

Stepping Forward to Reparations: A Data Driven Approach to
Social Justice

Deneia Y. Fairweather, Ph.D

Fulbright-Hays–Hillsborough Community College

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Introduction:

How do we build a more inclusive educational system in a post-colonial era? How do we build a more supportive educational system in a post-colonial era? How do we address youth empowerment in a post-colonial era? These are the guiding questions towards building a global digital classroom curriculum that focuses on repairing the injustices of the past through sustainable development. Reparations, often considered a divisive term, is associated with either compensated emancipation and a path toward reconciliation or an unrealistic solution that could bankrupt a nation.

Using Afro-Brazilian culture as a foundation, this lesson emphasizes postcolonial epistemologies and seeks to introduce a way for youth and young adults to understand the intention of reparations while realizing, implementing, and understanding the value of seventeen sustainable development goals introduced by the United Nations in 2015. This lesson empowers participants to use problem and project-based learning (PBL) techniques to move beyond decolonization toward a data driven investigation into why we need reparations. Using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDG) as a guide and foundation for applying anthropology, and primary data collected about the diverse cultures and communities of Afro Brazilians, *Stepping Forward to Reparations* advocates for a vision of democratizing education and creating global communities of practice that will empower youth and young adults to be active, uplifting and consistent participants in their communities.

Course Description:

This course is three 45 min. sessions offered either virtual or face to face. This course involves the following elements: social justice, African diaspora, applied anthropology, sustainable development, and cooperative learning. This course provides an in-depth study of the African Diaspora with a specific focus on Afro-Americans and Afro Brazilians. Students will develop critical and creative thinking skills to understand the connections between sustainable development, reparations, and the legacy of colonialism.

Unit Goals:

1. Students will develop research questions to complete a basic visual ethnography project.
2. Students will be able to speak with authority about sustainable development, the legacy of colonialism and reparations for Afro-Brazilians.
3. Students will engage in cross cultural comparative research on the legacy of colonialism between the United States and Brazil.

Learning Outcomes:

- I. Students will engage in problem solving techniques in a group of 3-4 participants.
- II. Students will focus scientific and artistic expressions on issues of social justice in a group of 3-4 participants.
- III. Students will design research questions for a basic visual ethnographic research project in a group of 3-4 participants using digital tools.
- IV. Students will explain how to apply anthropology toward addressing real world scenarios.
- V. Students will express the significance of anthropological wisdom while living in postcolonial societies

Essential Questions:

1. How can we reimagine capitalism today while understanding capitalism in the root of slavery?
2. How do we address youth empowerment?
3. How do we examine reparations from a global lens?

Resources for learning:

Video clips from documentary Emicida: AmarElo - It's All for Yesterday
Excerpts from Jorge Amado, Juibaba
Brazilian Legislation on Affirmative Action
Anthropology of Colonialism Playlist

Rationale:

The goal of Stepping Forward to Reparations is to enable young adults between the ages of 16-25, whose ancestors have been marginalized, to visually document and investigate how well the UNSDG are being manifested in the community. It aims to offer students the opportunity to engage with the United Nation’s institutional frameworks while contributing to the CARICOM global movement for reparations and post-colonial studies. Stepping Forward to Reparations emphasizes emancipatory voices and assumes that the experience of Afro-Brazilians in Brazil offers a unique lens into understanding postcolonial epistemologies and realities.

Decolonization has become more of a global movement where those who live in a post-colonial society attempt to unite and build nations devoid of the legacy of their former colonial ruler (Kennedy 2016). This has proven to be a struggle for many young adults living in post-colonial nations, as some have come to realize that the older generation have taken or understood their former colonizer’s culture as traditional culture at the expense of not realizing new cultural practices and identities emerging. (University of Belize. 2020, Emicida: AmarElo - It's All for Yesterday 2000). Stepping Forward to Reparations advocates for the elevation of discourses on decolonization to a data driven argument for reparations. This lesson suggests that a case for reparations is a case of unity, a case for creating voice. Consequently, this will empower students to become contributing members to their local and global communities.

Prerequisite knowledge:

1. Students must have basic knowledge about anthropological history, theory and methods.
2. Students must have basic knowledge about colonialism.
3. Students must know how to work effectively in groups.

Lessons Plans:

Key Concepts:

Reparations

Sustainable Development
Postcolonial epistemologies
Capitalism
Symbolic reparations
Psychological reparations

Colonialism
Emancipatory voices
Decolonization
Social Entrepreneurship
Material reparations
Structural Violence

Week One–Anthropology of Colonialism: The United States of America vs. The Americas

Monday:

Students will complete a pretest on their knowledge of colonialism before the class session.

Introduce key concepts

Discussion on legacy of colonialism in Brazil and the United States

View for 20 min. clip from Emerica: AmarElo - It's All for Yesterday

Students will begin the US/Brazil Comparison chart

Wednesday:

View clip on Decolonizing Belize

Introduce UNSDG–Students will complete an activity: **Sustainability Goals**

Activity: <https://www.feelgood.org/get-involved/own-the-goals/>

Discussion: What are post-colonial epistemologies? What does this look like? How does it sound?

Homework for the weekend: I will choose three excerpts from Juibaba for students to read and students will prepare three discussion questions and/or comments about the text for homework.

Week Two: The Visual Anthropology of Reparations: What does Reparations look like?

Monday:

Continue discussion on the UNSDG

Discuss the excerpts from Juibaba in groups and examine song lyrics from [Racionais MC's Negro Drama](#) as a whole group.

Read and Discuss the [Caricom Ten Point Plan for Reparatory Justice](#)

Connect UNSDG, colonialism and reparations to Juibaba

Wednesday:

Discuss Steve Biko Institution in Brazil. Introduce Brazilian Legislation on Affirmative Action and compare it with US policy on Affirmative action. Share examples of Affirmative Action from both countries

Homework for the weekend: Students will complete the US/Brazil Comparison chart.

Week Three: Applying Anthropology: How do we move beyond decolonization?

Monday:

Economic Anthropology: Share images and symbols from African Brazilian culture and discuss production, distribution and consumption.

Discussion: What are the different forms of colonialism? What does colonialism look like?

Wednesday:

Students will create a concept map that connects reparations, sustainable development and the legacy of colonialism. Students will work in groups to develop research questions.

Homework: Students will complete post test

Assessments:

► Pretest

► US/Brazil Comparative Chart—Students will complete three items on the comparison chart.

Assignment:

Students will have two assignments:

► Individual Students will write a critical reflection essay in response to this question: **Reflect on and identify a social problem in your community (it can be local or global). Based on the UN Sustainability Goals, which problem (s) are you most interested in solving? Why? In your opinion, what is the relationship between reparations and sustainable design and development?**

► As a group, develop three research questions about sustainable development and reparations to answer visually.

Grading Criteria:

Critical Essay

1. Did your essay identify a social problem in the community you would like to solve?

2. Did you identify a UNSDG in your essay?
3. Did you provide a rationale for why you chose this goal?
4. Did you identify how reparations are related to sustainable development?

Research Questions:

1. Did you group develop questions that can be answered visually?
2. Did your group identify potential locations to capture your images?
3. Did you groups highlight the targets of the sustainable development goals in your research questions?

Lesson Evaluation:

To determine and measure the success of this project:

- ▶ Two focus groups will be held
- ▶ One post course survey will be developed and administered

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