MLK Day Session Outline for SFU Jan. 2023

4:30-5:30 pm in JFK Auditorium

Title: What are ideal U.S. social studies learning goals to *effectively* educate American citizens on race issues?

Facilitator: Dr. Marnie L. Moist, Professor and Chair of Psychology at SFU

I. Background Information

The online Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *Woke* as a U.S. slang term meaning "aware of and actively attentive to important societal facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice)". The term is currently quite controversial. Some in America argue there is never really a moment where a person of color doesn't have to deal with discrimination, whether it be subtle and unconscious or as blunt and intentional as possible. Others in America can be found sobbing in despair at local school board meetings, "You will not make my child feel guilty for being white". A recent *Time* magazine article (Waxman, 2022) verifies that 19 states in the U.S. currently have laws or rules designed to regulate how racism and issues of race are discussed in the classroom; these are commonly called Anti-Critical Race Theory (CRT) Laws or Anti-Woke Laws. Pollock et al. (2022) conducted a large-scale study of this issue through the UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access and reported the following results:

> Nearly 900 school districts have experienced local actions related to the campaign (for example, public discussions about banning "CRT") or contention at school board meetings addressing "CRT." These 894 impacted districts enroll 17,743,850 students, or 35% of all K–12 students in the United States. Such districts are in states both with and without restrictive state efforts. Districts experiencing the most rapid demographic change (in which the percentage of White student enrollment fell by more than 18% since 2000) were more than three times as likely as districts with minimal or no change in the enrollment of White students to be impacted by the localized conflict campaign. This means that in the very districts where students' families and communities experienced rapid demographic shift, the conflict campaign could particularly restrict students from analyzing that experience — and restrict educators from learning to better support students" (Pollock et al., 2022, p. iv, Executive Summary).

American teachers everywhere are struggling with difficult questions about how U.S. history and current events can be taught accurately related to race in this polarized political climate. The life of Martin Luther King Jr. challenges us all to keep moving forward in our quest for unifying knowledge, beyond dangerous extremes that foment violence.

The main discussion challenge for today's session will be addressing this question:

- What are ideal U.S. social studies learning goals related to race issues for K-5thgraders? for 6th-12th graders? for undergraduate and graduate students at colleges/universities?

Please bring your laptop and the age-specific discussion tables below to this session!

II. Discussion Questions and Materials for Reflection

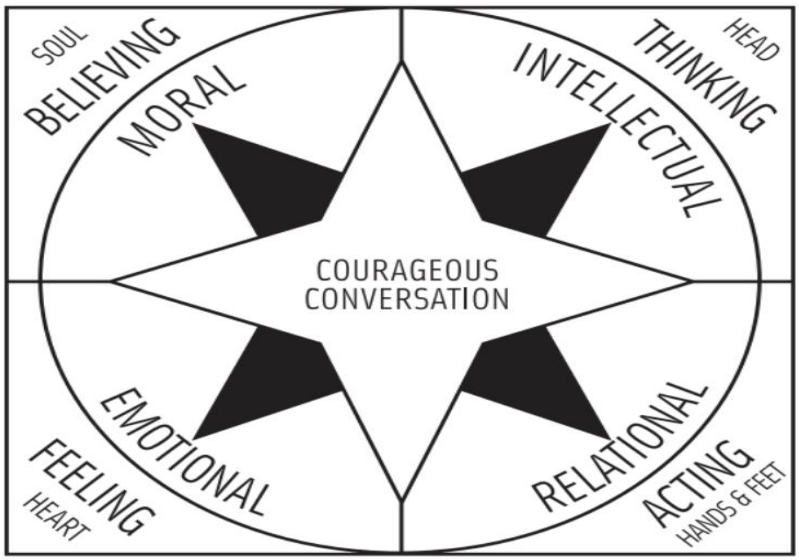
What are ideal U.S. social studies learning goals related to race issues….

- for K-5th graders (see Table 1 for some relevant PDE goals)?
- for 6th-12th graders (see Table 2 for some relevant PDE goals)?
- for undergraduate and graduate students at colleges/universities? (see Table 3)?

Related questions designed to encourage deeper reflection on this main discussion question:

- What do you remember learning about race and racism in school - what did vs. did not work well?
- Developmentally, what are youth at different ages truly capable of understanding and learning about?
- What role should Singleton's (2015) courageous conversation compass below play in the effective learning goals related to race?

The Courageous Conversation Compass



Adapted from Glenn Singleton's Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools, 2nd Edition (2015). "On this compass, we have identified four primary ways that people process racial information, events, or issues: moral, intellectual, emotional, and relational.

What are ideal U.S. learning goals related to race issues?

Table 1. U.S. K-5th Grade History and Current Events Learning Goals Related to Race Issues.

Existing K-5th Grade Social Studies Learning Goals History, Current Events, Race Issues			
Example Kindergarten Civics and Government PDE standards: Define respect for self and others. Identify significant American holidays and their symbols. *Example Kindergarten U.S. History PDE standards:* Identify a problem and discuss possible solutions. Explain responsible classroom behavior. With guidance and support, differentiate facts from opinions as related to an event.			
BEST-CASE SCENARIO	**+**	**-**	**WORST-CASE SCENARIO**

Table 2. U.S. 6th-12th Grade History and Current Events Learning Goals Related to Race Issues.

Existing 6th-12th Grade Social Studies Learning Goals History, Current Events, Race Issues			
Example 6th grade Civics and Government PDE standards: Summarize individual rights guaranteed by the PA Constitution and the U.S. Constitution. Describe how citizens and leaders use political symbols. *Example 12th grade Civics and Government PDE standards:* Analyze and assess the rights of people as written in the PA Constitution and the US Constitution. Evaluate the role of nationalism in uniting and dividing citizens. *Example 6th grade U.S. History PDE standards:* Explain how citizens resolve conflicts in society Explain why participation in government and civic life is important. Differentiate between fact and opinion, multiple points of view, and primary and secondary sources to explain historical events. *Example 12th grade U.S. History PDE standards:* Examine the causes of conflicts in society and evaluate techniques to address those conflicts. Evaluate and demonstrate what makes competent and responsible citizens. Evaluate the interpretation of historical events and sources, considering the use of fact versus opinion, multiple perspectives, and cause and effect relationships.			
BEST-CASE SCENARIO	**+**	**-**	**WORST-CASE SCENARIO**

Table 3. U.S. University History and Current Events Learning Goals Related to Race Issues.

Possible University Learning Goals History, Current Events, Race Issues			
BEST-CASE SCENARIO	**+**	**-**	**WORST-CASE SCENARIO**