

Equity Learning Lab

Curriculum Modules Overview

This four module curriculum was developed to guide Equity Learning Lab participants in their organizational transformation work. Each module contains sub-topics with a set of recommended core resources, additional resources for further exploration, and a set of reflection questions to help participants process the content. The full curriculum includes the following modules:

1. Foundational Learning - Structural Racism and Health Equity
2. Making Space for Conversations on Equity and Race
3. Supporting Personal Reflection and Growth
4. Leading Organizational Change

Module 1: Foundational Learning - Structural Racism and Health Equity

This introductory module to the Equity Learning Lab provides background on the historical foundations of race and racism in the United States. The content in the module draws connections between this historical context and racial disparities in individual and population health today. As you review the materials, consider the ways in which your own personal experiences and histories intersect with systems of oppression and how those intersections may inspire you to work for change.

Objective: All funded partners in the Equity Learning Lab become familiar with how structural racism has evolved historically and continues to create racially inequitable health outcomes in the American health care system.

Sub-topic 1a: Understanding the Origins of Race and Structural Racism

Core Resources

[Historical Foundations of Race](#)

Source: *National Museum of African American History & Culture*

This multimedia article provides historical context on the construction and evolution of the concept of race, with an emphasis on Black and white people in the United States. Those who prefer a video format could watch this accompanying [video](#).

(1 hour read + additional videos)



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[How the Bad Blood Started: In the U.S., racial disparities have been as foundational as democracy itself](#)

Source: *Nikole Hannah-Jones, Yaa Gyasi, and Jeneen Interlandi for the New York Times, as part of the 1619 Project*

This podcast draws direct connections between the current state of our healthcare system and a history of policies influenced by racist ideologies. Those who prefer a written format can read the article version called, "[Why doesn't the United States have universal health care? The answer has everything to do with race](#)". (Please note that the podcast and article are slightly different.)

(40 minute listen)

[A history of anti-Hispanic bigotry in the United States](#)

Source: *Marie Arana for the Washington Post*

This article traces contemporaneous acts of bigotry and hatred from the United States and its citizens, targeted at people with Hispanic and/or Latin American roots, to the early days of the United States.

(15 minute read)

[Screams and Silence](#)

Source: *Alyssa Jeong Perry, Shereen Marisol Meraji, Gene Demby, Kumari Devarajan, Jess Kung, and Leah Donella for NPR's Code Switch podcast*

This podcast explores and interrogates common narratives connected to recent and historical incidents of anti-Asian American violence in the United States. Those who would prefer to read this content can access the transcript [here](#).

(33 minute listen)

Additional Resources for a Deeper Dive

[America's Enduring Caste System](#)

Source: *Isabel Wilkerson for the New York Times*

This article is a distillation of Wilkerson's recent book, [Caste](#), this article looks at how America's system of using race as a tool of oppression relates to the caste systems of India and Nazi Germany.

(45 minute read)

[Racism Has Always Been Part of the Asian American Experience: If we don't understand the history of Asian exclusion, we cannot understand the racist hatred of the present](#)

Source: *Mae Ngai for the Atlantic*

This article walks through the history of exclusionary policies targeted at Asian people coming to the United States and connects this history to the current context of racism and violence directed towards Asian Americans.

(25 minute read)



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Reflection Questions

- ❑ Given the ways in which ideas about race have evolved in American society, what is your perspective on how race and racism impact people of color and white people today? How have your own ideas about race and racism evolved?
- ❑ What do you notice that you know or are more curious about related to both the specificity and the common threads of racism against different racial/ethnic groups in the US?
- ❑ What are some ways you, personally, or your organization has been impacted by the legacy of policies and decisions described in the articles?

Sub-topic 1b: Understanding How Racism and Other Forms of Oppression Structurally Affect Health Outcomes

Core Resources

[How Structural Racism Works - Racist Policies as a Root Cause of U.S. Racial Health Inequities](#)

Source: Zinzi D. Bailey, Justin M. Feldman, and Mary T. Bassett for the *New England Journal of Medicine*

This article examines the impacts of redlining and racialized residential segregation, mass incarceration and police violence, and unequal medical care on individual and population health.

(10 minute read)

[Principles on Structural Racism and Health Care](#)

Source: *America's Essential Hospitals**

This article provides ten principles to aid policymakers in efforts to address structural racism's impacts on health care.

(5 minute read)

[Indigenous Health Equity](#)

Source: *Abigail Echo-Hawk for the Urban Indian Health Institute*

This report draws a distinction between broad health equity and Indigenous health equity and makes the case for self determination as a key component of defining Indigenous health equity.

(15 minute read)



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Additional Resources for a Deeper Dive

[Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: evidence and interventions](#)

Source: Zinzi D. Bailey, Nancy Krieger, Madina Agénor, Jasmine Graves, Natalia Linos, and Mary T. Basset for *The Lancet*

This article provides a definition of structural racism and discusses research and interventions that grapple with the implications of structural racism on population health and inequities. (20 minute read)

Reflection Questions

- ❑ The authors in the New England Journal of Medicine article assert that, "Structural racism functions to harm health in ways that can be described, measured, and dismantled. Actions to dismantle racism necessarily involve the whole of society." One action they recommend is for medical and health communities "to turn a lens on themselves, both as individuals and as institutions." They also offer this final provocation: "Our fields have much to regret, and we have much still to offer to right our historical wrongs." How are you and/or your organization grappling with this idea of examining yourself and your responsibility to right the wrongs of the past?
- ❑ The articles offer actionable steps for shifting the status quo. Which recommendations feel most actionable for you and/or your organization? Which recommendations feel unattainable, and what supports might make them more attainable?

Sub-topic 1c: Racial Inequities and COVID-19

Core Resources

[Will COVID-19 Pave the Way for Progressive Social Policies? Insights from Critical Race Theory](#)

Source: Michelle Morse, Amy Finnegan, Bram Wispelwey, and Chandra Ford for *Health Affairs*

This article draws on Critical Race Theory to inform the potential policy opportunities provided by COVID-19 for health care providers to advocate for health equity, to the benefit of Black, Indigenous, and Latinx Americans.

(10 min read)

[COVID-19 data on Native Americans is a 'national disgrace.' This scientist is fighting to be counted](#)

Source: Lizzie Wade for *Science Magazine*

This article provides a discussion of longstanding issues of quality data collection among Native American populations and how COVID-19 illuminates how limited or inaccurate data can cause or exacerbate harm for communities of color.

(10 min read)



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Additional Resources for a Deeper Dive

[When Xenophobia Spreads Like a Virus](#)

Source: *Natalie Escobar for Code Switch on NPR*

This podcast looks at how the emergence of COVID-19 corresponded with and helped to highlight a rise in anti-Asian American rhetoric in the United States. Those who would prefer to read this content can access the transcript of the podcast [here](#).

(25 min listen)

Reflection Questions

- ❑ These resources provide examples of how the context of COVID-19 has shined a light on inequitable systems and created pathways for addressing these inequities. What similar opportunities have you seen in your work or the systems you engage with over the course of the last year? How might we ensure that changes and progress are institutionalized and long lasting?
- ❑ What is your reaction to the idea that data has been used as "a weapon to further marginalize and harm communities of color"? How important is accurate, ethical, inclusive data in efforts to address racial disparities in health outcomes?

In Partnership with:



With support from
the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



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Module 1: Foundational Learning - Structural Racism and Health Equity

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