

WGS 499 CAPSTONE

CULTIVATE D.E.I.

A CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM ON THE
COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY'S CAMPUS



The Spring 2021 Activism Capstone dedicates this handbook to future generations of activists on TCNJ's campus. We strongly urge subsequent capstones commit themselves to foster an anti-racist environment at the college. Ultimately, we hope our activism efforts will encourage a culture of change on campus, making the experiences of future students, faculty, and staff members of color more equitable and inclusive.



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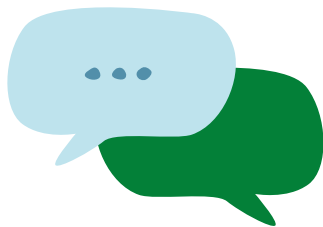
INTRODUCTION

The Spring 2021 Capstone for Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies sought to establish an anti-racist education requirement for first-year and transfer students at The College of New Jersey. We proposed the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) implement a zero-credit, anti-racist education course for its first-year and transfer students. In organization and implementation, the anti-racist component should resemble the existing zero-credit requirement for first-year and transfer HSS students—HSS 99: Orientation to Humanities and Social Sciences.

In developing and advocating for this proposal, this activism capstone undertook the following:

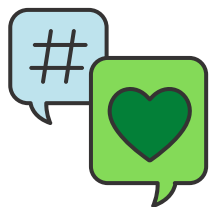


1. Conducted the necessary research on existing TCNJ anti-racist policy and activism efforts to develop our final proposal.

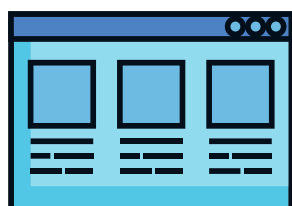


2. Organized three interactive diversity, equity, and inclusion workshop events to advertise our campaign efforts, collect research on students' current understanding of privilege and oppression, and gauge overall campus interest in an anti-racist education component.

INTRODUCTION (CONT.)



3. Developed a social media promotion schedule for all programming and policy efforts to help publicize the capstone's agenda.



4. Published our semester-long campaign efforts and anti-racist resources in website format to share with the campus community, our target audience, and other constituents.

MISSION STATEMENT

The TCNJ WGS 499 Activism Capstone resolves to promote racial justice within the campus community. The college, like the nation itself, has a complicated history with race. By virtue of its proximity to Trenton and Ewing, two communities of color, TCNJ advertises a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus. However, the college's relationship with these communities has been criticized as paternalistic, and its commitment to students of color has largely proved hollow. We strongly urge TCNJ's administration to implement a zero-credit, anti-racist education component for all first-year and transfer students within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

To comply with pandemic-era restrictions, our capstone's campaign for the anti-racist education component will be executed entirely online. Despite our inability to connect with the campus community and administration in person, we remain committed to our anti-racism objectives. We hope to meaningfully contribute to the campus conversation surrounding race and commit both TCNJ administration and the student body to anti-racism.

Spring 2021 WGSS Capstone Cohort



MISSION STATEMENT (CONT.)

The above mission statement is co-signed by all 11 capstone authors and approved by the capstone advisor, Professor Mary Lynn Hopps.

Miranda Crowley

Miranda Crowley

she/her

Asianna Hall

Asianna Hall

she/her

April Kibalo

April Kibalo

she/her

Rebecca Kosty

Rebecca Kosty

she/her

Elizabeth Nemec

Elizabeth Nemec

she/her

Gabbi Petrone

Gabbi Petrone

she/they

Gabriella Setti

Gabriella Setti

she/her

Nicollette Simon

Nicollette Simon

she/her

Hannah Statler

Hannah Statler

she/they

Danielle Szul

Danielle Szul

she/her

Genesis Vasquez-Peralta

Genesis Vasquez-Peralta

she/her

TARGET POPULATION

The target population for this campaign is the TCNJ campus, including students, faculty, staff, and administration. If implemented, the anti-racist education component will directly impact all first-year and transfer students in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. We hope the broader campaign surrounding the training module will foster conversations about race on campus among faculty, staff, and non-HSS students. Through our three-part event series, "Who's in Your Neighborhood," students from both HSS and other academic schools alike were asked to think critically about implicit bias, privilege, and systemic oppression.

In addition, we hope our capstone's Cultivate DEI website will serve as a permanent resource for all members of TCNJ's campus community. The website has links to educational resources, activism opportunities, and information about our capstone's policy recommendation for the anti-racist education component. We developed our programming and digital engagements with the broader campus community as our target audience.



ACTIVISM IN A PANDEMIC

COVID-19 played a significant role in our capstone project. In previous years, capstone cohorts attended in-person classes, hosted campus events, met in person outside of class time, and, in general, conducted their activism projects in a physical capacity on TCNJ's campus. Our capstone had to make several adjustments to the selection, development, and execution of our project:



1. Our capstone cohort met online throughout the semester via Zoom to complete project assignments and give status updates on each of our committees.



2. The Programming Committee had to adapt our three-part DEI workshop series for a virtual setting.



3. The cohort was forced to rely on social media and other forms of digital communication when promoting our project efforts.



4. Primary research and data collection were limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, all interviews were conducted online, and no in-person meetings with constituents within TCNJ administration.

MEET THE CAPSTONE



Miranda is a senior Communication Studies major in the Public and Mass Communications track with a minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies through the Women in Learning and Leadership program. She is committed to improving healthcare access for minority communities across the United States, focusing on public health issues like Black maternal mortality.



Asianna is a senior double majoring in African American Studies and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She is a passionate advocate for marginalized communities.



April is a junior Economics major with a minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies through the Women in Learning and Leadership program. She advocates for women leaders in male-dominated spaces and provides an environment for all to feel welcome and succeed.

MEET THE CAPSTONE (CONT.)



Rebecca is a junior Urban-Elementary Education and History dual major with a minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies through the Women in Learning and Leadership Program. She is a human rights activist with the organization Amnesty International at TCNJ. She hopes to bring this type of advocacy and anti-racism education into the classroom.



Liz is a senior majoring in Biology and Sociology and minoring in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Liz is eager to learn new ways of advocating for social equity and hopes to work with more community-based non-profits in the future.

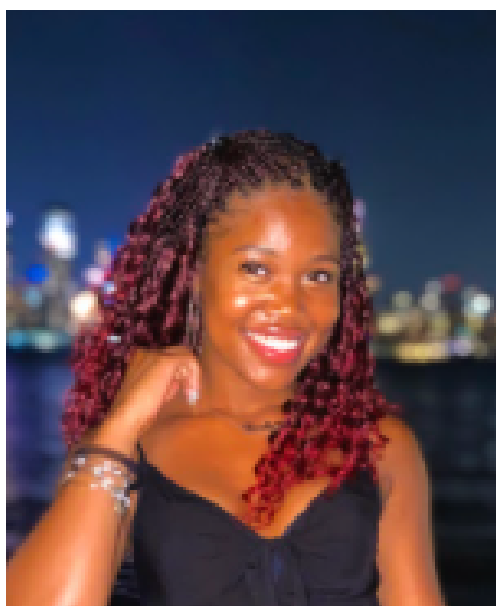


Gabbi is a senior Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Psychology double major at The College. She is involved with the Women in Learning and Leadership program, the Triota WGS Honor Society, and Theta Phi Alpha Sorority. She is an advocate for improved access to reproductive healthcare and dogs, books, and naps. She hopes to have a career in policy work after graduating from TCNJ.

MEET THE CAPSTONE (CONT.)



Gabriella is a senior Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies major through the Women in Learning and Leadership program, with minors in History, Psychology, and Law, Politics, and Philosophy. She is a zealous advocate for social justice and is passionate about female representation in the law, concentrating on public policy issues such as reproductive justice and education.



Nicollette is a junior, double majoring in Nursing and the Public Health 4+1 master's program with a double minor in Health and Wellness and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies through the Women in Learning Leadership program. She is passionate about anti-racism, transparency, equity, and equality among all people despite their identities. She hopes to improve the way minority groups are treated in the healthcare field and provide more opportunities for them to seek medical treatment.



Hannah is a senior Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies major at TCNJ. They are dedicated to community-based activism and act in solidarity with all marginalized groups to work towards ending systemic oppression.

MEET THE CAPSTONE (CONT.)



Danielle is a junior majoring in Early Education/Special Education and minoring in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She is also a member of Zeta Tau Alpha. Danielle is excited to advocate for equity, raise funds for worthy causes, and, in the future, create a safe and fun environment for her aspiring classroom.



Genesis is a senior double majoring in African American Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies with a minor in Criminology. She has served two terms on eboard with Women in Learning and Leadership, studied abroad in London, attended Leadershape and many women empowerment conferences out of state. She also co-founded the natural hair club on campus (Kinkz and Coilz) and is currently the President of the TRIOTA Honor Society. She is passionate about policy change in education, mass incarceration, women's rights, and marginalized communities.

COMMITTEES

The following committee breakdown will list which group members belong to each committee as well as articulate the responsibilities and function of the committee in the context of the overall project. Please note that members with a star (*) next to their name are shared between more than one committee.

Programming

Members: April Kibalo, Gabriella Setti*, Nicollette Simon*, Genesis Vasquez-Peralta

Overview: The Programming Committee is responsible for conducting events for the TCNJ community as a form of research. Through this role, the committee will be facilitating an event known as Archie Bunker's Neighborhood, which aims to educate the campus community on the effects of racism and other forms of discrimination against various identity groups. Once the committee has recorded the reactions from the activities, they will be used as primary data for our policy recommendation.



COMMITTEES (CONT.)

PR & Social Media

Members: Rebecca Kosty, Gabriella Setti*, Nicollette Simon*, Hannah Statler, Danielle Szul

Overview: The PR & Social Media Committee will promote capstone events on various social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, the ROAR app, etc. This committee is also responsible for communicating to the student body via campus-wide emails and social media to recruit students to participate in organized events. Lastly, this committee will publicize the capstone's milestone achievements and events.



Policy Research & Development

Members: Miranda Crowley, Gabbi Petrone

Overview: The Policy Research & Development Committee is responsible for researching current TCNJ anti-racist policy, investigating DEI frameworks at comparable institutions, and exploring sample curriculum for anti-racist education courses. This research will be used to develop a policy recommendation that will be published on the project website at the end of the term.

COMMITTEES (CONT.)

Website Research & Development

Members: Asianna Hall, Liz Nemec

Overview: The Website Research & Development Committee will develop a website for users to gain an introductory understanding of how race functions in modern U.S. society. This website will act as an impetus for students to change their view of race and racism, moving them from the passive label of 'not racist' to an active practice of anti-racism. This website will use multiple different mediums such as text, videos, and links to external resources that will educate students on how to commit themselves to anti-racism on and off campus. To reach our target audience, we will promote the website within different academic departments and student organizations. This website will also publish our capstone's campaign efforts, advocating for a mandatory freshman/transfer course on anti-racism. Overall, this website will serve as a valuable and sustainable resource to the project and the student body at large, contributing to a much-needed culture change on TCNJ's campus.



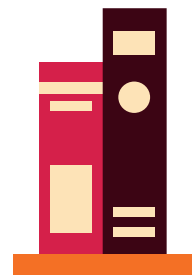
CAPSTONE RESEARCH

Each member of the capstone cohort conducted individual research on a specific subject area relating to our activism project. We used scholarly journals, news sources, and collegiate websites to collect secondary data. The research was used to develop the capstone's website and policy recommendation.



Miranda's research focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion policies at Ivy League and state schools. She also investigated the anti-racist commitments of a representative sample of Ivy League and state schools in the United States.

Asianna researched anti-racism's societal importance. This research focused on why and how racism has been continuously embedded in society through all aspects of institutionalization and intersectionality.



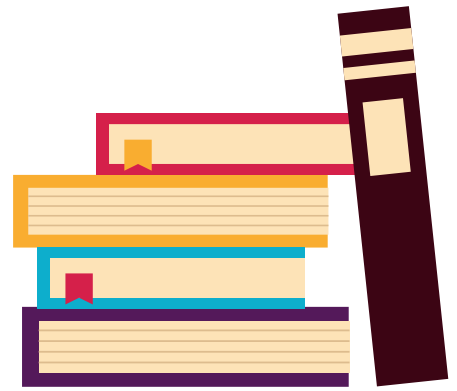
April's research focused on how unconscious biases play a role in the perception and everyday treatment of different people. She also explained why it is essential to recognize these unconscious biases and provided several ways to combat them within oneself.

CAPSTONE RESEARCH (CONT.)



Rebecca's research focused on social media's influence over conversations about race and who is more inclined to use social media for anti-racism advocacy. She discussed the different tactics used online that go against anti-racism and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Liz's research focused on critical theory, providing foundational knowledge on race, racism, privilege, oppression, and other major themes. With respect to the various lenses through which we study race, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of how race evolved and now functions in modern U.S. culture.



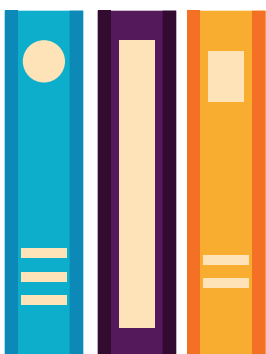
Gabbi's research focused on anti-racist education curriculum in the United States. She looked at what anti-racist education really means as well as how it is implemented in different classrooms across the country.

CAPSTONE RESEARCH (CONT.)



Gabriella's research focused on the efficacy of diversity, equity, and inclusion workshops in both collegiate and professional environments. She also analyzed various types of trainings while exploring possible new avenues for future diversity seminars. These findings informed the capstone's programming events and policy recommendation.

Nicollette's research focused on anti-racism advocacy. She provided many examples of racism, discrimination, police brutality, and hate crimes through the following incidents: George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Asian American hate crimes.



Hannah's research focused on whether or not social media can be an affective tool for activism. Their research demonstrated that while social media and online activism can be a great way for people to get informed and involved with like-minded others, it is not sustainable if not followed up with on-the-ground activism.

CAPSTONE RESEARCH (CONT.)



Danielle's research looked at the effectiveness of social media in anti-racism efforts. Her study and research yielded a number of significant findings toward anti-racism efforts as well as the efficacy of social media for activism.

Genesis's research grappled with why race-based conversations are so difficult. Her paper focused on how to teach race on campus, who benefits from race discussions, and what power is kept when avoiding those conversations. These kinds of questions helped the capstone expand our understanding of how to approach our campus with anti-racist courses.



PROJECT TIMELINE

The following chart maps our capstone's weekly tasks, meeting objectives, and pertinent deadlines over the course of the semester.

Week	Details
Week 1 (2/18-2/25)	TASK(S): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Google Drive organization• Comprehensive outline development• Preliminary research MEETING OBJECTIVES(S): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss comprehensive outline & project scope (2/21) DUE: N/A
Week 2 (2/26-3/04)	TASK(S): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive outline development• Organizational plan presentation development• Schedule all three events if possible<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Definitely schedule event #1

PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Discuss presentation & create outline for slides
- Identify student orgs and classes for all three eventss
- Overview of project timeline

DUE:

- Comprehensive outline
- Organizational plan presentation
- Contact student orgs and professors

Week 3 (3/05-3/11)

TASK(S):

- Schedule all outstanding events
 - Definitely schedule event #2
- Conduct research on potential website platforms
- Develop social media promotion schedule

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Discuss event scheduling progress
- Brainstorm survey ideas for end-of-event research collection
- Discuss potential website platforms
- Discuss research topics for independent paper

PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

DUE:

- Design survey for end-of-event research collection
- Assign research topics for independent research paper
- Pick website platform
- Social media promotion schedule

Week 4 (3/12-3/18)

TASK(S):

- Schedule all outstanding events
 - Definitely schedule event #3
- Decide project name
- Begin promoting activism project on social media
- Compile basic information for website (background research)

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Discuss Event #1 - what worked vs. what needs improvement
- Finalize project name

Due:

- Event #1: Archie Bunker's Neighborhood with Mitchell's class (3/15)

PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

Week 5
(3/19-3/25)

TASK(S):

- Conduct research on different website platforms

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Discuss Event #2 - what worked vs. what needs improvement

Due:

- Submit journal for peer review
- Event #2: Archie Bunker's Neighborhood with Student Government (3/24)
- Website outline

Week 6
(3/26-4/01)

RECHARGE WEEK

Week 7
(4/02-4/08)

TASK(S):

- Begin Activism Handbook
 - Assign components to capstone members
- Add interactive resources and comprehensive lists of books, movies, podcasts to website

PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Discuss which components of Activism Handbook should be completed and who is responsible for them

Due:

- Individual research summaries
- Annotated bibliographies
- Assign components of Activism Handbook

Week 8
(4/09-4/15)

TASK(S):

- Organize Event #3
- Analyze data from Event #3
- Website progress

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Divide work for website sections
- Divide work for activism handbook
 - Logo development

Due:

- Event #3: Archie Bunker's Neighborhood with WILL (4/11)
- All information for website formatting

PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

Week 9 (4/16-4/22)

TASK(S):

- Finalize website for peer review
- Activism Handbook progress

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Policy & Website Committees discuss the transformation of written policy info into website format

Due:

- Activism Handbook initial draft
- Website draft for peer review

Week 10 (4/23-4/29)

TASK(S):

- Finalize COSA presentation

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Develop COSA presentation slides and peer review all project materials

Due:

- Submit journals for final grading
- Presentation slides

PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

Week 11
(4/30-5/06)

TASK(S):

- Publish website
- Present work

MEETING OBJECTIVES(S):

- Final peer review of website & activism handbook

Due:

- Activism Handbook
- Website

PROGRAMMING

In a three-part event series, participants were tested on their knowledge of privilege, oppression, and intersectional identity. The Archie Bunker's Neighborhood activity illustrates the discrimination that different identity groups face in their daily lives. While blindly role-playing as one of five identity groups, the participants began to understand, among other things, that their mystery social categories barred them from adopting children, moving to certain neighborhoods, buying lucrative property, returning safely home from a police stop, or building schools with quality education standards.

Our activity was adapted to meet pandemic restrictions. Below, you will find a screenshot from one of our three events.



PROGRAMMING (CONT.)

After each event, the Programming Committee administered an anonymous survey to all participants. The survey asked students to reflect on their experience with the workshop and think critically about privilege, oppression, and identity on TCNJ's campus. These results were used as student testimony on our capstone website as well as to inform the cohort of the campus community's current understanding of race-based issues. What follows is a breakdown of those results across all three surveys:



On a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), 53% of respondents ranked TCNJ's commitment to DEI a 3.

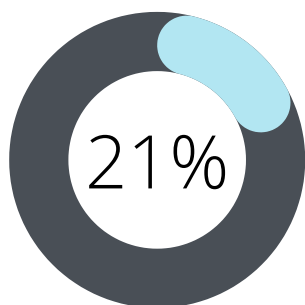


On a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), 47% of respondents ranked their understanding of TCNJ's DEI resources a 3.

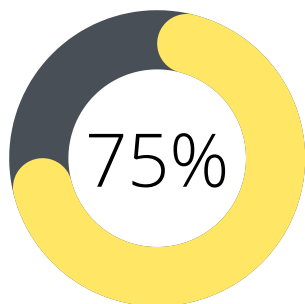


On a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), 42% of respondents ranked the problem of race on TCNJ's campus a 4.

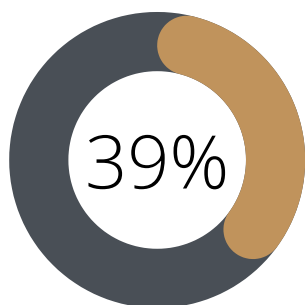
PROGRAMMING (CONT.)



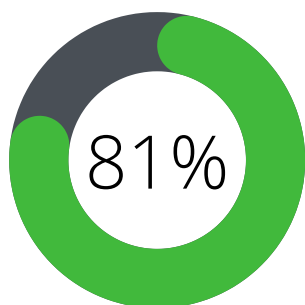
of respondents have personally experienced racism or racial bias at TCNJ.



of respondents have witnessed TCNJ students speaking or behaving in a way that indicates racial insensitivity.

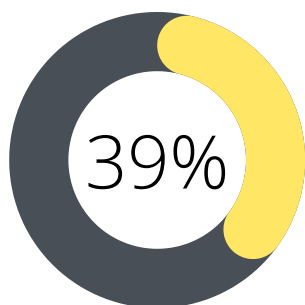


of respondents have witnessed TCNJ faculty/staff speaking or behaving in a way that indicates racial insensitivity.

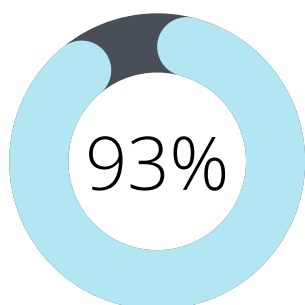


of respondents understand the difference between the passive label "not racist" and the active label "anti-racist."

PROGRAMMING (CONT.)

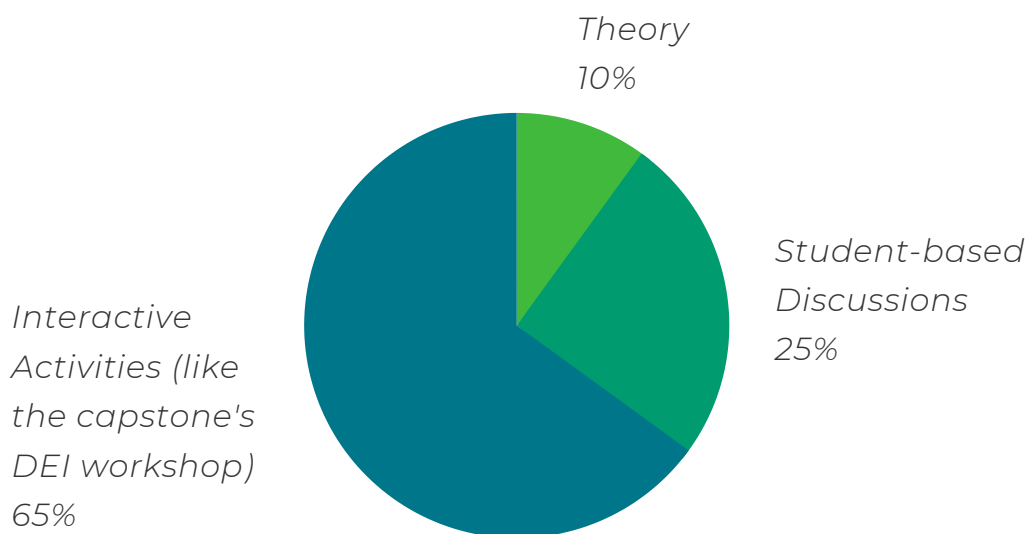


of respondents think the "Race and Ethnicity" civic responsibility requirement is sufficient for students to gain a comprehensive understanding of anti-racist practice.



of respondents think the TCNJ campus community would benefit from a required anti-racism course.

Finally, when asked which elements they think would be most effective in communicating topics of racial literacy to students, respondents said:



SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW

To publicize our capstone's progress and programming opportunities, the PR & Social Media Committee developed three social media profiles on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.



The capstone's Instagram account is called Cultivate DEI and has 4 posts, 90 followers, and is following 164 individuals. The PR & Social Media Committee primarily made infographic posts and shared quotes from the capstone on this account.



The capstone's Twitter account is called WGS 499 Activism Capstone and has 7 posts, 22 followers, and is following 111 individuals. The PR & Social Media Committee primarily reshared anti-racist resources and social justice news on this account.



The capstone's Facebook page is called Cultivating DEI and has 16 posts and 17 followers. The PR & Social Media Committee primarily posted status updates from the capstone on this account as well as other promotional graphics.

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW (CONT.)

The following gallery features screenshots of our different social media profiles as well as some sample posts from each account.



Instagram

"This capstone resolves to promote racial justice within the campus community by establishing an anti-racist education requirement for students at TCNJ."

cultivate.dei Message

4 posts 90 followers 164 following

WGS 499 Activism Capstone
Education
This capstone resolves to promote racial justice within the campus community by establishing an anti-racist education requirement for students at TCNJ

Followed by giannafulshopkins, gevxo, sierradintino +19 more

The TCNJ WGS 499 Activism Capstone resolves to promote racial justice within the campus community. The college, like the nation itself, has a complicated history with race. By virtue of its proximity to Trenton and Ewing, two communities of color, TCNJ advertises a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus. However, the college's relationship with these communities has been criticized as paternalistic, and its commitment to students of color has largely proved hollow.

cultivate.dei Mission Statement • The WGS 499 Activism Capstone strives to promote racial justice within the campus community and urge TCNJ's administration to implement a zero-credit, anti-racist education component for all first-year and transfer students with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences #cultivatechange2021

MARCH 4

Liked by kendraebke and 15 others

COLLEGE ATTENDEES MORE LIKELY TO SAY THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The majority of Black Americans report that they have experienced discrimination/unequal treatment at some point in their lives, but according to Pew Research Center, Black people with college experience are more likely to say so

Category	Some college*	High school or less
Experienced discrimination	81	59
People acted as if they were suspicious of you	55	38
People acted as if they thought you weren't smart	62	37

INFORMATION SOURCE: Survey of 65 Black respondents February 29th - May 9th, 2016
Pew Research Center

Did you know this? Check out these statistics! #cultivatechange2021

7 DAYS AGO

Liked by mlwhopps and 4 others

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW (CONT.)



Twitter

"Promote racial justice and establish diversity, equity and inclusion within the community. TCNJ Instagram: cultivate.dei Snapchat: cultivatedei."

WGS 499 Activism Capstone
@cultivatedei

Promote racial justice and establish diversity, equity and inclusion within the community TCNJ Instagram: cultivate.dei Snapchat: cultivatedei

Joined March 2021

WGS 499 Activism Capstone @cultivatedei · Apr 19

Where to donate? Here are a variety of programs and fundraisers that are available to help survivors, inspire people, and create change.

FUND RACIAL JUSTICE: WHERE TO DONATE

GEORGE FLOYD MEMORIAL FUND: OFFICIAL GOFUNDME TO SUPPORT THE FLOYD FAMILY: GOFUNDME.COM/F/GEORGEFLOYD	MINNESOTA FREEDOM FUND: COMMUNITY-BASED NONPROFIT THAT PAYS CRIMINAL BAIL & IMMIGRATION BONDS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN ARRESTED WHILE PROTESTING POLICE BRUTALITY	BLACK VISIONS COLLECTIVE: A BLACK, TRANS, & QUEER-LED ORGANIZATION THAT IS COMMITTED TO DISMANTLING SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION & VIOLENCE, & SHIFTING THE PUBLIC NARRATIVE TO CREATE TRANSFORMATIVE, LONG-TERM CHANGE.
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WGS 499 Activism Capstone @cultivatedei · Apr 19

Check out this link! Becoming an anti-racist educator: where to begin?

BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST EDUCATOR: where to begin?
by Elicia Cárdenas

Becoming an anti-racist educator: where to begin? (GUEST POST) - ...
Becoming an anti-racist educator: where to begin? - In this post, Elicia Cárdenas offers suggestions grounded in her own experience to ...
comprehensibleclassroom.com

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW (CONT.)



Facebook


"WGS 499 Spring 2021 Capstone - to promote racial justice within the campus community by establishing an anti-racist education requirement for students at TCNJ."

I'm no longer accepting the things I cannot change...
I'm **changing the things I cannot accept.**


— Angela Davis

 **Cultivating DEI**
@cultivate.dei · Education

[Follow](#)

 **Cultivating DEI** is 😊 feeling happy.
April 20 at 10:22 PM · 🌐

Update Week 1: our responsibilities included developing a comprehensive outline and conducting preliminary research. At that time, we also had our meeting goals, which were to address the overall scope of the project.

 **Cultivating DEI**
April 20 at 10:28 PM · 🌐

The tasks for Week 8 were to organize Event #3 with the Women in Learning and Leadership Program and analyze the data that was collected. We divided the work for the website along with the work for the activism handbook. This week we determined our logo and branding theme for the Capstone project.

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

CULTIVATE DEI WEBSITE

To better educate the campus community on anti-racism, the Website Research & Development Committee created a website with our capstone findings. The [Cultivate DEI](#) website has six navigational tabs: Home, Who We Are, Our Project, Education, Action, and Resources.

Home

The home page includes quotes from anti-racist activists and a hyperlink to our project overview.



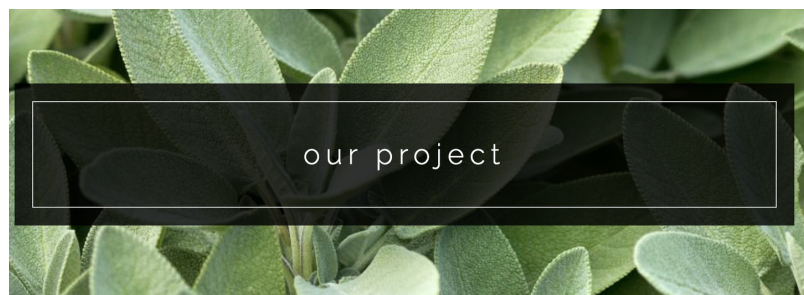
Who We Are

This page includes a description of our capstone cohort, our mission statement, and a step-by-step outline of our activism efforts.



Our Project

The project tab features our policy recommendation, event research, and social media efforts.



CULTIVATE DEI WEBSITE (CONT.)

Education

The education page offers a historical overview and brief explanation of race relations in the U.S.



Action

The action tab contains links to different anti-racist organizations for people to learn about, donate to, and volunteer for.



Resources

This page links campus resources for TCNJ students as well as general educational materials for any individual interested in learning more about anti-racism.



POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Background

Over the last couple of years, race and race relations in the United States have garnered national attention. In accordance, colleges and universities across the country have been aggressively updating their diversity, equity, and inclusion policies on campus. However, students often criticize these efforts as performative. The capstone's comparative analysis of Ivy League and state schools found that most Northeastern institutions of higher education have similar (and hollow) commitments to anti-racism. In fact, The College of New Jersey is one of the only sampled schools with a dedicated anti-racism task force. Moreover, it is one of the few institutions with an established diversity, equity, and inclusion framework that includes a senior-level cabinet position for its Chief Diversity Officer. However, TCNJ's complicated relationship with race cannot be solved solely through administrative committees.

The Ask

The Spring 2021 Activism Capstone urges the School of Humanities and Social Sciences to adopt a zero-credit, anti-racist education component for all first-year and transfer students. We propose that the HSS Anti-Black Racism Task Force work with Dean Wong to establish a formal training module for all incoming and transfer HSS students. The module would resemble the existing HSS-99: Orientation to Humanities and Social Sciences course in structure and implementation. This would ensure all new students in HSS are introduced to the school, their department, and the broader TCNJ community through an anti-racist lens.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION (CONT.)

Policy Target

The capstone has identified the School of Humanities and Social Sciences as the natural home for an initial program launch as it is the only school with an internal anti-racism task force. Also, HSS is home to both the Departments of African American Studies and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies—two departments that teach anti-racist philosophy in their curriculum.

The Justification

As it stands, TCNJ’s educational commitment to anti-racism is limited to the race and ethnicity liberal learning requirement. When asked whether or not they thought the race and ethnicity credit was sufficient for students to gain a comprehensive understanding of anti-racist practice, 61% of the capstone survey respondents said no. Outside of this credit, racial justice education is left to the discretion of individual professors when developing their syllabi. In the same survey, 93% of respondents agreed that the TCNJ campus community would benefit from an anti-racist education requirement.

In solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, The College of New Jersey Board of Trustees announced a resolution affirming their commitment to racial and social justice and inclusion. The preamble of the resolution commits TCNJ to “educate students to be active advocates and leaders for social justice in all aspects of society, their families, communities, and places of work.” The 2021 Activism Capstone strongly believes that an anti-racist education requirement aligns with this goal.

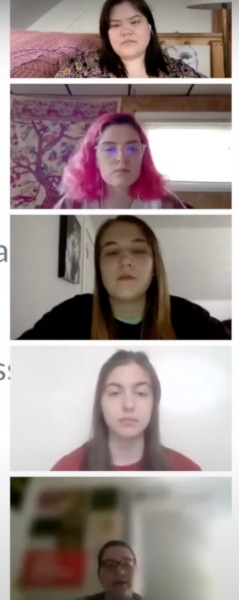
CELEBRATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

On Thursday, April 22, the WGS 499 Spring 2021 Capstone recorded a presentation of our activism project. Each committee gave a status report on the tasks they had accomplished so far, offering examples of social media posts, website outlines, policy reports, and programming data. In general, the presentation focused on the capstone cohort's project selection, development, and execution process. The video was uploaded to COSA's interactive program for conference attendees to view on Wednesday, May 5.

Progress Report

The Policy Committee accomplished the following tasks:

- ❖ Conducted informational interviews with members of HSS Anti-Black Task Force
- ❖ Determined and assigned research topics for individual research assignments
- ❖ Compiled resources to create a sample anti-racist curriculum



VOICES FROM THE CAPSTONE

I've drafted a lot of policy recommendations before, but I've never had the opportunity to do so in a group setting. My time with the capstone as well as in WILL has definitely prepared me for a career in collaborative praxis.

Miranda Crowley, Class of 2021

I've always been part of smaller activist projects, but this is definitely the biggest one I've done. Through this capstone, I was able to not only learn more about myself and hone my leadership skills and interests, but I also was able to assist in creating anti-racist resources for students.

Asianna Hall, Class of 2021

This class and capstone has made me so grateful to work with impressive women leaders who want to create a more equitable environment for everyone.

April Kibalo, Class of 2022

VOICES FROM THE CAPSTONE (CONT.)

This capstone allowed me to work with a group of strong leaders on a topic that we all care deeply about. I was able to grow in both leadership and activism and learn more about how we as students can make a difference.

Rebecca Kosty, Class of 2022

This activism project felt like the perfect application of the social justice theory we have been studying for the past four years. Not only was this project an excellent opportunity for us to practice and share our knowledge, it also addressed a critical gap in our institution's commitment to anti-racism. I hope our project can be one of many serious changes down the line.

Liz Nemec, Class of 2021

The capstone has not only exposed me to different styles of leadership but to different experiences and perspectives and how they shape us. I am incredibly proud of the work we have all done in creating anti-racist education and resources for the TCNJ campus and the wider community.

Gabbi Petrone, Class of 2021

VOICES FROM THE CAPSTONE (CONT.)

I am so proud of the fantastic group I worked with this semester and the remarkable project we put together despite the unprecedented obstacles we faced. This capstone has given me invaluable experience in researching trends, community organizing, and collaborative leadership.

Gabriella Setti, Class of 2021

This capstone class allowed me to be expressive about issues that do not only affect me but also others that look like me in the TCNJ community. I am so grateful to be able to advocate for anti-racism. Lastly, I am blessed to have collaborated with my peers to push for anti-racism education at TCNJ.

Nicollette Simon, Class of 2022

Through the process of completing this capstone with my classmates, I was able to learn more about myself as a leader, while simultaneously gaining a more in-depth understanding of the issue of lacking anti-racist education on college campuses.

Hannah Statler, Class of 2021

VOICES FROM THE CAPSTONE (CONT.)

This capstone provided me with many opportunities for growth in the fields of women's leadership and women's experience. The chance to collaborate with my peers on shared passions, while also enhancing our leadership and advocacy skills was essential in seeing how we can make a positive difference as individuals and as a community.

Danielle Szul, Class of 2022

This capstone project is a good way to finish my time here at TCNJ. It allowed me to express my concerns and possible solutions for the treatment of marginalized communities. I am grateful for the skills I have learned throughout this project and the space it provided me to learn more. I really hope that we encourage change on campus.

Genesis Vasquez-Peralta, Class of 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The capstone would like to thank our advisor, Professor Mary Lynn Hopps, for all of her professional and personal support throughout the semester. This project was conducted under extreme and unprecedented conditions. With ML's academic and emotional guidance, our cohort was able to explore our leadership styles, think critically about social justice theory, and engage in collaborative feminist praxis. Outside of this project, she has been an invaluable mentor throughout our undergraduate careers. We are incredibly thankful for her dedication to the cohort's success.

We would also like to thank Professor Michael B. Mitchell of the Criminology Department, the cabinet of TCNJ Student Government, and the executive board of Women in Learning and Leadership for co-sponsoring our three-part DEI event series on campus. With their cooperation, our cohort was able to amass the requisite knowledge for our website and policy pack development. We greatly appreciate their help in furthering our primary data collection.

By extension, we would also like to thank the many TCNJ students who participated in our event series. The discussion portion of our workshop often required students to disclose experiences with racial prejudice and other identity-based trauma. We appreciate every participant who made critical and honest contributions to our conversation surrounding race on TCNJ's campus.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<https://cultivate-dei4.webnode.com>

