

Proposal for EDI Reading Groups

Prepared by Sari van Anders, EDI Committee Chair, 09.04.20

The DEDI committee will offer a list of books for faculty and graduate students to read in a moderated reading group that focus on DEDI issues related to the five equity-seeking groups. Groups will be offered separately for faculty and grad students. Moderators will include Sari (and other committee members who learn how to do so/feels that they have the skills?). The books will reflect a mix of works including academic, scholarly, journalistic, and novels. We will provide the list to the groups with titles, book covers, and what kinds of material they are. People will have one month to read the book before the reading group convenes for a one hour discussion. We will offer at least one group per semester for faculty and one for grad students. The DEDI committee will buy the books for graduate students. We will focus each year on a topic, and this year will be Blackness/anti-Black racism/white supremacy.

To encourage faculty to join, we will report the percentage of faculty who have joined at least one book club every few months.

Book List:

- *They Said This Would Be Fun: Race, Campus Life, and Growing Up*, by Eternity Martis (autobiography; journalism)
- *The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power*, by Desmond Cole (journalism, account of activism)
- *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present*, by Robyn Maynard (scholarship)
- *So You Want to Talk About Race*, by Ijeoma Oluo (essays, guidance)
- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander (scholarship)
- *Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers her Superpower*, by Brittney Cooper (essays, guidance)
- *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing*, by Joe Feagin (scholarship)
- *White Guys on Campus: Racism, White Immunity, and the Myth of "Post-Racial" Higher Education*, by Nolan Cabrera (scholarship)
- *Until We are Free: Reflections on Black Lives Matter in Canada*, Eds. Rodney Diverlus, Sandy Hudson, & Syrus Marcus Ware (essays, activism, auto-biography, scholarship)
- (what else?)

Pros:

- Sari has led this kind of reading group before.
- Faculty learn well from other faculty, especially ones they know.
- Faculty moderating sessions with grad students can show investment and leadership.
- Separating grad students and faculty can reflect real differences in need.
- Having everyone- regardless of expertise level or social location – in the same reading group could help share expertise and experiences, and put a personal face on issues, which research shows to be helpful.

- Research shows that community norms and reporting can be used to help people to take action.
- Focusing on one topic can be helpful in terms of knowledge development and discussion.

Cons:

- If people lead without adequate training, knowledge, or skill, this can potentially lead to problems.
- Separating grad students and faculty can reify divisions.
- Having everyone – regardless of expertise level or social location – in the same reading group could be frustrating: going too high for novices, or too slow for experts; individuals might feel pressure to recount personal experiences, experiencing retraumatization, etc.
- Focusing on one topic is limiting!