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# Activating Emotional and Analytic Engagement in Blended Learning: A Multicultural Teacher Education Example

Ramona Maile Cutri, Erin Feinauer Whiting, & Stefinee Pinnegar

As colleges of education face challenges to provide flexible teacher education, teacher educators with no previous expertise or experience with distance and online instructional formats are being asked to design and implement these types of curriculum and instruction. There is often little attention to either faculty professional development or appropriate technical support. These efforts often occur without consideration of the appropriateness of technological use in relationship to the theoretical orientations and underpinnings of specific content areas, teacher education programs, or individual teacher educators (Keengewe & Kang, 2012).

Blended learning environments combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction and increase opportunities for reflection (Hixon & So, 2009; Kang, 2014). Research has explored the potential of computer-mediated communication and blended learning to create communities of inquiry grounded in principles of cognitive, social, and teaching presence (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000) and collaborative interactive learning with students and faculty (Vaughan, 2010). These qualities facilitate many of the conditions necessary for critical multicultural education. Yet what remains largely unattended to is the need to engage students on the emotional level. The lessons we have learned as we constructed a blended learning format multicultural education course for pre-service teachers is best introduced by one of the author's musings:

I wanted to touch my pre-service teachers' hearts and get them to consider multicultural issues from a place of compassion. This was around the same time that my department chair asked me to create the blended learning course, so the whole idea of learning objects beyond "readings" was really opening up to me and getting me excited. I had seen that textbook readings just become homework versus something students interact with, and then share with their friends. But when my students found an article, video, blogpost, etc. about a current event or topic they thought was interesting, they'd not only forward it to me electronically, but share it with all of their friends. I noticed that the things that they forwarded were from various sources, ranging from pop culture to academic journal articles that they read in other classes. I wanted to create in my blended learning class this same type of interest, engagement, and sharing of learning objects but make them specifically related to multicultural issues. This was also around the time when I was jumping on the Facebook bandwagon and discovering the power of social networking in this generation of college students. So there I was, an expert in multicultural education with little experience with technology, teaching pre-service teachers who were experts in technology with little experience with multicultural issues. (Cutri, 2011)

In this paper, we share our experience in designing a blended multicultural education course that we hoped would increase the likelihood that the teachers we were educating would take up socially just dispositions. We examine our own learning using a critical friend relationship with a colleague experienced in developing technological responses that honor relational aspects of teacher education within a framework of sociocultural theory. We steer our way to new understandings of how blended learning can facilitate teaching multicultural teacher education while maintaining a commitment to sociocultural learning theory (Cutri, 2011; Cutri & Whiting, in press).

## How We Got Started

We three teacher educators have different experiences designing online and distance education. However, we are all interested in relational aspects of teacher education and sociocultural theory, since both of these theoretical orientations show great promise for improving the quality of instruction beginning teachers can provide individually and collectively (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). We have been involved in creating hypermedia cases, professional development for teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) delivered at a distance, as well as blended learning. Two of us participated in the development of an ESL Endorsement for delivery at a distance (e.g. Teemant, Smith, Egan, & Pinnegar, 2005; Pinnegar & Teemant, 2003).

Six years ago, the two of us who design multicultural courses began to meet to discuss student responses to our multicultural education. We were primarily concerned with engaging our students intellectually and emotionally with the multicultural education content (Cutri & Whiting, in press; Whiting and Cutri, in press). Around the same time, as part of a university initiative, we had offered our class a blended learning format that combined asynchronous electronic sessions online and face-to-face class sessions. This initiative did not include any formalized professional development in blended curriculum development, but it did include resources such as access to course management systems.

We focused our conversations around two guiding questions:

1. How do we create curriculum that activates students' emotional and analytic engagement with multicultural education during asynchronous electronic class sessions?
2. How do we structure face-to-face class sessions to encourage students to share and reflect upon their experiences (from the past and in relationship to the online asynchronous activities)?

We structured our weekly meetings around these questions and took notes on our discussions for three consecutive years. In our efforts to make sense of our experiences, we turned to Design-based Research (DBR). DBR studies learning in environments that are designed and systematically changed by the researchers “to develop new theories, artifacts, and practices that can be generalized to other schools and classrooms” (Barab, 2006, p. 153). DBR enabled us to closely study our planning and practice as it passed through multiple iterations in the contexts of our courses.

The data we gathered focused on two different aspects of our journey: 1) the student's experiences and 2) our experiences as teacher educators. Cutri & Whiting (in press) document the emotionally charged quality of our experiences trying to engage our students intellectually and emotionally. For this paper we returned to the data to examine what we have come to understand about how to create blended environments that maximize learning from asynchronous and face-to-face experiences and activate emotional and analytic engagement with multicultural education.

For this analysis we discussed what the notes from our past conversations revealed. Then using dialogue (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009) we considered each lesson, comparing it to notes we had taken, assignments that had been added, deleted, altered, class schedules, outlines of online assignments and other commentary to provide evidence that the things we had come to understand had emerged from our experiences in shaping the curriculum. Through this process we saw our struggles coalescing around four main points of tension. Rather than seek to resolve these areas of tension, we opened them up to inquiry so that we might learn from them.

The tapestry of our conversations is best described as one woven from threads of intentional vulnerability and collaboration. Since we acknowledged early on both our expertise in multicultural education and our lack of formal training in blended learning course development, we were able to quickly acknowledge what we knew and what we needed to learn. Together, we committed to educating ourselves about blended learning through extensive reading and, eventually, participating in a formal professional development course on blended learning. Additionally, we agreed to systematically collect data on our course development efforts.

We engaged with our other colleague as a critical friend on this paper. In this role, our colleague critiqued the design, implementation, analysis, and re-design of activities individually and the course collectively. Across the six years, as we have worked to improve the course, we have conferred with this colleague, asking for suggestions, analysis, or recommendations. During this process, we questioned the interactions we were having with our students around the difficult content of multicultural education. Finally, as we engaged in this study, our critical friend discussed our findings, reviewed drafts of the paper, and pushed us to provide evidence of our thinking.

## How We Conceptualized the Course

Critical multicultural teacher education addresses inequitable distribution of power and access to educational opportunities. It attends to an underlying discussion of social privilege in addition to racial, gender, sexual orientation, and ability awareness at the individual and institutional levels (Banks, 1996; 1999; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Gorski, 2010; Gorski, Davis, & Reiter, 2012; Sleeter & Grant, 1987; 2006; Wilbur & Scott, 2013). Inherent in attending to this inequality is engaging pre-service teachers in critical reflections of their own assumptions, identities, and dispositions. National standards for teacher education accreditation mandate professional attitudes, values, and beliefs about diverse students, families, and communities (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Standards,

2013). A pedagogy of a mere lecture and regurgitation pattern will not promote the type of critical reflectivity and dispositional development required by national standards.

Attending to sociocultural theory in the design and development of multicultural teacher education curriculum supports teacher candidates in drawing forward what they understand from their own experiences as a basis for building on and developing their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in preparation to be teachers (Vygotsky, 1978). We sought to attend to the content of the course as well as to the pedagogical practices most likely to facilitate the type of inquiry and dialogue needed to influence dispositions. As a result, the conceptual framework for our blended multicultural education course draws on the theories of critical multicultural education and sociocultural learning theory, in particular the concepts of the *zone of proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1978) and a *trajectory of participation in a community of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which we elaborate on later in the paper.

## Tensions Experienced & Lessons Learned

As we discussed our experiences using a blended format in our critical multicultural education course, we uncovered four significant tensions.

### 1. Appropriate format for online materials

The first tension was the drawback of providing reading materials in electronic format, prompting us to reconsider how we provided reading material to the students. As professors with complete control over the readings we were complicit in requiring our students to purchase an expensive required reading packet. We recognized that when required materials are expensive, some teacher candidates simply do not purchase them. In addition, attention to financial burdens as potential barriers to learning is a concern we explore in our multicultural education course.

As we considered how to make the course materials more affordable, we realized that if we provided the material in electronic form that the teacher candidates could access for free, they would also have more autonomy regarding how, when, and where they read the materials using various electronic devices (e.g., phone, tablet, computer). With great (though naive and uninformed) faith in electronic materials, we did away with the required reading packet purchased from the university bookstore. Instead, we made all of the readings available to students electronically through various sources that allowed them legal and free access.

We found that when the reading materials were only available electronically, the teacher candidates did not read them as carefully as they did when the materials were in paper form. Moreover, they were unable to easily reference what they had read during face-to-face class session discussions. Research confirms the complex relationship between a reader's experience reading material electronically versus on paper (Kukulka-Hulme, 2007; Chao & Chen, 2009). During class interactions, teacher candidates confirmed that they had read the material, but were often unable to recall facts or express opinions about the specific issues discussed in the readings.

The collaborative and face-to-face component of our learning community was largely grounded in teacher candidates having read common articles, developing shared understandings of specific concepts, critiquing those concepts, and exploring how they related to future teaching. However, once the materials were in electronic rather than paper formats, the teacher candidates, as newcomers to this community of practice, did not participate in the course community in ways that we expected. Since they were not properly reading the materials, building notes on their reading, or retaining very effectively or efficiently the materials assigned, the face-to-face discussions fell short of their potential.

The lesson learned from this tension was that we needed to draw readings from a variety of formats. We required teacher candidates to buy a printed copy of the reading packet for the course. The physical artifact of the reading packet with articles highlighted by teacher candidates proved to be vital for the caliber of face-to-face class discussions.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), interaction and trajectory of participation patterns within communities of practice range from what they call legitimate peripheral toward more full participation. They distinguish between opportunities individuals are given to participate and access to cultural artifacts, such as a reading packet, as the two main variables impacting an individual's progression toward full participation and learning. In a critical multicultural education class, this translates into opportunities for and conditions of dialogue and inquiry created in interactions between teacher candidates and teacher educators. In our case, access to the physical artifact of the reading packet encouraged fuller participation in our community of practice.

This finding led us to wonder about what types of electronic materials, if any, might be better suited for student consumption. The articles in our reading packet were mostly academic articles addressing well-established multicultural education concepts. We recognized that this type of academic material differs greatly from learning artifacts from non-academic popular culture sources such as videos, audio texts, news reports, and other online resources. We recognized as well, that each format greatly differs from learning artifacts from non-academic popular culture sources such as videos, audio text and that if we were to use them successfully, we would need to develop resources and materials to support teacher candidates in using them.

Our finding regarding the varied literacy skills required in blended learning highlights the assertion made by Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack (2004) that “new technologies require new literacies to effectively exploit their potentials” (p. 1570). However, in the rush to implement new technologies in higher education the task of teaching students new literacies is often overlooked. Our finding suggests that identifying who is responsible for and best qualified to teach literacy skills must be addressed in teacher education.

Unlike the challenges presented by the electronic academic readings, we have had success presenting learning artifacts from popular culture to students online. The artifacts included short videos, both serious and humorous, on such topics of multicultural education as gender and racial stereotypes, and

interactive immigration maps. Students were able to recall details and points made from them during face-to-face class discussions. We also asked them to answer questions, take particular kinds of notes, or engage in outside-the-classroom interactions with friends and family in relationship to these materials. For example, we required teacher candidates to share various online artifacts with their social contacts via the social media platform of their choice, and then to analyze comments from friends on social media about the artifacts they posted. These analyses usually take the form of a short paper in which students identify trends and patterns in their friend social media platform of their choice, and then to analyze comments from friends on social media about (See Appendix A for a full description of a sample assignment.)

The social media “friends” today’s students maintain are a “local” social system in which students interact. Online popular culture artifacts are designed to be shared socially and interacted with, and we were more likely to push the teacher candidates to engage with them in these ways. For example, asking students to listen to the song from Avenue Q, “Everyone’s a Little Bit Racist,” and then design an interactive activity attached to it, is more engaging for students than asking them to read an American Educational Research Association (AERA) presidential address and come to class prepared to comment on how we attend to the educational debt in educating multicultural students.

The novelty of the online resource and the addition of sociocultural or linguistically based activities deepened students’ engagement with the materials and enabled them to make connections to their lived experiences outside the learning space of the class. Sociocultural learning theory encourages educators to begin with what students already know and extend that knowledge through additional experiences. Our students were very familiar with the process of sharing popular culture artifacts via social media and promoting discussion of them. The types of assignments described above built on that knowledge and extended it through additional structured experiences.

It has been much more productive to have students engage electronically with artifacts constructed for online consumption than with academic readings typically generated for paper formats. For Vygotsky (1978) and sociocultural theory that stems from his work, intellectual development is an inherently interactive activity occurring within a local social system. Structuring these interactive learning activities and experiences is therefore of critical importance. This is particularly true in a blended course where, since students participate in both face-to-face and electronic interactions, careful attention must be paid to what students can do independently, what they can do online, and what experiences fundamentally require face-to-face contact with the professor and each other.

Dalton (1998) identifies meaning-making as one of the Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy and defines it as “connecting school to students’ lives” (p. 10). Meaning-making involves personal and dispositional development and public use of materials and consideration of them in a public context. Multicultural teacher education seeks to affect the beliefs, values, and practices of teacher candidates. It relies on inquiry and dialogue as the primary vehicles for dispositional development (i.e., making meaning, critiquing, and reaching mutual understandings) (Gay & Kirtland, 2003; Gorski, 2010;

Hill-Jackson, 2007; Sockett, 2008). In our multicultural education courses individual dispositional development occurs in the social context of face-to-face and online interactions. Inquiry and dialogue in face-to-face and online settings demand attention to the relational aspects of education and learning. The adjustments we made to which materials were presented online and which were presented in paper format greatly facilitated increased inquiry and dialogue.

## 2. Online conversation and discussion

The second of the four major tensions we observed was the nature of online discussion posted on a platform called Digital Dialogues. This tool is used for assigning discussion points, and then asking teacher candidates to comment and discuss electronically either in small groups or whole asynchronous groups. The small groups for digital dialogues were formed randomly without consideration for participants' technical expertise; all students were enrolled in the same multicultural education course. The dialogues occur asynchronously, so no attention was given to time availability of group members. Because of the random assignment to digital dialogue groups, members of the same group would not necessarily sit near each other in class. In this way, students were encouraged to form relationships with multiple people in the class.

We quickly observed that some teacher candidates avoided participating, or engaged superficially and shallowly in their peer-to-peer online discussions. We acknowledge that trajectories toward full participation and learning include what Lave and Wenger (1991) call legitimate peripheral participation. However, shallow responses did not seem legitimate, but superficial.

One response to this situation would be for the professor to join in the digital dialogue and through questioning encourage students to “dig deeper” or “say more” in their discussions. Such questioning and guiding of students to build on what they know and extend to deeper understanding and application would be a form of what Vygotsky described as helping students progress through their zone of proximal development surrounding a topic (1978). However, we had hoped for this to be an activity that grew organically and gave teacher candidates an opportunity to develop ideas and hone them with each other. We hoped they would create an online community of practice that would travel from the online discussion into the face-to-face sessions.

We had not envisioned the digital dialogue interactions as a curricular element under the control of the professor. We felt intervening in the digital dialogues might compromise them as a safe forum for teacher candidates to express concerns, frustrations, and opinions about the delicate content of multicultural education (e.g., racism, sexism). Because we held out hope for these digital dialogues to become student-led and to create safe communities for trying out ideas and expressing beliefs, we were hesitant to intercede in the digital dialogue forum.

We considered the digital dialogue space to be a community of practice for which teacher candidates had primary ownership. We wanted to allow for legitimate peripheral participation within that community but not tolerate merely surface engagement with the topic of discussion or with peers' com-



ments. To address the tension between allowing for legitimate peripheral participation and insisting on quality participation, we created a simple rubric for the types of comments required. (See Appendix B for a sample rubric.) We did not participate directly in the conversations; however in using the rubric, we communicated to candidates that evaluation of participation would focus on the depth of discussion rather than the types of opinions expressed.

During digital dialogues we selected certain group conversations to observe over the week. We examined and noted trends and patterns in the conversation. Then we addressed or extended the commentaries in face-to-face whole class discussion, including certain ideas, dilemmas, opinions, or wonderings in the slides we used during face-to-face lectures. We observed that peer-to-peer critique happened more often online than in face-to-face interactions. However, as we engaged teacher candidates in ways of articulating critique and inquiry these skills began to transfer, although to a limited extent, to face-to-face whole class discussions. We also noticed how vital it was that peers disrupted or called-out their peers about certain ways of thinking or voicing diverse experiences and perspectives.

Teacher candidates knew that their dialogues were public, and that there was a chance that they would be quoted to illustrate an insight into a certain multicultural concept or to articulate a concern exhibited by more than one student. The practice helped us manage the polarizing of ideas and opinions and address our need to direct the discussion somewhat to avoid unethical tangents or comments. In the field of multicultural teacher education, teacher educators have an ethical responsibility to engender positive dispositions toward multicultural students and families. Additionally, the practice of quoting teacher candidate digital dialogue comments allowed these discussions and issues to live on in public space and permitted us to return to them more specifically throughout the semester.

We found it much easier to notice trends and patterns in teacher candidates' thought processes and opinions online than during face-to-face discussions, when so many other things are vying for the professor's attention. We also found it easier to wrestle with our own emotional responses to teacher candidates allowed these discussions a when we had the time and space to reflect on them.<sup>1</sup>

One lesson learned concerning the use and management of digital dialogues is that a small group discussion format is imperative. We recommend well-organized groups of about five people. We found it crucial to have a teaching assistant assign grades to teacher candidates for their participation in the discussions using the established rubric, and to flag elements of discussions that were potential problems and bring them to the professor's attention. The involvement of the teaching assistant demonstrated to the teacher candidates that they were accountable for their participation, but they knew that it was not graded, and so felt more free to articulate their concerns and opinions. They knew from the quoting of discussions in whole class lectures that the professor was involved and recognized the engagement and the value of knowing what they were thinking and learning.

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, we do not include samples of student Digital Dialogue responses because our aim is to focus on the tensions and lessons we experienced as teacher educators. If readers are interested in data from student perspectives, see Cutri, 2011; Cutri & Whiting, in press; and Whiting & Cutri, in press.

### 3. Connecting online and face-to face sessions

The third of the four major tensions we identified was the struggle to build connections between online and face-to-face sessions without being repetitive. Related to this challenge is the tension of trusting that the teacher candidates deeply engaged with and understood all the material online beyond simple recall on a quiz. The struggle to extend the knowledge that teacher candidates already possess when they come to a face-to-face class session is a classic one that professors face when guiding teacher candidates through their zone of proximal development. Relying on an electronic class session to deliver background knowledge can be even more complicated.

Professors generally have faith in their own teaching -- their presence in class, their lecture abilities, their well-designed learning activities. After a class, most professors can provide a general assessment of the students' response to the topic and how well they have understood the material. However, when the students have experienced all of the content online without any live professor present, we were unsure how to measure or feel confident that the learning experience had been successful.

One lesson learned regarding how to identify student knowledge gained through the electronic sessions is that, as in the face-to-face class sessions, it is helpful to design activities that ask teacher candidates to produce actual products. These products must utilize the information that the teacher candidates learned electronically and provide the professor an artifact of their learning through which to evaluate their understanding of the content. Teacher educators need to be aware that electronic sessions are communities of practice in and of themselves. (As mentioned previously, the digital dialogues are also communities of practice affiliated with the electronic sessions.) Examples of products that we assigned for online sessions included memos convincing another person of the key issues of a topic, short structured video responses, an analysis of opinions voiced about the topic in the form of a short paper, polling of friends and relatives. (See Appendix C for an assignment example.) Often these products were shared on digital dialogue and served as the source for those discussions of the topics. However, these products were also turned in and graded independently as course requirements.

It was important for us to be able to document teacher candidates' understanding beyond mere recall of facts presented electronically. One of the reasons for this was because we wanted to be able to identify themes and trends in how teacher candidates were responding to the online material. We were interested in how effective materials and activities were in pushing teacher candidate thinking and change. By having products posted electronically and reviewed if possible before the next class session, teacher candidate response to the materials and learning from them was made visible. We were also then better prepared for resistance, support, or apathetic responses to material from teacher candidates.

### 4. Relationship-building across distance

The fourth tension we observed was the difficulty of building relationships across electronic and physical space. Of course it can be challenging to memorize teacher candidates' names and build

connections with them in face-to-face sessions, but when electronic sessions are interspersed with face-to-face ones, both peer-to-peer and teacher candidate to teacher educator relationship-building becomes more difficult.

Our findings suggest that an effective way to establish relationships across electronic and physical space is to meet consistently with the teacher candidates face-to-face at the beginning of the semester. We have fourteen class sessions per semester, and we meet face-to-face for the first five to eight sessions before switching to a flipped learning model in which students meet electronically every other class session.

During face-to-face class sessions professors have the opportunity to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their knowledge, their understanding of the nuances of belief, opinion, and disposition. Yet even though professors' online materials, activities, and products are designed to push for deeper understanding, teacher candidates often treat these materials as if they are incidental. Their comments often indicate surprise that professors understand and are highly familiar with the ideas, controversies, and materials posted.

We found it difficult when we were not physically with the teacher candidates to express our presence and expertise since we conceptualized electronic sessions as a free zone where teacher candidates would take up new ideas, struggle to understand them with peers, and grow as professionals. We initially tried talking-head videos as a means of interjecting our presence. However, in our experience talking-head videos do not work well as a means of projecting professor presence or establishing expertise. Research confirms that single source artifacts such as talking heads and voice-over lectures accompanied by slides are not compelling to learners online, but rather that learners receive scattered, multiple sources of information and make sense and meaning of those sources as opposed to a single professor delivery model (Siemens & Tittenberger, 2009).

The four tensions that we identified in our efforts to capture the potential of blended learning informed by sociocultural pedagogy included: 1) finding the appropriate format for online materials; 2) facilitating meaningful online conversations and discussions; 3) connecting online and face-to-face class sessions; and 4) building relationships across distance. We now explore the implications of these identified tensions.

## Implications and Conclusions

Across the four tensions we identified there was a common overriding dilemma, which centered on our role as teacher educators in a blended learning environment. Computer-mediated instruction can be interpreted as merely putting learning materials online and granting autonomy to teacher candidates to make their way through them. Our commitment to sociocultural learning theory demanded that we further critique and question what roles teacher educators could most effectively play in a blended learning format.

The four tensions we identified are not easily addressed by making one choice over another. Rather, the points of tension became productive areas of inquiry for us to explore our role as professors. Recognizing the points of tension forced us to develop new understandings of how to scaffold teacher candidates through their zone of proximal development and encourage them to evolve toward full participation in their learning community, electronic or live.

The blended learning environment of the course enriched the teacher candidates' learning, but only after we as teacher educators systematically and rigorously reflected on our practices in light of sociocultural learning principles we are committed to and made needed adjustments. Many areas need further examination. Data collected from teacher candidates about how they make sense of the extension during face-to-face class sessions of materials presented online and how they make sense of their digital dialogue experiences would be insightful. Another area of further investigation is the ways in which teacher educators' presence is experienced during online sessions. We wonder in what ways our perceptions as teacher educators are similar to or different from teacher candidates' perceptions. We offer our four identified tensions and our wonderings to others interested in utilizing technology to pursue sociocultural teaching.

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## Appendix A

### Social Media Dialogue

Use social media to facilitate a conversation about race from an event in the news, etc. (on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or if you don't have access to social media, create a survey or email friends to start a conversation). Follow and respond to what your friends say.

1. Be sure to choose a recent current event (nationally or locally) involving racial identities, racial tensions, etc.

2. Be sure to think carefully about how you present the event on social media to ensure that you open up opportunities for your social media “friends” to explicitly express opinions about racial identities and racial tensions. We suggest that you consistently monitor the comments you get and interject in the “conversation” by sharing insights and understandings that you have gained from this class.
3. Do not just let the comments run wild. You are responsible for facilitating an honest and respectful conversation about race and the current event you posted about.
4. Write a 1-2 page analysis of the conversation that occurred. Do not just summarize what was said. Rather answer questions such as: *What were the trends in the dialogue and what implications could they have for students in your future classroom? What major concepts from class best describe the trend(s) that you saw?(Deficit theory? Fundamental attribution error? Thin-slicing, etc.?) What major concepts from class helped you address the trends you identified? How did it feel to be responsible for facilitating an honest and respectful conversation about race and current events?*

## Appendix B

### Scoring Guide for Digital Dialogue Inquiries

#### Video

- 10 points for doing the activity
- 1 point each for answering each question

#### Discussion Rubric

A-level work: Insightful. Shows careful reflection and learning. Makes connections between two or more of the following: course material, previous readings, online sessions, assigned book for this course, core beliefs, own past experience, applications to future teaching and students. Responses are original, showing deep understanding of the subject matter and its applications. Questions asked to group members are meaningful, thought-provoking, useful, and applicable to how this affects society and the classroom.

B-level work: Shows careful reflection and learning. Similar to the A-level grade, connections are made, showing understanding of the subject matter; however, understanding of how to apply the learned knowledge is not as deep. Questions asked to group members may not be as relevant, useful, or thought-provoking. Expresses opinions and reflections, but may lack evidence of how this relates to future students or teaching.

C-level work: Satisfactory. Responds to each video. Contributes to discussion and shows learning, but does not show originality, insight, and effort. May just be repeating what other group members have already said. Lacks in understanding of the subject matter.

D and below: Does not respond to each video. Does not show learning. Lack of originality, insight,

and effort. May be restating or summarizing information. Answers may be overly short with no real content.

## Appendix C

### Gender & Sexuality Learning Activity and Digital Dialogue Inquiry

Choose one of the following options. Report your experience on Digital Dialogue following directions below.

- Break a gender norm
- Attend a support group about a gender- and sexuality-related issue (e.g., Understanding Same Gender Attraction [USGA] meets at Provo Library Thursday evenings)
- Attend a support group for pornography addiction or for domestic violence

This assignment is a 2-week process. After doing one of the learning activities listed above for Gender and Sexuality, complete the activities below on Digital Dialogue.

Initial Post Due at 5:00 pm on Saturday, February 21st:

Reply to this post with a video of yourself answering each of the questions below. (15 points)

- Brief description of what activity you did (when, where, who).
- What expectations did you have before the activity, and what surprised you?
- How did the experience challenge or reinforce your core beliefs?
- What do you feel was the most interesting or important thing you learned?
- How will this learning impact your relationships with future students?

Due at 11:59 pm on Wednesday, February 25th:

Watch each group member impact your relationships meaningful discussion by replying with a typed response to the videos. Respond to each video at least once; however, keep in mind that this minimum requirement may not be enough to constitute what counts as a meaningful discussion. You will be graded on how well you show that you are making connections between the course material, the online sessions, the way you view society, your core beliefs, your own experiences, and your future teaching. You are welcome to ask your group members questions about their opinions as well. (20 points)

Here are some questions to help get you thinking about possible responses. This is NOT a checklist of requirements.

- What comments made by group members expanded your point of view and why?
- How does this subject affect students in their everyday lives?
- How do the comments and experiences made by your group members connect with what you



- have learned in the online session, previous readings, or your assigned book for this class?
- How has studying this subject affected your social viewpoint or perspective of society?
  - To what can you relate from personal experience, and how does this knowledge affect you as a future teacher?
  - How do these experiences change or reinforce your core beliefs?
  - How was your understanding of the “single story” expanded?

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Cutri, R., Whiting, E., Pinnegar, S. (2015). Activating emotional and analytic engagement in blended learning: a multicultural teacher education example. *Bank Street Occasional Paper Series 34*. Retrieved from <https://www.bankstreet.edu/occasional-paper-series/>