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Marisa Zapata, *Portland State University*

Stacy A Harwood, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*



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## Chapter 12

**Changing racial attitudes****Community-based learning and service in East St. Louis, Illinois***Stacy A. Harwood and Marisa A. Zapata***Introduction**

Planning programs rely on a variety of techniques to introduce students to the actualities of planning practice. Broadly defined, experiential learning is one such pedagogical technique, ranging from simulated projects to working directly with clients. Planning educators engage students with neighborhood residents, business owners, and government officials. These experiences create an important foundation for novice planners as well as opportunities to gain skills and knowledge not easily acquired from readings, lectures, and lab work. Freestone, Thompson, and Williams (2006) emphasize how such work-based learning (for example, internships) taught students about planning issues and processes, developed their technical skills, and fostered their personal growth; however, those skills did not necessarily include fostering a sense of civic duty or techniques for working in diverse communities.

An emphasis on community-based learning and service (CBLS) courses has been promoted as a pedagogical approach that can incorporate complexity; experiential learning; professional ethics; and issues of diversity, difference, and justice into the curriculum (Dearborn & Harwood, 2011; Lawson, Spanierman, Poetate, & Beer, 2011; Roakes & Norris-Tirrell, 2000). Planning educators view CBLS as an opportunity to develop justice-oriented practice by pairing students with community organizations. These partnerships both contribute to students' development and knowledge about working in marginalized communities and provide community organizations in underserved communities with much-needed technical assistance and resources (Bunnell & Lawson, 2006; Feld, 1998). This "scholarship of engagement," as described by Ernest Boyer (1994), has been a major change in research and educational priorities of universities. Underlying such activities is the assumption that through action, change

can occur both in the community where students work and in the students themselves (Prins, 2005).

Claims abound for the benefits of CBLS for the participants, especially the students (Angotti, Doble, & Horrigan, 2011; Eyler, Giles, Stenston, & Gray, 2001; Furco & Billig, 2002; Jones & Abes, 2004). Yet any systematic examination of the effects on student planners has been limited. How do CBLS courses embody professional values and practices that promote cross-cultural understanding and encourage students to embrace difference – ultimately, to advocate for social change? Can the unskilled or uncritical use of CBLS even reinforce harmful stereotypes and racial attitudes and thus further contribute to individual and institutional racism and structures of injustice? This chapter examines the effects of participating in a CBLS course on White undergraduate planning students, concentrating on the changes in students' racial attitudes and their awareness about the experiences and life circumstances of low-income, African-American communities.

### ***The possibility of transforming students' racial attitudes in a CBLS course***

With communities becoming more racially diverse and planners accordingly exploring new practices as they seek to be effective, part of their work must be their recognition of the planning professionals' historical role in constructing racial inequalities (Sandercock, 1998). Today's planners must also understand how to, as Bonilla-Silva (2006) describes it in the title of his book, fight "racism without racists." That challenge is confounded by the recent indoctrination to be "color blind," whereby people, particularly those of the White majority, are taught to avoid perceiving skin color (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000). To shift color-blind thinking, White planners have to move from lack of conscious racial identity to acceptance of their White identity (Helms, 1984, 1990). Then planners can take responsibility for their racial identity and begin the process of fighting racism.

Thus, teaching planning students about racial inequality and training them to incorporate social justice into their planning practice cannot progress without first raising awareness of their rarely articulated – even to themselves – biases about race (Aveling, 2006). When teaching about cultural diversity, educators aim for more than an increase in cognitive knowledge (Nagda & Tropp, 2006). They seek changes as well in behavioral and affective areas as well. One such transformation would be to help culturally White planning practitioners recognize how their perspectives reinforce White privilege (Solomona, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005). Other efforts might focus on strengthening empathy in practitioners who

work in marginalized or oppressed communities (Spanierman & Hoppner, 2004; Umemoto, 2001).

### ***CBLS in East St. Louis***

For more than 30 years, the East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP) has involved students from the University of Illinois in projects with community organizations in East St. Louis (ESL), Illinois (Lawson, 2005; Reardon, 2000; Sorensen, Reardon, & Klump, 2003). East St. Louis residents are 98% African American, and more than a third of the population lives below the poverty level.

Undergraduate planning students participated with ESLARP through a required planning course called Social Inequality and Planning (UP260). The average enrollment for the course was approximately 60 students, most of whom were sophomore and junior urban planning majors or minors, with slightly more male than female students. Most of the students were from Illinois, and about three quarters of them from the greater Chicago area. A majority of the students were non-Hispanic White. Very few had visited ESL before taking UP260.

A key component of the course was a required semester-long group project with an ESL community organization. At the beginning of the semester, students selected from a list of possible projects. Table 12.1 summarizes the 2006 and 2007 community partners and projects. Each project group had five to six students. Prior to the field trip, each group met several times and presented preliminary ideas, such as the process to complete the project, information they needed to obtain, and questions they wanted ask the community partners. During the intensive 2-day field trip to ESL, students toured the city, participated in volunteer projects, and met with their community partners to work on such projects as planning a fundraiser for a women's shelter and building a simple park sign prototype for the ESL Park District. Figure 12.1a and Figure 12.1b illustrate some of these projects in progress. While students had been in contact with the ESL community partners over phone and email, the 2-day trip in the middle of the semester was the first time students met their community partners in person. After the trip, students maintained contact with their partners through phone calls and email and, in some cases, a second trip to ESL. We also made arrangements for community partners to visit the campus and meet with students, but this was not always possible for each organization.

One student summarizing his thoughts about the field trip experience said, "The best part [of the course] was the trip to East St. Louis." CBLS gives students the opportunity to learn about themselves and to come to know people of different racial and class backgrounds. For many, the

Table 12.1 Community Partners and Projects in East St. Louis, IL

<i>Community Partner (Year)</i>	<i>Community Projects</i>
American Bottoms Conservancy (2006)	Write reports and educational materials about environmental issues.
City of East St. Louis (2006, 2007)	Create community buying guides; create city newsletter.
City of East St. Louis Park District (2006)	Develop park sign prototype.
Community Concepts Theater (2007)	Assist with golf tournament fundraiser.
Dayton-Wedgwood Neighborhood Organization (2007)	Beautify pedestrian pathway; develop safe routes to school.
Ema Wilson King Foundation (2007)	Fundraising and grant writing for fountain restoration
Emerson Park Development Corporation (EPDC), YouthBuild Charter School (2006, 2007)	Organize campus visit at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign for ESL high school students
EPDC and Regional Housing & Community Development Alliance (2007)	Conduct physical conditions survey
Opal's House Woman's Shelter (2006, 2007)	Fundraising and donations for the shelter; apparel design for fundraisers
Rush City Improvement Association (2007)	Conduct oral histories with community activists
Sanders Development Center (2006)	Develop promotional material for board recruitment and fundraising

2-day trip is their first encounter with an impoverished community; for others, it offered the opportunity for the first conversation with an African American. Students could relate the experience to what they had read and discussed in class. As one student insightfully put it, "it gave a voice to ideas that previously only existed on paper."

However, what does the comment, "The best part was the trip to East St. Louis" tell us about student learning? Did the students' perceptions about race and social inequality change? What do these changes (or the lack of changes) in attitudes reveal about CBLs as a transformative pedagogy? One might hypothesize that the CBLs experiences would reduce students' fears about racial minorities, increase knowledge about White privilege, and teach students how to work for positive change in communities of color (Helms, 1984, 1990). A closer look at the students' experience, however, reveals that the changes are complex and more difficult to realize than the literature suggests.

Proof



Figure 12.1a Campus tour with YouthBuild students. Photograph by ESLARP.



Figure 12.1b Students working on park signs. Photograph by ESLARP.

Proof

### ***Measuring change in racial attitudes***

We employed multiple methods to examine the changes in attitudes about race while the students participated in a CBL course (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). With a qualitative and quantitative survey instrument designed to measure racial attitudes, we tracked 60 White undergraduate students throughout semester-long courses (30 in 2006 and 30 in 2007).<sup>1</sup> We administered the survey at two points: at the beginning of the semester before the students' first trip to ESL and after the trip, toward the end of the semester.<sup>2</sup>

Of the variety of well-established psychological scales to measure different elements of racial attitudes, we used a scale called Psychosocial Costs of Racism to Whites (PCRW). The PCRW scale has three subscales: White Empathic Reactions, White Guilt, and White Fear of Others (Spanierman & Heppner, 2004). White students were asked to respond to 16 statements by selecting from among: 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree. Some examples of those statements include: "I am angry that racism exists;" "Being White makes me feel personally responsible for racism;" and "I am distrustful of people of other races." Higher subscale scores for White Empathic Reactions reflect higher affective costs of racism for White students. Higher subscale scores for White Guilt reflect higher levels of White guilt, and higher subscale scores for White Fear of Others reflect more fear of other races. See Appendix A for the entire PCRW scale.

We expected the PCRW subscales to reveal some changes between the beginning and the end of the semester. However, we also recognized the limitations of the scales for capturing a student's whole experience and the possibilities of it missing other aspects of learning. In addition, change also takes place after the semester is over and even after a student graduates and moves into professional practice (Dearborn, 2011). Response bias is another limitation, in which the research participant answers survey questions in the way they think the researcher wants.

We addressed some of the limitations by including guided inquiry questions to probe the students' attitudes further. At the beginning of the semester, the guided inquiry questions were designed to elicit students' expectations for the class, the trip to ESL, and their initial ideas about race and White privilege. Examples are "What do you expect to see in East St. Louis?" "How do you expect to feel in East St. Louis?" "How do you expect people in East St. Louis to react to you?" "Do you think you have certain privileges because of your race?" Some of the questions we asked toward the end of the semester to assess students' experiences in ESL were "In what ways was your experience in East St. Louis similar/different to your expectations prior to visiting?" "What was the most meaningful part



of your experience in East St. Louis?” “Were you aware of your race while in East St. Louis?”

We believed that the responses to the guided inquiry questions would equip us to better interpret the results from the scale items. Using a complementary approach for data analyses, we were guided by the quantitative results in our focus on the qualitative responses (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). In turn, the qualitative data broadened our understanding of the quantitative results and prompted us to return to the quantitative data for specific analyses.

Drawing on the work of Spanierman et al. (2006) and Spanierman, Todd, and Anderson (2009), we used cluster analysis with SPSS to identify distinct cluster groups based on the three PCRW subscale scores at the beginning of the semester. We conducted a nonhierarchical *K*-means cluster analysis, which requires that the number of clusters be specified in advance. We specified a five-cluster solution based on similar studies (Spanierman et al., 2006; Spanierman, Todd, & Anderson, 2009). We addressed local optima concerns by using the Steinley (2003) strategy of hierarchical clustering to identify the initial seed values for the *K*-means cluster analysis. We created a descriptive name for each the final PCRW cluster as show in Figure 12.2.

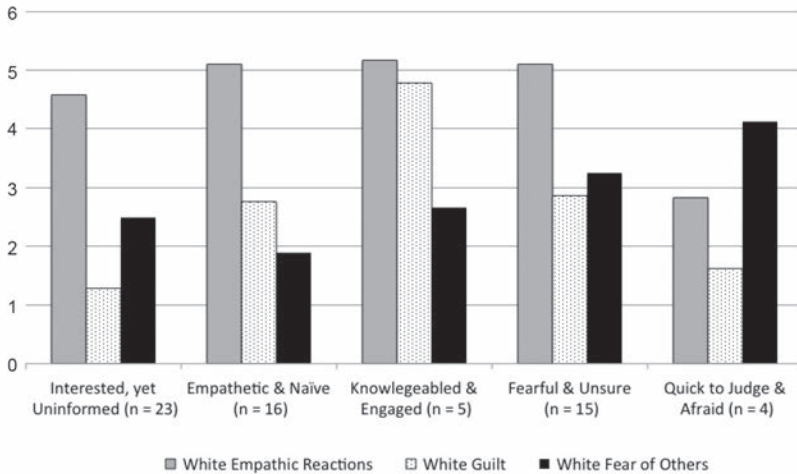


Figure 12.2 Final PCRW clusters. Figure by author.



**Racial attitudes of White students before the CBLS experience in East St. Louis**

The cluster analysis of the PCRW subscale scores reveals that the students began the course with differing racial attitudes and perceptions. Next we

*Table 12.2 Summary of Student Racial Attitudes and Perceptions Before CBLS*

<i>Cluster</i>	<i>PCRW Scores</i>	<i>Pretrip Perceptions about ESL</i>	<i>Expectations about Service</i>	<i>Comments about White Privilege</i>
<i>Interested, yet Uninformed</i>	High White empathic reactions Lowest White guilt	Stereotypical images of "inner city"	Want to help and be recognized as contributing	Little mention of White privilege
<i>Empathetic and Naive</i>	High White empathic reactions Lowest White fear of others	Awareness of challenges in low-income communities of color	Want to make a difference but worried about being accepted by residents	Awareness of White privilege Sadness and anger about racism
<i>Knowledgeable and Engaged</i>	Highest White empathic reaction Highest White guilt	Linked structural inequality and institutional racism to conditions in ESL	Want to work for social change	Some guilt
<i>Fearful and Unsure</i>	High White empathic reactions High White fear of others	Influenced by stereotypes Anxious and fearful about going to ESL, but excited	Excited to help but also want to be appreciated	Uncomfortable with their Whiteness Believed in reverse racism
<i>Quick to Judge and Afraid</i>	Lowest White empathic reactions Low White guilt Highest White fear of others	Strong negative stereotypes Fearful of Black males	Willing to learn about ESL from a new perspective	Unresponsive to learning about White privilege Negative toward affirmative action

briefly describe the clusters, drawing heavily from the student responses to the guided inquiry questions. See summary of student attitudes and perceptions in Table 12.2.

### ***Interested yet uninformed (before)***

This cluster did not have much remorse about race-based privileges but at the same time were upset about racism. They held stereotypical images of the inner city as demonstrated through the frequent use of words such as “rundown,” “ugly,” “dirty,” “beggars,” “poverty,” and “low ambition.” They did not use language that suggested they understood how structural forces shape the lives of the ESL residents or their own. In general they did not mention White privilege, and if they did, they mostly saw it as something out of their control.

### ***Empathetic and naïve (before)***

The students in this cluster showed awareness of the challenges ESL faces, such as lack of economic development opportunities and neglected infrastructure. These students expressed interest in learning about social inequality and how to fix it. They expressed anxiety about not being accepted by the ESL community members. Many acknowledged White privilege and could name examples of it, although they did not discuss specifically how their lives might exemplify it.

### ***Knowledgeable and engaged (before)***

These students presented the most sophisticated understanding of structural inequality. Some had had first-hand experience with either ESL or other low-income communities of color. These students wanted to work for social change. They acknowledged White privilege and struggled with some guilt and recognized the nuances of privilege in relation to social class.

### ***Fearful and unsure (before)***

This cluster often used the words “ghetto,” “poverty,” “projects,” “Blacks” and “minority.” These students were anxious about being perceived as different (White) in ESL. They were influenced by powerful stereotypical images of low-income African-American communities in terms of gangs,

violence, and rap music. They were excited about the trip and wanted to learn more. For this group, helping had a great value, and their self-worth was driven by external validation from whomever they helped. They recognized White privilege but not at an individual level and did not see that it comes at a cost (reverse racism).

### **Quick to judge and afraid (before)**

The students in this cluster exhibited considerable judgment of “other” communities – those unlike their own – and a protectionist reaction to the notion of trying to meet the needs of low-income communities, which was displayed in negative references to minority hiring and affirmative action. A few of these students did indicate awareness that some of their viewpoints might lack full information. For instance, one described a viewpoint as “harsh” and wished to soften the edges. These students also were afraid and viewed the upcoming experience in ESL through strong stereotypes, particularly about Black males, that drove their fear.

### **Racial attitudes of White students after the CBLS experience in ESL**

We expected that each cluster would have unique reactions to the experience in ESL. We analyzed the changes from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester in each PCRW subscale’s mean score for statistical significance. The subscale mean scores for each cluster and significance level is summarized in Table 12.3. We also compared the responses at each data collection time to the guided inquiry questions in order to identify any qualitative changes in attitudes and perceptions. We were especially interested to see whether and how attitudes changed within each cluster after the most intensive CBLS experience, the 2-day ESL trip. A paired sample *t*-test was run to compare the PCRW subscale mean scores; we found that three clusters had statistically significant changes and two did not. Of course, because of the sample size, the *t*-test results are exploratory. With a larger sample, we might have had more definitive results, yet what we found suggests that meaningful change could occur in a CBLS course.

Because of the nature of the PCRW, decreases or increases in any of the subscales cannot be read simply as “good” or “bad.” Rather, each change in the subscales was analyzed in relation to the other subscales and their actual scores. Hence, some amount of White Guilt was considered good because it indicates awareness of White privilege and of society’s

Table 12.3 PCRW Subscale Mean Scores for Each Cluster

PCRW Subscales	Clusters					
	Interested, yet Uninformed	Empathetic and Naive	Knowledgeable and Engaged	Fearful and Unsure	Quick to Judge and Afraid	
n =	23	16	5	15	4	
<b>White Empathic Reactions</b>						
Beginning	4.54	5.15	5.23	5.10	3.13	
End	4.51	4.84	4.57	4.94	4.08	
<b>White Guilt</b>						
Beginning	1.29	2.71	4.88	2.93	1.55	
End	1.77**	2.61	2.72*	2.37**	1.95	
<b>White Fear of Others</b>						
Beginning	2.52	1.89	2.40	3.28	3.80	
End	2.38	2.14	2.96	2.85**	3.80	

Paired Sample Test (2-tailed) significant at the 5% level (\*\*\*) and significant at the 10% level (\*\*)

discrimination against Blacks and suggests less personal prejudice against Blacks (Swim & Miller, 1999). At the same time, a high sense of racial guilt can be paralyzing and generate racial self-hate. In another example, if at the beginning of the course the cluster is marked by high White Fear of Others, then a positive finding would be not only that White Fear of Others decreased but also that its relation to the other subscale scores also shifted to be more balanced. Hence, even if the White Fear of Others subscale did not diminish significantly, increases in White Empathic Reactions subscale and the White Guilt subscale might reflect a more balanced racial identity. Using these results and the responses to the guided inquiry questions, we describe the effects on CBLS experience for each cluster. These results are summarized in Table 12.4.

### ***Interested yet uninformed (after)***

Overall, the students in this cluster had been eager to learn from the trip to ESL. At the same time, they had brought with them many stereotypes about low-income Black communities. After the trip, these students expressed shock about the conditions in ESL, which may explain some of the increase in the White Guilt subscale score. One student “couldn’t believe such a place existed in the United States.” Seeing ESL first hand and talking to individuals in ESL had made the poverty “real.” Students had been surprised to learn that there were people who cared about ESL, which may explain the decrease in White Fear of Others. In ESL, the students had been acutely aware of being White, and some had recognized their discomfort as the experience of being in the minority. Most, however, did not see their lives as particularly privileged, and they explained the origins of their own circumstances as “people get where they are because of decisions, regardless of race” and as the result of efforts made by their parents and grandparents.

### ***Empathetic and naïve (after)***

Personal connections with individuals, the feeling that they were contributing something, seeing people grateful for their help, and seeing residents helping themselves were experiences valued by this cluster. They were surprised by the “sense of community in the neighborhoods” and the revelation that “people really want to make ESL better.” Some students had feared being rejected by community members and were pleasantly surprised when people welcomed them. These students, unlike those in the other four clusters, all indicated an awareness

Table 12.4 Summary of Student Racial Attitudes and Perceptions After CBLS

Cluster	Changes in PCRW	Poststrip Observations about ESL	Poststrip Observations about Service	Comments about White Privilege
Interested, yet Uniformed	White empathic reactions little change	Shocked by physical conditions	Felt hopeful	They are not privileged Uncomfortable with their Whiteness in ESL
	White guilt increased**	Surprised that residents care about ESL		
	White fear of others decreased			
Empathetic and Naïve	White Empathic reactions decreased	Surprised by the sense of community	Were not rejected by the ESL residents, surprised that residents helped them	Awareness of their own race, but downplayed its importance
	White guilt decreased	Overwhelmed by kindness of ESL residents		
	White fear of others increased	ESL more complex than had previously imagined	Enjoyed being told their efforts mattered	
Knowledgeable and Engaged	White empathic reactions decreased			More ambiguous about White privilege
	White guilt decreased*			
	White fear of others increased			
Fearful and Unsure	White empathic reactions decreased	Did not see violence, never felt in danger	Felt welcome and appreciated	Very aware of their race in ESL Awareness of White privilege
	White guilt decreased**			
	White fear of others decreased**			
Quick to Judge and Afraid	White empathic Reactions increased	Eye opening, new knowledge	Valued the experience Importance of helping the community	Felt like a minority
	White guilt increased	Residents care about creating change		
	White fear of others unchanged			

Paired Sample Test (2-tailed) significant at the 5% level (\*\*\*) and significant at the 10% level (\*)

of race but asserted that it did not affect them. They tended to start responses with statements like “yes, I was aware of my race, but. . . .” While acknowledging that White privilege exists, they did not draw any connections to their own circumstances. In other words, they became a little less naïve, but these students also maintained color-blind views about race.

### ***Knowledgeable and engaged (after)***

While this cluster had been better informed than most of their classmates, the trip to ESL added complexity to their views about poverty and inequality. After the course, these students’ acknowledgment of White privilege was more ambiguous. They agreed that White privilege existed, but with more questions. They wondered about the role of social class in poverty. Like students in the other clusters, they enjoyed making a difference and being told their efforts mattered. “Someone walked by and said thank you very enthusiastically. . . . It wasn’t simply a feel-good exercise for us.”

### ***Fearful and unsure (after)***

The opportunity to hang out and talk one-on-one with people in ESL was the most meaningful parts of the trip for these students, reducing their anxiety about crime and hostility. One student remarked, “I did not see guns or violent gangs, did not feel threatened or in danger.” Being welcomed and appreciated by residents also mitigated the discomfort they felt when people stared at them. These students recognized that ESL residents looked at them in part because of race: “I’m White and ESL is almost 100% Black.” The trip to ESL also gave these students tangible evidence of how the differences between their hometowns and ESL might relate to White privilege rather than to the strong negative stereotypes of individuals that they had accepted before the trip. Even the one student who did not enjoy the trip at all did find that her stereotypes about safety had been challenged.

### ***Quick to judge and afraid (after)***

These students’ comments focused more on their new knowledge. The trip appears to have opened students’ eyes to the actualities of the lives in low-income communities of color. These students became more aware of the complex sociology of low-income communities, such as the high



level of church going and the residents' concern about problems in their neighborhood and efforts to combat them. Some of the students commented on having the experience in ESL of being minorities themselves. These students also noted the racism among their classmates. These students emphasized the importance of supporting the community. "I was glad to help at the thrift store/soup kitchen because these types of places really [help] the poor community. It is all some of these people have in the world." While none of the changes in subscale scores were statistically significant, the direction of the changes moved in towards an antiracist White identity.

### **Implications for teaching, CBLS and a racially just planning practice**

This study offers insight into what 60 White students gained from one CBLS course in a low-income, African-American community. Many of the students began the CBLS course with stereotypes that reinforce fear of people of color. Across the study clusters, the students learned the value of first-hand knowledge: that people and places are revealed as complex once you get to know them. They discovered, for example, that many low-income people care vigorously for their community and work to improve it. Students learned that they could feel welcome and thus comfortable in a low-income African-American neighborhood. Although many students were reluctant to label their negative stereotypes as racist, after the course they did acknowledge such earlier views were problematic. What do the changes observed in this study in student attitudes and values suggest about CBLS as a transformative antiracist pedagogy? The findings suggest that although CBLS plays an important role in training future planners, one isolated approach and a single course are not enough.

### ***Different pedagogies***

What is needed, in part, are different pedagogies for different students in the same class. In Table 12.5, we summarize recommendations for each cluster for instructors to use in the classroom.

In addition, instructors might use the PCRW questions to better understand the students. We do not suggest categorizing the students on the basis of subscale scores; rather, the PCRW can help instructors know the range of White Empathic Reactions, White Guilt, and White Fear of Others among the students and adjust their pedagogy accordingly. Student

Table 12.5 Recommendations for Instructors by Cluster

<i>Student Type</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
<i>Interested, yet Uninformed</i>	Build on hope for a better future to keep students engaged. Provide more information about White privilege. Create wider experiences to support their growing understanding of White privilege.
<i>Empathetic and Naïve</i>	Promote connection to place to help humanize poverty and challenges to improve conditions. Provide more direct guidance and time to process what they are experiencing. Do not rush out of comfort zone. Will respond positively when they feel comfortable and helpful.
<i>Knowledgeable and Engaged</i>	Demonstrate relationship between short-term and long-term changes. For example, one semester students can focus class on planning, another semester on implementation and agreed-upon planning strategies, and a third semester on evaluation of the impact of such strategies. Cultivate leaders in the classroom by allowing them to help facilitate difficult discussions about race.
<i>Fearful and Unsure</i>	Working alongside residents will significantly reduce fear. When stereotypes fail to materialize, students respond positively to continuing to work on diversity-related issues. Create space for these students to sit and think and then go back out and try the real world.
<i>Quick to Judge and Afraid</i>	Cultivate empathy with these students regarding how Whites are implicated in the creation of poverty. Develop individual relationships with community members by creating opportunities for one-on-one or small-group conversation, such as eating lunch or working on a small project together.

responses could be a valuable tool in forming small discussion groups or teams for projects and to ensure some diversity of attitudes in working groups. Comparing the subscales could also help instructors to identify which aspects of students' thought were most influenced by the CBLS course, as well as which students were most affected by it.

Also, we suggest discussing the psychological issues raised as students develop an antiracist identity. Helping students understand that whatever they are experiencing is “normal,” that powerful emotional response to CBLS is common, and that people start this work at different points can help them process their emotions. Sharing this information with community partners may also help them identify different strategies when working with students, especially those who become defensive when challenged.

### **Conversational topics and styles**

Because students come with varying experiential and knowledge levels, holding discussions allows students to process and explore their understanding. Discussions also allow more knowledgeable students to lead by example and struggling students to raise questions, creating peer learning.<sup>3</sup> Conversations should happen both informally and formally through the course, and even with community members in the field. Community members often appreciate being able to participate in educating the students about their community. Here are some recommended discussion topics to cover in a CBLS course.

- Explore students’ expectations about what they will see, how they may expect to feel, and how community residents will react to them.
- Discuss students’ experiences during CBLS and ask them to *compare* them with their initial expectations. Comparisons help students expose previously held stereotypes about place and people.
- An uncomfortable topic but one that is easier to launch after college students have visited an impoverished community is *White privilege*. The discussion will need to engage with the complicated intersection of race and class. For many students, the idea that race in itself confers privilege is new, implausible, and resisted.
- Finally, how does what students learned in CBLS translate into professional practice? Discuss the implications of racial attitudes and beliefs for planning practice.

### **Course frequency**

Courses offered should be repeated for more than one semester and include a range of approaches. After only one CBLS course, most White students would not be adequately prepared to work in diverse communities. If

planning programs are serious about educating planners who will further racial justice, they must place more emphasis on CBLS in the curriculum. Departments must rethink their requirements to include a thoughtful sequence of CBLS courses, hire faculty committed to racial justice, and create lasting partnerships based on honest dialogue with community organizations wanting to join this endeavor. To work with diverse communities, planning programs must be willing to reconsider how they teach and evaluate the impact of CBLS on students and community partners.

## Conclusion

With additional research and further reflection, CBLS could have even more impact on community partners, students, and instructors. For instance, this study has examined only the experience of White students. Since the reality of our classrooms is increasingly diverse, we hope to do further research on how students of color experience CBLS and what students from different backgrounds learn from each other in order to illuminate the pathways for constructive classroom dialogue about race. Other questions could focus on how and what community partners learn from students and instructors. The study demonstrates that, at least for White students, direct work with communities of color has an impact on their perceptions of race. CBLS serves as a powerful tool for training the next generation of socially just and racially conscious planners.

## Notes

1. The students took the CBLS course either in the fall of 2006 or 2007. Each group had similar characteristics, such as age, racial composition, year in school, range of racial attitudes, and familiarity with ESL. Nearly all of the students participated in at least one of the surveys, but only about half of the students completed the both surveys. Some students missed class on the day of one of the surveys. A smaller number chose not to take the survey. In addition, students were also excluded if they did not self-identify as White, non-Hispanic. In this chapter, we focus on those students who completed both surveys.
2. This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects at the University of Illinois.
3. Germane to the topic at hand, but beyond the scope of this chapter, instructors need to consider how such conversations will differ depending on the presence and number of students of color.

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## Appendix A (Spanierman & Heppner, 2004)

Directions: Please respond to the following statements by circling the appropriate number corresponding to your response. Your possible choices range from 1–6. Please answer honestly, as there are no right or wrong answers. Avoid answering as you think you “should” feel or how you would expect others to answer.

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Moderately Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Moderately Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. When I hear about acts of racial violence, I become angry or depressed.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I feel safe in most neighborhoods, regardless of the racial composition.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I feel helpless about not being able to eliminate racism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Sometimes I feel guilty about being White.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I have very few friends of other races.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I become sad when I think about racial injustice.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Being White makes me feel personally responsible for racism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I never feel ashamed about being White.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I am fearful that racial minority populations are rapidly increasing in the U.S., and my group will no longer be the numerical majority.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I am angry that racism exists.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I am distrustful of people of other races.	1	2	3	4	5	6

(Continued)

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	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Moderately Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Moderately Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I feel good about being White.					1	2 3 4 5 6
13. I often find myself fearful of people of other races.					1	2 3 4 5 6
14. Racism is dehumanizing to people of all races, including Whites.					1	2 3 4 5 6
15. I am afraid that I abuse my power and privilege as a White person.					1	2 3 4 5 6
16. It disturbs me when people express racist views.					1	2 3 4 5 6

Additional information about the PCRW scale:

There are three subscales:

White Empathic Reactions (6 items: 1, 3, 6, 10, 14, 16)

White Guilt (5 items: 4, 7, 8, 12, 15)

White Fear of Others (5 items: 2, 5, 9, 11, 13)

Some of the items are reverse scored (questions 2, 8, and 12).

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