

NEH Landmarks Grant Program: The Long Road from *Brown v. Board of Education*

A *tentative* day-by-day program of study, July 2017

All morning sessions will begin at 9 a.m., and afternoon sessions will end by approximately 5:30 p.m. When the first morning session is at a historic site, NEH scholars will depart by charter bus from the front of the Cary & Belvidere Street dormitory (the Cary St. side) on the VCU campus.

**Sunday's Essential Question**

*Why should we care about Brown v. Board of Education and school desegregation in Virginia?*

**Sunday Evening**

**Orientation**

Topic: Welcome!  
Description: NEH scholars will meet one another, the project co-directors, and staff members  
Faculty: Drs. Yonghee Suh & Brian Daugherty  
Time: 2:00-3:00 p.m.  
Location: VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building

**Session 01**

Topic: School Desegregation in Virginia in the Context of U.S. History  
Description: Dr. Peter Wallenstein will present an overview of the history of school desegregation in Virginia within the stream of U.S history, from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement. He will also discuss the significance of *Brown* and its implementation process on the current policy and practice in U.S. public schools.  
Faculty: Dr. Peter Wallenstein  
Time: 3:00-4:30 p.m.  
Location: VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building  
Readings: Wallenstein, *Cradle of America*, chapters 23 & 24

**Session 02**

Topic: *Brown*, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Use of the Past  
Description: Dr. Gabriel Reich will discuss how the dominant narrative of the Civil Rights Movement, starting from *Brown* in 1954 and ending with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, has been shaped by ideology and political contestation, and how that narrative is circulated in textbooks, museums, public rituals, and various artifacts of mass media.



Faculty: Dr. Gabriel Reich  
Time: 4:30-6:00 p.m.  
Location: VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building  
Readings: Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Use of the Past," and: King, "Teaching Black History as a Racial Literacy Project" OR Epstein, "Adolescents' Perspectives on Racial Diversity in U.S. History."

### Monday's Essential Questions

*Why did African Americans in Virginia seek the end of segregated education? How did school desegregation in Virginia impact African American education and educators?*

#### Monday Morning

**8 a.m., Charter bus departs from the front of the Cary & Belvidere Street dorm**

#### Session 03

Topic: Improving African American Education Before *Brown*  
Description: In this session, Dr. Luranett L. Lee will discuss how African American communities made efforts to improve African American education prior to the *Brown* decision, in particular by training and producing quality African American teachers. She will also outline the unintended consequences of school desegregation, including the demotion or dismissal of African American educators in the 1950s and 1960s because of the integration of African American and white schools.

Faculty: Dr. Luranett L. Lee  
Time: 9:00-10:30 a.m.  
Location: Virginia State University (VSU)  
Readings: Miller & Gregg, "Teaching Staff," and Randolph & Sanders, "In Search of Excellence in Education: The Political, Academic, and Curricular Leadership of Ethel T. Overby"

#### Session 04

Topic: Tour of VSU Campus (Teacher Preparation Program)  
Description: NEH scholars will learn how African American teacher training was done in the 1940s by visiting historic buildings at Virginia State University.

Faculty: Dr. Luranett L. Lee & Mr. Lucious Edwards  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Location: Charter bus / VSU campus



## Monday Afternoon

### Session 05

Topic: Archival Work  
Description: NEH scholars will spend time with Mr. Lucious Edwards, Jr., Archivist Emeritus of Special Collections and Archives at VSU. Mr. Edwards will share the manuscript collections of the Virginia Teachers Association Papers and the Prince Edward County Free Schools. He will also give an overview to the NEH scholars about how to use archives to find primary sources for teaching.  
Faculty: Mr. Lucious Edwards, Jr.  
Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m.  
Location: Special Collections and Archives Building, and then Engineering Building, Virginia State University (VSU)

### Session 06

Topic: Curriculum Project  
Description: NEH scholars will be introduced to their curriculum project by the program mentor teachers. In small groups, NEH scholars will brainstorm ideas for their curriculum projects. NEH scholars will be encouraged to work with other teachers to create their lessons for the project. At the end of this session, NEH scholars will share the essential question/focus of their curriculum project lessons.  
Faculty: Dr. Yonghee Suh & Mentor Teachers  
Time: 4:00-5:30 p.m.  
Location: VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building

## Tuesday's Essential Questions

*How did school desegregation play out at the local level? How does the story of Prince Edward County fit into the story of school desegregation in Virginia?*

## Tuesday Morning

**7:30 a.m., Charter bus departs from the front of the Cary & Belvidere Street dorm**

### Session 07

Topic: 1951 Student Strike and *Davis v. Prince Edward School Board*  
Description: NEH scholars will learn about the 1951 student strike and the



*Davis v. Prince Edward County School Board* lawsuit that became one of the five cases involved in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Dr. Larissa Smith Ferguson will present the history of R. R. Moton High School (now a museum) and the significance of the 1951 student strike in the broader context of the Civil Rights Movement.

Faculty: Dr. Larissa Smith Ferguson  
Time: 9:00-10:30 a.m.  
Location: R. R. Moton Museum, Farmville, VA  
Readings: Kluger, *Simple Justice*, chapters 19 & 20

### Session 08

Topic: Tour of R. R. Moton Museum  
Description: NEH scholars will have a guided tour of the R. R. Moton Museum to learn about the 1951 student strike and the *Davis v. Prince Edward County School Board* lawsuit. Scholars will tour six galleries that feature the 1951 student strike, life under the “separate but equal” policy, the *Davis* case, Massive Resistance, the closed school era, and the reopening of the public schools in 1964.

Faculty: Dr. Larissa Smith Ferguson  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Location: R. R. Moton Museum, Farmville, VA

## Tuesday Afternoon

### Session 09

Topic: Tour of Downtown Farmville and Longwood University  
Description: NEH scholars will visit historic sites such as the First Baptist Church and the Methodist church where African American educators and leaders gathered for their meetings, as well as selected locations in Longwood University.

Faculty: Dr. Larissa Smith Ferguson  
Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m.  
Location: Charter bus / Longwood University, The First Baptist Church, Downtown Farmville, VA

### Session 10

Topic: Primary Sources at the Library of Virginia  
Description: NEH scholars will work with Catherine Fitzgerald Wyatt, a Librarian for the Library of Virginia, who will discuss how to locate appropriate primary sources and use them to create and teach lessons on school desegregation. Focusing on primary



sources from the Virginia Memory digital database of the Library of Virginia, this session will also cover the division in Virginia's society over the issue of school desegregation and how Virginians responded in different ways to *Brown*.

Faculty: Ms. Catherine Fitzgerald Wyatt  
Time: 4:00-5:30 p.m.  
Location: The Library of Virginia

### Wednesday's Essential Questions

*How did the process of school desegregation proceed in the South? How did the status of school desegregation change in the early 1960s?*

#### Wednesday Morning

#### Session 11

Topic: Massive Resistance to School Desegregation  
Description: NEH scholars will learn about the state of Virginia's response to *Brown v. Board of Education*, focusing on the adoption of Massive Resistance laws in 1956 and their revision over time, as well as the impact of Massive Resistance on the Civil Rights Movement and racial relations in Virginia and the South.  
Faculty: Dr. Brian Daugherty  
Time: 9:00-10:30 a.m.  
Location: VCU, 701 West Grace Building  
Readings: Daugherty, *Keep on Keeping On*, chapter 3  
Klarman, *The Backlash Thesis*

#### Session 12

Topic: Tour of the Capitol Grounds and Virginia Civil Rights Memorial  
Description: This will be a walking/bus tour of downtown Richmond. More specifically, NEH scholars will visit the Capitol Building where Massive Resistance legislation was adopted, as well as the Virginia Civil Rights Memorial, which includes a statue of R. R. Moton High School student Barbara Johns, who organized and led the 1951 student strike. We will also visit the statue of Governor (and later U.S. Senator) Harry F. Byrd, Sr., the architect of Massive Resistance, as well as other historic sites, time permitting.  
Faculty: Dr. Brian Daugherty  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Location: Charter bus / Downtown Richmond, VA

#### Wednesday Afternoon

#### Session 13



Topic: Archival Work  
Description: NEH scholars will visit Special Collections and Archives of Virginia Commonwealth University and explore primary sources, including the Voices of Freedom collection as well as documents from Edward H. Peeples, Helen Baker, Heslip M. Lee, and others who participated in or were witness to efforts to desegregate the schools in Richmond and surrounding areas. Dr. Wesley Chenault, head of VCU Special Collections, will lead a discussion on how to find various types of primary sources, such as personal papers or visual and audio sources, at archives, libraries, and museums.  
Faculty: Dr. Wesley Chenault & Ray Bonis  
Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m.  
Location: VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building

### Session 14

Topic: Oral History and Teachers in the Movement  
Description: Dr. Alridge will discuss how African American teachers taught, in both segregated and desegregated schools, as well as how those same teachers participated in social activism during the Civil Rights era of the 1960s. He will also share his perspective on oral history as a method of preserving and telling stories about the past, specifically the history of school desegregation in Virginia and the Civil Rights Movement.  
Faculty: Dr. Derrick Alridge  
Time: 2:45-4:15 p.m.  
Location: VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building  
Reading: Chafe, "The Gods Brings Threads to Webs Begun"  
Alridge, "The Dilemmas, Challenges, and Duality of an African American Educational Historian"

### Thursday's Essential Questions

*How did the status of school desegregation in the South change in the late 1960s, and why?  
What were the pros and cons of school integration for African Americans in the South and elsewhere?*

**Thursday Morning**

**8 a.m., Charter bus departs from the front of the Cary & Belvidere Street dorm**

### Session 15



Topic: Neither White Nor Black Schools, Just Schools (*Green v. County School Board of New Kent, Virginia*, 1968)

Description: Dr. Jody Allen will provide a lecture that sets the context for school integration in Virginia and will specifically talk about *Green v. New Kent County*, a 1968 U.S. Supreme Court decision that ended “freedom of choice” school desegregation plans and accelerated school desegregation in Virginia and throughout the nation.

Faculty: Dr. Jody Allen

Time: 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Location: New Kent County High School (7365 Egypt Road, New Kent, VA 23124)

Readings: Allen and Daugherity, *Recovering a Lost Story*  
Allen, Daugherity, and Trembanis, New Kent County Lesson Plan

### Session 16

Topic: Tour of George W. Watkins School and New Kent School

Description: NEH scholars will tour two historic schools in New Kent County: the George W. Watkins School, the all-black school at the time, and the New Kent School, the all-white school at the time. Scholars will learn about inequities in educational opportunities for African American and white students in Virginia in the mid-twentieth century as well as the process of school desegregation in New Kent County.

Faculty: Drs. Jody Allen & Brian Daugherity

Time: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Location: Charter bus / New Kent County sites

### Thursday Afternoon

### Session 17

Topic: Memories of *Brown* and *Green*

Description: NEH scholars will meet with former students from both the George W. Watkins and New Kent Schools. The former students will share their experiences going to school in the county in the 1950s and 1960s. NEH scholars will also have an opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussion with the students on what race relations and educational opportunities were like in New Kent County at the time of the *Green* lawsuit and afterward.

Faculty: Drs. Jody Allen & Brian Daugherity

Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Location: Watkins Elementary School (11705 New Kent Highway, New Kent, VA, 23124), auditorium



## Session 18

Topic:	Curriculum Project
Description:	NEH scholars will complete their curriculum projects and have them ready for presentation on Friday. Mentor teachers will assist them. After this session, scholars will have time to work on their lesson plans individually or in small groups.
Faculty:	Drs. Yonghee Suh & Brian Daugherty
Time:	4:00-5:30 p.m.
Location:	VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building

## Friday's Essential Questions

*How did political and judicial changes affect the process of school desegregation in the 1970s and thereafter? What are some of the successes and challenges of school integration in the present day?*

### Friday Morning

### Session 19

Topic:	60 Years Since <i>Brown</i>
Description:	Dr. Charles Ford, co-author of the book, <i>Elusive Equality: Desegregation and Resegregation in Norfolk's Public Schools</i> (2012), will talk about the triumphs and tragedies of <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> and school desegregation in Virginia. Based on his research, Dr. Ford will reflect on the legacies of <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> and discuss why public school desegregation was such a contested affair that was abandoned after a brief moment of success.
Faculty:	Dr. Charles Ford
Time:	9:00-10:30 a.m.
Location:	VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building
Readings:	Ford and Littlejohn, <i>Elusive Equality</i> , chapters 5 & 6

### Friday Morning

### Session 20

Topic:	Curriculum Project
Description:	NEH scholars will present and exchange feedback on the lessons they created for their curriculum projects.
Faculty:	Drs. Yonghee Suh, Brian Daugherty, and Mentor Teachers
Time:	10:30-12:00 p.m.
Location:	VCU, Academic Learning Commons Building

