

Teaching Tolerance in

HIGHER EDUCATION

Case Studies of Teacher Preparation Programs



TEACHING
TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study presents the findings of 13 case studies and interviews with university faculty demonstrating how Teaching Tolerance resources can be constructively incorporated into existing coursework across the teacher education curriculum. Taken as a whole, the studies and interviews in this report can serve as models or road maps for faculty interested in using Teaching Tolerance in their work with pre-service educators.

Participating faculty teach in colleges and universities in eight states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawai'i, Idaho, Kansas, Maine and New York—states with very different credentialing requirements and student populations. Although each took a different approach when integrating Teaching Tolerance materials into their courses, some larger conclusions can be drawn from the results:

- ➔ Teaching Tolerance materials are valuable additions to introductory and core classes (such as Foundations of Education) and subject-specific methods courses.
- ➔ Teaching Tolerance materials are integral to coursework promoting diversity, inclusion and culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy.
- ➔ While Teaching Tolerance materials have traditionally been used to complement the primary texts of a course, they can also serve as foundational resources around which courses can be designed.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT TEACHING TOLERANCE

A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance (TT) offers a broad range of free materials for K–12 educators. The project’s best-known product may be its magazine, published three times per year and distributed to more than 450,000 educators nationwide. But the resources available through its website, tolerance.org, are extensive. These materials support educators invested in equity and inclusive practices in K–12 schools. Users typically access the site’s content in one of three ways: through its menus, which sort content by use; through its homepage, which sorts content by topic; or through the Learning Plan Builder, which prompts users with a series of questions and uses their responses to sort and recommend content.

First-time users will best get a sense of TT’s resources by browsing the menus on tolerance.org, which categorize materials by their use to educators: as classroom resources, professional development materials and tools, magazines and publications, and frameworks for teaching.

TT’s resources are also accessible—and sortable—by topic. From the project’s homepage, educators can choose from eight categories:

- ➔ race and ethnicity
- ➔ religion
- ➔ ability
- ➔ class
- ➔ gender and sexual identity
- ➔ immigration
- ➔ bullying and bias
- ➔ rights and activism

Selecting any category will lead users to a selection of “featured resources” on that topic as well as a comprehensive list of relevant TT resources.

Finally, resources are accessible through TT’s online Learning Plan Builder. Available to anyone with a free tolerance.org account, the Learning Plan Builder walks users through the key steps of planning a lesson or a series of lessons. It asks educators to select a grade level and a topic, then provides a range of recommendations for each part of the learning plan. Users select learning goals from the Social Justice Standards. They are prompted to choose or create “essential questions” to guide student learning and to select a topic to facilitate the questions. The Learning Plan Builder produces a list of recommended texts from the library housed on the site, followed by a customized list of student tasks and teaching strategies (classroom activities). Users preview and select texts, tasks and strategies, which are then imported into their learning plan. They can choose to save their plan as “private” so they’re the only ones with access or set it to “public” for others to read.

NAVIGATING TOLERANCE.ORG

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

This section of the site includes banks of lessons, learning plans, student tasks and teaching strategies. It provides access to an extensive online, multimedia library of short texts suitable for classroom use and a series of film kits that include lesson plans, class activities and classroom-appropriate films on topics like the grape strike and boycott led by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta or the 1963 children's march for civil rights in Birmingham, Alabama.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the Professional Development section, educators can find resources—including published guides or video webinars—on topics like school climate, instruction, classroom culture, family and community engagement, and teacher leadership.

MAGAZINE AND PUBLICATIONS

Users visiting the Magazine and Publications section of the site will find archives of Teaching Tolerance magazine, along with hundreds of online-only short articles offering reflections and recommendations for curriculum, classroom and school practice. They'll also find special publications, including reports on school climate and instruction. Finally, the section includes best practices guides for serving ELL students and families, for anti-bias education, for creating an LGBTQ-inclusive school climate and for teaching.

FRAMEWORKS

The Frameworks section offers concrete recommendations for teaching critical topics like digital literacy, the civil rights movement and the history of American slavery. Two frameworks in particular, the Social Justice Standards and *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education* offer a clear way to plan and present anti-bias education.

THE SOCIAL JUSTICE STANDARDS

Organized into four domains—Identity, Diversity, Justice and Action—the Social Justice Standards includes a set of anchors, grade-level outcomes and school-based scenarios to show what anti-bias attitudes and behaviors look like in the classroom.

Together, the Social Justice Standards and *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education* represent a continuum of engagement in anti-bias and social justice education and offer a road map for teaching social justice education at every grade level.

CRITICAL PRACTICES FOR ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION

The guide *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education* offers practical strategies for educators committed to building classrooms where academic and social-emotional goals are accomplished side by side. The guide provides recommendations for implementing culturally responsive pedagogy by:

- using instructional strategies that support diverse learners and allow for deep exploration of social justice issues
- creating classroom environments that reflect diversity, equity and justice and that encourage students to speak out against bias and injustice
- engaging families and communities in ways that are meaningful and culturally competent
- teaching social justice curricula as part of larger individual, school and community action

The four sections of the guide—Instruction, Classroom Culture, Family and Community Engagement, and Teacher Leadership—each offer recommended practices and outline specific strategies educators can use to bring social justice values to their classrooms.

Both the range of resources available and the collaborative potential of the site’s Learning Plan Builder make TT a natural fit for education courses. But while the program has tried a handful of initiatives to reach out to faculty in higher education, few have been sustained. In part, this is because TT’s primary mission has always been to talk and listen directly to K–12 teachers. Based on the sheer volume of “.edu” email addresses in its contact database, however, there is no doubt that TT already has a substantial footprint in teacher education classes.

METHODS

Reporting on a small number of case studies and interviews, this paper represents a modest attempt to determine what pre-service education classes might look like if Teaching Tolerance materials were intentionally integrated throughout education coursework in colleges and universities.

During the 2015–2016 school year, seven faculty received small stipends to integrate TT materials into their existing classes as they saw fit and then to report their results. The findings of the case studies constitute the bulk of this report. Six additional faculty members, whose classes were already driving traffic to the TT website, were identified and contacted by the project. They were interviewed about the value of TT materials to themselves and to their students. The results of these interviews are interspersed throughout the case studies.

FINDINGS

Although this report focuses on a limited number of courses, it is important to note that the faculty referenced here use TT resources across several of their classes. Whether designing major assignments around the Learning Plan Builder, screening a film in class or emailing a magazine article to an interested student, those who make use of TT resources say that the project adds considerable value to their teaching experience.

“I know that when I’m looking for something to share for my candidates, it’s one of the first places that I’ll go to—just because it’s so well resourced,” explained Danielle Centano, who incorporates TT materials into her courses at Claremont Graduate University. If the breadth of available resources is one draw for faculty, another is the program’s explicit focus on social justice education. SUNY Plattsburgh’s Denise Simard noted: “Social justice is definitely fundamental. ... We’re asking folks to work with other people’s children, and if we can’t be real with each other and engage with their children on a real level, [that is an] injustice to—and a disservice to—the people we’re trying to serve.”

By way of introduction, it is useful to think of the pre-service educator’s course trajectory as divided into three basic categories of classes: foundations, methods and enrichment. **Foundations** courses go by different names at different institutions; they share a common objective of providing new teachers the basics of pedagogy. **Methods** courses are usually subject-specific (although this varies between elementary and secondary credentialing programs). **Enrichment** courses focus on specific areas of pedagogy. Depending on the program this category may include required diversity, equity and inclusion classes.

The faculty introduced in this report offer a model of how Teaching Tolerance materials can serve as key elements in all three types of pre-service education classes.

FOUNDATIONS COURSES

The credential program at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) has developed a tradition of prioritizing social justice. While TT materials have long been a staple of the program's teacher education courses, in recent years faculty have been experimenting with using TT resources to build constructive bridges between the theory and practice of culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy.

In her course Principles of Teaching in a Diverse K–8 Classroom, Maggie Beddow and her colleagues at CSUS included TT resources. They focused particularly on the program's tool for building learning plans and the Social Justice Standards to incorporate anti-bias education into their curriculum while also teaching lesson planning. Beddow, whose own teaching credential is from CSUS, believes strongly that teacher education should begin from a social justice perspective. "It's not going to be an add-in; it needs to be integrated into everything we teach," she explained. "So our lessons should be created around those topics."

Like other foundations classes, Principles of Teaching in a Diverse K–8 Classroom serves to orient new educators to the profession, delivering fundamental lessons in pedagogy and instructional approaches. The students in Principles of Teaching are undergraduate pre-service educators seeking their bachelor's degrees through the state-approved credentialing program.

It is worth noting that in her case study, Beddow refers to *Perspectives for a Diverse America*, a TT resource which is no longer available in its original form. Last year, TT revised its website and incorporated the different components of *Perspectives* (which had been a standalone site) into tolerance.org. Key elements of *Perspectives*—the Social Justice Standards, the custom Learning Plan Builder and the collections of texts, strategies and tasks—are now housed on tolerance.org. The new iteration of *Perspectives* actually expands on the original as users can now browse Learning Plans built by other educators.

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PERSPECTIVES COMPONENTS

Perspectives for a Diverse America was an online tool designed to guide educators through the development of a custom learning plan that makes use of TT's library of texts, teaching strategies and student tasks. Although *Perspectives* no longer exists as a stand-alone website, it has been integrated into tolerance.org and is now known as TT's Learning Plan Builder. The Learning Plan Builder serves the same purpose and utilizes the same curricular components at Perspectives.

PERSPECTIVES TEXT LIBRARY

Teaching Tolerance's site includes a large, searchable library of short texts. This multi-genre, multi-media collection aligns with the Common Core's recommendations for text complexity as well as with the Social Justice Standards. Users select from informational and literary nonfiction texts, literature, photographs, political cartoons, interviews, infographics and more. Each text is leveled and includes discussion questions.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

TT offers an array of strategies to build literacy and social-emotional skills while exploring meaningful texts. Unlike conventional or scripted lesson plans, these strategies allow users to select and combine vocabulary, reading, and speaking and listening activities, customizing a pathway that supports the user's instructional goals. Most strategies are Common Core-aligned and include special notes about connections to anti-bias education and adaptations for English language learners.

STUDENT TASKS

TT encourages users to assess students using performance tasks and rubrics that measure writing, civic engagement and critical literacy skills. Tasks are divided into two groups. "Write to the Source" tasks allow students to demonstrate their argumentative, explanatory and narrative writing skills by responding to customizable prompts. "Do Something" tasks empower students to take action in their school and community.

In 2015, Beddow and her colleague Steven Daley watched several students respond to *Perspectives* and other TT resources at a professional development workshop at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. As a result, they decided to embed TT resources into their foundations class. They crafted a social justice component for their course and required students to use *Perspectives* to build and share learning plans. In 2016, nearly 100 of their students attended the Museum of Tolerance training, where they learned to use the tool. Beddow and her colleagues incorporated lessons from the training into class lectures and discussions, finding that TT resources allowed them to easily teach lesson planning while incorporating key concepts in anti-bias education.

Beddow explained that even students who missed the Museum of Tolerance workshop quickly figured out how to create lessons. “What the students really liked about the program,” she said, “was the ease of use. They liked using templates and that you could do pretty much everything online. You can just click on different areas and fill in what you are doing. This made it easy to select the topic, the central text, the essential questions—basically all of the parts of their lesson.”

At CSUS, diversity education is essential to the student learning experience, and student teachers are primarily placed in under-served schools with high percentages of English language learners. According to Beddow, new teachers sometimes struggle to integrate social and emotional learning skills with the academic language they must convey to their students. TT resources solved a problem that Beddow and her colleagues had struggled with: how to move from the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy to its practice. “This was always the biggest challenge for the students,” said Beddow. “That was really the selling point for us. We really felt like Teaching Tolerance gave us something tangible so that we could teach about the theory and they could put it into practice.”

In particular, Beddow and her colleagues were interested in lessons that engender empathy. “Bullying is a big problem in our schools,” Beddow explained. “Our students often report that there is bullying going on in their classroom.” While their course already featured a lecture on social emotional learning, both Beddow and Daley felt that it could be improved with more practical aspects. Beddow noted that, like many TT resources, the Social Justice Standards prioritize empathy. She and Daley decided to have students create a practical task using TT materials for social and emotional learning instruction. The resulting assignment requires students to use TT materials to create a learning plan designed to teach empathy.

The CSUS model shows that faculty do not have to choose between incorporating diverse perspectives and teaching rigorous lesson planning. The TT tools used here allowed faculty to bridge the gap for the benefit of the new pre-service teachers that they serve.

METHODS COURSES

Building on what students have learned in foundations courses, methods courses tend to focus more closely on processes and procedures for teaching specific student populations or for teaching specific disciplines. This report details how faculty are using TT materials in two major types of methods courses: in a course supporting work with English language learners (ELLs) and in a social studies methods course. This report includes case studies that show how faculty worked with pre-service teachers and with teachers already in the classroom, using TT resources to incorporate cutting-edge practices throughout their coursework. While each of the practices detailed here might be adapted to suit other methods courses, the section also includes comments from faculty incorporating TT materials into their preparation for future STEM and ELA teachers.

SUPPORTING TEACHERS OF ELL STUDENTS

Claremont Graduate University (CGU) is a small, private school on the eastern edge of Los Angeles County. It is part of the Claremont Colleges Consortium, a group of collaboratively organized but independent undergraduate and graduate schools. CGU is unusual in that it is not directly affiliated with an undergraduate program. Its teacher education program is part of the School of Education Studies, which also has M.A., Ph.D. and Ed.D. offerings. CGU provides credentialing for new and experienced teachers.

Danielle Centano is the coordinator of CGU's teacher induction program. (Under California's two-tier credentialing system, educators with a bachelor's degree can begin teaching after completing a preliminary training program and passing examinations. After a few years in the classroom, they return for an induction program, like Centano's, to clear their preliminary credential.) She is also a coordinator for the preliminary program, providing substantial support for clinical work, ensuring school site support and working with master teachers.

Centano uses TT resources and publications in both CGU's preliminary program and its induction program. In the preliminary program, TT's film kit and documentary *Bullied* feature prominently in the program's sections on mental health and school climate. Centano also reports that she shares the Social Justice Standards with candidates and with support providers at school sites. "I give them the Teaching Tolerance website resources and specifically ask them to look at the anti-bias curriculum," she said, "so that they will think about how that might be something that they can work with their candidates on applying to their curriculum."

TT materials feature most prominently, however, as support for educators working with English language learners. CGU claims a diverse group of teachers who teach at some of the nation's most diverse schools and serve a large population of ELLs. According to Centano, it is essential the program infuses social justice into the ELL curriculum:

Studies show that our English language learners really are trailing behind their English-proficient peers. There's a wide gap in achievement. We might not be giving all students the access to be successful that they need. To me, that is absolutely a social justice issue when we have students who are here and want to learn but don't have access to the curriculum in order to be successful. That's a big problem. I want our teachers to be aware that that is indeed the fact that these students, while they might be sharing resources and curriculum with them, these students don't have access to it. It's their job to provide the scaffolding and to provide the supports and resources so that every student that they work with does have access to the curriculum and can be successful.

In 2016, Centano taught ELD Rigor and Relevance, a class designed to help teacher candidates support ELLs. As the course title suggests, using these materials helps her students refuse the false dichotomy between rigor and relevance. This example shows how TT materials may be integrated into a methods class focused on reaching English language learners. The readings list features several TT publications as required and recommended texts. Centano's students read *The Trump Effect*, "10 Myths About Immigration" and *Critical Practices for Anti-Bias Education*. They began the class with exploration of hidden bias, engaging in a conversation about how bias affects the ways teachers plan, approach instruction, and think about their students. Centano included *The Trump Effect* (TT's report on the effect of the 2016 election on schools and classroom culture) because she expected her students would need to be able to engage in difficult conversations with children from immigrant families or who might be immigrants themselves.

The ability to navigate these core social justice questions is at the heart of how CGU envisions its teacher education programs. "We don't just prepare teachers," said Centano. "We prepare socially just teachers. That means our mission is aligned with Teaching Tolerance's mission." Centano says she and the teachers she works with have come to rely on TT as a reliable source for timely information: "I find that Teaching Tolerance is a place that I know is going to help to further our mission," she said, "and provide us the tools and the resources that we need to provide timely and current social justice resources to our students."

TEACHING TOLERANCE FOR STEM TEACHERS

At Fairleigh Dickinson University, Khyati Joshi uses TT resources to reach out to students across disciplines. Working to support future STEM teachers, she has them crosswalk the next-generation science standards and The Social Justice Standards to identify overlap and map science curriculum to anti-bias education goals and outcomes. While this work is in its early stages, she plans to continue finding ways to incorporate TT resources for future teachers, describing the materials as "quality I can count on."

CENTERING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOCIAL STUDIES METHODS

A few time zones away, Teaching Tolerance materials were used to structure a different type of methods course at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The institution has a large teacher education program dedicated to placing teachers in diverse schools across the islands. In Hawai'i, new teachers can earn a credential without a graduate degree, although many new teachers are also in graduate coursework after pursuing subject-specific majors.

Amber Makaiau, a faculty member, is a long-time supporter of TT who has served on the program's advisory board. In 2016, she made TT resources the heart of a professional development course for teachers districtwide. She also helped the UH Mānoa Institute for Teacher Education design its Secondary Program around the Social Justice Standards. For their culminating project, all students must now complete a final portfolio assignment that is assessed using the standards.

Makaiau integrates TT materials into all of her classes. But she made the program's resources the centerpiece of her class Teaching in the Subject Field: Social Studies, a class that reaches graduate and undergraduate students alike. This methods course is designed to teach cohesive unit planning, provide a solid foundation for an anti-bias, social justice teaching experience, and prepare teachers for the broad array of topics they will encounter in the social studies. She explained:

Basically, how I structure my methods class is that I start with looking at this idea of building community and what does it mean to be a culturally responsive teacher, and that's at the heart of where you're starting in your work as a social studies teacher: creating an intellectually safe environment, creating strategies for building community, getting to know who your students are, and then building these relationships with the students. From there comes curriculum design. That is the art of balancing, taking standards and national standards, knowing who your students are, and then creating curriculum from there.

Makaiau found that TT materials met her pedagogical and practical goals as an instructor. "*Perspectives for a Diverse America* was the perfect marriage of all of these theoretical foundations for the purpose of social studies that is related to culturally responsive teaching and cultural and social justice education," she said. "We have to teach students how to backwards-plan understanding by design. *Perspectives* brought those two worlds together and it was the perfect activity for me to do introductory lessons with my students."

A closer look at Makaiau's syllabus reveals her investment in teaching the significance of planning units, rather than individual lessons. In place of what can be a piecemeal approach to lesson planning, she wants her students to leave her class with the ability to plan in broad arcs that serve multiple learning objectives. Because TT encourages educators to begin with essential questions and plan backward through culminating activities, the program's materials serve this goal—a goal that Makaiau thinks should be at the heart of social studies instruction writ large.

TT's resources and tools stand out from other online curricula—particularly among free resources—because they serve as a bridge from the more mechanistic aspects of instruction to the more applied and activist aspects. Makaiau's experience shows that professors could use the program's collection of texts, strategies and tasks to teach the entire suite of social studies methods up to and including "taking informed action"—for her, an experience "at the heart and soul of social studies education." Makaiau's methods class shows how faculty can use TT's

TEACHING TOLERANCE IN ENGLISH METHODS COURSES

At Southern Connecticut State University, Meredith Sinclair uses TT materials in her Secondary English Methods classes. Sinclair reported that students appreciate the practicality of the materials and that TT resources help her move from theoretical conversations to K-12 application with her pre-service teacher candidates. She said her students appreciate the articles featured on the site, which provide concrete examples of activism and which are easy to include but still offer big take-aways. The ability to provide concrete examples of classroom practice is a critical component of her teacher preparation program, and Sinclair noted that TT is a trustworthy source of those examples.

Sinclair hopes to develop a module for other SCSU education faculty around social justice pedagogy, which will explicitly include The Social Justice Standards as well as tools that prepare students to incorporate the Learning Plan Builder into their lesson planning. Recognizing that educators work in a standards-driven climate, Sinclair knows that teachers feel pressure to be accountable to academic standards. She appreciates how TT materials align with Common Core standards. “*Perspectives* also aligns to what [National Council of Teachers of English] is doing around equity and inclusion,” Sinclair noted, “and accreditation requires the university to think about equity and inclusion not only in practical ways but also in concrete ways. Teaching Tolerance materials help us do this.”

At California State University, Fresno, Selena Van Horn incorporates a range of TT resources in her K-8 Writing class. Self-reflection is a key instructional goal for Van Horn, and one she sees as central to strong instruction. Before a teacher can facilitate an open dialogue about gender identity with students, for example, they must already understand their own gender identity. Van Horn uses TT materials to help veteran and pre-service educators explore their own identities in preparation for classroom discussions about marginalized identities and identity groups.

Van Horn also uses TT materials to support her students as they learn to navigate systems and honor student identities. She aims to equip future teachers with ways to make change in public education for the good of all students and student identity groups. She said she looks to Teaching Tolerance because the resources are not centered on whiteness, but reflect and respect all identities.

resources to scaffold their students’ learning from the elementary (e.g., designing essential questions) to the advanced (e.g., constructing complex culminating tasks). Although Makaiau’s students relied on *Perspectives*, the resources and Learning Plan Builder now housed on tolerance.org preserve these essential capabilities.

For Makaiau, the purpose of the methods course is to provide new teachers with opportunities to learn about effective strategies and approaches to their subject matter. This involves more “nuts and bolts” teaching, providing guidance and methods for teaching vocabulary, running a community inquiry, leading a close and critical reading of a text and encouraging students to take informed action. It is difficult to expose students to all of these strategies in just one semester. For Makaiau, the resources available through TT’s website provided one way to do so. “It gives them multiple strategies and activities that students can do to do vocabulary and word work, or how to read close and critical reading of text,” she says. When students express concern about how to lead discussions in their classes, Makaiau refers them to the “community inquiry” section of the teaching strategies outlined on tolerance.org, so her students can immediately have time-tested tools at their fingertips.

TT resources economize time, Makaiau reports, and they help her achieve the broad coverage required by a methods course. But they also allow her to foreground anti-bias education in her class. Often, anti-bias and social justice work are sidelined into elective courses rather

than integrated across the teaching curriculum. But in Makaiau's classes, students learn that this work is foundational to their pedagogy. "You're going to need to show how to teach in a diverse classroom; you're going to need to have a multicultural lens," she said. "Why don't you just start there? Teaching Tolerance materials allow you to begin with social justice approaches to topics like classroom management, and that should just be the way that teachers learn how to teach, not something extra that gets added on." Makaiau said that incorporating TT resources makes her "feel like I'm doing a better job as a methods instructor, because they hit every single thing that I'm responsible to teach my students."

Makaiau notes that the higher education environment is different, and often more siloed, than the K-12 environment in which TT normally works. "University professors are their own entities," she said. "If you can reach them, you're lucky." She believes, however, that a number of university professors would use a variety of Teaching Tolerance tools if they saw them. "They would be, like, holy mackerel! I want to use this in my course!"

These methods classes show that Teaching Tolerance tools allow faculty to bridge rigor and relevance, foregrounding diversity and anti-bias work while also providing detailed instruction in subject- or student-specific teaching methods. Access to free texts and strategies, combined with planning tools that allow teachers to build lessons online, provides substantial benefits to new teachers who may be uncertain about how to prepare rigorous units for their classes.

Many schools of education require enrichment courses designed to help future educators build diverse and inclusive classrooms and school communities. These classes, addressing topics such as multicultural education or culturally responsive teaching, typically work to equip teachers to engage with diverse student populations. The majority of the courses profiled in this report are enrichment courses.

There are several reasons why TT materials may be more commonly used in enrichment courses than their foundations or methods counterparts. It may be that faculty teaching these

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ENRICHMENT COURSES

classes have more flexibility to incorporate materials as they see fit. These faculty members may also be more familiar with TT itself, given that its stated goal of “educating for a diverse democracy” aligns with their disciplinary focus. Or it may be that TT materials are just particularly well-suited to integrate into enrichment course syllabi. Whatever the reason, the courses detailed in the following pages showcase the flexibility and diversity of TT resources as they fit into a range of courses tailored to different institutions and populations.

CENTERING CRITICAL PRACTICES IN UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE COURSES

The first example comes from Colorado. Elizabeth Dorman is an associate professor of teacher education at Fort Lewis College. Located in the southwest corner of Colorado, the college mirrors the local community and is a Native American- and Latinx-serving institution. Although Dorman’s pre-service and practicing teachers often share identities with the students they serve, she finds that there is still considerable work to be done to foster sophisticated understandings of identity, diversity, equity and social justice. “I am always looking for resources to help my students become students of their students,” said Dorman.

Although she has used TT resources for many years, Dorman most recently incorporated them into two classes: Instructional Equality and Cultural Competence. Undergraduate education majors enrolled in Instructional Equality are eligible to teach in Colorado after completing their degree. Cultural Competence, a graduate course, is part of Fort Lewis’ Teacher Leadership program, enrolling current teachers pursuing an advanced degree. The courses have overlapping instructional goals and learning outcomes, including exploring social identity and the identities of K–12 students as well as differentiation between a deficit orientation and an asset orientation when approaching diversity.

In her undergraduate class, Dorman makes use of several TT resources, including the site’s professional development webinars, articles and publications. While her students have participated in some webinars in real time, she assigns others as homework prior to in-class discussion. She also frequently uses key blog posts and magazine articles about current and controversial subjects, like inclusion of transgender students and religious tolerance. And she asks students in all of her classes to follow Teaching Tolerance on social media to receive current updates about new and particularly relevant materials. As for TT publications, Dorman includes *Speak Up at School*, a practical guide for teaching students how to respond to biased remarks and stereotypes, and *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education*. The latter serves as an essential element, a core text that structures both her undergraduate and graduate classes.

Critical Practices covers important advice for teachers in four areas: instruction, classroom culture, family and community engagement, and teacher leadership. Instructional Equality, Dorman’s undergraduate class, focuses mainly on the instructional section of *Critical Practices*, organizing students around critical engagement with materials, differentiated instruction, and cooperative and collaborative learning. Dorman uses verbal and visual activities to encourage

RESOURCES TO ENCOURAGE SELF-REFLECTION

At the University of Maine at Farmington, Elizabeth Yeaton-Evans uses TT materials for a similar purpose. She seeks to uncover white privilege for her predominately white student body first through the lens of poverty and class, then race and gender. She said that this process has helped her to reach what she calls her “Trump Community.” To ensure that she reaches as many students as possible, she asks herself, “How do I maintain objectivity, encourage students to open up without turning off while I honor and understand people’s perspectives and educate them to be critical thinkers?”

The multiple viewpoints available through TT materials have helped her do this. Yeaton-Evans says that she trusts TT resources because they are reflective of best practices, vetted and accessible. According to Yeaton-Evans, TT materials help her students learn to ask, “What is your story?” The question is key to their ability to self-reflect, build empathy and participate in difficult or uncomfortable yet productive conversations.

students to carefully examine the practices. She says that differentiated instruction, cooperative and collaborative learning, and real-world connections consistently stand out as the most meaningful practices for her undergraduates. *Critical Practices* allows Dorman to build bridges in her classroom, connecting students who will be teaching a range of different grades and subjects. “It really helps the students to get a more concrete idea of what it looks like specifically to teach in a culturally responsive way,” she said. To check for understanding, Dorman groups students and asks them to make presentations about what it might look like to teach for equity in their content area.

“These are not methods classes,” said Dorman, “but I was hearing from students that they felt like they needed some more specifics to apply ideas in the classroom. Awareness is one thing, but they wanted to turn what they were learning into action. I have found that *Critical Practices* is really helpful for that.”

Dorman also integrates TT publications and webinars into her graduate class, Cultural Competence. Students in this class may have anywhere from two to 20 years of experience teaching. Because the graduate students are learning how to design and facilitate professional development for their peers (the course’s culminating activity), their class draws more extensively from all sections of *Critical Practices* than its undergraduate counterpart. One particularly rich source for these students is the leadership section. “These teachers have a lot of background knowledge,” Dorman explained. “They’re able to grasp the ideas of the *Critical Practices* more easily because they see them in their classrooms.”

Like many faculty, Dorman relies on Teaching Tolerance for up-to-the-minute resources that will support her pre-service and current educators. “I try to model being an ongoing learner,” she said, “and bringing in materials from Teaching Tolerance and other places encourages my students to take on that disposition as well.” Although Dorman feels that her courses in general are improved by TT materials, she particularly loves *Critical Practices*:

I feel like specifically since I’ve started using the *Critical Practices* guide, that has been a godsend because it helps my students access more concrete ways to use and apply these ideas in their classroom—and have it go beyond just awareness. I’ve become very clear that it’s not just about awareness. Where my students are developmentally, they need some concrete application skills so that the awareness doesn’t just fizzle into the ether after they leave my class. I hear from students semesters, even years after they take my class, how it really transformed them. They say over and over how transformational it is, and probably the biggest reason for that is how much emphasis I put on exploration of

their own identity, their own culture's privilege. I have a huge focus on race and racism because I feel like that's the hardest "ism" to talk about, and if we can make some progress with that, then the other "isms" are easier to deal with.

Dorman's case shows the utility and flexibility of these resources in preparing educators to work with diverse students.

SPARKING STUDENT INTEREST WITH TT ARTICLES

700 miles away, in Kansas, Melissa Reed teaches undergraduate teacher candidates and graduate students at Emporia State University (ESU). To teach in Kansas, educators must complete a four-year program and receive an initial license. ESU's education department uses what Reed describes as a "medical model," with students beginning internships in their third year. This means that students graduate with four semesters of student teaching, beginning with classroom observations and leading up to teaching their own classes. The majority of the program's pre-service teachers are white, while the majority of students in the city of Emporia are Latinx and Asian.

One critical problem that Reed faces is that many of her students have never been exposed to cultures other than their own, including languages and religions. She needs easy-to-understand materials that will open conversations about diversity without intimidating students new to these kinds of conversations. She finds that Teaching Tolerance materials fit this goal. Reed requires students to subscribe to the program's electronic newsletter and its magazine, and she finds that articles on events like Mix It Up at Lunch Day or on topics like the needs of immigrant students routinely catch the attention of her students and spark serious discussions in class.

One reason she says she relies on TT resources is that they are easy for her students to read:

The materials there are teacher and student friendly. They're written so that the kids can understand. Sometimes when you get into research journals or you get into textbooks, they're written almost for a false world. The Teaching Tolerance materials are real. They take you to articles that are written by teachers who are doing those kinds of things. Or they're news articles or newsworthy, things that are trending— again, that are very student and teacher friendly, for kids who may not have enough prior experience or prior knowledge before coming to the class to be able to work from. I have to have this foundation in place before we can do some of the other things we must accomplish in class.

Because they're accessible to undergraduates, the materials encourage creative discussion around the real issues that K-12 students face. For example, one TT article about Syrian refugees led to her students in an activity during which they decided what to pack in a backpack if that were all they could carry. This activity, in turn, led into an empathic discussion of the challenges faced by migrant students, students these pre-service teachers might one day serve. Using TT materials, Reed explained, helps her engage students in critical discussions without provoking defensive reactions. "If I use these materials, it doesn't

sound like I'm telling students how to do something, or I'm accusing them of being biased.”

Reed also integrated Teaching Tolerance materials to improve pre-service educators' understanding of English language learners (ELLs). For one assignment, she asked her undergraduates to create a website library of links and TT resources about serving ELLs. In the process, students not only identified valuable content, they also began to see the shape of conversations about best practices in the field. “This was a good opportunity for self-learning regarding trends and issues,” said Reed. The library they created with TT materials continued to serve students throughout the semester. They regularly select one resource from their library for a course segment called “Education in the News” for small-group discussions and class sharing. And Reed's students also create a digital storybook, designed to teach an aspect of a new culture to another person. Reed says that her students' interest in their topics was often sparked by the TT website research that originated the project.

BUILDING LEARNING PLANS AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE COMPETENCIES

The teacher education program at SUNY Plattsburgh has a strong social justice focus that begins in the first year. Denise Simard, who teaches a required first-year course designed to examine how diverse identities and perspectives can be applied in classrooms, uses TT resources to help meet these guidelines in the class. Working with two other collaborating faculty, Simard incorporated TT texts, strategies and lesson planning tool into her course Ethics, Relationships, and Multicultural Competencies in Education. In the class, Simard explained, “We ask questions like, ‘How do you as a teacher identify your biases and how do you navigate knowing yourself so that you can serve other people's children?’”

One key requirement is an assignment called “Teach Me Something,” where students design and practice enacting lesson plans. Simard and her colleagues had teacher candidates log on to the TT website to design learning plans, complete with texts and culminating tasks, and submit them for review. The teacher candidates then taught the lessons in aftercare programs as part of their applied field experience. Finally, they reflected on their experience together in class. Simard said that students appreciated the breadth of texts available online, that TT's tools for building learning plans provided an “excellent” way to teach unit design and construction, and that her students found them easy to navigate. “My students never once expressed any difficulty using the site,” she says. “They just jumped in and figured it out.”

FINDING AND TEACHING DIVERSE TEXTS WITH TT RESOURCES

A final example of how faculty have included TT resources in enrichment classes comes from Boise State University. The school boasts a large teacher education program, and it places graduates into the increasingly diverse Boise-area schools. Sonia Galaviz is a long-time advocate for TT materials; she has also served on the program's advisory board. In 2016, Galaviz structured an entire class around TT materials, using *Perspectives* to teach unit design and other basic principles while also guiding her students into the more advanced arenas of multiculturalism and diversity.

The undergraduate course, Language, Literacy and Culture, was offered during three out of five weekends in the fall of 2015 and 2016. Interestingly, not all of her students were pre-service teachers. While all were interested in pedagogy, some worked in the private sector, including one student who ran a preschool. The course objectives centered on understanding research, policies and practices in terms of their relationships with language, culture and literacy. Twenty percent of students' grades relied on their work with TT materials.

Galaviz began with the goal of helping her students identify diverse and rigorous texts for their classrooms. She brought in more than 60 examples of texts from her personal library, encouraging her students to do the same. "Books can lead us into really meaningful discussions," she said, "because they prompt meaningful conversations about what they are presenting or the questions that they beg." Using *Reading Diversity*, a TT tool designed to help teachers select diverse and rigorous texts, Galaviz's students spent several hours dissecting the texts and choosing among them for lessons that they would subsequently prepare. Then, they dove into the TT text library and explored the site independently.

Another major objective of the course was unit design. Galaviz showcased model Learning Plans she had created with TT's Learning Plan Builder. Displaying shorter and longer plans, she showed students how the tool can be used to customize the content. Some students who were elementary school teachers were very focused on using TT's step-by-step process for building Learning Plans. Others used the tool to find texts and strategies that met other needs—looking, for example, for texts and strategies that could help the user work with international students.

Although secondary teachers often struggle to find time for longer units—particularly in highly sequenced social studies classes—Galaviz found that her secondary education students really wanted to use complex texts and to include TT's "Do Something" tasks at the end of their learning plans. "I feel like that brings in all sorts of higher-order thinking skills when you have a *doing* portion of it," she said. "That's close to my heart and how I teach." Courses like hers demonstrate the ways that TT materials can fit into pre-service classrooms that bridge content areas, bringing Teaching Tolerance to audiences who might not otherwise encounter it.

CONCLUSION

Although TT has traditionally focused on serving educators already at work in K-12 schools, the program clearly serves as a potential resource for future teachers, teaching assistants, in-service teachers and the faculty who serve them. The examples in this report show how TT materials can be used throughout education coursework. The reports from faculty already integrating TT materials into their classes demonstrate the ease with which these resources can be incorporated into undergraduate and graduate syllabi.

Uses range from reflective activities for unpacking bias and privilege to practical tasks like unit design. As faculty selected the TT resources that best suited their work in the classroom, they relied on the program's publications, online tools, text and strategy libraries to add value to their teacher preparation courses.

Taken together, these case studies illustrate a few of the many ways all types of teacher preparation courses can be enhanced through the use of TT materials. In foundations courses, methods courses or enrichment courses, TT can provide valuable support for future educators. When faculty introduce their students to tolerance.org, they introduce them to an extensive set of resources that will encourage, celebrate and support them as they begin the challenging, necessary work of educating for a diverse democracy.

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