



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Priority Submission Deadline: Monday, January 8, 2024 (Midnight, EST)

Last Call for Submissions: Friday, February 2, 2024 (Midnight, EST)

In Person Conference April 8-10, 2024

Monday 10amEST, April 8, 2024 – Wednesday Noon, April 10, 2024

Arcadia University, Glenside, PA, USA

Online Conference April 26, 2026

Friday, April 26, 2024 Online

Curriculum Studies and Questioning Liberty

This year, AAACS will convene conferences once again alternating between the physical place and the virtual space. The first, our 2023 AAACS place-based conference, commences in the welcoming environment of Arcadia University, just north of Philadelphia. This conference will precede AERA. The second, our 2023 AAACS Online Conference, will shortly follow. Place and space are embedded in our scholarly work, providing diverse possibilities for representation, and we will continue to support both modalities for the benefit of our scholarly community.

Philadelphia, in a “Unitedstatesian” (Jupp, 2023) context, is known historically by some as ‘the cradle of liberty.’ It is a significantly demarcated location, rife with possibility for launching complicated conversations around freedom, choice, and a subtheme of our conference, liberty. The notion of liberty is historically fraught, as at its inception in the U.S. context, it was only intended for some, and is contemporarily a perilous concept. As we see insurrectionists claim rights denied to others, the galvanization of movements around stripping long fought-for rights from minoritized groups, and as we live and gather on unceded ancestral lands of people continuously denied sovereignty, we see our physical place as holding “multiple meanings, literal and symbolic” (Pinar, et al., 2008), and look forward to conference presentations and discussions interrogating the construct of liberty.

In the current climate, liberty *is* contentious. We welcome proposals that look to the past, but seek clearer understanding of this present moment, with determination and hope for a benevolent future. Presently, we see continued book bans, legislative attacks against LGBTQIA+ individuals, assaults on critical race theory and anything promoting acceptance of diverse ideas and perspectives, and ever more duplicitous demands by extremist organizations

on school boards. Additionally, we see continued fear, trepidation, and profiteering over the condition of “learning loss,” with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and teacher shortages not yet in the rearview mirror, along with further rigidity in what is called curriculum in schools.

We are interested in research and theorizing what Robert Helfenbein (2021) calls “spaces of possibility,” in which “an openness to the bounds of behavior enable[s] broader identity work and new social structures,” or what might be called assemblages (p. 51). Such spaces of possibility become visible when we do not impose fixed borders to what counts as a learning space, where individuals and groups might, “interrogate and negotiate social forces acting upon them” (p. 52). As such, we invite proposals exploring how art extends public activism including film, media, and other visual and performing arts, popular culture studies, and embodied curriculum as spaces of possibility. We are curious about public and private spaces of possibility and how, as Helfenbein writes, we might open up the borders of “what counts” as we consider curriculum.

As Hongyu Wang (2010) reminds us, “*What is not* makes possible *what is*” (p. 376). Wang encourages us to overcome our fears and move “over the edge of darkness” as she asks us, “*Is not curriculum – currere – about movement, moving out of the frozen state, moving toward what is yet to come?*” (pp. 375-376). In light of the darkness of our current moment, we seek proposals exploring how curriculum studies informs possibilities for actions and moving forward.

Additional questions that we ask our membership to consider in this call include:

- In what ways might spaces of possibility (see Helfenbein, 2021) bring us a sense of hope? How might we theorize about spaces of possibility as imbued with the potential for hope? What are ways we are seeing hope spring from spaces of possibility in our research and teaching?
- How might we understand liberty in the U.S. context given painful histories of denials of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for so many?
- How might we respond to the narrowing and further standardization of K-12 curricula (i.e., how might new literacies respond to the rigidity of the Science of Reading movement)? What does it mean to embrace fluidity with increasing calls for rigidity and standardization?
- How might we consider the continuing development and evolution of artificial intelligence as we consider spaces of possibility and rootedness in the varied places where we engage in curricular work?
- As we consider varied geographies, virtual spaces, creation of communities, etc., why does place matter? Why does consideration of spaces matter?
- Connelly (2013) defines a “site of activity” as “a complex system involving teachers, students, curricular content, social settings, and all manner of impinging matters ranging from the local to the international. It is a system that needs to be understood systemically” (p. ix). He goes on to state that, “The question is [...] how it all works together.” How might we consider “sites of activity” as “spaces of possibility”? How can we offer critiques of such sites as we know them today? How might such sites in educational contexts as we know them be transformed into “spaces of possibility”?

Presentation Formats:

We also welcome presentations, panels, and proposals for sessions exploring other issues relevant to curriculum studies and concerns of curriculum theory broadly. We welcome proposals for single papers, collaborative presentations, panels, round tables, posters for an all-conference poster session, and we invite proposals for alternative formats. We continue to encourage multiple modes of engaging with sharing ideas through formatting such as podcasts, short documentaries, comics, performance, or additional creative formats.

Specifically, we encourage proposals in the following alternative formats:

1. *Virtual Poster Session*: Building on last year's successful virtual poster session, we encourage proposals for a poster session that will be available for viewing online. You will work closely with our AAACS Secretary, Sandra Vanderbilt, to make your work available for viewing over the days of the in person and virtual conferences including a short video of your explanation of your work. There will also be time for conference attendees to interact with poster authors at both conferences (please note, if you are only planning to attend one conference, we welcome your poster presentation).
2. *Book Review Panels*: We welcome proposals for panels responding to recently published books including the author of the text.
3. *Arts and Media*: We also hope to see proposals taking up new ways of sharing ideas, disseminating research findings, and opening up possibilities for theorizing through arts and media that can be shared at or before the conference times as a way to engage your audience.

Graduate Student Council

This year, we are excited to announce the reinvigoration of the Graduate Student Council. The AAACS Graduate Student Council will work closely with AAACS Secretary, Sandra Vanderbilt, and Program Chair, Toni Carmichael, in conference planning and organization. This is an exciting opportunity to be involved with and close to the inner workings of the association and new work in curriculum studies. Please see the full call for the council and [application link](#).

See Proposal Guide for Submission Requirements and Links on p. 6.



Curriculum Studies and Spaces of Possibility
Friday, April 26, 2024 Online

We are excited to welcome proposals for our 4th Annual Online Conference, which we hope will continue to bring opportunities to engage with scholarship and thinking together from across the globe. We are also committed to finding ways to increase accessibility in our conference spaces, and we see the virtual space as imbued with possibility in this way. As an association that has explicitly valued curriculum studies from diverse geographies, cultures, and histories with our Taskforce on the Internationalization of Curriculum Studies, we value and want to continue to hold a space for an international focus in AAACS. With this, we will hold a separate and, yet, closely connected virtual conference less than three weeks after our place-based conference with an emphasis on internationalization.

Our online conference will extend this call with an explicitly international focus engaging in, as the Taskforce emphasizes, surveying, analyzing, translating (where necessary), interpreting, and sharing the work of curriculum theorists, scholars, and contributors who work outside of the North American context.

We welcome proposals for this year's online conference focused on places and spaces of possibility seeing place as holding "multiple meanings, literal and symbolic" (Pinar, et al., 2008), as we look to the past, to understand our present moment, and to hope for possibilities in the future. In the U.S. context we see continued book bans, legislative attacks against LGBTQIA+ individuals, assaults on critical race theory and anything promoting acceptance of diversity of any kind, school boards acquiescing to the demands of extremist outside political organizers, discussions of learning loss with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and teacher shortages, and further rigidity in what is called curriculum in schools. As we host from this context, we are interested in proposals highlighting issues of place and space in other geographies across the globe as well as within the U.S. context.

We are interested in research and theorizing what Robert Helfenbein (2021) calls "spaces of possibility," in which "an openness to the bounds of behavior enable[s] broader identity work and new social structures" or what might be called assemblages (p. 51). Such spaces of possibility become visible when we do not impose fixed borders to what counts as a learning space, where individuals and groups might, "interrogate and negotiate social forces acting upon them" (p. 52). As such, we invite proposals exploring how art extends public activism including film, media, and other visual and performing arts, popular culture studies, and embodied curriculum as a space of possibility. We are curious about public and private spaces of possibility and how, as Helfenbein writes, we might open up the borders of "what counts" as we consider curriculum.

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- How might we understand liberty in the U.S. context and globally given painful histories of denials of liberty historically and presently for so many?
- What does it mean to embrace fluidity and openness as we consider curriculum in schooling for young people?
- How might we consider the continuing development and evolution of artificial intelligence as we consider spaces of possibility and rootedness in the varied places where we engage in curricular work?
- As we consider varied geographies, virtual spaces, creation of communities, etc., why does place matter? Why does consideration of spaces matter?
- Connelly (2013) defines a “site of activity” as “a complex system involving teachers, students, curricular content, social settings, and all manner of impinging matters ranging from the local to the international. It is a system that needs to be understood systemically” (p. ix). He goes on to state that, “The question is [...] how it all works together.” How might we consider “sites of activity” as “spaces of possibility”? How can we offer critiques of such sites as we know them today? How might such sites in educational contexts as we know them be transformed into “spaces of possibility”?

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2024 AAACS Proposal Guide

- To submit your proposal:
 - Use the following [link for the place-based conference](#) at Arcadia April 8-10
 - Use the following [link for the online conference](#) April 26
 - Proposals will include a maximum 500 word abstract (excluding references)
- For questions/inquiry regarding the conference and/or call for proposals, please email conference and program committee at: aaacsandconference@gmail.com
- Proposal Acceptance email for priority deadline sent early February.
- After the proposal acceptance email is sent, more details will follow concerning the 2024 AAACS conference program and registration.

The American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (AAACS), a non-profit organization since 2017—the American affiliate of the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS)—was established to support a "worldwide"—but not "uniform"—field of curriculum studies. Our hope, in establishing this organization, is to provide organizational support for a rigorous and scholarly conversation within and across national and regional borders regarding the content, context, and process of education, the organizational and intellectual center of which is the curriculum.

References

Connelly, F.M. (2013). Foreword. In: Deng, Z., Gopinathan, S. & Lee, C. K. E. (Eds.), *Globalization and the Singapore curriculum: From policy to classroom* (pp. vii-xii). Springer.

Helpfenbein, R. (2021). *Critical geographies of education: Space, place and curriculum inquiry*. Routledge.

Jupp, J. (2023). Introduction to itinerant curriculum theory. In J. C. Jupp (Ed.), *Itinerant curriculum theory: Decolonial praxes, theories, and histories* (pp. 1-28). Peter Lang.

Pinar, W., Reynolds, W., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. (2008). *Understanding curriculum: An introduction to the study of historical and contemporary curriculum discourses*. Peter Lang.

Wang, H. (2010). Intimate revolt and third possibilities: Cocreating a creative curriculum. In Malewski, E. (Ed.), *Curriculum studies handbook: The next moment* (374-386). Routledge.