



Bridging the Gap - Teaching for Social Justice through Storytelling of Immigrant Experiences

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Introduction

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In the U.S., Anti-Chinese sentiment increased during the pandemic, resulting in a considerable spike in overt violence and hatred directed at Asian American individuals.

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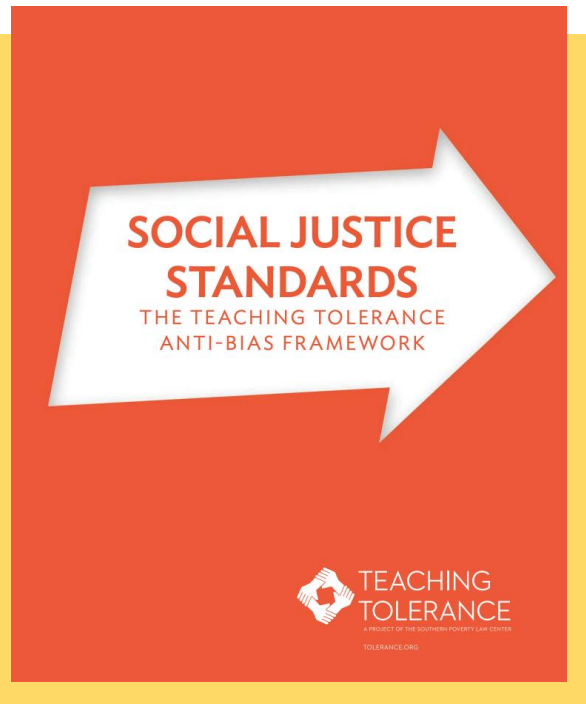
Growing attention to social justice in world language teaching and research

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A call to amplify Asian voices and integrate social justice in world language education

Teaching Tolerance

- A guide from Teaching Tolerance
- a set of standards and age-appropriate learning outcomes divided into four domains—identity, diversity, justice and action (IDJA).
- "This continuum of engagement is unique among social justice teaching materials, which tend to focus on one of two areas: either reducing prejudice or advocating collective action."
- [tolerance.org](https://www.teachingtolerance.org)



Social Justice Standards: 4 Domains

- **Identity:** Ensure students develop positive social identities while at the same time coming to understand their identities are complex and multilayered.
- **Diversity:** Support students to develop a cultural competence that allows them to not only appreciate the many similarities and differences between individuals and social groups but understand the value these offer our society as a whole.
- **Justice:** Teach students to recognize the relationship between individual and systemic acts of bias, injustice, and oppression and the role power and privilege play in shaping how we experience the world.
- **Activism:** Help students identify and dismantle their own role in supporting harmful beliefs and practices, stand up for the rights of others, and reach out to educate others on issues that are important to them.

https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/TT_Social_Justice_Standards_0.pdf

Social Justice in Language Classroom

- Language classrooms provide an ideal context for entering critical dialogue and welcoming the discussion of social justice (Nieto, 2002).
- Language classes should “challenge, confront, and disrupt misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination based on social and human differences,” and to “promote critical thinking and agency for social change” (Nieto, 2010, p. 46).

Integrating Social Justice in CHN351

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Students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehension of texts on topics of China's changing macroeconomic environment and current business practices;
2. Speak and write about business-related topics using formal style vocabulary and business terminologies at the advance level;
3. Communicate with Chinese speakers/businesses in a linguistically competent and culturally appropriate manner
4. Think critically about topics of community, equity, and social justice, be able to empathize with experiences and perspectives of others.



**...through
stories of
immigrant
experiences**



**"IDENTITY
IS A
LIFE STORY"**

-Dan McAdams

Chinese Communities in Atlanta Project

Preparation/Storytelling

Community Building and
Social Change Fellows

Story circles

Trip to Chinatown



Phase 1

Phase 3

Phase 2

Group Project



Phase 1: Preparation and Story Circles



Civic and Community Engagement > Programs > CBSC

Make an impact on your community

Community Building and Social Change Fellows Program

Want to be a social change agent? A builder? Collaborate with professionals? The Community Building and Social Change (CBSC) Fellows Program is designed to present both challenges and opportunities in building a stronger, contemporary, urban America. To realistically effect positive change where it's needed the most, Fellows are trained and given the proper tools to make a difference through academic coursework, an intensive paid 10-week hands-on summer field experience, site visits, small group meetings, and public presentations.

Fellows get to see firsthand the critical role that collaboration plays in the resolution of important public issues. They can also hone the skills needed to transform their passion for social justice into meaningful actions that revitalize communities and promote positive and lasting social change. And more importantly, they will get real world experience working in Atlanta's communities.

At Emory, a story circle experience begins with a designated speaker sharing stories about a particular topic. The audience then divides into smaller groups to tell their own stories related to the topic. Discussion is led by a facilitator and structured in a way that encourages full and authentic participation in both listening to and telling personal stories.

“Telling your story is a gift, but careful listening to another’s story is also a gift. The point is to link the telling part and the listening/hearing part. Together, they can be transformative.”

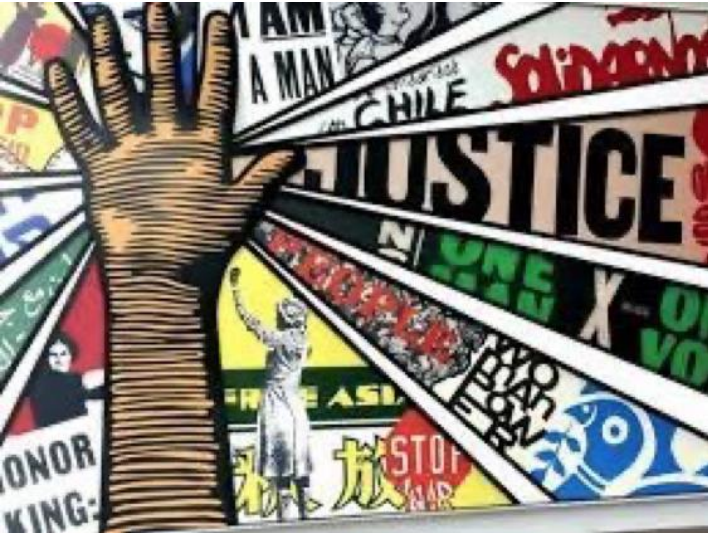


Phase 2: Trip to Atlanta Chinatown

- Preparation – research Chinatown history and businesses
- Assigned Tasks:
 - visit a restaurant, the bookstore, the gift store, and the bakery
 - interact with business owners, customers, community members
 - explore ideas for phase 3 of the project



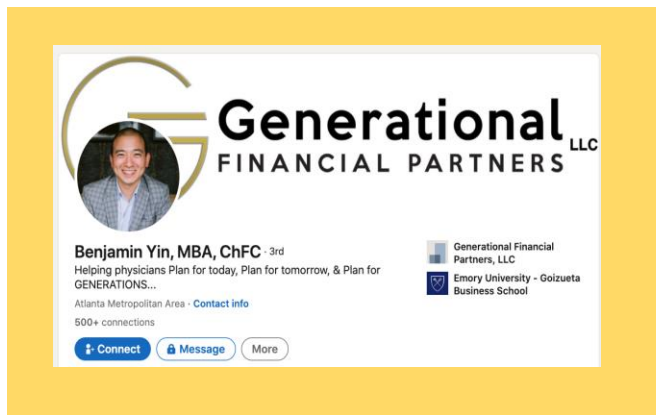
Phase 3: Group Project



- integrates the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing proficiencies while fostering social justice awareness and action.
- Involves a theme of social justice, equity, identity; and explores the experiences of Chinese immigrants and their businesses.
- Must include interviews with community members and visits to businesses.
- Components:
 - Written essay
 - Oral presentation
 - Digital story
 - Reflection

Sample Project 1: Benjamin's Story

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作为一家金融服务公司，GenFi 并未受到太大影响。部分原因是食品服务在很大程度上依赖于面对面交易，而金融服务可以通过虚拟方式进行。在疫情之前，就巧合的已经停止租用实体办公地点。这不仅帮助公司削减成本，而且还提高了员工的绩效，这使他们的日程安排更加灵活，并在他们将所有服务转移到网上时改善了工作与生活的平衡。疫情帮助GenFi在2019年将利润率提高了15-20%，在2020年提高了20-21%，而2021年是他们最好的一年。GenFi 将他们的服务扩展到佐治亚州以外的地区，与其他公司建立了更多的州外合作伙伴关系，他们公司甚至进一步领先于竞争对手。

From Generation to Generation

Sample Project 2: Joyce's Story

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新兰州拉面



兰州拉面



疫情影响

3月14号暂时关闭了餐厅

“如果一个人被感染，它会影响到整个餐厅，然后会影响到每个人，以及他们所有的家人” - Zhang (公司发言人)

5月16号重新开放，只提供外卖服务

Why Immigrant Stories?

- The stories highlighted historical and contemporary injustices Chinese immigrants faced and amplified marginalized voices, allowing students to make connections to broader patterns of systemic inequality that affect marginalized communities.
- They fostered empathy and connection. By hearing the struggles and triumphs of individuals, students developed a deeper emotional connection to issues such as racism, xenophobia, and cultural resilience.
- storytelling can promote critical thinking, inspire hope, and build resilience.
- challenge stereotypes about the "model minority" myth, which presents Asian Americans, particularly Chinese Americans, as uniformly successful and upwardly mobile.
- They facilitated language learning and cultural awareness in a meaningful and authentic way.

References

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THANKS!

Do you have any questions?

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