

EDUC 317: Democracy and Education  
Spring 2022  
Monday/Wednesday 1:20-2:35pm  
**\*\*Medical-Grade Masks Required in Class\*\***

Instructor: Laura Jaffee  
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Office: 13 Persson Hall  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-4pm, Thursdays 12-2pm  
**Schedule office hours here:** <https://calendly.com/ljaffee>

"There's no such thing as neutral education. Education either functions as an instrument to bring about conformity or freedom." - Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In the U.S. national fable, universities are imagined as mainstays of equal opportunity that prepare citizens for participation in a democratic society. Challenging this myth, this course examines the historical and contemporary investments of U.S. higher education in U.S. empire, particularly considering how universities promote and maintain U.S. imperialism, settler-colonialism, and white supremacy (often justified globally in the name of "spreading democracy"). The first part of the course will focus on the ways universities— as state institutions— have supported racial capitalism, settler land theft, disability injustice, and gendered violence.

The latter half of the course will explore insurgent democratic spaces created on U.S. campuses through student movements. We look, for example, to U.S. campus-based protests for Black freedom and the movement for justice in Palestine to consider how students are engaging in collective struggle to challenge universities' investments in U.S. empire. How might social movements push, challenge, extend, or expand our understandings of both democracy and of what constitutes education? As a foil to a national discourse that romanticizes the role of universities in upholding democracy, how might we understand social/student movements as spaces for theorizing and practicing radical and transformative conceptions of democracy?

I recognize that we're continuing to feel the effects of the pandemic in disparate ways. I imagine that within our classroom there's a mix of excitement at not being on #ZoomU, anxiety caused by continued uncertainty re: virus variants, and concern for the health and wellbeing of family and friends, here and elsewhere. I've tried to plan our semester with these varied experiences and considerations in mind. My hope is that we can build community and connection as we collectively navigate learning during an ongoing global health and economic crisis, the impacts of which are felt unevenly. Throughout the semester, let's bear in mind that folks are feeling the effects of the pandemic in different ways that we may not be privy to, and try to be generous with one another during class discussions, group projects, etc.

**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 TEXTS

Ferguson, R. (2017). *We Demand: The University and Student Protests*. University of California Press.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Participation (15%)

Learning and knowledge production are collective processes. Showing up having read and being prepared to **thoughtfully contribute and ask questions** is essential for both your and your peers' (and my) learning in this class. Readings should be completed by the date listed on the syllabus *before* class.

### Reading Summary (5%)

As part of a commitment to collectively cultivating an accessible learning space, each student is responsible for creating reading notes to share 1 time during the semester. Your notes are a resource that the whole class can consult. Likewise, you'll be able to consult all your classmates' notes (e.g., if you miss class for whatever reason, if you didn't fully grasp the author's argument, or if you had a particularly rough week and simply weren't able to do the closest of readings). Your notes should include a *brief* (5-7 sentences) summary of the reading. Beyond that, you can choose how to organize your notes. You might want to include a few bullet points of compelling examples that the author uses to support their argument, a quote that clearly articulates the thesis, etc. Your reading summary is not meant to be long (around a ½ to 1 page). Think about what's most useful for you as a quick recap to refresh your memory about a text. **Your summary should be added to a shared Reading Summary Google Doc (linked at the top of Moodle) by 12pm on the day you're signed up** (so all the reading summaries are accessible in one place). Some questions to consider while reading and taking notes (these are meant as a guide; your reading notes need not directly answer all 4 questions):

1. What are the author's main arguments?
2. What struck you as interesting or unsettling about those arguments? Why?
3. How do claims made in this text relate or compare to those brought up in other course texts, or to your own experiences?
4. What questions did the reading raise for you?

### Defining Democracy Assignment (25%)

What do we mean when we say democracy? What is the role of education in a democracy? Where does education for democracy happen? Does education ever impede democracy? This assignment asks you to explore and expand your understanding of democracy and to analyze the extent to which it does/doesn't exist in the U.S. Details to come.

### Student-Led Lesson (20%)

"Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students." - Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Once during the semester (on a week labeled "Student-Led Lesson" in green on the schedule), you're responsible for generating questions and facilitating discussion for the whole class period. This is not a presentation. For the week you're facilitating, you'll meet with your group (of 3 people) to brainstorm questions and plan a lesson based on the day's assigned texts. 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, inclusive, and engaging. Resources with sample activities and accessibility considerations will be posted to Moodle for your reference.

Some ideas to consider eliciting through your lesson: What are the author's main arguments? What are the similarities/differences with other arguments we've read/heard so far? What connections did you make to current events, media representations, or your own life? Your group will submit a brief outline/lesson plan to me prior to your lesson to give me a sense of your plan and the work/preparation you put into it.

### **University Archives Reflection (5%)**

Write a *brief* (300-400 words) reflection based on what you discovered in Colgate's "Protest and Activism" Archival Collection. Include *substantive* references to 2 course texts.

### **Final Group Project (25%)**

For your final group project, you'll be working in groups of 3-4. There are several options for both the content and form of the project. Topic options include:

1.) Select a social movement (e.g. BLM, migrant justice, movement to cancel student debt, graduate student/contingent faculty union drives, climate justice organizing, movement to end gendered and sexual violence, disability justice, etc.) and research how students have/are organizing as part of the movement in ways that embody democratic engagement. Possible questions to consider: What is the history of the movement? How have college students engaged with the movement? What students are leading the movement? How are the issues framed, and what tactics are used? What educational tools/materials is the movement using to build power? Have other campus workers (staff, faculty) been involved? How are the issues that concern the movement amplified or exacerbated by the global health and economic crisis? How does the movement's work illustrate/expand/transform our understanding of democracy?

2.) Complete a social action project as a way to practice/enact democratic principles in y/our community. The goal of a social action project is to create change in your community/on campus. A social action project critically explores a particular issue or problem and takes action to transform it. Social action projects are about both process and product. Your group will identify and enact a social action to address a particular problem/need based on course themes.

3.) A separate topic agreed upon in conversation with me *in advance of the assignment deadline*.

Whatever your topic, you and your group will complete a creative project of your choosing to convey your research findings. Projects can take the form of a graphic, open letter, online game, digital zine, digital art project, short video, newspaper/magazine article, podcast episode, etc. During the last day of class, you'll share your project with the class.

### **Final Course Self-Assessment (5%)**

Deets to come.

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due</i>
Participation	15%	Ongoing
Reading Summary	5%	Varies
Defining Democracy Assignment	25%	Wednesday, 3/9 by 5pm
Student-Led Lesson	20%	Varies (Wednesday Week 4, 5, 6, 10, or 11)
University Archives Reflection	5%	Wednesday, 4/13 by 5pm
Final Group Project	25%	Wednesday, 5/4
Self-Assessment	5%	Finals Week, Tuesday, 5/10

## CLASS POLICIES & RESOURCES

### *Attendance*

In the event of an unavoidable absence, please contact me by email ([ljaffee@colgate.edu](mailto:ljaffee@colgate.edu)) prior to class. Please keep in mind that more than 2 unexcused absences will affect your participation grade. After two unexcused absences, 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. Contact info as follows: Evelyn Lester, Director of Disability Services

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

### *SensusAccess*

SensusAccess is available to students, faculty, and staff with 3 different access points. Documents can be submitted to SensusAccess from within Moodle as well as from the [SensusAccess page on the Colgate website](#). Students can also submit documents for conversion directly on the [SensusAccess website](#). The converted document will be emailed to you regardless of where they upload/submit the original document.

### *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 317" 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're unable to make it to my office hours but would like to meet, please email me (24 hours in advance of your proposed meeting time) suggesting another window of time to meet.**

### *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

### **Week 1**                      **Syllabus, Course Overview, and Introductions**

Monday, 1/24                      Half-Day Schedule

Wednesday, 1/26                      Listen: *Movement Memos* Podcast, [Apocalypse Normal](#) [17 min.]

### **Week 2**                      **Defining Democracy**

Monday, 1/31                      hooks (2003). *The Will to Learn: The World as a Classroom*. [12 pages]

Freire (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Chapter 2 [14 pages]

Wednesday, 2/2                      Olson (2004). *Introducing the White Democracy* [18 pages]

Kurth-Schai & Green (2009). *Democracy & Education*. [3 pages]

### **Week 3**                      **Racial Capitalism**

Monday, 2/7                      Burden-Stelly (2020). [Modern U.S. Racial Capitalism](#)

Zirin (2021). [Welcome to the Real March Madness](#). *The Nation*.

Zirin (2021). [Edge of Sports: College Athletes in the Petri Dish](#).

Wednesday, 1/9                      Olson (2004). Chapter 5: *The Abolition-Democracy* [20 pages]

[Editorial: Colleges' overreliance on adjunct faculty is bad for students, instructors and academic freedom](#) (2021)

### **Week 4**                      **Unsettling Democracy**

Monday, 2/14                      Patel (2021). Chapter 2: *Settler Colonialism* [32 pages]

LISTEN: [How Universities Benefit from Stolen Native Land](#). *The Red Nation Podcast*. [1 hr. 7 min]

Wednesday, 2/16                      **STUDENT-LED LESSON**

la paperson (2017). *A Third University is Possible*. "Land. And the University is Settler Colonial" & "A Third University Exists within the First" (pp. 25-53)

### **Week 5**                      **The Imperial University**

Monday, 2/21                      Wilder (2013). *Ebony and Ivy*. [excerpts]

Wednesday, 2/23	<p><b>STUDENT-LED LESSON</b></p> <p>Chatterjee &amp; Maira (2014). The Imperial University: Race, War, and the Nation-State. [43 pages]</p>
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Surveillance State / Campus Cops</b>
Monday, 2/28	<p>Howell (2018). "Forget Militarization": Race, Disability, and the "Martial Politics" of the Police and of the University. [15 pages]</p> <p>IN CLASS: <a href="#">Time to Workshop Defining Democracy Paper/Project</a></p>
Wednesday, 3/2	<p><b>STUDENT-LED LESSON</b></p> <p>Oparah (2014), Challenging Complicity: The Neoliberal University and Prison-Industrial Complex [18 pages]</p>
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Debt</b>
Monday, 3/7	<p>Patel (2021). Chapter 3: Profit and Debt [31 pages]</p> <p><i>Advocates Demand State Legislature Return CUNY To Tuition-Free Roots</i> (2021)</p> <p>In Class: <u><a href="#">Your Debt Is Someone Else's Asset</a></u> [6 min.]</p>
Wednesday, 3/9	<p>IN CLASS: <a href="#">Watch You Are Not a Loan</a> [45 min.]</p> <p><b>**Defining Democracy Assignment Due by 5pm</b></p>
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Student Movements: Historical Context</b>
Monday, 3/21	<p>Ferguson, R. A. (2017), Introduction &amp; Chapter 1</p> <p><i>A Case for Reparations at the University of Chicago</i> (2017)</p>
Wednesday, 3/23	Ferguson, R. A. (2017), Chapter 2 & 3
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Student Movements</b>
Monday, 3/28	<p>Ferguson, R. A. (2017), Chapter 4 &amp; Conclusion</p> <p>Trilateral Commission (1975). <i>The Crisis of Democracy</i> (p. 113-115)</p>
Wednesday, 3/30	<b>STUDENT-LED LESSON</b>



Biondi (2012). Brooklyn College Belongs to Us: The Transformation of Higher Education in New York City. [27 pages]

## **Week 11**

### **Student Movements**

Monday, 4/4

[Visit to the University Archives— Colgate University Protest and Activism Collection— CLASS IN CASE-GEYER 560 \(Batza Room\)](#)

Wednesday, 4/6

### **STUDENT-LED LESSON**

Gumbs (2014), Nobody Mean More: Black Feminist Pedagogy and Solidarity [20 pgs]

## **Week 12**

### **Student Movements: The Movement for Justice in Palestine**

Monday, 4/11

Salaita (2014), Normalizing State Power [16 pages]

Listen: *Movement Memos Podcast*, What the Mainstream Media Never Told You about Palestine (2021) [1 hr.]

Wednesday, 4/13

Barrows-Friedman (2014). Chapters 7: Intersecting Struggles and Common Causes & Chapter 8: Advice to Student Activists [26 pages]

Maira (2015). The Ghosts that Haunt Us: USACBI and the Settler University [8 pages]

Vally (2015). Palestinian Solidarity in South Africa and the Academic Boycott of Israel [7 pages]

Kapitan (2015). Climbing Down from the Ivory Tower [5 pages]

**\*\*University Archives Reflection Due by 5pm**

## **Week 13**

### **Intersecting Freedom Struggles**

Monday, 4/18

[GUEST LECTURE by Fabiola Ortiz Valdez, Syracuse-based migrant justice and labor organizer and researcher](#)

Wednesday, 4/20

Grande, S. (2018). Refusing the University [15 pages]

[IN CLASS: Time to Workshop Final Project](#)

## **Week 14**

### **Intersecting Freedom Struggles**

Monday, 4/25

Patel (2021). Chapter 4: Fugitive Learning in a Settler Society [24 pages]

Indigenous Action Zine (2014): Accomplices not Allies

IN CLASS: Watch *Takeover* [40 min.]

Wednesday, 4/27      Patel (2021). Chapter 6: Study Groups and Collective Struggle: Theories of Transformation [16 pages]

**Week 15                      FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

Monday, 5/2              *Final Project Workshop Time*

Wednesday, 5/4        *Final Project Presentations*

**\*\*Final Group Project Due in Class**

**Week 16                      Final Exams**

Tuesday, 5/10          12-2pm