

## ***More Information about the Black Paint Curriculum Lab Fellows Program***

### **Knowledge Flows: Curriculum Lab as a Space for University Collaboration**

The Black Paint Curriculum Lab is a vibrant space for weekly dialogue and cultural events with a rotating group of participants, including current Teachers College graduate students, faculty, and alumni. Weekly meetings focus on issues ranging from addressing the emotional needs of learners amidst racial protests, to the effects of the pandemic on schooling, to the topic of mass-incarceration and knowledge creation in surveilled spaces. We come together as a sounding board for inventive approaches to teaching and learning, using theories from the field of curriculum studies and critical spatial analysis to complicate how knowledge flows through all spaces in communities, including but not limited to schools and other formal learning environments. The Black Paint Fellows Program will bring together members of the broader Columbia University community for discussions about neighborhood spaces and what different spaces teach amidst a cross fertilization of professional knowledge.

#### ***Who might be interested in curriculum?***

Any place holds a curriculum that defines knowledge and pedagogical practices. Consider how people in a community find food options. Is there a corner bodega, a local market, or a supermarket? What is the selection of food available in each? Are fresh vegetables available, and if so, what is the variety and quality? Which stores are affordable? What are the dining and takeout options? The COVID pandemic challenged the realities of food hunger and access. Many accessible food options closed and in response to the needs and creativities of communities, neighborhood refrigerators arose to collectively provide for others. As we look at the choices people have in finding the food they need and desire, how these arrangements teach people about food, and elevate or surveil particular cultural associations with food, we see the multiple manners in which something we engage with so unconsciously each day is a kind of curriculum. In other words, the knowledge hidden throughout our communities reflect choices people have made about how a space is constructed, about who gets a say, and about the consequences for the ways we live.

The Curriculum Lab creates opportunities to theorize neighborhoods and the routine activities in these spaces as *curricular*. The word curriculum is often relegated to educational spaces, but in the Curriculum Lab, we frame our investigations on the premise that all spaces are curricular. Spaces hold knowledge that is constructed, contested, and experienced as much as the content held in textbooks or on course syllabi. Thus, the study of how spaces are curricular is as relevant to teachers looking to develop lessons or refine their pedagogical practice, as it is to professionals who communicate knowledge in any field. Urban planners and ecologists need more critical reflection into how their strategies educate people about the community and their place in it. Historians, sociologists, and other social scientists need to see the nested contexts of social formation intersecting across time. Medical professionals and scientists need insight into the lived experience of people in communities. An investigation of how various disciplines define knowledge in a community may lead to a spatial analysis of neighborhoods and then offer novel solutions to pressing social needs.

#### ***What will Fellows do?***

The aim of the Black Paint Curriculum Lab Fellows Program is to foster these dialogues and activities about curricular theorizing and spatial analysis across a broader network of students and faculty across Teachers College and Columbia University. In weekly meetings, Fellows will make interdisciplinary connections using creative dialogue prompts and field trips that engage with art, culture and community partners. Fellows will also contribute to an interactive exhibition of curricular investigations and spatial designs at a Roundtable Presentation in May 2022.

See what we are up to at <http://curriculumdesignlab.weebly.com/>