



Anti-Racist Community Engagement
Digital Companion

<https://compact.org/anti-racist-ce>

“The Class Feels Like It Should Be Illegal”: Latinx Experiences and the Promise of Anti-Racist Pedagogies

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Project Description: DIY Glossary

The *Do-It-Yourself Glossary* is a semester-long project that consists of developing definitions of historical events and processes as well as sociological keywords, concepts, and theories. Students are each provided with a blank exam booklet. The booklet serves as a physical register in which students collect noteworthy concepts coupled with personalized definitions. Students develop definitions by making connections among assigned readings, classroom discussions, everyday life, and social processes. These connections form the foundation for critical self-reflection. In class, the professors model examples of which types of terms could be used in the glossary, and provide some explicit connections between the terms, the assigned or in class readings/ assignments, and students’ personal experiences.

For example, class discussions on the troubled record of U.S. history textbooks lead to students sharing their own experiences of unease and outrage with whitewashed content in high school textbooks. These initial critical self-reflections are further developed in glossary entries that couple concepts with writing that demonstrates creativity, understanding, and, most importantly, validates their own experiences. This way they can take academic terms like hegemony, segregation, or neo-liberalism, or more colloquial expressions like the “international good-guy view” used by James Loewen, and apply to their personal experience and the structures around them. As the semester unfolds, students are prompted to use these collections of concepts and reflections as springboards towards more detailed and in-depth analysis, weaving together not only their lived experiences to specific terms, but to the experiences of their classmates and to other terms and readings. For example, they might demonstrate the impact of residential racial segregation on resources allocation as defined in the readings, by comparing their experiences with others in the class across K-12 public school districts.

Students work on their glossaries individually throughout the semester and are expected to contribute to the glossary weekly early in the semester. To help students remain engaged, and to provide additional feedback on their definitions the glossaries are collected before the mid-point of the semester, as well as towards the conclusion of the semester. The students receive detailed feedback, to encourage clearer written connections between personal experiences and the

glossary terms and concepts. The *Do-It-Yourself Glossary* is designed to help students complete their community engagement journals, community-based projects, and research presentations, which explicitly ask them to elaborate on these connections.



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