

Queensborough Community College

Unseen Threads: Exploring the Links Between Historical and Contemporary Discrimination

Program Description

Context

The Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Campus Center (TRHT) effort is a national initiative spearheaded by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Established at Queensborough Community College in 2021, the TRHT Campus Center is one of seventy-two such centers nationwide dedicated to challenging biases and fostering the development of leaders who are committed to creating more equitable communities.

Queensborough Community College also hosts the Kupferberg Holocaust Center (KHC), founded in 1983 as one of the pioneering research archives on the East Coast dedicated to Holocaust studies. Over the years, the KHC has evolved into a vibrant hub for reflection and education, with a mission to impart the lessons of the Holocaust to current and future generations, emphasizing the dangers of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping.

The TRHT and KHC initiatives share significant synergies. Both centers are committed to addressing and dismantling systemic biases, promoting understanding, and educating communities about the impact of discrimination. Together, they create a powerful intersection of historical insight and contemporary action, working to build a more just and inclusive society.

Opportunity

The increasing prevalence of Islamophobia, antisemitism, racism, and other forms of hate has led to heightened discriminatory behavior on college campuses nationwide, sparking student protests and unrest. In response, the TRHT Campus Center and KHC will collaborate during the 2024-2025 academic year to engage faculty in a program designed to increase understanding of the links between historical forms of discrimination and hate and their connections to contemporary manifestations.

As part of this initiative, participating faculty will visit the KHC and the three Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Sites in Montgomery, Alabama. These sites will provide valuable insights into the links between past and present. This immersive experience aims to foster deeper understanding of these issues and support meaningful changes.

Participants

Ten full-time Queensborough faculty who teach introductory courses will be selected through an application-based process.

Population Impacted

At the end of the program, participants will be required to submit proposed curricular revisions for their introductory courses. Considering the large enrollment in these courses, these proposed changes could positively influence the academic experience of hundreds of students each year.

Program

Part One

Friday, November 1, 2024 10:00AM – 4:00PM

Participate in a full day of programming at the Kupferberg Holocaust Center (KHC). This includes a tour of the KHC exhibit *The Concentration Camps: Inside the Nazi System of Incarceration and Genocide*. Following the tour, attend a lecture by KHC faculty partners, who will offer practical examples of how the exhibit's content can be integrated into curricula and enhance scholarship. Participants will also engage with an expert/scholar/practitioner who will illuminate connections between historical and contemporary manifestations of hate in educational and museum settings.

Part Two

Thursday, November 14 – Saturday, 16, 2024

Attend a two-night trip to visit the Legacy Sites in Montgomery, Alabama. This includes tours of the Legacy Museum, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, and the Freedom Monument Sculpture Park. Participants will then engage in discussions on incorporating insights from these visits into curricular and programmatic reforms.

Part Three

Attend a Spring 2025 lecture by an expert/practitioner/scholar on the links between different forms of hate and discrimination, providing additional context and understanding for addressing these issues in museum and educational setting. This event will be open to the CUNY community.

Requirements

1. Attend the all-day session at the KHC on Friday, November 1, 2024, in person.
2. Attend the two-day Legacy Site tour in Montgomery, Alabama on November 14-16, 2024.
3. Attend the TBD Spring 2025 lecture. Virtual participation will be an option.
4. Participate in a TBD Spring 2025 CETL event. Present an overview of your experience, highlighting key insights and outlining the specific curricular changes you plan to implement based on what you learned.

5. Submit a short reflection paper by April 25, 2025, that outlines the specific curricular changes that will be implemented in AY 2025-2026. This reflection should include a summary of insights, planned changes, details regarding when the changes will be implemented, and the expected impact. This reflection will help ensure that the knowledge gained from the program is effectively applied to enrich the educational experience.

Details

Following submission of the reflection paper, participants will receive a stipend of \$1,000.

Hotel stays will be pre-paid by the College and group meals will be paid for with a college credit card. Participants will be reimbursed for flights and taxis to and from airports.

Our Partner

The Legacy Sites, Equal Justice Initiative, Montgomery, Alabama

“The Legacy Sites invite visitors to reckon with our history of racial injustice in places where that history was lived. Situated on lands occupied by Indigenous people for centuries, in a region that once held the largest population of enslaved people and would later become the heart of the Civil Rights movement, the Legacy Sites offer visitors a powerful opportunity to engage with history and begin an era of truth-telling.”

(<https://legacysites.eji.org/about/>)