

Dr. Eddie Cole

Professor of Education and History, UCLA

Fellow, Harvard Radcliffe Institute

May 15, 2024

[5:00 pm] [Dr. Pam Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Welcome to #EquityChat sponsored by @CollegeFutures w/your @equityavengers hosts @lamkeithcurry @DrTammeil & @DrPamLuster. Tonight, we're excited to welcome back @EddieRCole, Professor @UCLA and now @RadInstitute Fellow. Welcome Dr. Cole!

[5:05 pm] [Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q1 @EddieRCole. As you engage in equity-focused work, what is your walk-up song or anthem?
@DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A1: (1/2) I love this question. I don't have a song/anthem, per se, but I often replay a quote from a favorite TV series — “Wu-Tang: An American Saga.” The quote is: “We're the standard bearers of hip-hop, god. This ain't supposed to be easy...”

[#EquityChat #EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A1: (2/2) I like that quote because: 1) We should require high standards in our work. 2) We should not expect change to come easy. History shows us this is not easy work. It requires sustained effort. It is not easy, but must take care and persist. [#EquityChat #EquityAvengers](#)

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @lamkeithcurry](#)

Brooklyn Zoo....

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

You know what it is, [@lamkeithcurry!](#)

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @lamkeithcurry](#)

All day. What's funny, I visited the zoo last year and I was singing the song for weeks.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

This is a great quote. I picture us all running the 4x100 continuously and then getting back on the track and keeping it going: sprint, pass the baton, pick up the baton again, sprint. It's individual and group work. Then you get faster, better...[#EquityChat](#)

[5:11 pm] [Dr. Keith Curry \(@lamkeithcurry\)](#)

Q2 @EddieRCole. You've said you enjoy teaching/ researching the ways the past shapes our present. Was there a defining moment/experience that catalyzed your journey to engage equity work from a historical lens? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A2: (1/2) Yes, I love studying and teaching history. And a defining moment for me was, when I was a [@TSUedu](#) student, a 38-year-old [#HigherEd](#) desegregation case was closed. The experience showed me how the past shaped my educational present. [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A2: (2/2) At the time, I was also editor of student newspaper. I met with our college's president before the courtroom announcement. I've always remembered that moment. Now, I study history and leaders. More here: <https://nytimes.com/2006/09/12/education/12tennessee.html...> [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[5:18 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Q3 @EddieRCole. Last time you were on [#EquityChat](#), The Campus Color Line was just newly released. What research are you currently working on that we can look forward to? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A3: (1/2) I've spent this academic year on the East coast at the Harvard [@RadInstitute](#). I've been working on a history of how Black intellectuals have shaped [#HigherEd](#). From library design to academic freedom, Black influence is all around us. [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A3: (2/2) Current challenges aren't always new. Instead, we typically have new wrinkles to old problems—problems that people before us have considered. My next project is to be published by [@PrincetonUPress](#), read more here: <https://radcliffe.harvard.edu/people/eddie-r-cole...> [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[5:25 pm] Dr. Gilkerson (@DrTammeil)

Q4 @EddieRCole. In 2021, you said “equity discussions/definitions today must consider history, history, and more history.” What can #highered leaders learn from our history to help us navigate the current attack on DEIA in our institutions? @DrPamLuster @IamKeithCurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A4: (1/2) My answer remains the same: political attacks are not unique to #HigherEd. So leaders should ask questions like: which previous leaders navigated these attacks well or not well? That history helps expand current leaders’ perspectives. #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A4: (2/2) Current #HigherEd leaders must understand that we can’t solve centuries-old problems with one or two initiatives. Therefore, to solve equity problems, one must also know the root cause/history of those problems. Leaders should not avoid rigorous study. #EquityChat

[5:32 pm] Dr. Curry (@iamkeithcurry)

Q5 @EddieRCole. Within the current national climate, what advice would you give college presidents/leaders as they navigate through difficult challenges? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A5: I’ve told several presidents the following: set a standing meeting w/your librarian/archivist. You’re a more effective leader when you know your campus histories. Then, you can put people first in decision-making because you understand where ppl are coming from. #EquityChat

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

When I first became a faculty member, I found refuge with librarians at all my campuses. Maybe it’s the historian in me...but I never thought about it in this light. Thank you for this.

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

You’re welcome — and thanks for sharing that! #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

It’s my experience that #CommColleges are not great with documentation of their histories...but as many are around for decades, we’re getting better. #EquityChat

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

We must start to create our archives for [#CommColleges](#)! Records from state archives; stories from local historical societies; oral histories from community groups; local newspaper articles. The history is there. We must talk w/the community to pull it together! [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Couldn't agree more! Love this recent [@peraltacitizen](#) article- First Female Community College President in CA and [@PeraltaColleges!](#) [@CollegeAlameda](#)
<https://t.co/ReZWxEQ93u>

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A5 continued: that's necessary to challenge mistruths in this current national climate. Leaders have to speak truth to the lies. Set the record straight. Otherwise, we allow people outside [#HigherEd](#) to set the agenda and narrative for us. That's a no-no. Leaders must push back.

[5:39 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Q6 [@EddieRCole](#). To do this work, we must continue learning and partnering with others. How do you educate yourself and who is informing your practice? [@DrTammeil](#) [@IamKeithCurry](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)
[#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A6 (1/2): This is a big-time question. I don't have enough characters to reply. But the standard answer is read widely across various fields. Also: talk to people. Talk to students. Think with colleagues in various fields—even if you disagree. [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Dr. Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

So true, across fields -out of our zones [@EddieRCole](#) [#EquityChat](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

It's essential. We can't allow our roles as administrator to supersede our first responsibility as educator and learner.

We're working backward if we don't keep the main thing, the main thing. [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

I think it's important to continue teaching ...and learning and listening!
[#EquityChat](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

Yes - yes - yes. History has shown me that greatest misstep of a leader is when they start to think they've learned it all. But the work continues. It always continues. We must keep teaching/learning. [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A6: (2/2): In the past month, we've seen many [#HigherEd](#) leaders dismiss dialogue with students and faculty re: campus protests. Leaders can't inform their practice if they don't have meaningful convos. with people outside of administrative offices. [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[5:46pm] [Dr. Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q7 @EddieRCole. We all have a vision of the future we want to live in. What is your freedom dream for higher education and what gives you hope for its future? @DrPamLuster @iamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A7: I'll echo part of my previous answer, but students give me hope. I like their fire. I dream—and we all should dream—of [#HigherEd](#) w/engaged learners. We should teach and challenge more, complain and condemn less. Otherwise, why are we here? [#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Dr. Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

No complaining and condemning! [#dothework](#) [#EquityChat](#)

[5:53 pm] [Dr. Curry \(@iamkeithcurry\)](#)

Q8 @EddieRCole. The road to racial equity is long. How are you sustaining yourself? What practice would you recommend to other [#EquityAvengers](#)? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures [#EquityChat](#)

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A8: (1/2) First, I live for boundaries. I don't do email evenings/weekends. Much love to first responders who work on call, but many in [#HigherEd](#) are consumed by 24/7 accessibility. I'm not. I regulate most tasks 9-to-5 hours. Long game, not the short one! [#EquityChat](#) [#Healthy](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Oooh...I'm still learning on this one!!!

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

A8: (2/2) Second, have some fun! This is going to my summer on the beach cruiser. Or let's get some miles in on foot. Let's go for a walk on your campus this summer, [@iamkeithcurry](#)! What say ye?
[#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Strap on those Chuck Taylors [@iamkeithcurry](#) and WALK!

[6:00 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

TY [@EddieRCole](#) for re-engaging with us and reminding us of the importance of our history. Looking forward to your new work with [@RadInstitute](#). Keep an eye out here for next week's guest announcements. Until then [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@DrTammeil](#) [@DrPamLuster](#) [@equityavengers](#) OUT!

[Eddie R. Cole @EddieRCole](#)

Always my pleasure! [#EquityChat](#)