

## **Annual Cycle 2020-21**

### *Applicant Information*

#### **Applicant/Project Director Area\***

Cherrie Kwok, Department of English (mk7kf)

Anastasia Curley, Department of English (ac9we)

#### **Other Organization Name**

If your organization is not listed in the options above, please list it here. For Students, please indicate the student organization or CIO related to this application.

*Character Limit: 250*

#### **Student Graduation Year**

2023

*Character Limit: 250*

#### **Additional Team Members**

You may list additional leadership team members here. Please include their UVA computing ID if applicable.

Piers Gelley (pgg3cw)

David Coyoca (wdc4r)

Marissa Kessenich (mjk3yv)

John Modica (jsm5ut)

Ian Jayne (imj4tq)

Vallaire Wallace: (vmw4pv)

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### *Project Overview*

#### **Project Name\***

Teaching Writing and Anti-Racism in the ENWR 1510 Classroom Project

*Character Limit: 100*

#### **Abstract\***

In spring 2021, a group of faculty and graduate students from U.Va.'s Writing and Rhetoric Program will produce a syllabus for an ENWR 1510 course that focuses on Thomas Jefferson, U.Va., and Charlottesville, and their relation to colonization, slavery,

and white supremacy. All first years in the College take ENWR 1510 as an introduction to collegiate-level writing and critical inquiry, but instructors develop their own syllabi designed to meet those skills. In our iteration, however, students would learn those skills by exploring the aforementioned topics. Our immediate goal is to encourage and support instructors who wish to teach such a course, while our broader goal is the widespread adoption of a course that would increase student awareness of racial inequity. Such a course was called for in U.Va.'s Black Student Association's "Historic, Yet Unmet Demands" campaign, which was issued during the protests for racial justice last year. Our group wishes to meet that demand.

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### **Narrative\***

During the protests for racial justice in the spring and summer of 2020, U.Va.'s Black Student Association (BSA) issued a set of "Historic, Yet Unmet Demands" where they called upon the University to take a more active role in combating white supremacy. Among these was a demand that the University "[e]xpand the current curriculum and increase funding of initiatives committed to combating racism." A subsection of this demand reads, "All students, regardless of area of study, should have required education (either inside or outside the classroom) on white supremacy, colonization, and slavery as they directly relate to Thomas Jefferson, the University, and the city of Charlottesville."

We are a group of faculty and graduate students from the Writing and Rhetoric Program who aim to meet that demand by developing a syllabus for ENWR 1510 (a Writing and Critical Inquiry course) that addresses those themes. Because ENWR 1510 is required for nearly all first-years and new transfers, we felt that this course would be an ideal place to introduce undergraduates to the themes highlighted in the BSA's language. In fall 2020, we began meeting to work collaboratively on a syllabus that would meet the requirements of ENWR 1510—focusing on students' skills of critical inquiry, engagement with secondary sources, and personal development as writers. Our collaborative syllabus exists in a direct reaction to, and conversation with, primary and secondary sources that address white supremacy, colonization, and slavery in relation to Thomas Jefferson, the University, and the city of Charlottesville. By the end of the fall semester, we finalized a broad outline for the syllabus, major assignments, curricular materials, and pedagogical resources.

In spring 2021, we are now drawing on key studies in anti-racist pedagogy and research to flesh out the details of this course. For example, in the month of February we are focusing on finalizing the learning goals for the course and a set of instructor goals. To shape our decisions here, we have drawn on important anti-racist pedagogical research like Antonia Darder's "Creating the Conditions for Cultural Democracy in the Classroom," and essays from *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. We plan to have a full syllabus designed in time for for our group to submit the syllabus to the Writing and Rhetoric program's Curriculum Committee, so that it can be circulated to interested faculty

members and graduate instructors who want to consider adopting or adapting our syllabus and curricular materials as they prepare to teach ENWR 1510 in fall 2021.

Funding from the Jefferson Trust would advance this project in two ways.

First, this grant would help to support the work that lies ahead of us. It would allow our members to devote more time to facilitating the adoption of our syllabus, expand our ability to recruit more members to join us so that the workload is spread more evenly and efficiently, and (once the syllabus is complete) enable us to offer honoraria when we solicit student and institutional feedback from key groups like the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies and the Black Student Alliance.

Second, this grant would provide a useful bridge to a larger project: the creation of an Open Educational Resource syllabus and anthology on the topic of white supremacy, colonization, and slavery in relation to Thomas Jefferson, the University, and the state of Virginia. This would be a more ambitious project that aims to meet the Black Student Association's demand at a statewide level. In conversation with Judy Thomas of Faculty Programs, and Sherri Brown, Research Librarian for the English Department, we have begun outlining such a project, which we hope could be supported by a VIVA Open Course Grant for the following academic year (2021-22). Our work this semester will help us lay significant groundwork for such a project, including making connections with other universities in Virginia to see whether we might partner with them. Our group already has connections to Derek Mueller, Director of Writing & Rhetoric at Virginia Tech, and we hope to loop in other state institutions, particularly HBCUs such as Virginia State University and Norfolk State University.

We feel that our project would therefore contribute a great deal to the U.Va. community. In the short term, it would send a clear message to U.Va.'s Black students, other students of color, and their allies that their faculty and graduate instructors are addressing their demands and wish to honor them. In the long term, students and instructors in the resulting ENWR 1510 sections would learn how to engage thoughtfully with U.Va.'s history.

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### **Work Plan**

#### **New or existing\***

Is your project new or currently existing? If existing, what new element is the Trust being asked to support?

This working group is a new project. In the past, ENWR 1510 instructors have taken up the task of teaching students the relationship between language, race, and power in individual courses and classrooms. This initiative, however, represents the first time ENWR 1510 instructors have come together for a programmatic discussion about

integrating these topics as they relate to the history of U.Va. and Charlottesville into a syllabus and teaching materials that can be taught across sections of the University-required first-year composition courses.

The Trust would therefore be supporting the creation of those materials; we expect, for example, to craft a series of adjustable and revisable curricular modules, assignments, and lesson plans for instructors' use. Instructors will be able to use our work as a starting point to help their students confront and think through the ways that writing and rhetoric can affirm, contradict, negotiate, challenge, transform, and empower particular cultural ideologies. We believe that this course will enrich community life at U.Va. by helping students understand the University's history, and will allow them to see themselves as stakeholders who can shape and enrich this institution in their time here.

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### **Expertise\***

What experience or expertise does your area/organization/team have with similar programs or projects?

Each member of our committee has experience designing first-year composition courses at U.Va. The varying degrees of experience between our group's members (from graduate students who are first-time instructors to full-time faculty) ensure that our materials will be useful for both new and experienced instructors. At the same time, working across our different levels of experience also motivates us to agree on a series of shared expectations that will guide the work of teachers across course sections. In addition to our roles as composition instructors at U.Va., our members share a concern for equity and anti-racism in higher education that expresses itself in our research interests and expertise in methods of critical race theory, trans and queer studies, feminism, postcolonial studies, cultural studies, education, and writing, rhetoric, and composition. Our group also brings together faculty members responsible for graduate teacher training and those who have developed similar programs in the past, such as the "Teaching Hard Literature" and "Teaching Hard History" programs.

The infrastructure of the Writing and Rhetoric Program will also provide support for this project through the involvement of the program's Curriculum Committee. This committee, which is composed of experienced writing and rhetoric faculty, will review the materials created by this initiative prior to their implementation in the classroom. The dissemination of these materials will also include guidelines and instructor objectives that outline the intention behind their development: even as individual instructors exercise the freedom to adopt and revise these materials in their own classrooms, they will be guided by a set of clearly-defined objectives and goals that will ensure their implementation is in line with the goals of this initiative and the Writing and Rhetoric Program at large.

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### **Collaboration\***

Are other organizations doing similar work? Will you collaborate with them? Why or

why not?

U.Va. and Charlottesville-based faculty, students, staff, activists and community advocates have produced course syllabi and research collections on the topics that are central to our syllabus. They often take a predominantly historical, legal, and cultural studies approach when examining the relationship of colonization, white supremacy, and slavery to the histories of U.Va. and Charlottesville. Our project is both an extension of these existing efforts, as well as a unique contribution among those efforts, because we are focusing directly on the ways that writing and language in particular have sustained those relationships. As we consider how to integrate questions about citation into the syllabus—questions regarding whose work gets elevated and celebrated, what sources get used, and how—our team takes the importance and difficulty of collaboration very seriously. Much of our work will involve collecting projects created by U.Va. and Charlottesville-based scholars and activists, and producing teaching materials that engage with these projects. As a corollary to our syllabus, we also hope to collect the materials that others have developed in one centralized location, so that their work, and our own, can be shared as a resource for instructors in all departments at U.Va. At the moment, these resources are dispersed across the University rather than gathered together in a way that teachers and students can easily access. (This U.Va. repository—and our syllabus—will likely develop even more once our group is in a position to apply for the VIVA Open Course Grant in the next academic year, and begin looking toward a state-wide scale for the project.) Thus, we see our work as creating a writing course that helps students and instructors grapple with the complexity of engaging with the work of others, but also as setting them on a path to engagement with other organizations, on Grounds and off.

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### **Students\***

If you are a student group, please outline your plans for successful transition in leadership.

The current timeline for this project aims to produce the full syllabus with suggested reading schedules, major assignments, and unit structures by the end of spring 2021. This will ensure that interested ENWR instructors have enough time to adopt, adapt, or revise these materials for their fall 2021 courses. All of the current graduate student members and faculty members of this group will be enrolled at U.Va. for the 2021-2022 academic year, and as such will be present to implement the proposal on the timeline that we lay out below.

We are asking for funding for the immediate phase of the project; in the spring 2021 academic semester, we will do sustained work to develop the materials we plan to share. However, we plan to develop a long-term home for these materials and for the work that others have done on teaching the history of U.Va. and Charlottesville. In other words, the initial stage of this project will be accomplished fairly quickly (by May 2021), but the faculty involved in the working group, along with graduate students who will still be present in future years, will continue to deepen and develop the resources we create.

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### **Timeline**

Please indicate the approximate expected timeline for both the full project **and** for the Jefferson Trust funding (these may or may not be different).

#### **Project Start Date\***

*Character Limit: 10*

Sept 2020

#### **Project End Date\***

*Character Limit: 10*

May 2021

#### **Jefferson Trust Funding Start Date\***

*Character Limit: 10*

March 2021

#### **Jefferson Trust Funding End Date\***

*Character Limit: 10*

May 2021

### **Activities\***

List all activities, individuals responsible, and timelines (start/stop dates). Ex: Hire student workers - Project Director - 5/2020

*Character Limit: 5000*

### February: Learning Objectives and Instructor Objectives

February 12: Send out one or two short anti-racist pedagogy readings and past examples in the field to help our group think about what kind of objectives we want to set for the class.

February 19: Each group member contributes at least one learning objective, or instructor objective, to the shared doc—or begins giving feedback on other objectives that others have raised.

February 26: Group meets to finalize the **Learning Objectives and Instructor Objectives document**.

### March: Major Assignment #3 and Unit 3

March 12: Distribute one or two short anti-racist pedagogy readings and past examples in the field to help us think about how to structure the assignment and unit.

March 19: Group members comment on the draft description for the third major assignment, and/or provide a reading, or give feedback on a suggested reading, for Unit 3.

March 26: Meeting to finalize **Major Assignment #3 and Unit 3**.

### April: Major Assignment #2 and Unit 2

April 9: Send one or two short anti-racist pedagogy readings and/or past examples in the field to help us plan how to structure this assignment and unit.

April 16: Members of the group comment on the draft description for the second major assignment, and/or provide a reading, or give feedback on a suggested reading, for unit 2.

April 23: Meeting to finalize **Major Assignment #2 and Unit 2**.

### May: Major Assignment #1 and Unit 1

April 30: Disseminate one or two short anti-racist pedagogy readings and past examples in the field to help group members structure this assignment and unit.

May 7: Group members comment on the draft description for the first major assignment, and/or provide a reading, or offer feedback on a suggested reading, for Unit 1.

May 14: Meeting to finalize **Major Assignment #1 and Unit 1**.

### ***Determining Results*** ***Project Goals/Objectives\****

Our first goal is to have a full syllabus, complete with a digital library of relevant readings, by May 14, 2021. Accomplishing this will allow us to approach our second goal: encouraging the adoption or adaption of this syllabus by faculty and graduate student instructors for the 2021-2022 academic year. In parallel, we will work toward our third goal of preparing an application for the 2021-2022 season of VIVA Open Course grants, laying the groundwork for a more ambitious inter-institutional collaboration to create an Open Educational Resource.

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### ***Measuring Success\****



Firstly, we plan to solicit feedback from faculty at the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies, and from undergraduates in the Black Student Alliance once we have a stronger outline of the syllabus and its curricular materials. This will ensure that we can not only work with, and address, the concerns expressed by U.Va.'s Black communities, but also shape our materials in direct collaboration with them. That, to us, is central to measuring the success of this project. Secondly, we will collect student and instructor data from the ENWR 1510 sections in the fall who decide to use and adapt our syllabus and curricular materials in their classroom. We will then identify the existing strengths and areas of improvement for the syllabus based on the feedback we receive.

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#### **Funding Required**

##### **Total Overall Project Funding Required\***

\$6200

*Character Limit: 20*

##### **Jefferson Trust Funding Request\***

What is the portion of the Total Overall Project Funding being requested from the Jefferson Trust?

\$6200

*Character Limit: 20*

##### **Applicant Contribution\***

What amount (if any) of the Total Overall Project Funding are you, the applicant, contributing? *This may include personal contributions or departmental contributions. Do **NOT** include amounts listed as Firm or Pending below.*

None

*Character Limit: 20*

##### **Not contributing?\***

We are not contributing because our members are not in a position to fund the project. This proposal aims to cover the costs of labor to produce teaching materials, which is



within our expertise and responsibilities as writing instructors.

*Character Limit: 250*

#### **Other FIRM Funding Sources\***

What amount (if any) *has been or will be funded* by other sources (e.g. government agencies, other private foundations, businesses, individuals)? *Do **NOT** include amounts listed elsewhere in this section.* Please list each source and the amount funded on a separate line. *Example:*

None

*Character Limit: 2000*

#### **Other PENDING Funding Sources\***

What amount (if any) is *not yet funded* but is under consideration by additional sources? *Do **NOT** include amounts listed elsewhere in this section.* Please list each source and the amount under consideration on a separate line. Also include the expected response date. *Example:*

None

*Character Limit: 2000*

### **Other Funding Information**

#### **Previous Jefferson Trust Grant Proposals\***

Have you or another party to this proposal applied previously to the Trust for funds for this project or any other project? If yes to either, please state when, the name of the proposal, and whether or not it was approved.

Yes. Cherrie Kwok and John Modica have previously applied to the Trust to fund expenses related to a nationwide graduate conference for the Department of English, titled "UVA Gradcon," in spring 2020. The proposal was approved.

*Character Limit: 2000*

#### **Partial Funding Impact - for requests over \$50,000**

Explain **in detail** how you would use a reduced allotment if your proposal is not fully funded by the Trust, or you do not receive the full alternative source funding requested. Please indicate partial minimum funding threshold received from the Trust which would allow the project to move forward.

Briefly describe how the project scope would change if only threshold funding is provided.

N/A

*Character Limit: 2000*

**Continuation Funding\***

If your project is to continue beyond the grant project timeline, what are your plans for future, ongoing funding? How will the project be sustained? *(If your project is not designed to continue but is self-contained, please enter "N/A.")*

As mentioned above, we hope to pursue a larger VIVA Grant after fall 2021 to sustain and expand the project at the University level and at the statewide level.

*Character Limit: 2000*