

TLH Seminar #1 Run of Show (Fall 2021)

Note: the run of show for Seminar #1 in Spring 2022 (for both cohorts) was very similar to this one. The substantial difference was that Pedagogy Co-Leader Javiela Evangelista opened the day with a discussion about making space in her syllabus (from Fall 2021) for TLH experiments with her students, which she called a “Student Scholar Center.”

Quick Agenda:

- 4:00 - 4:10 Welcome: planning to teach with resources (e.g., accessibility), what’s coming up
- 4:10 - 4:30 Break out groups—cf. Manifesto Tool
- 4:30 - 4:50 Report back to group as a whole: Manifesto, Priority, Passions
- 4:50 - 5:00 Break
- 5:00 - 5:30 “Why?” Inspired by Felicia Rose Chavez, Chapter 2
- 5:30 - 6:00 Break out groups: begin to discuss Public Knowledge Project

Full Run of Show (+ Selected Meeting Minutes):

4:00 - 4:10 Shelly and Cathy

Welcome and introduce and thank the whole team: Jessica, Christina, Annemarie

Pedagogical tools: Collaborative writing (manifesto); reflecting (metacognition) on group process

- Begin with the Manifesto, Break out rooms (we decide who is in what group based on project similarities) where people discuss the manifesto in small groups (4)

Teaching Tool #1: Writing a shared manifesto (or other purposive document) in a collaborative tool like a google doc:

- Please review the manifesto we made together last summer.
- What are your top three priorities? Why are these your top choices?
- Please add your thinking to the Collective Working Document.
- Full, Original manifesto from the Summer Institute (all 3 cohorts):
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iCP9ytOsoJ7Fkg5Vb1HXfzAebH7slnqVeBjW5Kqcs2Q/edit?usp=sharing>
- Cohort 1’s Specific Collaborative Working Document:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1G65nqzjLvckdiCjNRiKqhnHJI9XtNmdwTkQvuU6isHo/edit?usp=sharing>

How To Use this Tool in Class

Whether inviting students to create a whole manifesto or to write class outcomes or to engage in some other kind of collaborative activity, using a Google Doc or other free, online tool for a quick “inventory” exercise (one where everyone contributes at the same time, no grades or other

stakes, very quickly) is an ideal warm up for all forms of collaboration. It helps students develop trust (of themselves, one another, and you). It helps you get a very quick read of what they are thinking (not how they think about what the first student to answer happens to say.). It also helps lower the stakes for writing for non-English speakers (no grammar correction!). Finally, it offers a structure to the (deadly) breakout room or (deadly) small group discussion, with deliverables and an announcement that someone will be the spokesperson. A way to have everyone pay attention!

4:10 - 4:30 Breakout Rooms (Guided by Shelly and Cathy)

4:30 - 4:50 Report back

The reporter should be the person who had rice in a meal most recently. If more than one did--work it out! (And report back on how you did.) NB Everything's a lesson. . .

Report back What 3 things that you think should be top TLH priorities?

Teaching Tool #2 : Metacognition/reflection/process: Tell us about your process. How did you decide which priorities? Did each person in your group get one? Did you combine, compromise? These processes are often mysterious to students and in classroom "groups" they are often unspoken, undiscussed, unanalyzed. And it's a practice in listening--humility via Chavez ch. 2.

- "Meta": the thing we forget most often in learning and that is key to learning, thinking about how we think
 - Areas of overlap? Same? Different?
 - How can we integrate them for the rest of our TLH Workshops?
 - How can this list become our "charge" to CUNY and the world?
 - How can these be action items for our classrooms, our principles, our chairs and deans, our students, our professional lives?
 - How do these fit in your public facing projects?

Notes on How Fellows Arrived at Top 3:

(Group 3): shared manifesto on zoom, scrolling through together to write down things that resonate (it took some time, so less discussion, stated out loud, came to consensus) - Foster Community of Care; Create Safety and Bravery in the Classroom; Embrace Liberatory Practices that Center Around Experience

(Group 2): communities of care, belonging (by using liberatory pedagogy - help students see themselves as contributing to public knowledge and belonging to the institution) and voice (exercising and elevating our voices as belonging to the institution)

(Group 1): 2 questions most interested in: what we value; what our vision is. Keywords and phrases, and consolidate them into three - creating communities of care that value freedom and

investigate freedom practices; importance that within this community, that students take a leadership role and value collaboration, the company of others; multiple voices and multivocality, poetry and music, sound and words, thinking about them beyond literature or English courses, that they should be a part of every classroom

(Group 4): fostering growth in students (and moving away from grades); learning outside of the classroom - students and teachers to bring their lives into the classroom; civic engagement (when bringing in lived experience, you're applying what you learn to your life outside the classroom as well)

Rethinking Group Work Together (Comments from Fellows in the Chat):

- Metacognition has been very helpful to my performance students.
- I think it's important for students to understand why we make pedagogical choices—otherwise they just think it's busy work!
- I agree- students are interested in our pedagogical decisions
- In my experience students are frustrated when they're in a group with students who are unprepared
- ^^
- how do we rethink group work so that even the underprepared student can participate? That working class student even when they read half the book, they feel unempowered even when they did half the work. The student who seems unprepared is actually partially prepared. The bourgeoisie student has been practicing how to fake it to make it all their lives.
- I'm really interested in this, and find that it helps to make time to reflect upon how time / space that is organized to invite participation, also ways of being / types of participation
- So the more quiet student might be the more conscientious
- We haven't quite broached this yet, but group work in my experience doesn't work without a pre-established community.
- Essentially asking people to *start* becoming social in a class when the instructor hasn't created a social setting in the first place is unfair.
- Points to the total participation methods (who had rice most recently, whose birthday is closest to today) that ensure more equitable participation
- Good point. How can you create community right at the start?
- The reading by Rose Chavez was helpful- thinking about deep listening, the importance of my contributions/ words (Andalzua) was on my mind while doing group work and set the tone for our collaboration
- I agree and find that it helps to also use breakout rooms by choice / election, too.
- I agree. In most cases, the most social time is the first class. From there, we rush on to cover the material.

More about Metacognition/reflection/process:

We were divided into groups of 4 (arranged based on content in your Google Forms) and, in 15 minutes, everyone looked over the Institute from the Manifesto and agreed on three values and priorities their group would celebrate/exemplify in their work together.

To find an equitable way of choosing a spokesperson, we used a different method than we did at the Institute (then, the spokesperson was the person whose birthday was closest to that date). We had as spokesperson the person who had most recently eaten rice (personal but not invasive, a cross cultural unifier, and amusing). All those qualities break through hierarchies in classrooms that replicate social hierarchy.

When we re-assembled as a whole group, each small group reported on their three priorities (note four people, three priorities) and we also asked them to tell us how they had arrived at their values and priorities. What was their specific process? This helps us--and our students when we do this in class--understand some of the methods and management tools of working with relative strangers to come up with something productive. Making the decision process overt and a subject of conversation helps to demystify collaboration and offers students tools for collaborative projects going forward.

4:50 - 5:00 Break

5:00 - 5:30 Jessica conducts a tour of the Commons (i.e. document library: <https://commons.gc.cuny.edu/groups/tlh-cohort-1/library/#/>) and an accessibility exercise

- Overview of accommodations process; pros and cons
 - Zoom poll
 - How would you rate your knowledge of disability accommodations in the classroom? (Likert, 1-5; very limited knowledge, somewhat limited knowledge, basic knowledge, somewhat knowledgeable, very knowledgeable)
 - Do you have any students with disabilities who have requested accommodation this semester? (multiple choice)
 - Yes, blind or low-vision
 - Yes, deaf or hard of hearing
 - Yes, physical or mobility disability
 - Yes, learning disability
 - No
 - What types of accommodation requests have you received (this semester or in previous semesters)? (multiple choice)
 - Changes to a classroom environment
 - Changes to the format of materials (i.e. for text legibility or audio captions)

- Removal of architectural barriers
 - Changes to class policies like deadlines or timed tasks
 - Request for assistive technology
 - Something else
- Discuss – how can those accommodations be built into the syllabus to benefit all students?
 - Are there accommodations that conflict with other curriculum requirements? Are there accommodations that help other students who need additional support?
 - How does the failure to embrace accommodations become part of a “hidden curriculum” of inequity.

Selected comments made by fellows:

Verbally:

- Students don't necessarily realize they could ask for extensions or accommodations
- Building flexibility into the syllabus benefits everyone
- With so many responsibilities (in addition to coursework) inflexible deadlines are hard to meet.
- Deadline zones instead of deadline dates

Teaching Tool #3: Inventory methods, Jamboard - Anonymous, Total Participation

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1JgcKm0Clq7HaXrFnPp0Z8te7bnA25WJQXE8yNbSoPg/edit?usp=sharing>

Jessica used three simple polls to ask us all questions about accessibility. A poll is another “inventory” method (students answer all at once, immediately see results, witness the diversity of opinions or experience, low stakes, no grades, anonymous). She also used a Jamboard tool to have us post our thoughts in response to three additional questions. This offers variety (it's not another Zoom chat), it's colorful and easy and fun.

Questions for Discussion:

- What questions do you have about making your course materials accessible?
- What challenges have you encountered when trying to improve the accessibility of your course materials?
- What strategies have worked for providing accommodations? Or, what didn't work?
- What lessons have you learned from the disability accommodation process?
- Discuss: How is incorporating accessibility into the syllabus a way of teaching students a culture of compassion/empathy how to automatically think about accessibility?

- How do you recognize and respond to the diversity of learning in your classroom?

5:30 - 6:00 Shelly and Cathy

Teaching Tool #4: Listening. And Reflection, meta: “Teaching is reciprocal.” Listening exercise. And “Why”. Shelly and Cathy talk about “why” they do it because we rarely talk to our students about “why” we do it. They literally don’t know why we spend 7 or more years of our lives becoming specialists in our field. They don’t know why their colleges require certain basic courses. Then open to discussion. Chapter Two, Chavez’s *Anti-Racist Workshop*...

Shelly and Cathy made the point that, although we spent 7+ years of our lives earning degrees, we rarely talk to our students about why we do what we do--or about why we think it is important that they take courses in the subjects we teach. We are in the humanities. We should be experts at “why” but we often pass over it. Inspired by Chapter two of The Antiracist Writing Workshop, we discussed why we do what we do, the deep heart and soul of our commitments, and then asked others to offer their stories. Much research confirms that students often have no idea why they are taking courses other than that “they are required,” especially general education or elective or non-vocational courses. We need to do better. We can inspire and be inspired.

How to Use This Tool in Class

All the break outs, discussions, representations, process, and conversations (including and maybe especially the “why”), are part of putting on a public program that represents our mission and shares it beyond those of us lucky enough to be able to spend this term together. This is also incredibly useful for students--to see their own work not just as a paper to be graded but as something that has purpose in their community.

6:00 - 6:30 Break out rooms for Public Knowledge Projects (same as first break out rooms)

- *You need to schedule at least one meeting offline*
- *Topics and formats due in 2 weeks*
- *4 events in fall (maybe across 2 different days)*
 - *\$2,000 budget for each group, possibly more*
- What kind of event do you want to put on? When? How will you involve your class?
- How will your event also communicate and enact, support, and pass on the values discussed in the manifesto?

Letters sent to the two cohorts in weeks leading up to first seminar (from Spring 2022):

Dear Colleagues,

We are excited to be meeting together on February 15 @ 4-6PM / February 17 @ 4-6PM. You should have received the Zoom link in your calendar invitation.

As at our Summer Institute, this upcoming session will be highly interactive; and we will be using a variety of pedagogical “tools” that anyone can easily use in your classrooms. In advance of our session, we need you to complete the following:

- *Please fill out this brief (10 minutes maximum) Google form that will give us the information we need to set up break out rooms and collaborative teams for the public project you, your colleagues, and your students will be presenting. **We need this by Thursday, Feb 10th.** Thank you!*
- *Please read chapter 2, “Fostering Engagement, Mindfulness, and Generosity,” in Felicia Rose Chavez’s *The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop*.*
- *Please mark your calendars for Chavez’s *Anti-Racist Pedagogy Workshops* on February 8th and 16th. RSVP [here](#).*
- *Please earmark some space in your syllabi this semester for TLH related activities. On Tuesday, Feb 24th at 4-5 PM, Javiela will be leading the first TLH Open Office Hours of the semester about how to incorporate TLH-related activities into your syllabi. (Keep a look out for a calendar invitation!)*

We hope your semester has gotten off to the best start. Your leadership and example are an inspiration in these difficult times. We look forward to seeing you! If you have any questions or issues, please let us know asap.

Best wishes,

Javiela and Cathy / Javiela and Shelly