# Nicholas S. Bell, PhD

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#### **EDUCATION**

## **University of Delaware, School of Education**

2022 Ph.D. in Education

- Specializations: Sociocultural and Community-Based Approaches; and Education Statistics and Research Methods
- Dissertation: Critical Investigation of Overrepresentation in Special Education: Developing an Anti-Racist Special Education Model
- Dissertation Committee: Dr. Laura Eisenman (Chair), Dr. Roderick Carey, Dr. Zachary Collier, Dr. Donna Y. Ford, and Dr. Ratna Nandakumar

## West Chester University, College of Education and Social Work

2012 Master of Education in Literacy

2008 Post-Baccalaureate in Elementary Education: K-6 Certification 2004 Bachelor of Science in Special Education: K-12 Certification

# ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH POSITIONS

2025-	Assistant Professor in Special Education, University of Connecticut, Neag School of
	Education
2023-2025	Assistant Professor in Special Education, University at Albany, School of Education
2015-2023	Instructor and Assistant Professor, University of Delaware, School of Education
2013-2017	Adjunct Professor, West Chester University, College of Education

## K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHING

Penn Valley Elementary School in the Lower Merion School District Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade Special Education Teacher	2012-2015
Penncrest High School in the Rose Tree Media School District Ninth-Twelfth Grade Special Education and Science Teacher	2007-2012
Octorara Elementary School in the Octorara School District Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade Special Education Teacher	2004-2007

#### RESEARCH AREAS AND METHODS

My research focuses on studying education practices and policies and their impact toward identifying and shaping equitable experiences for students in general and special education. Foci:

- Anti-racist special education practices and policies to prevent resegregation/educational redlining and provide students quality, equitable experiences in special education
- High Quality and justice-based teaching in math/science for students identified with/out disabilities
- Preparation of special education teachers' equity knowledge, skills, and beliefs to teach all students
- Application of QuantCrit in Educational research.

I utilize a variety of research methods, including advanced statistical models (e.g., structural equation modeling), qualitative approaches, and mixed methods.

## **AWARDS AND HONORS**

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## 2022 Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children Dissertation Award

• The purpose of the award is to recognize doctoral students who have focused their research on the preparation of pre-service and in-service educators serving students with disabilities or who have conducted related research having clear implications for the preparation of educators serving students with disabilities.

#### 2022 Frank B. Murray Award for Excellence in Graduate Research

• The Frank B. Murray Award is presented to a PhD candidate in the School of Education whose research demonstrates thoughtfulness and leadership and has the potential to be applied in educational settings. I received this award for my dissertation and teacher preparation research.

#### 2022 Most Valuable Professor Award

• The Most Valuable Professor Award is given to those who had a profound impact on collegiate players at UD. A softball and field hockey player, who I taught in education courses, nominated me.

## 2017 Dr. Rita Fillos Award

• The Dr. Rita M. Fillos Award was established to recognize a staff member at University of Delaware who is pursuing professional development opportunities while making significant contributions to the college. I received this award for my excellence in teaching education courses.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

## **Books**

Connor, D., **Bell, N.S.**, Vélez, V., & Scott, L. (2026). *Researching disability, equity, and inclusion: Actively diversifying the field of Special Education.* Routledge.

# Journal Publications (published/accepted) \*denotes graduate student

- **Bell, N.S.**, & Connor, D. (forthcoming). Civil rights violations in special education: Eliminating educational zones of resegregation. *Urban Education*.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Connor, D., Vélez, V., & Scott, L. (forthcoming). Critical perspectives to diversity special education research: Challenging traditional narratives of objectivity, neutrality, and science. *Race Ethnicity and Education*.
- Ford, D.Y., & **Bell, N.S.** (forthcoming). Disrupting special education resegregation and promoting anti-racist teaching with a critical race counterstory. *Journal of Negro Education*.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Desimone, L.M., Carey, R. & \*Polanco, P. (forthcoming). Anti-Racist and ambitious teaching in math classrooms: A quantCrit analysis of students' perspectives. *Urban Education*.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Carey, R.L., Scott, L., Collier, Z., Eisenman, L., & Vélez, V. (2025). Critical investigation of resegregation patterns in special education: Toward an anti-racist special education model. *Exceptional Children*. DOI: 0.1177/0014402925135872
- **Bell, N.S.**, Velez, V., Ford, D., Collier, Z., Zubaca, N., Salim, S.B., Slusarz, E., Park, S., & Sukumar, J. (accepted-2025). QuantCrit Principles of Practice for Disrupting Racialized Injustices in Special Education. In *Inquiry: Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines*, 34 (1). DOI: 10.5840/inquiryct202551524
- Desimone, L.M., **Bell, N.S.**, \*Lentz, A., Lee, K., & \*Marianno, L. (2025). A holistic examination of how professional learning and curriculum relate to ambitious and culturally relevant instruction

- and student engagement. *American Educational Research Association Open*. DOI: 10.1177/2332858424131042
- Collier, Z. K., \*Sukumar, J., Cao, E., & **Bell, N.S.** (2025). Signaling model misspecification in latent class analysis. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*. DOI: 10.1080/10705511.2024.2435995

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- **Bell, N.S.**, Collier, Z., Vélez, V, & Ford, D.Y. (2024). CritSEM: Advancing QuantCrit to examine racialized resegregation in special education. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 1–34. DOI: 10.1080/19345747.2024.2408538
- **Bell, N. S.**, & Codding, D. (2024). Equity Scenario Response Survey: Understanding teacher candidates' preparation of their sociopolitical identity. *Urban Education*, *59*(3), 878–910. DOI: 10.1177/00420859211027616
- Scott, L. A., & **Bell, N.S.** (2024). Understanding the relationship between race and career intent of teachers serving students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*. DOI: 10.1177/10634266241272028
- Scott, L., **Bell, N.S.**, Bowman, R. W., Evans, I., & Dayton, M. (2023). Factors influencing the attrition and retention of special education teachers based on gender and racial differences. *The Urban Review*. DOI: 10.1007/s11256-023-00670-9
- **Bell, N.S.**, Soslau, E., & Wilson, C. (2022). The Student Teaching Equity Project: Exploring teacher candidates' knowledge, skills, and beliefs. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 73(1), 23–36. DOI: 10.1177/00224871211039849
- Scott, L., **Bell, N.S.**, Dayton, M., Bowman, R. W., Evans, I., Grillo, M., Spence, C., & Layden, S. J. (2022). Special education teachers of color retention decisions: Findings from a national study. *Exceptional Children*, (20220707). DOI: 10.1177/00144029221109850

# Journal Articles (under review or revisions) \*denotes graduate student

- **Bell, N.S.**, Vélez, V., Ford, D.Y., Collier, Z., Slusarz, E., & Martin, M. (under revision). Delaware study of resegregation patterns for behavioral disabilities: The urgency for anti-racist special education practices and policies. *Behavioral Disorders*.
- **Bell, N.S.,** Vélez, V., Collier, Z., Ford, D.Y., & Connor, D. (under review). Educational redlining in special education: Establishing new civil rights protections for Students of Color with/out disabilities. *AERA Open*.
- \*Slusarz, E., & **Bell, N. S.** (under review). Unpacking teacher candidates' sociopolitical identities in inclusive classrooms. *Teacher Education and Special Education*.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Vélez, V., Ford, D.Y., & Collier, Z. (under review). QuantCrit investigation of resegregation patterns case study. *Sage Research Methods*.
- Robertson, A., Mondesir, R., Vélez, V., Stella, S.E., Huỳnh, T. & **Bell. N.S**. (under review). Illustrating that racism intervenes to shape enrollment in introductory physics: A QuantCrit analysis. *Race Ethnicity and Education*.
- Hill, K., Desimone, L.M., & **Bell, N.S.** (under revision). Professional partnerships as a policy mechanism for school improvement: How do partnerships and school context influence teachers' instruction? *Educational Policy*.

- **Bell, N.S.**, Scott, L., Vélez, V., Ford, D.Y., Collier, Z., & Peña, J. (under review). Racial justice in special education: A QuantCrit counterstory to challenge resegregation and inform anti-racist policy and practice. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.
- \*Polanco, C., **Bell, N.S.**, Desimone, L.M., & Carey, R.L. (under review). Does ambitious and social and political teaching foster student engagement? A structural equation modeling comparison of teacher and student perspectives. *Teachers College Record*.
- \*Park, S., & **Bell, N.S.** (under review). Teacher candidates' preparedness to address injustices: Applying critical race theory and QuantCrit in a Korean context. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*.
- \*Park, S., & Bell, N. S. (under review). A QuantCrit mixed-methods study of Korean teacher candidates' equity readiness. *Teachers and Teaching*.

# **Edited Special Issue**

**Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Connor, D., Vélez, V., & Scott, L. (2026-accepted). Guest editor for special issue on Anti-racist and critical perspectives to equitably diversify special education research. *Race Ethnicity and Education*.

#### **Practitioner Articles**

**Bell, N.S.** & Ford, D.Y. (2024). Anti-racist teachers: Disrupting resegregation [overrepresentation] in special education. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*. <a href="https://www.diverseeducation.com/opinion/article/15683971/antiracist-teachers-disrupting-resegregation-overrepresentation-in-special-education.">https://www.diverseeducation.com/opinion/article/15683971/antiracist-teachers-disrupting-resegregation-overrepresentation-in-special-education.</a>

# Conference Presentations\*denotes graduate student

- **Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Collier, Z., & Vélez, V. (under review). Educational redlining in special education: Establishing new Civil rights protections for Students of Color with/out disabilities. *American Educational Research Association*. Los Angeles, CA.
- **Bell, N.S.**, & Connor, D. (under review). Civil rights violations in special education: Eliminating educational zones of resegregation. *Urban Education. American Educational Research Association*. Los Angeles, CA.
- Connor, D., & **Bell, N.S.** (under review). [Symposium]. Anti-racist critical perspectives diversifying special education research: Challenging traditional narratives of objectivity, neutrality, and science. *American Educational Research Association*. Los Angeles, CA.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Desimone, L., & Wilson, J. (2025). QuantCrit investigation examining representation in special education: Intersectionality and school characteristics. *American Educational Research Association*. Denver, CO.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Collier, Z., & Vélez, V. (2025). [Symposium]. A collection of critical race counterstories: Disrupting resegregation in special education using QuantCrit. *American Educational Research Association*. Denver, CO.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Collier, Z., Vélez, V., Connor, D., & \*Slusarz., L. (2025). Confronting traditions in special education: Towards cultivating anti-racist and anti-ableist perspectives. *American Educational Research Association*. Denver, CO.

- Vélez, V., **Bell, N.S.**, Collier, Z., Ford, D.Y., Martin, M., \*Salim, S., & \*Sukumar, J. (2025). Challenging "Color-lines" in special education via GIS: Anti-racist possibilities to disrupt zones of resegregation. *American Educational Research Association*. Denver, CO.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Collier, Z., Ford, D.Y., Vélez, V., \*Sukumar, J. & \*Salim, S. (2025). Evidence of anti-racist teachers: Disrupting the racialized practice of resegregation in special education. *American Educational Research Association*. Denver, CO.
- Ellis-Robinson, T., & **Bell, N.B.** (2025). Forging a model for antiracist inclusive special education classrooms: Practices for professional learning and preparation. *Teacher Education Division Council of the Exceptional Children*. Pittsburgh, PA.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Vélez, V., & Collier, Z. (2025). CritSEM: Advancing QuantCrit to examine racialized resegregation in special education. *Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness*. *Baltimore*, *MD*.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Connor, D., & Scott, L. (2024). Critical perspectives to diversity special education research: Challenging traditional narratives of objectivity, neutrality, and science. *American Educational Research Association*. Philadelphia, PA.
- Polanco, P., **Bell, N.S.**, Desimone, L., & Carey, R. (2023). Students' perceptions of culturally relevant and ambitious teaching in mathematics. *American Educational Research Association*. Chicago, IL.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Vélez, V., & Collier, Z. (2023). Applying and extending QuantCrit: Research on overrepresentation in special education. *American Educational Research Association*. Chicago, IL.
- **Bell, N.S.**, Ford, D.Y., Carey, R., Scott, L., Collier, Z., & Eisenman, L. (2023). Critical investigation of overrepresentation: Developing an equitable, anti-racist special education model. *American Educational Research Association*. Chicago, IL.
- Scott, L., & Bell, N.S. (2023). In A. Emery (Chair), Learning and motivation research inclusive of disability. [Symposium]. *American Educational Research Association*, Chicago, IL.
- **Bell, N.S.**, & Scott, L., Ford, D.Y. (2022). Transformative mixed-methods synthesis: Developing an equitable, anti-racist special Education model. *Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children*. Richmond, VA.
- **Bell, N.S.** (2022). Critical Investigation of overrepresentation in special education. *Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children*. Richmond, VA.
- **Bell, N.S.** (2022). Qualitative meta-analysis on overrepresentation in special education. *American Educational Research Association*. San Diego, CA.
- Scott, L., & **Bell, N.S.** (2022). Teaching during the covid-19 pandemic. *American Educational Research Association*. San Diego, CA.
- Scott, L., & **Bell, N.S.** (2021). Factors associated with special education teachers of color attrition and retention. *Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children*. Fort Worth, TX.
- **Bell, N.S.**, & Codding, D. (2021). Equity Scenario Response Survey: Understanding teacher candidates' preparation of their sociopolitical identity. *American Educational Research Association*. Orlando, FL.

- Codding, D., & **Bell, N.S.** (2021). Applying humanizing pedagogy in a reflexive analysis of sociopolitical identity among teacher candidates. *American Educational Research Association*. Orlando, FL.
- **Bell, N.S.**, & Codding, D. (2020). Equity Scenario Response Scale: Measuring preservice teachers' equity knowledge and skills. *American Educational Research Association*. San Francisco, CA. Conference canceled.
- Kotch-Jester, S., & Bell, N.S. (2020). Equity-Focused Conferencing Protocol. *American Educational Research Association*. San Francisco, CA. Conference canceled.
- **Bell, N.S., &** Codding, D. (2020). Measuring preservice teachers' knowledge and skills and validating the Equity Scenario Response Scale. *American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education*. Atlanta, GA.
- Kotch-Jester, S., & Bell, N.S. (2020). Equity-focused conference protocol: Developing student teachers' awareness and agency. *Association of Teacher Educators*. Atlantic City, NJ.
- **Bell, N.S..**, & Soslau, E. (2019). Exploring measures of equity competence: Can equity-focused teacher preparation make a difference? *American Educational Research Association*. Toronto, CA.
- Soslau, E., & **Bell, N.S.** (2018). Rethinking the student teaching curriculum to support the development of racial literacy. *American Educational Research Association*. New York, NY.
- **Bell, N.S.**, & Soslau, E. (2018). Preparing equity-focused pre-service teachers: Exploring outcomes of the Student Teaching Equity Project (STEP). *American Educational Research Association*, New York, NY.
- Soslau, E., & **Bell, N.S.** (2017). Managing racial stress while educating white teacher candidates: A self-study. *American Educational Research Association*. San Antonio, TX.
- Soslau, E., & **Bell, N.S.** (2017). Re-thinking the student teaching curriculum: Using field-based instruction to help candidates notice, acknowledge, and address bias in the classroom. *The European Conference on Education*. Brighton, England, UK.

#### **Grants Awarded**

# 2025-2026 Spencer Foundation: Conference Grant (\$15, 000)

QuantCrit Policy Center for Community-Responsive Quantitative Research: Building Research Models and Local Collaborations to Advance Civil Rights Protections for Students of Color

• Using quantitative tools, we seek to conduct bold transformative, justice-based research to (re)establish Civil Rights protections for Students of Color. We argue that current educational policies and practices, especially in special education, deny Students of Color access to an equitable education, while simultaneously divesting in their educational futures. Collectively, these efforts pose a threat to civil rights protections and to the principles articulated in Brown v. Board (1954) and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To challenge this context, we aim to examine, interrogate, and challenge the misuse of statistical approaches in special education research (that undergird policy development), and offer community-responsive quantitative and computational methods that advance anti-racist research in the field. Therefore, we are holding a convening that brings together critical scholars to design and start a QuantCrit Policy Center focused on community-responsive quantitative and computational research

## 2024-2026 Spencer Foundation: Racial Equity Research Grant (\$75,000)

Advancing QuantCrit Methods in Special Education Research

• This investigation focuses on anti-racist research, in partnership with the Delaware Department of Education. Currently, we are examining the extent that anti-racist teachers can disrupt zones of resegregation in special education by applying QuantCrit via innovative data analytical models to analyze Delaware administrative data. Next, we aim to understand how key stakeholders (e.g., superintendents and legislators) in the state of Delaware, based on investigative findings, plan to exercise their agency and act.

Principal Investigator: Nicholas Bell

Co-Principal Investigators: Zach Collier and Verónica Vélez

# 2021-2023 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Grant (\$1.5 million)

Professional Learning Partnership Study, Research on Curricular Aligned Partnerships

• We conducted a study, involving 12 school districts across the country serving 50% or more Black and Latinx students, to examine districts' efforts to improve instruction through curriculum and professional learning focused on culturally relevant and ambitious math teaching.

Principal Investigator: Laura Desimone

Role: Senior Researcher, Project Manager, and Quantitative Methodologist

# **Grants and Research Funding (under review or not funded)**

# 2026 American Psychological Foundation: Visionary Grants (\$20, 000)

Critical Race Spatial Mapping: Disrupting Zones of Resegregation in Special Education (under review)

Our project seeks to disrupt structural limitations in schooling at the intersection of race and disability, especially for Black and Latinx youth, to amplify educational opportunities that enable every student to reach their fullest potential, without the threat of resegregation in special education.

# 2026-2031 Office of Special Education Programs: Preparation of Leadership Personnel Competition Grant

Project Seeds at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (under review)

Project Seeds will prepare future researchers, teacher trainers, and policy leaders with a focus
on equity who in turn will prepare and support professionals to advocate and successfully offer
services to individuals with disabilities.

Principal Investigator: Catherine Corr *Role:* Advisory Board and Mentor

# 2025-2030 NSF: Racial Equity in STEM Grant (\$4, 629, 999)

Transforming Access to Quality STEM Education for Black and Latinx Students by Challenging Resegregation in Special Education: A QuantCrit Analysis (under review)

• For this grant, we propose the development of a CritEd R package that applies QuantCrit to unique data analytical approaches. We will collaborate with students in the Justice League at a local Delaware School District to develop the R package and analyze state-wide data about how antiracist practices and policies in special education disrupt resegregation patterns to promote high quality STEM experiences for Black and Latinx students. Further, this grant will study how the school district uses these findings to make critical changes in policy and practice.

Principal Investigator: Nicholas Bell

Co-Principal Investigators: Zachary Collier, Verónica Vélez, Chrystalla Mouza, and Nermin Zubaca

\*Proposal scored competitive by review panel but it did not align with current priorities

Delaware Department of Ed	ucation Data, 2008-2023
Civil Rights Data Collection	n, NCES Restricted Data
Early Childhood Longitudin	al Study-2011, NCES Restricted Data
National Assessment of Edu	icational Progress, NCES Restricted Data

University at Albany	2023-
ESPE 887 (S24): Applying QuantCrit in Educational Research	
ESPE 652 (S24): Anti-Racist Math Instruction for Students with Disabilities	
ESPE 560 (S24): Introduction to Human Exceptionality	
ESPE 652 (F23): Anti-Racist Math Instruction for Students with Disabilities	

## **University of Delaware**

CV

EDUC 400: Student Teaching

EDUC 433: Equity-Focused Student Teaching Seminar

EDUC 437: Diagnosis and Instruction for Literacy

EDUC 400: Student Teaching

EDUC 419/619: Diversity in Secondary Education

EDUC 691: Applied Statistics and Research Design

EDUC 667: Introduction to Statistics

EDUC 867: Simulation and Bayesian Analysis

# **West Chester University**

2013-2017

2015-2023

2022-2019-2019-2019-

EDA 203: Students with Exceptionalities

EDA 303: Special Ed: Processes/Procedures for General Educators

EDA 304: Special Ed Processes/Procedures for Secondary Educators

EDA 314: Curriculum and Instruction Individual Learning Differences I

EDA 421: Curriculum and Instruction Individual Learning Differences II and Field

EDA 582: Special Education Field and Seminar

# **Advising and Mentoring**

#### PhD Advisee

• Sumaita Salim, School of Education, University at Albany (2023-2025)

#### **Dissertation Committee Member**

- Sojung Park, School of Education, University at Albany (2025-)
- Elizabeth Slusarz, School of Education, University at Albany (2025-)
- Sydney Kriner, Biomechanics and Movement Science, University of Delaware (2024-)
- Camila Polanco, Human Development and Family Services, University of Delaware (2023-205)
- Dennis Williams, School of Education and Human Development, University of Virginia (2024-2025)

#### **MEd Advisees**

• Six Students in Special Education Programs, University at Albany (2023-2025)

#### **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Grant** (2021-2024)

• Mentored four PhD students in structural equation modeling and/or culturally relevant teaching at the University of Delaware as part of my role on the grant

## **Research Graduate Assistants and Apprenticeships**

• Mentoring four graduate (PhD) students on my research projects at the University at Albany (2023-)

#### **SERVICE**

#### **University Service**

- Diversity Equity Inclusion and Justice/Climate Committee (University at Albany)
- Chair of Research Subcommittee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (University at Albany)
- Research for Equity Symposium (University at Albany)
- Co-Chair of 2020-2021 Colloquium Series: Disability, Race, and Education (University of Delaware)
- Co-Leader of CRAFT (Creating Real Advocates Fostering Togetherness): Equity Inquiry Groups for Teacher Academy Students and Teacher Candidates from University of Delaware, Wilmington University, and Delaware State University in collaboration with Delaware Department of Education
- Co-Leader of Equity-Focused Professional Learning in a Delaware school district (University of Delaware)

#### **University Committees**

- PhD Committee (University at Albany)
- School of Education/Climate Committee (University at Albany)
- Equity Committee for School of Education (University of Delaware)
- Teacher Academy Committee (University of Delaware)
- University Council on Teacher Education Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Committee: School of Education Representative (University of Delaware)
- Capstone Committee Chair (University of Delaware)
- Welfare Committee (University of Delaware)

#### **Professional Service**

- Teacher Education Division CEC: Disproportionality Modules for Teacher Preparation/Education
- Equity Inquiry Group in School of Education (faculty and staff), University of Delaware

#### **Conference and Journal Reviews**

• Exceptional Children Journal: Ad hoc reviewer	2024-
• Review of Educational Research: Ad hoc reviewer	2024-
Remedial and Special Education: Ad hoc reviewer	2021-
• Journal of Teacher Education: Ad hoc reviewer	2020-
• Professional Development in Education: Ad hoc reviewer	2022-
• Conference Reviewer: AERA (Division K, D)	2015-
• Conference Reviewer: AERA (Special and Inclusive Education Research Sig)	2024-
• Education and Urban Society: Board of Reviewers	2021-2024
• International Journal of Educational Reform: Board of Reviewers	2021-2024

# **Invited Speaking Engagements**

• Transformative Vision of Special Education (AERA's online speakers series)	
• CritSEM Lecture (Critical Data Science For a Diverse World Conference)	2025
• Resegregation Research Lecture (University of Delaware)	
• Anti-Racism in Special Education Lecture (Rutgers)	2025