

## How Do White Students Learn About Race? A SOTL Investigation of What's Going on When Students Move from Emotional Reactivity to Racial Understanding

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This SOTL project was one part of an ongoing investigation into the question: How do white students learn about race? Using a methodology of systematic self-observation students were invited to journal about their experience of “racial moments.” Data analysis focused on exploring the process of what’s going on when students move from emotional reactivity to racial understanding. Findings include the following: 1.) Students reported learning from the process of noticing and reflecting on racial moments 2.) The process of learning involved noticing thoughts, feelings and assumptions; engaging in a process of questioning; being able to stay with the process even in the face of uncomfortable feelings and not-knowing; and often not really coming to a place of resolution, but opening the door to even more questioning and reflection. 3.) One aspect of student learning was movement away from an unconscious racialized worldview toward consciously using race as an interpretative lens. Although metacognitive awareness of thoughts and feelings seems to be an essential foundation for this process, new information about race and the normative dominance of whiteness helped students critically think about race.

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