekly synchronous Zoom meeting, **you'll complete an asynchronous activity each week**. Some of these activities require you to work in small groups. For the sake of consistency/simplicity, we'll create your small groups at the start of the semester, and these will be your partners for small group work throughout the semester. Because we'll only be meeting once weekly, you'll have the other class period to meet with your group and complete the week's activity.

To switch things up, and so that we'll have intermittent opportunities to talk in smaller groups (and see one another as slightly larger Zoom boxes), we'll split the class in half for our synchronous Zoom meetings a few times throughout the semester (Weeks 4, 8, and 12, as indicated on the schedule in purple with the words "Split Class"). You will sign up to participate in either the Monday or Wednesday Zoom group during those weeks (so during those 3 weeks, you'll be meeting with me once in groups of 7-8). The day you sign up for (Monday or Wednesday) is the day you're responsible for attending synchronous Zoom discussions for those 3 weeks. **Together, your comments in synchronous Zoom discussions and your weekly asynchronous activities (e.g., discussion board posts, small group assignments, etc.) will make up your participation grade.**

If you're thinking: "Wow this sounds like a lot to keep track of," I trust we will get in a rhythm and get through another semester of pandemic learning together. In an effort to facilitate that, I **will send out a weekly email to the class no later than 9pm Sunday** that includes 1.) Details about that week's asynchronous activity 2.) Reminders about that week's class structure and 3.) Any upcoming assignment deadlines.

MLK Keynote Response (5%)

Building on several articulations of racial capitalism you've read, heard, or seen thus far, in what ways did Davis's keynote illuminate or exemplify the concept of racial capitalism (whether or not explicitly named)? How did her talk extend or expand your understanding of the term? Feel free to reflect on other aspects of her talk that particularly resonate, as well. You should reference

and cite at least one reading/video (excluding videos shown during class) in your response. Responses should be roughly 500 words.

Reading Notes (5%)

Each student is responsible for creating reading notes to share 1 time throughout the semester. Your notes can take the form of a concept map (there are a number of free programs that can help with this, e.g. bubbl.us, Mindmeister, etc.), bulleted outline, diagram, audio notes, or another format that works best for you. The reading notes are a resource that the whole class can consult. **These should be uploaded to the “Reading Notes” Moodle folder under the appropriate week by Wednesday at 9am on the week you’re signed up.** Some questions to consider while reading and taking notes:

1. What are the author’s main arguments?
2. What struck you as interesting or unsettling about those arguments? Why?
3. How do points or claims made in this reading relate to or compare to those brought up in other readings for this course?
4. What connections did you make to current events, media representations, or your own life?
5. What questions did the reading raise for you?

Racial Capitalism Concept Map (20%)

You will create a concept map/visual representation demonstrating your understanding of racial capitalism as an analytic lens. Details to come.

Student-Led Facilitation (20%)

Once during the semester (on a week labeled “Student Facilitation Day” in purple on the schedule), you’re responsible for generating questions and facilitating discussion within a breakout room during Wednesday’s synchronous class. *This is not a presentation.* For the week you’re facilitating, you will meet with the other student facilitators during Monday’s class period to brainstorm questions based on the week’s readings. On Wednesday, each of the week’s facilitators will be placed in separate breakout rooms to facilitate discussion among your small breakout room. **By 9am Tuesday, facilitators will email the class 2-3 discussion questions to ponder in advance of Wednesday’s class.** See the questions under “Reading Notes” above for some ideas to consider eliciting through your facilitation. Feel free to include a brief activity, video/audio/media supplement, or other interactive element (short video clip, visual aid, etc.). Consider what teaching practices you can use to make your lesson accessible and engaging.

Final Collaborative Project and Presentation (25%)

There are several options for both the content and form of your final group project. Topic options include: 1.) Researching recent developments in education policy under the new presidency and analyzing these changes through critical frameworks discussed throughout the

semester; 2.) Researching proposals/demands for changes in education policy/practice put forth by Black, Brown, or Indigenous-led social movements; 3.) A separate topic of your choosing agreed upon in conversation with me *in advance of the assignment deadline*. Your grade will consist of your overall project grade (20%) and your self-assessment of your work (5%). **Your group is required to meet with me at least once to discuss your project** (during Weeks 13 or 14). More details to come.

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due</i>
Participation	25%	Ongoing
MLK Keynote Response	5%	Thursday, 2/11 at 5pm
Racial Capitalism Concept Map	20%	Friday, 2/26 at 5pm
Reading Notes	5%	9am Wednesday, Week varies
Student-Led Facilitation	20%	Week 7, 10, or 13
Final Project/Presentation	25%	Friday, 4/30 at 5pm

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance

In the event of an unavoidable absence, please contact me by email (ljaffee@colgate.edu) prior to class. Because you'll only be meeting with me once per week, please keep in mind that more than 1 unexcused absence will negatively affect your participation grade. After one unexcused absence, you will lose two percentage points per unexcused absence. Given the exceptional conditions under which we're working/studying this semester, please be in communication with me about what's happening in your life (sharing to the extent you feel comfortable) if circumstances inhibit your ability to participate in or attend class so that we can figure out together how best to support your learning.

Accessibility

My goal is to support the full participation of all students and create a learning environment that is inclusive, accessible, and welcoming. I understand that students have different ways and paces of learning and accessing information, and that each student comes with their own, and sometimes difficult, experiences with learning. I aim to make the classroom environment comfortable and respectful without undermining the importance of discussing conflicting ideas and opinions. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that impede your inclusion and participation, please communicate with me as soon as possible so we can discuss the best way to support your learning. If you have any kind of disability, whether visible or non-visible, learning, emotional, physical, or cognitive, and need accommodations or alternatives to lectures or assignments, please contact me so we can discuss accommodations and support. *In an effort to be fragrance-free, please refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, or other heavily-scented products that make spaces inaccessible to folks with asthma, allergies, and other chemical sensitivities.*

In some cases, I will ask students requesting accommodations to contact the Director of Academic Support and Disability Services to receive help determining and coordinating a specific accommodation on the basis of disability/medical documentation. Contact info as follows:

Evelyn Lester, Director of Disability Services

Tel: (315) 228-7375; TTY: (315) 228-6001; Email: elester@colgate.edu; [Website link](#)

Email Policy

Your questions are welcome. Please give me 48 hours to respond on weekdays before following up. I do not respond to emails on Sundays. Include "EDUC 310A" in the email subject line so that I know the message is course-related and can respond promptly. **Emails with questions about upcoming assignments should be sent at least 48 hours before the assignment is due.** I cannot guarantee a response to emails about assignments within 48 hours of the submission deadline. **If you would like to meet outside of office hours, please email me briefly stating why you can't come to office hours and suggesting another window of time to meet.** Email me at least 24 hours in advance of your proposed meeting time.

Library Support

Librarians are available to assist you with your research needs. You can [make an appointment](#) to meet with a librarian, or stop by the main desk and you will be directed to the librarian on call. [Online research guides](#) are also available to help you identify the library databases most relevant to your topic.

The Writing and Speaking Center

“Regardless of ability, all of us can benefit from receiving constructive feedback on our writing or public speaking. At the Writing and Speaking Center, a free service for all students, writing consultants can help you with a draft's focus, organization, grammar, style, and citations, among other aspects. If you're preparing a speech or oral presentation, speaking consultants can help you organize your content or practice your delivery to an audience. All meetings are private, and you may visit at any stage of your process, from clarifying your initial ideas to reviewing a final draft or practicing a presentation. See the webpage (<http://www.colgate.edu/centers-and-institutes/writing-and-speaking-center>) for more information or to reserve an appointment. The center is located in 208 Lathrop Hall. Phone: (315) 228-6085”

Counseling Center

“The Counseling Center, located in Conant house, focuses on helping students to ameliorate problems that might be obstacles to their growth and development by providing the highest quality clinical services as well as consultation, prevention, training, and psycho-education. The Counseling Center supports the mission of Colgate University and the Office of the Dean of the College, encouraging the intellectual, emotional, and social development of students, working to cultivate a genuine sense of meaning and purpose in their lives. We are committed to supporting diversity and treating all members of the Colgate community with respect, recognizing a special duty to those of under-represented and historically marginalized groups.”

<http://www.colgate.edu/offices-and-services/counseling>

Academic Integrity and the Colgate University Honor Code

Please bear in mind your obligations as a Colgate student. Academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to plagiarism, will not be tolerated. You are expected to cite work accurately and diligently. If you have any questions about what this means or how it is done correctly, feel free to contact me. It is expected that the work you submit in this class will be your own. You are expected to carefully read [Colgate's Honor Code](#) and [Code of Conduct](#) and will be held accountable for compliance to the policy. Any incident brought to my attention will follow the guidelines set forth in The Colgate University Academic Honor Code and Colgate University Student Handbook.

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Schedule may change. Any changes will be sent via email.

Week 1 Syllabus, Course Overview, and Introductions

Monday, 1/25 Half-Day Schedule

Wednesday, 1/27 WATCH: [Angela Davis on Racial Capitalism](#) [25 min]

Asynchronous Activity: BEFORE Wednesday's class, select a song that makes you feel good (maybe it helps you relax, gets you excited, etc.) and add it to our Class Playlist Google Doc next to your name. Along with the song title/artist, include a line or 2 of the song lyrics that resonate with you, capture something about yourself, and/or tell us something about your interest in taking this class. Be prepared to share your song selection and why you chose it during Wednesday's class.

Week 2 Defining Racial Capitalism

Wednesday, 2/3 Burden-Stelly (2020), [Modern U.S. Racial Capitalism](#)

Melamed (2015), Racial Capitalism [9 pages]

In Class: Ruth Wilson Gilmore, [Geographies of Racial Capitalism](#) [16 min]

****Thursday, 2/4 at 7-8pm Angela Davis Mandatory MLK Keynote**

Week 3 Guest Lecture

Monday, 2/8 *WHOLE CLASS MEETS MONDAY* for a guest Lecture by Nikeeta Slade, Black Lives Matter Syracuse organizer

Taylor (2020), [How Do We Change America?](#)

LISTEN: Taylor (2019), ["Housing and the Construction of Black Urban Identity"](#) [54 min]

****500-word Angela Davis Keynote Response Due Thursday, 2/11 at 5pm**

Week 4 Historicizing Education Policy | **SPLIT CLASS**

2/15 & 2/17 Sojoyner (2016), Introduction: The Problematic History Between Schools and Prisons [12 pages]

Estes (2019). [The U.S. stole generations of Indigenous children to open the West.](#)

Rooks (2017), Chapter 4: How the North Wasn't One [29 pages]

Asynchronous Activity: Meet with your small groups to generate grading criteria for your Racial Capitalism concept maps.

Week 5

Schooling as Social Control

Wednesday, 2/24

Mayorga, Aggarwal, & Picower (2020), Introduction (book)

Sojoyner (2016), Chapter 2 [36 pages]

Handel (2020), [If Biden is Serious About Healing the Country, He Must Change Education Policy](#)

Asynchronous Activity: Meet with your small groups to workshop Racial Capitalism concept maps. Details TBA.

****Racial Capitalism Concept Map Due Friday, 2/26 at 5pm**

Week 6

BREATHER WEEK

Wednesday, 3/3

IN CLASS: Watch *The Black Power Mixtape*

Week 7

High-Stakes Testing | [Student Facilitation Day](#)

Wednesday, 3/10

Au (2020), Chapter 1: High-Stakes Testing: A Tool of White Supremacy for over 100 Years (book)

Rooks (2017), Chapter 7: The Age of Resistance [21 pages]

Asynchronous Activity: Brainstorm questions emailed by facilitators.

Week 8

Teachers/Workers | [SPLIT CLASS](#)

3/15 & 3/17

Jones (2020), Chapter 3: Keys to the Schoolhouse: Black Teachers, Education Reform, and the Growing Teacher Rebellion (book)

Sojoyner (2016), Chapter 3: Land of Smoke and Mirrors: The Meaning of Punishment and Control [44 pages]

LISTEN: Hayes (2020), [Chicago Teaches Pledge Collective Action as January Reopening Approaches](#) [25 min.]

Asynchronous Activity: Create a meme, cartoon, or TikTok (not a forum I yet fully understand; learning is a lifelong journey) capturing an argument from this week's readings. Your visual should be uploaded by Wednesday at 5pm. Comment on one of your classmates' creations by Friday at 5pm.

Week 9

School Choice

Wednesday, 3/24

Aggarwal (2020), Chapter 4: School Choice: Raced Rights and Neoliberal Restructuring (book)

[Education Privatization Advocates Find an Opportunity in the School Reopening Debate](#)

Lahm (2021), [Charter Schools Movement Sees a Growth Opportunity in Public School Funding Cuts](#)

In class: WATCH *The Era of Neoliberalism* [30 minutes]

Asynchronous Activity: Working with your small groups, create a digital collage or other visual representation of your ideal school. Think about the type of school you wish you had attended. Some questions to consider as you collectively imagine your school: What does the physical space look like, both in and outside? What are the titles of some courses taught? Are teachers unionized? What teaching methods or practices are used? How is the school organized (e.g., Do students only learn alongside students who are the same age/grade? What technologies, strategies, etc. facilitate inclusive classrooms?)? Are multiple languages spoken/taught? What means allow students a collective/democratic voice in their learning?

Week 10

School Closings | Student Facilitation Day

Wednesday, 3/31

Lipman (2020), Chapter 6: School Closings, Racial Capitalism, State Violence, and Resistance (book)

White (2020), Chapter 7: Charter Schools: Demystifying Whiteness in a Market of "No Excuses" Charter Schools (book)

Rooks (2017), Chapter 5: Education Dreams and Virtual Nightmares [20 pages]

Asynchronous Activity: Brainstorm questions emailed by facilitators.

Week 11	BREATHER WEEK
Wednesday, 4/7	IN CLASS: Watch Remaking Schools in the Time of Coronavirus [1 hr. 20 min]
Week 12	Higher Education Policy SPLIT CLASS
4/12 & 4/14	Stein (2018). Confronting the Racial-Colonial Foundations of U.S. Higher Education. [13 pages]
	Kelley (2016), Black Study, Black Struggle
	LISTEN: Higher Ed in Crisis . <i>The Dig</i> podcast. [2 hours]
	<i>Asynchronous Activity: Moodle discussion Forum. Details TBA.</i>
Week 13	Movements Student Facilitation Day
Wednesday, 4/21	Sojoyner (2016), Chapter 5: By All Means Possible: The Historical Struggle Over Black Education [40 pages]
	Taylor (2012), Focus On: The Freedom Schools.
	LISTEN: Agitate! Educate! Organize! <i>School Colors</i> Podcast [56 min]
	<i>Asynchronous Activity: Brainstorm questions emailed by facilitators.</i>
Week 14	Final Project Work Time
4/26 & 4/28	<i>Time to meet with groups virtually and schedule group appointments with me</i>
	**Final Projects Due Friday, 4/30 at 5pm
Week 15	Final Presentations
	Thursday 5/6 at 12-2pm: Share final projects with the class