DIGITAL LEARNING AS A TOOL FOR EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER ED

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“I need them to understand that even if a lot of things have changed now in education, a lot of things have happened as a result of people making sacrifices so they could have a better education. I just want them to know that.”

Dorothy Counts-Scoggins, 79
Injustice of Old

- Overt malicious actions committed with the intention to harm.
- Indian Boarding Schools
- Plessy vs Ferguson
- English-Only Instruction Policies

Injustice in Education Today

- Merit-Based Financial Aid
- Curriculum that fail to center diverse scholars
- Microaggressions and low-expectations from faculty
- Gap Gazing
- “All-Student” Approaches to student success which ultimately privileges white students
- Educational design systems that center on assimilating students of color into a white streamed academy.

Injustice in Digital Learning Today

- Lack of research related to implementation of digital tools and courseware for marginalized students.
- Digital tools that are created primarily by white males.
- Digital tools that are evaluated using the experiences of historically over-represented student populations.
- Marginalized voices and perspectives on teaching practices and digital tools are often ignored, excluded or deemed irrelevant.
- Lack of professional development opportunities for faculty that center equity and racial justice in digital learning implementation.
Systemic Barriers and Injustice in Education

- Recurring personal hardships
- Working multiple jobs as a full-time or part-time student
- Avoidance of test-taking and other evaluative situations
- Disengagement from academia
- Lack of Belonging

- Limited outside-of-class academic engagement

- Struggling with high levels of stress and a lack of emotional well-being

- Frequent major changes

- Underperforming in classes

- Limited participation in class

- Less likely to ask for help
“Factory model” of teaching and learning
Race neutral and “objective” approached to teaching
Assimilating students into white-centered academic culture
Student Blaming

Individualization and differentiation within student learning
Culturally relevant pedagogy
Reshaping systems and practices to recognize and develop the brilliance of diverse students
Institutional Transformation
WHAT’S THE VALUE IN DIGITAL LEARNING?
Every Learner Everywhere advocates for equitable outcomes in U.S. higher education through advances in digital learning.

Our mission is to help institutions use new technology to innovate teaching and learning, with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students, poverty-affected students, and first-generation students.

We are a network of twelve partner organizations with expertise in evaluating, implementing, scaling, and measuring the efficacy of education technologies, curriculum and course design strategies, teaching practices, and support services that personalize instruction for students in blended and online learning environments.

Learn more at everylearnereverywhere.org
To date, Every Learner Everywhere has supported over 500 institutions in the redesign of courses resulting in more accessible, adaptive, and equitable environments for students.

While our initial work concentrated on scaling active and adaptive learning, with the advent of the COVID-19 crisis Every Learner Everywhere expanded its focus to digital and online learning more broadly.
Anti-racism is a process of actively identifying and opposing racism. The goal of anti-racism is to challenge racism and actively change the policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas and actions.

- Anti-racism is rooted in action.
- Simply being “not racist” is enough.
- "The only way to undo racism is to consistently identify and describe it — and then dismantle it." –Ibram Kendi
### Innovative Teaching and Learning

- Awareness that all students do not have access to the time, space and resources needed for success.
- Does not place the burden on students to identify and address needs.
- Holds course designers and instructors responsible for checking for biases.
- Invests in the professional development to build cultural competency.

### High-Quality Digital Learning

- Understands the impact of digital tools on different student groups.
- Provides accountability for unintentional consequences of digital learning implementation.
- Measures positive and negative outcomes and associated metrics to access impact.
- Raises accountability for digital tool providers to build solutions that are equitable for all students.
Strategies for Digital Learning that Center Racial Justice

“The active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.” The NAC International Perspectives: Woman and Global Solidarity

- Beware of technosolutionism
- Do Not Rely on Assumptions about Students
- Be Proactive and Transparent
- Be Clear About Engagement with Digital Tools
- Create a Social Presence
Let’s Connect

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THANK YOU