



Decolonising Biological Sciences Blackboard Space: A case study

Student Contributors: Kamara Venner and Sophia Saleki
Staff Supervisors: David Lawson & Celine Petitjean

Decolonising Biological Sciences at Bristol

Since 2021, the School of Biological Sciences has undertaken a number of Decolonisation-related projects:

- **Student Curriculum Developers Summer 2021**
Student-led Curriculum Audits
- **Student Decolonisation Partners 21/22**
Student surveys/focus groups
Developed online discussion and resource space
- **Staff Eye View of Decolonising the Curriculum 21/22**
Staff focus groups and surveys
- **Student Decolonisation Partners 22/23**
Quantifying demographics of highlighted researchers

Here we discuss one of the outputs from our Student Decolonisation Partners 21/22, where staff and student partners developed an online discussion and resource space on Blackboard.

1: Development



The blackboard space was developed by Kamara Venner and Sophia Saleki, the two Students Decolonisation Partners from the 22/23 project, in collaboration with staff supervisors.

3: The Staff Area

Staff can find:

- Example material to integrate in lectures or to use as inspiration
- Presentation recordings of the projects and other staff resources.
- A discussion board to engage, share, ask and answer to questions.

Impact:

Staff surveys revealed that 58% of staff who replied have engaged with the Blackboard space. 16% said they've made changes to teaching in response to engagement with the Blackboard space, with 41% saying they intend to make changes.

While both student and staff engagement could be improved, many discussion spaces within the BB are populated with interesting resources and ideas.

The Blackboard (BB) Space was developed with the following goals in mind:

- Collate, share and highlight useful decoloniality-related information to staff and students in the School of Biological Science
- Create a space where staff and students can ask questions, discuss decolonisation and share ideas and resources
- Record and showcase of the work done by the Decolonising Biological Sciences Team.

Accessing the BB Space

The BB site is available to all staff and students in the school of biological sciences through their BB Dashboard.

2: BB Space Structure

The BB Space is structured with a Welcome page, through which you can access:

- Presentations and project introductions.
- Resources for staff and students
- Spaces for engagement and discussion
- Opportunities e.g., volunteering and recruitment

4: Manifesto in the Making

The Manifesto in the Making area provides a space for sharing what decolonisation means to individuals using the space, and explores the fact that decolonisation is a work in progress that benefits from constant questioning and challenge.

Next Steps:

As the School of Biological Sciences continues its ongoing Student Decolonisation Partners projects, student partners will continue to advertise, contribute and encourage further engagement with the BB Space to further our School decolonisation goals.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the student partners for their contributions to the BB Space, and BILT for their ongoing support of these projects.