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SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

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How did the theme of social justice emerge in Case Western Reserve University's (CWRU's) 5-year strategic plan, Forward Thinking (2008–2013), as one of the university-level academic priority areas? This CWRU study describes the journey of an idea from an individual proposal, to incorporation into the campuswide strategic plan and, ultimately, the beginning stages of institutionalization in the form of the newly created Social Justice Institute.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) is a private, research-one institution in Cleveland, Ohio. Founded in 1826 and federated in 1967, CWRU began as two institutions, the Case Institute of Technology and Western Reserve University. CWRU borders Cleveland Heights, the City of East Cleveland, as well as the Cleveland neighborhoods of Glenville, Hough, and Fairfax—the latter four are composed primarily of African American residents. The university comprises the College of Arts and Sciences and seven professional schools—law, nursing, medicine, dental medicine, engineering, social

work, and business management. The university has about 10,000 students with 40% undergraduates and the remainder graduate and professional students. Currently, the majority of the university's undergraduates receive their degrees through the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering. The business management and nursing schools also have undergraduate programs.

In 2007 to 2008, with a newly hired university president, Barbara R. Snyder, CWRU launched a university-wide planning process. The university had not engaged in such a strategic planning process in more than a decade. Nor had the university, which was suffering a budget deficit, launched a development campaign in many years. The planning process was envisioned as an opportunity to assess, innovate, enhance, potentially connect, and better align the various parts of a decentralized university. It began with the reconsideration of CWRU's mission and identifying a set of priorities and goals that would ideally reenergize the faculty and lay a foundation for an eventual development campaign.[1]

The university's strategic planning process evolved on multiple levels. Different academic units at the departmental, school, and college levels formed their own planning teams to develop priorities and

lobby for their needs. These visioning processes not only provided strategic focus for those academic units but also influenced, and were influenced by, discussions at the university level. This multilevel approach incorporated faculty, interdisciplinary program and center directors, academic department chairs, the deans of the seven schools and the college, university administrators from undergraduate and graduate studies, student affairs, development and fundraising, campus facilities and physical plant, the offices of the provost and the president, as well as other administrators, staff, and undergraduate and graduate and professional students.

In the Beginning:
The Emergence of Social Justice

In spring 2008, I joined the university-level planning team in my capacity as the chair of the President's Advisory Council on Minorities (PACM). With the top leadership position in the diversity office open, I would also soon serve, at the request of the university president, as the chair of the search committee for CWRU's inaugural vice president for Inclusion, Diversity & Equal Opportunity. By spring 2008, the strategic planning process already had been underway for a semester, but no one from PACM—as had been agreed upon by the then provost—had been appointed to the university-level team. I stepped into the gap, at the request of PACM.

Assessing and advocating for diversity measures and accountability at CWRU was then (and remains now) among the primary goals of PACM. PACM had created a robust diversity statement that was adopted by the university in May 2007.[2] As part of their ongoing advisory and advocacy work, PACM members believed that diversity also must be visible in CWRU's new strategic plan. This meant not only declaring diversity a core value but also explicitly articulating diversity as a strategic goal—with aims, initiatives, and measures of success. Doing this would reinforce and elevate diversity's importance by signaling to university members the need for community responsibility. We also hoped that the incorporation of diversity as a strategic goal would result in empowered action, more financial and human resources, and the establishment of coordinated pathways of actualization. This is how I found myself on the university strategic planning team and in a place to witness silences that ultimately provided what I viewed as an opportunity to introduce another issue into the strategic planning conversation, namely, social justice.

The discussions about academic and research priorities focused significantly on science, medicine, and engineering. This was not a surprise, given the university's identity and the tremendous strengths in those fields, but for me, it revealed a significant gulf—one that laid bare the ongoing concern of many faculty members in the humanities, arts, social sciences, and related professions who often found themselves and their scholarly contributions eclipsed by this particular CWRU trinity. How could we spotlight and advance the often overlooked, but extremely exciting and significant, fields of inquiry, education, and creativity?

I also pondered: How could faculty members do that in a way that elevated the conversation about diversity and inclusion from the individual and interpersonal levels to a connected and more expansive examination of systemic oppression and structural impediments to advancement. Prejudice, discrimination, and inequality are not only institutional matters—that is, they are not confined to campus-based discussions of representation, climate, and university processes (though critically important). These matters also required scholarly investigation; and yet, at the same time, these issues should not be bound by the arguably protective scaffolding of scholarly debate. As individuals, as members of an academic community, as a university, we are also part of a local community and society. Injustices existed around us on- and off-campus. Undoubtedly, the local neighborhoods had human and institutional assets, rich histories, grounded knowledge, and founts of promise and hope. But there is also no disputing that these neighborhoods continued to experience and struggle with the legacies and contemporary manifestations of exclusion, marginalization, and disinvestment. How do we as scholars and faculty members understand this history and the present-day circumstances, and what is our and the university's relationship to it all?

This led to the idea of suggesting social justice as an "academic priority" or "alliance" area. The theme, study, and advocacy of social justice had the potential to build a community of scholars; bridge seemingly unrelated research, scholarship, teaching, and other creative projects and initiatives; and promote more holistic thinking with regard to analyzing and addressing social issues. A social justice focus also could result in increased attention to the humanities, arts, social sciences, and other related professions. The following statement was included in a 2008 proposal that I drafted in 2008 to make the initial case for social justice as a university-wide academic priority:

> Creating a university-wide Social Justice Institute at CWRU—where critical inquiry into such enduring questions are not only valued, but also seen as a crucial part of the knowledge process that generates policies and enacts programs to address disparities and inequalities—can truly distinguish the university from its peer and aspirant institutions. The development of such an institute also can help realize the university's stated goal of truly creating a research university that values all of its scholars and recognizes its place in society. . . . It is a bold move.

THE INITIAL PROPOSAL

As part of the established strategic planning process, ideas for university-level academic priority areas had to initially be submitted at the school or college level. The fact that academic priority areas had to originate in the schools and the college reflected both an attempt to pay attention to the priorities emerging in each academic unit as well as to the existence of "silos" of the university. In fact, the effort to identify university-wide academic priorities was articulated as a deliberate attempt to promote innovative initiatives and break down silos by seeking ways to bring faculty together as colleagues and intellectual thought leaders. This was not an easy task at CWRU where science, medicine, and engineering seemed to rule the day (proposing alternatives or unabashedly stating a desire to move beyond these foci could often raise eyebrows). Nor is it an easy task at any university, particularly a

highly decentralized one, where the budgets, tuition streams, appointments, and promotion and tenure structures do not necessarily provide incentives or long-term benefits for multidisciplinary or multi-school collaborations.

While submitting university-wide proposals at the college and school levels may have seemed contrary to the goal of breaking down silos, the process did not, a priori, have to replicate silos, reify a decentralized model, or feed into internecine institutional politics. There were valid reasons for seeking counsel and gaining support for academic priorities at the college and school levels. If proposals did not garner enough backing at these levels, then securing even broader buy-in of those ideas as university-level priorities might be difficult. Moreover, the thinking was that the submission of the proposal through a school or college would encourage faculty and administrators to consider how the proposal reflected, incorporated, or built upon strengths; how it had the potential for innovation as well as addressed the gaps (since thinking outside the box was encouraged); or how it aligned with the priorities and goals of numerous academic units.[3] Finally, initial endorsement of an idea through a school or the college was viewed as a minimal way of ensuring that there would be some "appeal" to build upon whether, for instance, it was linked to already identified research or teaching priorities, faculty enthusiasm, or the likelihood of institutional commitment of resources. The proposed ideas needed able explainers and ardent advocates; finding champions and galvanizing interest were imperative. This procedure potentially had a democratic (even if arguably extinguishing) impulse as well. Academic units that often were or felt marginalized at CWRU might have a better chance of bringing forward ideas that may not have otherwise emerged.

Submitting a proposal through a school or the college, however, could also lead to problems. For example, a proposal could be dismissed prematurely for various reasons, including intellectual and/or institutional politics, without first gaining a broader hearing from others across the university. A proposal also could be crafted to align with already established university academic emphases in order to gain traction and resources and, in this way, harbored the

potential for quenching or chilling originality, as well as ignoring discussions about the lack or imbalance of resources available for some academic units. In fact, by the time I joined the strategic planning team, it seemed to me that at the university level, the ideas that consistently seemed to gain traction tended to reinforce the already established brand of the university. This is why it is so important, alongside establishing the necessary mechanisms for vetting ideas during a strategic planning process, to also pay attention to and be intentional about who is at the table. Diverse voices, among the usual suspects, can make a profound difference.

I am not sure what other models for submitting an idea for consideration had been discussed. Having joined the team with the process barreling ahead, this is the procedure that I followed. I can say this, however. I tended to think in terms of the potential benefits that designating social justice (which had not emerged in discussions up to that point) as a university-wide priority might garner: that is, an endorsement of critically studying and teaching about the concepts, stances, and praxis of social justice on campus and in community; of adding depth and value to the university mission; and of promoting a multilayered intellectual and creative enterprise that could enrich real-world impact. Once social justice became a part of university-level discussions about selecting academic priority areas, representatives from different schools who saw potential benefits for and linkages to their work supported the idea. This included the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Law (which had recently established a center for social justice), and the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (which mentions social justice in its mission).

An equally important rationale for choosing social justice as an academic priority was this: Just imagine the potential transformational impacts that giving deliberate attention to, and university-level support for, social justice could have on CWRU's campus and the greater community—local, national, and even international. For me, social justice was connected to the mission of universities, critical pedagogy, and even goals echoing around campus. In 2000, for instance, I piloted my City as Classroom course, which focuses on a select social justice issue

(e.g., education or criminal injustice), is taught off campus at a community home, and requires students to engage in change activism in cooperation with community partners. Developed with the support of a University Center for Innovation in Teaching and Education (UCITE) Glennan Fellowship, the City as Classroom course has a philosophy grounded in the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire and bell hooks.[4] The course philosophy statement reads:

> In the tradition of critical pedagogy, education and learning should be "relevant and emancipatory" and based upon a humanist agenda. It is my belief that the study and application of history should be part of a broader liberation project—one that arms students and scholars with the necessary analytical tools and information to combat social, cultural, and political myths and to address historical and contemporary issues.[5]

My research reflects this interest as well by focusing on race, class, gender; urban history; and liberation struggles.[6]

In considering social justice as a strategic university-level academic priority, the following questions came to mind in the Spring of 2008: Shouldn't we teachers and researchers be educating students and members of the university in an increasingly global world about the critical issues of our society? Shouldn't we be paying attention to the role of entrenched systems of inequality that structure people's life chances, social relationships, and political, economic, and other opportunities—or the lack thereof? What about inequality and oppression? How do we as scholars perpetuate it, how do we challenge it, how do we use our expertise and knowledge to create different, more just situations? From my perspective, social justice as an issue and goal was a valid area of study and intellectual endeavor and a worthy and necessary realm of praxis.

Society is full of social injustices. Far from a society that openly accepts and appreciates differences, historical, systemic, and contemporary prejudice and discrimination devalue and oppress people. My life's journey, academic pursuits, and engagement as a scholar-activist have involved identifying and revealing such systems of inequality through the incorporation of voices of people struggling to improve the quality of life. Rigorous intellectual

work—inquiry, research, and critical analysis—is crucial for recognizing, understanding, and challenging inequalities and oppression.

Moreover, for me, social injustice has been embodied. My own experience as an African American woman (at CWRU and elsewhere) has involved navigating what is now called conscious and unconscious bias, personal and systemic inequality, and culturally insensitive situations often exposed in the very positioning of being the "only," one of a few, or, still in the 20th and 21st centuries, a "first." I was the first Black salutatorian in my undergraduate institution's 187-year history, and in 2004, I was the first Black person tenured in CWRU's history department. This represents progress *and* exemplifies the unfinished business before us. Moving closer to social justice means developing approaches and strategies for identifying, analyzing, and addressing lack of access and injustices—including the horrid, dehumanizing "isms"—through the power of education, dialogue, collaboration, and action. The way in which people understand the breadth and depth of injustice is a critical crossroad en route to a socially just society or social justice.

Even as the idea of social justice was gaining traction as an academic priority area, it remained amorphously defined. And, yet, clearly those two words resonated. They meant something—at its most basic, to bring attention to injustice and to improve people's lives. Social justice, paired with ethics, was included in the strategic plan as one of the four academic priorities, or pillars, of the university.[7] In June 2008, the CWRU Board of Trustees approved the university's 5-year strategic plan Forward Thinking, and this also meant endorsing diversity as a core value *and* a strategic goal and social justice as an academic priority area.

BUILDING ALLIANCES AND IMPLEMENTING AN EXPANDED PROPOSAL: AN ITERATIVE PROCESS

The incorporation of social justice into CWRU's strategic plan as a pillar of research and scholarship heralded a critical first step. It brought recognition, affirmation, and a level of commitment. Moving from idea to action required further planning, champions, human and financial resources, and vigilance. While awaiting the board of trustees' vote on the strategic plan and having been invited to shepherd the social justice idea into reality, I enthusiastically charged ahead, invigorated by the prospect of working with others to institutionalize social justice.

Early in the process, the social justice initiative benefited from seed money from the Office of the President. I also received support in the form of a number of committed faculty searches from the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Cyrus Taylor, who became an enthusiastic supporter of the initiative in its conceptual stage (and remains so).

I began meeting with other deans and faculty colleagues. I wanted to know what others found exciting about this opportunity. What might they envision as the pitfalls? What were the possibilities for collaboration? How did they picture their schools as part of such a university-wide initiative? Would they, too, be willing to commit resources?

Receiving ongoing input (sometimes solicited, other times volunteered; sometimes with enthusiasm, other times measured), I expanded the initial proposal, including a review of CWRU's heritage, assets, and gaps; national context and distinctiveness; and the relationship of social justice to diversity and inclusion as well as community bridge building. The expanded proposal suggested a structure as well and identified potential research foci and programmatic elements. In other words, it suggested a way to operationalize and institutionalize social justice. I recommended creating a university-wide Social Justice Institute as a home, informational clearinghouse, and hub of innovation and support for alliance-based activities, including faculty research and scholarship, programs and events, curriculum innovation, and civic engagement. While the institute would build alliances across the existing schools and college, it would also operate with its own budget and leadership.

In order to foster further buy-in, collaboration, and support for the social justice initiative, as well as the other academic priority and alliance areas, faculty from different disciplines and schools were proactively approached and brought together into working groups. After a semester of meeting

with some deans and faculty and sharing the draft proposal, the social justice working group began meeting. The social justice initiative approach, which I advocated, was on institutionalizing the alliance, that is, evolving social justice from "idea" to "action" to a "sustainable entity."

Not all the university-wide faculty alliance leaders and working groups decided to follow this route in their own academic priority areas. There existed a continuum of approaches. Some alliance areas (for instance, culture-creativity-design and health) functioned as "umbrellas" for programs or projects that existed independently. Other alliance areas envisioned their role as a federation of faculty, departments, or programs that coalesced for specific projects or as endorsers of proposals, but not as developers of an institutionalized entity. Some faculty members who did suggest establishing a center or institute imagined those enterprises as situated within a particular school or as drawing upon their own discipline or unit while seeking input from faculty appointed in different schools. The model proposed for social justice was differently ambitious not only in its desire to establish a university-wide institute but also in its vision to provide a home and hub for social justice-related work that was tied to, but not focused only on, research.

Interestingly enough, the challenges that have accompanied launching the institute were not the result of hesitancy on the part of university leadership, because substantial financial support and faculty searches had been committed to help launch it. Initial (and ongoing) challenges included institutional culture, getting buy-in from some departmental and school-level representatives, vying for the time of very busy people, and navigating turf claims and a decentralized bureaucratic structure. Some schools were worried about supporting their ongoing enterprises versus starting new ones or, alternately, controlling new resources. For instance, some colleagues involved in the social justice initiative implementation process did not believe an institute should be developed. There were conversations about whether a formalized structure and independent entity, especially in a time of limited university resources, should be created. A couple faculty members argued that whatever resources were available should be used to support existing centers and projects.

The real thorny issues of how to allocate existing and new financial resources provoked feelings of a zero-sum game for some—no matter the priority area. The fear that disciplines would be ignored or their academic units or offices would not have access to the resources they already craved or needed or wanted, were real. During a period of scarcity and mounting deficits, some CWRU faculty and deans were less apt to see the potential, or this situation, as an occasion for creating or expanding opportunities not more firmly under their control. This situation persisted despite the fact that other universities had already begun recognizing the rich possibilities of establishing multidisciplinary frameworks, professorships, and research collaborations, and competitive granting agencies increasingly required collaboration. However, others believed that the diversity of participation, and the strength that comes from that, could potentially bring more attention and increase resources and impact.

The existence of silos and turf presented challenges as well. I was viewed by some as chiefly a history department faculty member in the college rather than as someone promoting the ideas undergirding a university-wide social justice initiative. In my mind, whoever led the initiative had to have a "home" somewhere in the university. Moreover, as a member of the university-level planning team, I consciously wore a university-wide hat and had imagined the establishment of an entity that served as a campuswide hub that also encouraged and supported the promotion of social justice as theory, lens, and praxis throughout the seven schools and college and their many departments and programs. I viewed the collaborative approach as powerful, exciting, and transformative.

Not oblivious to the silos and bureaucratic constraints, I took seriously the university strategic planning challenge to "think outside of the box" and believed that if enough of us worked together, we might just begin to change the institutional culture. The university was not known for social justice, nor was it articulated as a university-wide priority. This had the potential to open up new opportunities for faculty, as well as staff and students, to come together to generate, initiate, and implement programs and projects. I had imagined the creation of an intellectual and social space of support and

synergy where the whole was greater than the sum of its parts. Despite the challenges, as director of the initiative, I just kept pushing against small and large barriers that kept emerging in our discussions. While some colleagues probably viewed this approach as stubborn or rigid, I call it holding the vision.

In 2009, the Office of the Provost made additional funds available to the social justice alliance area to hire a consultant to help in expanding buy-in, in navigating politics, and in developing and refining our ideas in the form of a strategic plan. Having an outside consultant to help facilitate the dialogue and the social justice strategic planning process was a tremendous help, and it showed a commitment on behalf of the Office of the Provost to the collaborative process and social justice effort. Over the summer of 2009, the consultant, Jackie Acho, and I met together and separately with individual stakeholders on campus and in the community. It was important to build investment in the process and to identify distinctive ways that we could work together across departmental or professional school boundaries. Moreover, these strategic interviews also provided an additional foundation for introducing the social justice initiative to community members. Some of these interviews have led to partnerships and collaborations with internal and external partners thereby supporting a critical element of the Institute's alliance-based concept and generating enthusiasm and attention around social justice issues.[8]

During Fall 2009, after recruiting some new participants from the faculty and staff, the working group embarked upon a rigorous planning process that included simultaneously thinking about potential grants that we might apply for to underwrite social justice work. This included applying for a major external grant which ultimately was unsuccessful, as well as an internal interdisciplinary alliance investment grant (IAIG) from the Office of the Provost. The strategic planning process was time and labor intensive, but the working group had some dedicated and thoughtful faculty who committed themselves to the process. The social justice working group met once a week and completed our strategic plan that included proposals for staff support, a collaboratively developed idea for a community-based research project, a plan to innovate social justice curriculum, an outline for a talent plan that included hiring faculty and identifying mechanisms for supporting and growing social change leaders, and suggestions for launching robust programming and minigrant competitions. We used the strategic plan as the basis for our IAIG proposal, and in Spring 2010, we received notice of our award and began the implementation process.

Developed through an iterative process, the proposals incorporated a myriad of voices and reflected the creativity and concerns of different constituents, laid the foundation for the institute's strategic plan, investment grant proposal, and subsequently its alliance-based work. In particular, the working group collaboratively developed the institute's mission statement: "Working toward equal access to opportunity for all people through understanding and addressing the root causes of social injustice and developing innovative solutions." Our working group's overarching goals are to provide a space for promoting and supporting alliance-based social justice-related research, scholarship, and teaching; for building trust with and improving our community and society; and for training social change leaders.

In thinking about a research agenda, three preliminary thematic areas were identified, taking into consideration the pressing concerns of the day, as well as the possible areas of faculty strength and growth. The following themes continue to guide the Social Justice Institute's collaborative efforts: (a) subject identities (e.g., race, gender, class, and sexuality), (b) political and economic inequalities, and (c) spatial and geographical inequality. Finally, the strategic plan for the Social Justice Institute also identified the necessity for permanent, full-time administrative and project staff to support social justice initiatives. Not all of these components have been implemented, nor is it clear how many will remain as we continue to develop the institute.

THE INSTITUTE'S LAUNCHING

A successful IAIG proposal accompanied by additional resources did not eliminate the bureaucratic, political, and human resource challenges, and new challenges would emerge. However, the leadership team expanded to incorporate new faculty and staff representing offices such as the Center for Community

Partnerships and the Center for Civic Engagement and Learning. By the Fall of 2010, the Social Justice Institute launched its public face. Compiling ideas from the leadership team and other university constituents, and supported by a design team from the university marketing and communications office, the institute conceived and unveiled its website.

With volunteer staff support (the institute had not yet hired a dedicated staff person), the institute held its inaugural public programs and signature events.[9] In Fall 2010, a two-day conference titled Social Justice, Race, and Profiling: An Intergenerational Think Tank featured local and national scholars as well as nonprofit and grassroots practitioners. The panels included such topics as criminal injustice, from redlining to housing foreclosure, and immigration. And the first College of Arts and Sciences faculty member hired as part of the social justice faculty recruitment initiative in Chicana/o & Social Justice History, Dr. John Flores, gave a presentation as part of the think tank. For 2 days (and in the spirit of the Charles S. Johnson Race Relations Institute at Fisk University), the CWRU Social Justice Institute think tank featured local and national scholars, thought leaders, and activists including John A. Powell, Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon, Ms. Xernona Clayton, and Donald Freeman. During Spring 2011, the institute also launched its second signature event with the help of an appointed subcommittee of faculty, student, institute teams members, and external partners.[10] Titled the Jean Donovan International Social Justice Conference: "Repression, Resistance & Transformation in Central America," this 2-day event marked UN World Social Justice Day and honored a management school alumna who was one of the four martyred church women killed by a military hunta in El Salvador 30 years ago in December 1970. On this weekend, even with the university officially closed because of a blizzard, this event proceeded successfully, conveying the excitement generated by the event and the appeal for social justice-related programming.

In Spring 2011, with its investment grant funding, the institute was able to hire its first administrative staff member, a part-time department assistant (who became full time in February 2012). The institute launched a search for a research associate–project coordinator for its debut community bridge-building

and research project titled the Voicing and Action Project, and ran its second tenure-track faculty search in the College.[11] The power to define faculty positions lie with the institute's director and members of the leadership team. Run as an interdisciplinary search, the chosen candidate would be appointed in the department most reflective of her or his area of study and discipline—if the department's faculty voted positively. To search for a teacher in the subject area of urban inequality and social justice, a search committee was intentionally composed not only to represent multiple departments in the College of Arts and Sciences but also to include a faculty member from outside the college. There were seven committee members; four of them also served on the institute's leadership team. The search ended in the successful hire of Timothy Black who started the Center for Social Research at the University of Hartford and wrote the award-winning book *When Heart Turns Rock Solid: The Lives of Three Puerto Rican Brothers on and off the Streets.*

Most of the institute's projects and initiatives (several of which still remain to be launched) either promote or are developed or implemented through a collaborative, alliance-based process that seeks to expand faculty, staff, and external networks and collaborations to move forward the work of social justice.[12] This includes the institute's community-based Voicing and Action Project, which has been inaugurated in and with East Cleveland, a predominantly Black inner-ring suburb where efforts to organize bases of community power and promote revitalization are underway.[13] The Voicing and Action Project has a steering committee of university, institute, and community partners and has trained East Cleveland residents and stakeholders as community researchers to conduct interviews for the first phase of its "voicing" work. The project has been featured in the *Neighborhood Voice*, recognized for creating a collaborative and inclusive approach to engaging community in the institute's work.[14]

A CWRU STUDY WITHIN A CWRU STUDY: DEVELOPING SOCIAL JUSTICE CURRICULUM

Another vital element of the institute's work has been curriculum development. There was extensive

discussion and debate about how our working group should approach curricular innovation and implement what we developed. During the Fall 2009 social justice strategic-planning process, the group decided to give priority to establishing a university-wide social justice minor, with an aspiration toward a major. Our working group also decided that it would like to develop a series of graduate and professional courses or even a program or degree.

During Fall 2010, the institute established a subcommittee to begin creating the social justice minor. The investment funds secured from the Office of the Provost allowed us to provide incentives—research and travel stipends—to encourage faculty to participate in the curriculum planning process. In addition to members from the different disciplines within the college (including history, sociology, and political science), participators included the vice president of Inclusion, Diversity & Equal Opportunity (also a faculty member in English) and faculty members from the schools of engineering, management, nursing, law, social work, and medicine.[15] (The planning process is still ongoing.)

The curriculum planning team discussions began with faculty members sharing their course syllabi (or if they had not taught a related course, they shared an article) that conveyed how they defined, framed, approached, and viewed social justice. The planning team then engaged in a provocative dialogue about how best to define social justice for the curricular program, as well as about whether other terms (such as *social change* or *justice* without the "social") might serve to describe the minor program. We also looked at minor programs at other colleges and universities, explored the history and philosophy of social justice itself, examined how different disciplines probed social justice as theory and praxis, and how social justice as a concept related to other familiar terms, such as *inequality, disparities, fairness, equity,* and *oppression,* as well as the tension between promoting critical analysis, advocacy, or both. In addition, as part of an assignment for a diversity-and-design class taught by the subcommittee's management school faculty representative, a few students held focus groups to ferret out potential student interest in a social justice minor. The students presented the information they'd gathered to the subcommittee, providing yet another input of information. Like the

institute proposal itself, the social justice minor also incorporated an iterative process.

Beginning in mid-Fall 2010, the curriculum subcommittee met every other week. Over the next 18 months, participating faculty on the subcommittee developed the institute's justification for a social justice minor. The subcommittee provided an intellectual purpose that focused on educating future social change leaders:

> Drawing inspiration from the root meaning of education—*e-ducere*, "to lead out"—we envision a truly unprecedented, university-wide curricular program designed to equip and empower people to become agents of change in our world, not just as "doers of good" but as informed, critically minded promoters of social justice, both on and off campus.

In addition to developing a justification for the minor, the subcommittee spent a significant amount of energy developing its curricular mission and objectives that are also used to address the merits of elective courses as part of the minor. The curricular mission reads as follows:

> The Social Justice Program prepares students across the university to address national and global inequities. The curriculum will emphasize history, theory and practice of social justice; the distribution of power, resources and opportunities; and appropriate individual and collective remedies for social injustices. Through cross-disciplinary study, dialogue, research, active community engagement, and advocacy and leadership development, the curriculum promotes understanding of one's place in and responsibility to community, country, and planet.

The curricular objectives elaborate on the mission. The curriculum planning subcommittee developed three concentrations: (a) ethics, politics, and economics; (b) inequality and discrimination, and (c) social movements and social change. These are all reflected in the introductory social justice "signature" core course.

In Spring 2012, the institute piloted its signature introductory course (see course highlights in Figure 16.1). SJUS100: Introduction to Social Justice is divided into three segments: concept, issues, and remedies, and it takes a case study

approach. Each week, students have a reading that either presents a dilemma—hypothetical or actual—that encourages students to wrestle with definitional, theoretical, and situational questions related to social justice. The instructional model includes at least two professors in the classroom throughout the entire course; the other faculty on

the subcommittee who also helped to design the minor and the course serve as lecturers during the semester. As of this writing, Fall 2012, the institute is completing its assessment of elective courses for potential inclusion into the social justice minor and preparing to submit its application to establish the minor.

[SJUS100]—Syllabus as of February 20, 2012

Co-Instructors:

Dr. Rhonda Y. Williams and Dr. Diana Lynn Morris

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." ~ Margaret Mead

Course Description:

Concepts and quests for justice and struggles against injustice have shaped human understanding, relationships, and behavior for centuries. Individuals operate within community contexts created through interactions and relationships structured by sociability, belonging, and responsibility. Probing broad questions, this signature core course encourages students to think critically and expansively about the social world and the conditions of humanity. The course provides a foundational exploration of social justice concepts, issues, and remedies thereby developing the necessary analytical tools and information to assess inequality and injustice and address historical and contemporary issues. Based on a cross-disciplinary, case study approach, featuring faculty from different schools and departments at CWRU, this course also provides students with multiple frameworks for understanding the interconnections between what are often perceived as disparate and disconnected fields of study and inquiry. The three primary questions that guide the course are, What is social justice (concepts)? Why does social justice matter (issues)? What can be done (remedies)?

Course Objectives:

- Expose students to a wide range of academic literatures focused on inequity and discrimination.
- Familiarize students with the overarching historical and theoretical "concepts" and frameworks of social justice.
- Introduce students to key topics and/or issues exposing social injustice and critically analyze and problem solve around them.
- Introduce students to social justice remedies or "tools" to combat injustice, such as individual resistance, policy, advocacy and social action, and collective struggle.

Required Readings:

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks
A Raisin in the Sun
No Fear

Figure 16.1   Highlights of Introduction to Social Justice

Course Schedule

SOCIAL JUSTICE CONCEPTS (Weeks 1–4)

WEEK 1: Introduction

Who are you?
What is social justice?
What is dialogue?

CWRU Study: "The Cake"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. David Crampton, Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences

Reading:

David Bohm, Chapter 2: "On Dialogue," in *On Dialogue* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 6–47.

WEEK 2: Equality, Equity, and Fairness

How am I connected, and to whom do I have an obligation?

CWRU Study: Amartya Sen, "The Flute"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Rhonda Y. Williams, Director, Social Justice Institute; History Department, College of Arts and Sciences

Readings:

Michael J. Sandel, Chapter 1: "Doing the Right Thing," in *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* (FSG, 2009), pp. 3–30
Amartya Sen, "Introduction: An Approach to Justice," in *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2009), pp. 6–27.

WEEK 3: Rights, Ethics, and the Collective Good, Part I

CWRU Study: Toni Morrison, "Recitatif"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Marilyn S. Mobley, Vice President, Inclusion, Diversity & Equal Opportunity; English Department, College of Arts and Sciences

Readings:

Audrey Thompson, "Caring and Colortalk: Childhood Innocence in White and Black"
Garrett Albert Duncan, "The Play of Voices: Black Adolescents Constituting the Self and Morality," in *Racing Moral Formation: African American Perspectives on Care and Justice*, edited by Vanessa Siddle Walker and John R. Snarey (New York: Teachers College Press), pp. 23–54
Beverly Daniel Tatum, "The Resegregation of Our Schools and the Affirmation of Identity," in *Can We Talk About Race? And Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007), pp. 1–38.

WEEK 4: Rights, Ethics, and the Collective Good, Part II

CWRU Study: Henrietta Lacks
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Diana Morris, Executive Director, University Center on Aging and Health; Florence Cellar, Associate Professor of Gerontological Nursing

Readings:

Excerpts from Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (New York: Random House, 2009)

Figure 16.1   Continued

(Continued)

Paul Farmer, Chapter 9: "Rethinking Health and Human Rights," (pp. 213–246), in *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES (Weeks 5–8)

WEEK 5: Discrimination, Privilege, and Power, Part I

CWRU Study: *A Raisin in The Sun,* a play by Lorraine Hansberry (Read in its entirety)
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Rhonda

WEEK 6: Discrimination, Privilege, and Power, Part II

CWRU Study: "The Case of Julie Franklin Powell"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Sue Hinze, Department of Sociology, College of Arts and Sciences

Readings:

Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," *Peace and Freedom,* July/August, (1989): 10–12

Excerpts from Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities* (New York: Crown, 1991).

WEEK 7: Race, Ethnicity, and Class

CWRU Study: "The Case of Undocumented Mexican Immigrants"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. John Flores, Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences

Readings:

Samuel Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge," *Foreign Policy* (2004)

Mike Davis and Justin Akers Chacon, "Conquest Sets the Stage," "Neoliberalism Consumes the 'Mexican Miracle,'" and "From the Maquiladoras to NAFTA: Profiting From Borders," in *No One Is Illegal: Fighting Violence and State Repression on the U.S.-Mexico Border* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006)

Jonathan Walters, "How Immigrants Are Organizing for Workers Rights: Your Hands Make Them Rich: Justice for Janitors (JforJ)" (2004), The Electronic Hallway and Research Center for Leadership in Action: www.wagner.nyu.edu/leadership/tools/files/JusticeforJanitors.pdf

WEEK 8: Local Issue in the News

CWRU Study: TBD
CWRU Study Facilitators: Dr. Rhonda and Dr. Morris

Readings: TBD

SOCIAL JUSTICE REMEDIES (Weeks 9–13)

Week 9: Legal Solutions and Limits

CWRU Study: "The Case of Alvin Atkins"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Jonathan Entin, J.D., Law and Political Science, School of Law

Reading:

Joseph Tussman and Jacobus tenBroek, "The Equal Protection of the Laws," *California Law Review* 37, no. 3 (Sept. 1949): 341–381.

Figure 16.1   Continued

(Continued)

Week 10: Policy

CWRU Study: "Allocating Public Money"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Susan Case, Department of Organizational Behavior, Weatherhead School of Management

Reading:

Susan S. Case and J. Goosby Smith, "Contemporary Application of Traditional Wisdom: Using the Torah, Bible, and Qur'an in Ethics Education," in *Handbook of Research on Teaching Ethics in Business and Management Education,* edited by Charles Wankel & Agata Stachowicz-Stanusch (Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2012)

Week 11: Individual Resistance and Social Action, Part I

CWRU Study: "Whistle-Blowing: Bunnatine Greenhouse"
CWRU Study Facilitator: Dr. Marc Buchner, Department of Electrical Engineering, School of Engineering

Reading:

Marsha Coleman-Adebayo, *No Fear: A Whistleblower's Triumph Over Corruption and Retaliation at the EPA* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2011)

Week 12: Individual Resistance and Social Action, Part II

Potential Guest Speaker: Marsha Coleman-Adebayo, of the No Fear Coalition

Reading:

Finish Coleman-Adebayo, *No Fear*

Week 13: Protest Movements and Collective Struggle

CWRU Study: Occupy Wall Street
CWRU Study Facilitators: Dr. Rhonda and Dr. Morris

Readings:

Website: occupywallst.org
Select ten (10) news reports that together will allow you to (1) assess the movement over time, (2) reflect diverse political perspectives and news analyses, and (3) convey the voices of those engaged in the protest.

Week 14: Sharing Group Project Reports (in-class)

Figure 16.1   Continued

ORGANIZATIONAL LESSONS LEARNED

An "idea" has to be championed into action. This case reveals the power of vision, intellectual stewardship, and impassioned commitment. It also reveals the necessity of securing multiple levels of buy-in and university resources. This particular institutionalization and change process was

facilitated by key faculty and administrators and nourished by the intellectual and creative energy, as well as the time, of other faculty, staff, and community partners. In Fall 2012, the institute will have operated 2 years in the public sphere. Given this relatively short time frame and the various events already held and programs underway, recognition of this milestone and the people who helped to make it happen is in order.

This case also exposes the challenges and potential pitfalls that need to be navigated or handled when moving from ideas to action to institutionalization. New ideas can take root and grow. However, such change is rarely smooth or conflict free, particularly when it comes to social justice. Moreover, the pace of institutional change can be glacial, and the bureaucratic structures and politics that provide the context for implementing new ideas can be both liberating and exasperating. Finding the pathways to get ideas heard and moving those ideas into action require not only personal commitment and passion but also learning how bureaucratic structures operate, gaining greater understanding of institutional politics, and identifying champions (not simply "allies") who will help navigate rough and often shifting terrains as well as internal institutional contradictions.

Allies, "Worker Bees," and Engagement

Those who enact and sustain organizational change benefit not only from the existence of champions but also from learning about who is an ally, why, and in what way. It is imperative to understand (as much as any of us can) why people are at the table and the nature of their self-interests. We humans all have them. Moreover, thinking through who one's allies are, versus merely presuming certain people to be allies, is equally necessary. Such intense work, particularly starting enterprises from scratch or the ground up, also requires "worker bees" who are asked about their interests, what they see as their value-added skills, and how much time they can commit. The underlying consideration here is, How do you effectively involve the talents of others as well as effectively maximize the use of their time when time in academe is a scarce competitive resource.

Bringing onboard dedicated support staff is critical to the success and sustainability of an initiative of this magnitude. Although depending primarily on the faculty director, volunteer leadership team members, and even volunteer staff support to initially advance the institute's initiatives might work in the short term, sustaining an institute with multiple objectives and initiatives calls for several astute and loyal administrative staff members who can oversee the daily administrative tasks. Such talent can free up more time for the faculty director and leadership team members to focus on the intellectual enterprise and community-based praxis, as well as issues of sustainability. In the case of the Social Justice Institute, this includes developing a plan for identifying internal and external grant and operational resources that can support the initiative. While the institute received substantial "seed" money, it does not yet have a guaranteed annual budget. This represents a critical next phase of institutionalization—one that incorporates shoring up and sustaining the human and financial resources necessary to carry out the mission and multiple goals of the institute.

Reflection and Rejuvenation

Taking the time to reflect upon what has worked and what has not worked is necessary. Reflecting, adjusting, retooling—all these are critical to social justice pedagogy and praxis. As critical thinkers and practitioners, we scholars need to reflect upon the meaning of being a social change agent operating within and from the academy. This type of reflection includes regularly appraising personal and collective goals, institutional contexts, power dynamics, available resources, moral compass and integrity, and the role that all of these play in advancing, or potentially destabilizing, the work. Reflection also must be accompanied by dedicated time for rejuvenation.

A Future Direction

There are many tasks ahead, including implementing, even as committee members reassess the elements of the strategic plan. This includes launching curricular and research competitions, filling

positions, recalibrating the institute's metrics, and developing a sustainability plan. In particular, a critical future aim is to work with development and foundational relations to secure philanthropic, corporate, and foundational support that can ultimately result in an endowment.

ENDNOTES

1. In 2011, Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) announced the launching of its $1 billion fundraising campaign guided by some of the priorities established in its 5-year strategic plan, "Forward Thinking."

2. For CWRU's diversity statement, see http://blog .case.edu/case-news/2007/05/03/diversity

3. Not surprisingly, the processes did not always work as thought.

4. See hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom.* (New York, NY: Routledge); Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary ed.). (Harrisburg, PA: Continuum). Original work published 1970.

5. Rhonda Y. Williams, City as Classroom course syllabus.

6. For instance, see Williams, R. Y. (2004). *The politics of public housing: Black women's struggles against urban inequality.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press; Williams, R. Y. (2009). "Something's wrong down here": Low-income Black women and urban struggles for democracy. In K. L. Kusmer & J. W. Trotter (Eds.), *African American urban history since World War II* (Historical Studies of Urban America, pp. 316–330). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press; Williams, R. Y. (2010). The pursuit of audacious power: Rebel reformers & neighborhood politics in Baltimore, 1966–1968. In P. E. Joseph, *Neighborhood rebels: Black power at the local level.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan; Williams, R. Y. (2011). "To challenge the status quo by any means": Community action & representational politics in 1960s' Baltimore. *The War on poverty and struggles for racial & economic justice: Views from the grassroots.* Athens: University of Georgia Press; Williams, R. Y. (2012). "We refuse!": Privatization, housing, and human rights. In C. Heatherton & J. T. Camp (Eds.), *Freedom now! Struggles for the human right to housing in L.A. and beyond* (pp. 12–23). Freedom Now Books: http://freedom-nowbooks.wordpress.com/about/

7. One of the four major pillars identified as an academic priority area in the 5-year strategic plan was social justice and ethics. CWRU already had established an endowed center, the Inamori Center for International Ethics and Excellence, directed by Dr. Shannon French. The existence of this center, as well as relatedness but not sameness of social justice and ethics as concepts, resulted in the pairing of social justice and ethics as an alliance area. Dr. French serves as the alliance leader for ethics, and Dr. Williams serves as the director for the alliance-based Social Justice Institute. While they operate different programs and have established their own missions and agendas, the two leaders work to regularly update each other, support each unit's work, and also intentionally sponsor a couple events together each academic year, in addition to sharing thoughts and advice. Also of note is that the Social Justice Institute's curricular minor program has three focus areas—one of which is ethics, politics, and economics. (See provided syllabus for SJUS100.) As the Social Justice Institute (SJI) curricular subcommittee developed the minor, members decided that including ethics as concept or building block was important. Members also agreed, however, that while ethics as a point of departure can encourage us to examine moral dilemmas in order to analyze and prescribe personal and interpersonal dynamics and praxis, this discussion can happen without necessarily addressing issues of the "collective good," power, hierarchy, access, and oppression.

8. For instance, during these interviews, I met Randall McShepard, the cofounder and executive director of PolicyBridge, an African American think tank in Cleveland, Ohio. During the institute's inaugural year, Randy McShepard supported the institute by facilitating a plenary session during our inaugural think tank, and then, during Spring 2011, the Institute cosponsored a PolicyBridge event featuring MacArthur Fellow, CEO of Growing Power, and biodiversity expert, Will Allen. Since then, I have been asked to serve on the PolicyBridge board, and our organizations continue to seek opportunities for collaboration.

9. See the CWRU Social Justice Institute website: www.case.edu/socialjustice

10 This team included Dr. Marixa Lasso, a scholar of Latin America at CWRU, who originally suggested holding an event to mark the 30th anniversary of the martyred women, particularly Jean Donovan, a CWRU alumna. Dr. Shannon French, the director of the Inamori International Center, shared with me information on UN World Social Justice Day. The two ideas were bridged to create this signature event.

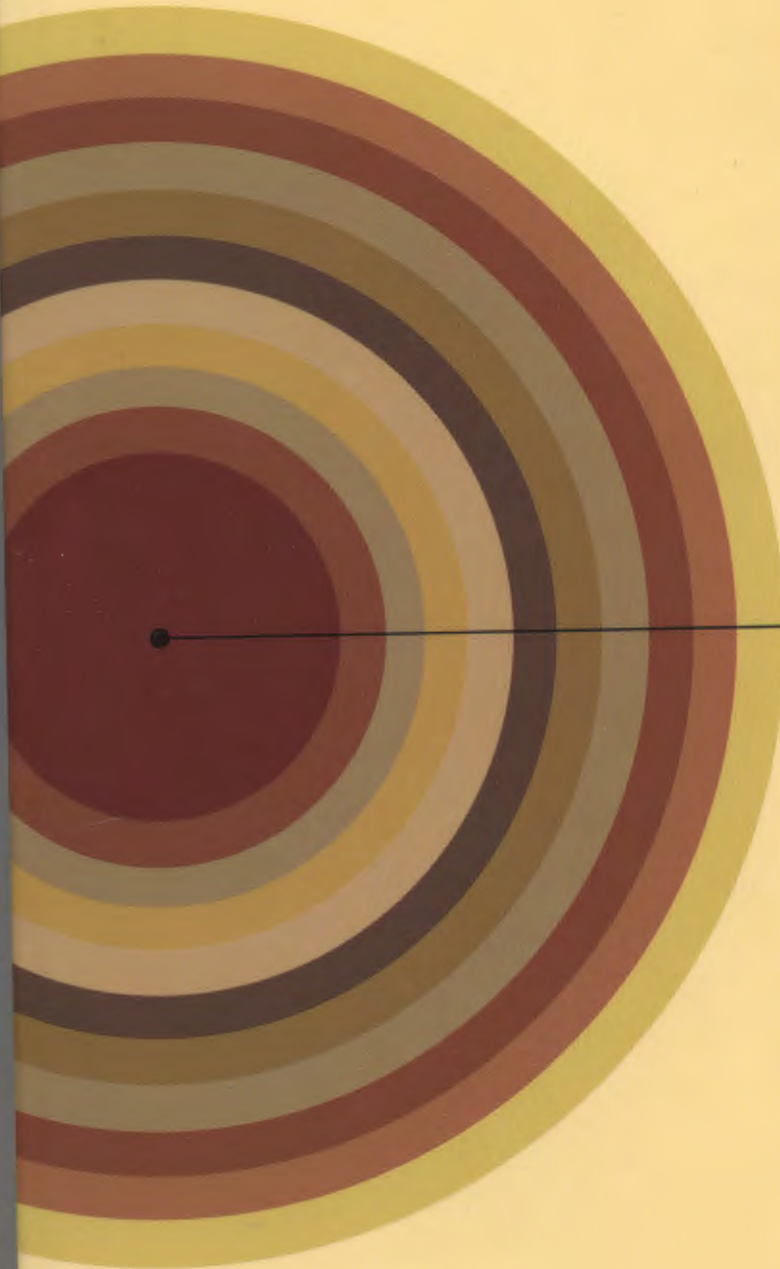11. The research associate and project coordinator position was filled in November 2012.

12. According to the 2011 CWRU Social Justice Institute director's report, about 40 faculty or staff members and about 35 external constituents either engaged in the planning of or participated in institute initiatives.

13. The central community organizing group in East Cleveland, the Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope (NOAH), is also a community partner of the Social Justice Institute. Additional SJI community partners who are involved with the institute's Voicing and Action Project include residents and institutional stakeholders representing city hall, seniors, parks and recreation, and the business and arts community.

14. Perry, M. LaVora. (2011, August). East Cleveland voices hope: CWRU's social justice institute to record residents' histories. *Greater University Circle Neighborhood Voice.* LaVora Perry serves on the institute's Voicing and Action Project steering committee and participated as a member of the research associate subcommittee. She and two of her teenaged children also have decided to train as community researchers-interviewers for the Voicing and Action Project.

15. The original faculty subcommittee members were Marc Buchner (engineering), Susan Case (management), David Crampton (social work), Jonathan Entin (law), John Flores (history), Scott Frank (public health), Susan Hinze (sociology), Jennifer Madden (graduate student), Marilyn S. Mobley (English; vice president, Inclusion, Diversity & Equal Opportunity), Diana Morris (nursing), Elliot Posner (political science), and Rhonda Y. Williams (history; founder and director, Social Justice Institute). In Fall 2012, Susan Hinze and Diana Morris became cochairs of the subcommittee.

SOCIAL JUSTICE and SOCIAL WORK

Rediscovering a

Core Value
of the Profession

Michael J. Austin, Editor