Toward an Endarkened Academy
A Call to New Imaginings & Endarkened Wisdom

The Watson College of Education Endarkening Collaborative invites you to participate in our collaborative half-day workshop and series of praxis circles on **May 19, 2022, in EB. 162, from 9am-1pm**, to explore the question of what it means to teach, research, and serve toward an endarkened academy, thereby pushing us to ask what we can imagine for ourselves and the world. **Dr. Venus E. Evans-Winters** will serve as the keynote to open this unique participatory workshop.

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A Call for All—

Frames matter. Historically, enlightenment and the tenets therein—objectivity, rationality, reasoned judgment—have too long been the pillars of academic institutions and the general framing for the work of the university. That is, the organizing principles for teaching, research, service, practice, collegiality, and tangentially wellness, are rooted in ways of knowing and being that are divorced from and devoid of humanizing perspectives from traditions and theoretical viewpoints that might elevate the holistic—mental, social, spiritual, psychological, emotional-selves. Whereas questions of life and living, joy and thriving beg more of educators and researchers and other practitioners, as those who think, theorize about, and work within systems of power, privilege, and oppression, we demand a different line of questions that would move away from “what do we have now, and how can we make it better?” We require an alternative set of strategies and waymaking tools that might engender a different relationship to work and study by operating, not from the center, but from and with the masses of dark people who live with their backs against the wall, those whose faces line the bottom of the well (à la Derrick Bell).

We begin by asking, “what can we imagine for ourselves and the world?”—opting for language, a framing that would dream these longings into view. We choose an accounting that might purposefully interrogate, disrupt, and dismantle oppressive approaches and shift the institution’s relationship to the mental, spiritual, and intellectual onto-epistemologies of dark people through various contexts, necessitating “a different relationship between [we], as the researchers, and the researched, between [our] knowing and the production of knowledge” (Dillard, 2000, p. 663). This is not
enlightened work. Rather, it is decidedly endarkened, which is to say committed to “talking and walking around with other people, working, dancing, suffering, some irreducible convergence of all three, held under the name of speculative practice” (Harney and Moten, 2013, p. 110). We gesture toward an otherwise way of knowing and being, an “opaque on purpose,” (Shange, 2019, p. 16) that would reorder power relations and is incessantly committed to rehearsing practices that center the multiple and compounding realities and knowledges of dark communities.

Against this background, we call for endarkened peoples and their co-conspirators (in the Watson College and across campus) who are interested in and committed to endarkening and mutually connected transformative conceptions and ways of being to join us for the kick-off of an Endarkening Collaborative. We will begin with listening and learning sessions for us to engage with and prepare for this vision. If your work or aspirations align with this vision and call, please join us.

**Ways to Get Involved:**

We ask that you engage with this call by letting us know about who you are and what you are thinking and wondering about related to the work of endarkening academia in general and UNCW/WCE in particular.

Please RSVP by sharing your thinking with us via this [Google Form](#).

In service to endarkenment,

The WCE Endarkening Collaborative

c/o Candace Thompson, Satlaj Dighe, Wilson Okello, Symphony Oxendine, Caitlin Ryan, Shawn Savage, Amy Senta, Laura Szech and Karla Zaccor