FALL 2024 NEW GTA ORIENTATION

Hosted by the Center for Teaching Excellence

You will find materials from the Fall 2024 New GTA Orientation hosted by the Center for Teaching Excellence that reference "matters of non-discrimination, diversity, equity, inclusion, race, ethnicity, sex or bias."

POLICY TUTORIAL

The goal of this component is to practice responding to teaching scenarios in a way that aligns with federal and KU policy. In these quizzes new GTAs will respond to scenarios based on summarized policies on the Teaching-Related Policies and Practices for GTAs page.

FROM THE PRIVACY, DISABILITY, AND ACCESS POLICY QUIZ

Question: A student comes to you after an exam on which they have not performed well. They inform you that they have a learning disability and would like a make-up exam because the format of the exam puts them at a disadvantage. What should you do in this situation? *Reference the section on Student Access and Accommodation Process.*

- You should offer to let the student re-take the exam in a new format that accommodates their disability.
- You cannot offer a new exam, because the student is required to inform you of their disabled status at the beginning of the semester.
- [**Correct answer**] You may choose whether or not to offer a new exam in consultation with your supervisor, but the student should work with the Student Access Center to determine what, if any, accommodations are appropriate based on the student's disability and individual needs.

Question: One of the GTAs with whom you share an office has begun talking about a particularly disruptive student in one of the sections he teaches. After getting a description of the student, you realize that the very student about whom your office mate is speaking was in one of your sections last semester. You received a notice last semester that the student had a disability and you were able to arrange accommodations for him. The student has not disclosed his disability this semester, and the GTA thus does not have the information he needs in order to help the student. Are you allowed to disclose the student's disability to the other GTA? *Reference the section on Student Access and Accommodation Process.*

- [**Correct answer**] No. The student has the right to privacy regarding his disability status, which includes the right to determine to whom he discloses his disability.
- No. This current problem the student is facing may be something else, and telling the other GTA what was previously wrong with the student may only complicate matters.
- Yes. The policy of the University is to establish the most effective educational environment possible, and since the student registered his disability with the University, that information is available to all professors and GTAs.

Question: What could you do to make your course more accessible to all students regardless of their abilities? *Reference the section on Accessibility through Universal Design for Learning (UDL).*

- [Correct answer] Offer alternatives for visual or auditory information and optimize access of tools and educational technology.
- Offer information in one modality (visual or auditory only).
- Choose educational technology regardless of how accessible it might be.

FROM THE CONSENTING RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY QUIZ

Question: Mandatory reporters are required to report incidences of discrimination on the basis of race (including racial harassment), color, ethnicity, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual harassment, and sexual violence), national origin, age, ancestry, disability, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, gender identity, gender expression, and genetic information. Are you a mandatory reporter? *Reference the section on Mandatory Reporting Policy and Resources for Supporting Students that Report Sexual & Intimate Partner Violence.*

- [Correct answer] Yes. As a GTA I am an employee of the University of Kansas and are therefore a mandatory reporter.
- No. I am not a mandatory reporter.
- Possibly. If the student reports an incident to me outside the classroom, I do not have to report it.

Question: A student comes to you after class and tells you that they have experienced sexual harassment or violence. What do you do? *Reference the section on Mandatory Reporting Policy and Resources for Supporting Students that Report Sexual & Intimate Partner Violence.*

- Tell the student to stop talking immediately! You are a mandated reporter and must report the incident to the police.
- [Correct answer] Ask the student what you can do for them. If necessary, review the resources available on and off-campus and connect them to the resources that will help them the way they want to be helped. Submit a report to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX by filling out an online form for mandatory reporters. Explain to the student that you are obligated to submit the report and they will be contacted by the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX and they can decide if and how to proceed with the complaint.
- Call 911

FROM THE PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS POLICY QUIZ

Question: You are teaching a class with students from a variety of backgrounds, including English as a Second Language learners, first-generation students, and students with historically marginalized racial identities. You notice that some of your students are not performing well on their assignments, while others do not seem engaged during class time. What are some effective ways you could shape class time to support students from a broad range of backgrounds? *Reference the section on Inclusive Teaching Practices (general).*

- Increase lecture time so you can control the content that students receive during class.
- Give the students problems to solve that have one definite answer.
- [Correct answer] Increase course structure (e.g., guided reading questions, preparatory homework) and transparency (explicitly communicate what it takes to be successful, use rubrics, and examples

of exemplar work), choose content and examples that address and model diversity, and create opportunities for students to explain information to one another.

Question: Before your first lecture, you have a student email you and inform you that their preferred name and personal pronouns differ from what you may have on your class roster. What can you do while calling roll the first day to maintain the privacy of this student and make them feel included? *Reference the section on Inclusive Teaching Practices for Queer and Trans Students.*

- [**Correct answer**] Provide your name and pronouns while introducing yourself to the class. Use the correct preferred name and personal pronoun provided by the student. Apologize if you make a mistake by misgendering any student and then continue the conversation.
- Ignore the student's email, you have to call the roll and refer to students as they are on the roster.

ESSENTIAL MODULE

The goal of this component is to explore effective teaching strategies that are applicable across disciplines.

BELOW IS A PDF COPY OF THE MAKING YOUR TEACHING EQUITABLE MODULE

Making Your Teaching Equitable

KU CTE New GTA Orientation Conference Essential Module

EM1.1 Introduction to Making Your Teaching Equitable

Welcome to the "Making Your Teaching Equitable" module! Inclusive teaching practices are essential for creating a learning environment where all of your students can succeed. This module is designed to introduce you to inclusive teaching practices and strategies.

Module Goals:
- Learn to create an inclusive learning environment that supports all students.
- Develop skills to facilitate positive discourse on diverse topics.
- Understand Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and create accessible course content.
- Connect students to campus resources for academic success.

Module Overview:
- Read pages EM1.1 to EM1.4.
- Complete reflection survey EM1.5 by August 19th, 1 PM CT.

Reflective Moment:

Before diving in, reflect on your past experiences as a student and envision your new role as an instructor. Consider what motivated you in your classes and how instructors created a positive and motivating learning environment. Keep these things in mind as you are working through the module. *How might you implement the strategies you find here in your teaching role?*

EM1.2 Podcast: Taking an Inclusive Approach to Teaching

Listen to the podcast on "Taking an Inclusive Approach to Teaching" featuring Doug Ward, Associate Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, and Meagan Patterson, Associate Professor in Educational Psychology.

Action:
- [Listen to the podcast](#)
- [Or read the transcript](#)

Key Points:
- Doug and Meagan explore two frameworks for teaching with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Framework 1:** Inclusive teaching practices create a welcoming and motivating classroom environment. Refer to module section 1.3a for concrete strategies for creating an inclusive climate.
- **Framework 2:** Addressing content related to diversity, equity, and inclusion is valuable across all disciplines. Racism, sexism classism, ableism, and other forms of oppression (or "isms") operate at personal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural levels and may come up in class discussions even when they are not planned. Best to be prepared and have some tools to employ should the situation arise. Explore strategies in module section 1.3b.

Key Terms used in the Podcast:

Content versus Classroom Climate	As mentioned above in the key points, there are two ways of thinking about inclusivity in the classroom. One way is through the actual content of your course: how can you bring in diverse authors, examples, methods, and projects into what you are actually teaching? The other is through the way you set up your class: how can you make your teaching practices and relationships with students more equitable and supportive of diverse identities and learners?
Cultural Competence	The ability of an individual to understand and respect values, attitudes, and beliefs that differ across cultures, and to consider and respond appropriately to these differences in their communication with others.
The Hidden Curriculum	While educational systems have an explicit curriculum that they are teaching to students, there are also "hidden" or implicit messages that are just expected for students to know or figure out on their own. This could be things like: what office hours are, how to communicate with a professor, what sort of resources are normally available to students on a campus, etc. Making the hidden curriculum more transparent makes it more likely for all students to succeed.
Conscious Competence versus Unconscious Competence	Being aware that you have a skill or knowledge versus skills or knowledge being so innate that you don't even realize that you're doing it. For students or professors with more privileged backgrounds, they may be unaware that they are expecting everyone to have the same competencies - like with the concept of the hidden curriculum above.
Networks of Support	GTAs are not alone in being able to help students - there is an entire network of counseling, access, tutoring, housing, and financial services at KU that are meant to help support students (and you!) Being able to direct your students to their various networks of support is a big part of being inclusive in your teaching.
Ground Rules	Establishing "ground rules" at the beginning of the semester for how to engage in discussions or content relating to diverse individuals and concepts can be an important way of being more inclusive in your teaching. These "ground rules" will look different depending on what you are teaching and/or who is in your classroom, but you should think about what are a few key rules that will help students feel better prepared to have difficult conversations.
Calling Out versus Calling In	"Calling out" refers to making someone aware that what they've said is offensive. This is necessary and important in a lot of contexts, but sometimes in the classroom it can shut students down and prevent them from learning. "Calling in" is similar in that it attempts to inform someone that they've said something controversial and offensive, but you approach the conversation as a learning moment without attacking the individual. Saying things like "why do you hold that view?" or "I think your view is wrong

	compared to my experiences - can we discuss further and see how we both got to these differing responses?"
Diversity	Different academic fields may use this term differently, but broadly it is often used to refer to the idea that people come from different backgrounds, and they belong to different social groups, including things like race, gender, class, sexual orientation, etc. Those group memberships shape people's experiences, both in terms of how we as individuals view the world, but also in terms of how other people view and treat us.
Equity	Because diverse identities lead to different experiences, we all need different supports to get to the same outcome. Equity ensures that people receive the specific supports that they need to live and be successful.
Equity versus Equality	Equality means giving everyone the same thing (everyone is equal and thus is given equal supports) whereas equity focuses on the unique supports that each individual needs because of their diverse identities and experiences. This may mean in some cases that certain people have the privilege of not needing extra support, while others need much more time, money, and energy to help support them. This may not be an equal allocation of resources, but it is an equitable one.
Inclusion	Taking our understanding of diversity and the principles of equity and really putting them into practice in the classroom, the workplace, and the community. The ultimate goal of inclusion is to create an environment where everyone feels like they have the skills, tools, and support to succeed and engage with others.
Hot Moments	Because diversity, equity, and inclusion are all tied to our identities and experiences, discussions of them can be very emotionally heavy. "Hot moments" refer to flare ups of emotion in a classroom during discussions about important topics. Learning how to manage those hot moments is a key part of doing DEI work in the classroom.

EM1.3a Inclusive Teaching Practices

We recognize that most GTAs (~85% in 2022) will not teach in a role that allows them full control over the course content and design, especially in their first year. The list of concrete examples of things you can do to create an inclusive and engaging climate was compiled with this in mind. Regardless of your specific role and responsibilities, we think you will find at least a few strategies that you can employ. For GTAs with more experience and/or more control of course design, there are additional recourses below. Explore the sections that best suit your needs.

1. Use Inclusive Language:

- Choose phrases like "Hey folks/all/everyone" for mixed-gender groups.
- Refer to breaks by their seasonal names (e.g., "winter break").
- Explain American idioms, especially in exam prompts, to support non-native English speakers and prevent them from spending unnecessary time deciphering language instead of answering questions.
- Opt for alternatives during roll call, such as using name tents, calling last names, or having students introduce themselves in person or on a discussion board. Model inclusivity by including

your pronouns in your introduction. Explore additional tips for fostering inclusivity in your class: https://sgd.ku.edu/top-10-tips-day-one-and-beyond

2. Create Transparency:

- Clarify learning goals, assignment rationale, and success criteria.
- Demystify assignment expectations by providing clear goals, task explanations, steps for completion, and criteria for high-quality work.
- Communicate preferences for communication methods and class participation.
- In writing assignments, explain the importance of students' own ideas versus shared information and help guide those accustomed to prioritizing expertise over their own original thought.
- Offer guidance on how students ought to allocate time to assignments and prioritize various out-of-class tasks.
- Dedicate time in class for students to ask questions about assignments and expectations.

3. Build Rapport:

- Know and use students' names in-class and when responding to messages or posts on Canvas.
- Incorporate icebreakers and peer learning.
- Ask students to reflect on how their learning is enhanced by interaction with classmates (e.g., "What did you learn from someone else in today's discussion?").
- Task students to work in pairs or small groups on brief, well-defined activities (with a timeline and specific goals/outcomes).

4. Foster Academic Belonging:

- Employ an early-term background questionnaire (here is an example) to gather insights into students' academic experiences, goals, and concerns. Utilize the obtained information to establish connections between course topics and individual student profiles.
- Encourage early-term office hour visits for students to discuss interests and experiences with course material. Consider structuring office hours using the provided example.
- Begin discussions by asking for concrete observations (e.g., describing an image, passage, or diagram) before moving to analytical questions. This establishes a common starting point, highlights diverse perspectives, and models desired analytical processes.
- Avoid generalizations in class.
- Acknowledge diverse contributions and discuss contributions of diverse scholars.
- Try to accompany verbal instructions with a written corollary. Multiple modes can be helpful to students with different processing abilities as well as non-native English speakers.
- Create structured opportunities for students to provide feedback on their experience of the learning environment and contribute ideas for improving it.
- Invite students to identify examples from their own arenas of knowledge or expertise to illustrate course concepts.
- Express care for students' well-being and provide information about campus resources. Share this list of support services via the syllabus, Canvas, or directly with students facing challenges.

- Acknowledge campus events or incidents that may be creating barriers to students' sense of being welcomed and valued; acknowledge the differential effects incidents have on different students.
- Discuss the contributions of diverse scholars.

5. Create Structure and Support During Discussions:

- Initiate discussions by clearly outlining the purpose, learning objectives, and prompts. Communicate these elements explicitly with students and revisit them as necessary throughout the discussion.
- Establish ground rules or "learning contracts" where students define responsibilities and expectations for themselves and you. Collaborate with students on these guidelines, referring to them before initial discussions and revisiting them as necessary.
- Highlight the importance of respecting others' perspectives, avoiding generalizations, and being careful not to ask others to 'represent' a group you perceive them to belong to.
- Be an active facilitator (reword questions, correct misinformation, reference relevant material, make connections to stated learning goals and other course concepts).
- Include everyone in a larger class discussion through think-pair-shares or small group discussions. After, a small group or pair discussion, consider asking students to share something they learned from someone else.
- Include a range of voices during a facilitated discussion by taking a queue, asking to hear from those who have not spoken, or waiting until several hands are raised to call on anyone.
- Give all students time to gather their thoughts in writing before discussing them with the whole group.
- Save time at the end of the discussion to summarize it, and gather student feedback (e.g., a "minute" reflection paper, an exit slip about the muddiest point).

Additional resources for experienced GTAs with course content and design control

- Inclusive Syllabus and Course Design: Follow the KU syllabus guide and the Kim Case Syllabus Challenge.
- Inclusive Assignment Design: Learn how assignments can enhance learning with the "Designing an Inclusive Assignment" handout [APPENDIX A].
- Reflective Teaching Practices: Explore the Inclusive Strategy Reflection Tool [APPENDIX B] for ongoing self-assessment and goal-setting.

EM1.3b Facilitating Conversations Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Engaging in conversations about challenging and divisive topics in the classroom requires careful preparation and consideration. These discussions may arise from course content or be prompted by current events, and they can potentially lead to heated exchanges. The following strategies aim to create a positive and inclusive environment for discussing difficult subjects, whether planned or unexpected.

Commit to an Inclusive Classroom Climate:

- Acknowledge diverse perspectives and emotions around the topic.
- Promote the free exchange of ideas, inclusive of multiple views for critical thinking.
- Prepare in advance for difficult discussions when possible.
- Scaffold Difficult Discussions for Students:
- Encourage understanding before reacting; ask students to listen, ask questions, and restate opposing views.
- Be an active facilitator, correcting misinformation and referencing course material.
- Include everyone through think-pair-shares, small group discussions, or reflective writing.
- Manage contentious interactions and use "hot moments" as learning opportunities.
- Foster class rapport and community through peer learning with diverse pairs/groups or by prompting students to reflect on how their learning is enriched by interactions with classmates (e.g., "What did you learn from someone else today?").
- Save time at the end of the discussion to summarize it, and gather student feedback (e.g., a "minute" reflection paper).

Apologize Effectively if Needed:

- Avoid minimizing or placing conditions on apologies.
- Acknowledge and take responsibility for any offense.
- Take steps to address the behavior and move forward.

Particularly for Dialogues Sparked by Crises:

- Consider which students (and instructors) are most vulnerable. Individuals whose identities are marginalized and/or underrepresented on campus may feel afraid, unwelcome, or drained and fatigued.
- Be sensitive to the ways these feelings can affect students' abilities to engage in class.
- Make a special effort to include the voices and perspectives of individuals from marginalized groups in course materials and discussions. Avoid implicitly (or explicitly) activating stereotypes.
- Be prepared to intervene and manage "hot moments" if negative discourse arises.
- Help students feel supported by acknowledging the conflict and creating opportunities for reflection and empathy.
- Be aware of "self-care" strategies to help students (or yourself) cope with distress and fatigue.
- Direct students to other resources that can provide emotional support or help them respond to and cope.

Inform Yourself on Course-Relevant Issues:

- Identify crisis-related issues relevant to course themes.
- Address diverse perspectives within your field and model critical thinking.
- Recognize how your background may influence teaching on these issues.

Sample Ground Rules:

- Strive for intellectual humility and recognize societal patterns.
- Respect others' rights to differing opinions; challenge ideas, not individuals.
- Listen attentively, be courteous, and support statements with evidence.
- Allow everyone the chance to talk and speak up if offended.

Extra resources for laying the groundwork and reflecting on your own identity:

Resources for Difficult Conversations:

- Explore advice for "Teaching into Conflict" by reading this article from Insider Higher Ed by Karlyn Crowley [APPENDIX C].

  Trigger Warning: Sensitive Content This article discusses challenging topics, including the Ukrainian-Russian conflict, the testimony of Christine Blasey Ford during Brett Kavanaugh's Supreme Court nomination hearing, and issues related to sexual assault, harassment, and violence. It includes descriptions of graphic content and emotional responses, which may be distressing to some readers. Please proceed with caution and take care of your well-being as you read.

  What You Will Learn: By reading this article, you will gain insights into how faculty members can navigate and facilitate difficult conversations in college classrooms, especially during turbulent times. You will learn practical strategies for creating a supportive environment, framing and guiding discussions, and managing emotional responses. The article also offers advice on establishing ground rules, holding space for productive discomfort, and using tools to ensure effective and compassionate communication.

- Utilize activities like the Social Identity Wheel to encourage student self-reflection.

Personal Work on Privilege and Oppression:

- Guide self-reflection on your relationship to privilege and oppression [APPENDIX D].
- Recognize and reflect on your positionality as an instructor.

For a deeper exploration, work through the Breakout Module on Guiding Necessary Classroom Conversations about Systemic Differences.

EM1.3c Designing for Accessibility

Design for accessibility involves eliminating unnecessary learning barriers to ensure all individuals can access course opportunities. Courses mindful of accessibility are generally better for all students.

Design flexible access and engagement methods:

- **Engagement Options:** Provide diverse ways for students to engage with the course. Allow choices aligned with their interests.

- **Information Representation:** Offer various ways to represent information. Use multiple formats for content presentation, interpretation of language/symbols, and comprehension of material.
- **Demonstration of Learning:** Allow multiple options for students to demonstrate learning. Consider alternatives like creating a documentary film instead of a paper or a portfolio with reflections instead of an exam.

For an in-depth exploration of UDL, refer to the Breakout Module, "Principles of Universal Design for Learning." Learn instructional strategies to ensure all students engage with the material in a way that suits them best.

Ensure content accessibility:

- Document Formats: Use scanned documents with OCR (Optical Character Recognition) capability or accessible formats like Word, PowerPoint, or Excel.
- Video Accessibility: Create videos with Kaltura for captioning or provide descriptions/transcripts for visual/video content.
- Refer to this guide for making documents, videos, and websites accessible to a broad audience.

EM1.3d Supporting Students with Campus Resources

As mentioned in the Podcast, there are a lot of resources on campus that you might want to be aware of and draw on to help your students feel a connection to campus and foster their success at the University. Adding resources to your syllabus (if possible) or just sharing resources with your students can help set an inclusive classroom climate from the very first day of class. Spend a few minutes getting familiar with the resources available on campus below so you have a sense of what is available to you before you enter the class.

- Check out this list of student support and campus resources compiled by the Center for Teaching Excellence.
- Here are some support services compiled by the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging that may foster their success at the University.
- Here is a list of campus resources compiled by Academic Success that may be helpful to you or your students.
- Lastly, here is a list of where to report concerns or issues you (or your students) may encounter on campus.

EM1.4 Considerations for Remote Teaching

Many of the suggested strategies for creating an inclusive climate can easily translate from in-person to online. Below are some considerations you may want to make in shifting some of the strategies to an online environment.

- Here is a checklist [APPENDIX E] you can use while designing an online course to improve the climate, pedagogy, and content from an inclusion perspective.

- Like creating ground rules for constructive engagement, offer your students guidelines on how to interact in discussion boards, often referred to as "netiquette" or etiquette for online communication. Here is an example of netiquette guidelines [APPENDIX F] used in an undergraduate online course.

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Designing an Inclusive Assignment

We typically think about assessments and assignments as a mechanism for gauging student learning, but they can do much more than that! The way you assess student learning is a major determinant of how students spend their time on a course, and assessments that take the form of assignments typically produce more robust learning than timed exams. They are also a valuable avenue for generating student excitement and understanding of "what all the learning is for." This handout provides guidance on how to design engaging assignments that provide all students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning.

I. Identify learning goal

A well-designed assignment is aligned with one or more course learning goals, or the outcomes you want your students to achieve by the end of the course. To identify one or more goals to focus on in your assignment, ask yourself:

- What do you want your students to be able to do by the end of your course?
- Are the goals relevant to all learners? Do goals match the needs of students who take the class? How do you know?

Identify one or more goals that you will focus on in your assignment:

II. Consider how students can demonstrate understanding

The next step is to identify an assignment (or set of assignments) that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement of course goals. Ask yourself:

- How would you know if students have achieved the learning goals? What should they be able to do?
- How can your assessments/assignments create opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement of the goals?

Describe your assignment concept:

III. Planning supporting learning experiences and materials

The next step is to identify the learning experiences and materials students will need to successfully complete your assignment (and achieve the learning goals). Ask yourself:

- What steps would YOU take to successfully complete this assignment? What knowledge and/or skills will students need to perform effectively?
- What activities will equip students with the needed knowledge & skills?
- What needs to be taught or "coached" so that students have the necessary knowledge and skills? How could you accomplish this?

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IV. Additional considerations for refining your assignment plans

Past performance: Have you used this assignment in the past?
- If so, how well are students achieving the desired course outcomes and is that equitable? How do you know? Are there areas of learning that could use more support?
- What feedback from students have you received about the assignment? How might that inform the design?

Student Choice and Ownership: Reflect on the ways in which you are allowing students to demonstrate their learning to you.
- Are there opportunities for students to introduce their own knowledge and experience (e.g., creating ways for students to engage with material and make it their own, as well as share own unique perspectives)
- Are there ways to introduce flexibility/learner choice into the assignment, such as choosing their own topic or how they demonstrate their learning (e.g., a paper, a video, a podcast)?

Transparency: Consider what strategies you will use to help students understand assignment expectations and criteria.
- How will you help students understand the purpose of this assignment?
- How will you make sure students understand the steps involved in the assignment: what to do, and how to do it?
- How will you make sure students understand your expectations for excellent work on this assignment, and your criteria for evaluating it (e.g., rubrics, examples of exemplary work)? Are there opportunities for student self-evaluation?

Accessibility of Materials: Reflect on how students access the assignment the necessary materials.
- Are there ways you have addressed how students access content and materials, with the goal of making them more accessible?
- How have you considered technology access or the cost of course materials?

Relationships and rapport: Will there be group work associated with the assignment? If so, reflect on how students will need to and benefit from interacting with one another or with you while working through the assignment.
- What can you do help student develop relationships and rapport within their groups?
- What sorts of guidelines and goals could you give students for within-class interactions (e.g., attendance, listening/speaking, other behaviors)? How could students be involved in setting guidelines and goals?
- What guidelines could you give (or co-develop with) students for out-of-class group work (e.g., communication, dividing work, timeliness)?

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Teaching the Whole Student/Supporting Success: Consider what you can do to foster student success on the assignment.

- What do you do to help students feel comfortable reaching out to you for support?
- How can you design your deadlines and policies to help students balance classwork with life demands outside your class?
- Have you considered timing of assignment steps to avoid conflicts with holidays, major assignments in other classes students are likely to be taking (especially within majors)?
- Are there ways to build flexibility/assignment choices that are available to all students when they need them (e.g., choose to submit 3 of 5 assignment options, opportunities to redo assignments, an amnesty day or other "escape valves"?)
- Will there be opportunities for you to identify students who are struggling early in the process?
- How can you create opportunities for feedback, growth and improvement (e.g., revisions)?

Reflecting on Your Practice: Applying
Inclusive Teaching Principles

These lists offer examples of concrete strategies aligned with general inclusive teaching principles. Reflecting upon your teaching practice, do you or would you use any of the following strategies?

√= Yes, I use this in my teaching
~ = I sort of use this in my teaching
 X = No, I do not use this in my teaching
☆= I would like to try this, though I may need more information or resources

TRANSPARENCY
Clearly communicating about norms, expectations, evaluation criteria

_____ 1. Explicitly communicate the purpose, task, and evaluation criteria for each graded assignment.

_____ 2. Clarify how you'd like students to address you, especially if you teach students with a range of educational and cultural backgrounds.

_____ 3. Share in easy-to-find places (syllabus, Canvas site, etc.) your preferences for how students should communicate with you, whether to ask questions or talk more broadly about course material: what kind of questions/topics are best for office hours, which are best for email, what do you want brought up in the full class, what should be addressed to a GSI, etc.

_____ 4. Explain the learning objectives of the activities you use class time for (e.g., discussion of readings, lectures, critique of peers' work, independent work on projects).

_____ 5. Communicate your sense of the instructor's and students' respective roles in shaping and guiding class discussions. (What are students' responsibilities, what are yours? When and why might these shift?)

_____ 6. For writing assignments, explain your expectations around the relative importance of students' ideas/analysis and their sharing of information or ideas/words published by others. (This can be especially important if you have students who have previously learned in educational systems where deference for expertise is prioritized over original thought.)

_____ 7. Offer guidance on how students ought to allocate time on assignments and prioritize various out-of-class tasks.

_____ 8. Dedicate time in class for students to ask questions about assignments and expectations.

_____ 9. Invite students to share information about their own expectations about the learning environment based on their prior experience to help you understand where your expectations may be mismatched.

_____ 10. Communicate (on a syllabus and/or in person with your class) your goal of creating an equitable and inclusive learning environment.

What other ways do you seek to be transparent about norms and expectations? What are additional areas where you could be more explicit about your expectations or assessment process or criteri

Reflecting on Your Practice:
Applying Inclusive Teaching Principles

ACADEMIC BELONGING
Cultivating students' sense of connection to the discipline + scholarly and professional communities

_____ 1. Communicate high expectations and your belief that all students can succeed.

_____ 2. Allow for productive risk and failure. Emphasize that struggle and challenge are important parts of the learning process, rather than signs of student deficiency.

_____ 3. Assess students' prior knowledge about your field and topics so you can accurately align instruction with their strengths and needs.

_____ 4. Help students connect their prior knowledge to new learning (e.g., when introducing a new topic, ask students individually to reflect on what they already know about the topic).

_____ 5. Learn and use students' names and pronouns; learn what they choose to be called (which may differ from aname on a roster) and how it's pronounced.

_____ 6. Encourage students to learn and use one another's names, correctly pronounced.

_____ 7. Build rapport through regular icebreakers.

_____ 8. Emphasize the range of identities and backgrounds of experts who have contributed to your field, and/orsponsor discussion about the reasons for a history of limited access to the field.

_____ 9. When inviting outside critics or speakers, seek to identify professionals who bring a range of backgrounds, including identities that are different from yours.

_____ 10. Prepare outside visitors to contribute to the inclusive environment in your classroom (by making sure they are aware of accessibility needs, sharing norms you've established for inclusive discussions, etc.).

_____ 11. Acknowledge campus events or incidents that may be creating barriers to students' sense of being welcomed and valued; acknowledge the differential effects incidents have on different students.

_____ 12. Encourage or require students to visit office hours early in the term, and use that time to ask about theirinterests and experiences with course material.

_____ 13. In class, avoid generalizations that may not include all students. These might include assumptions about life experience, economic means, or future goals.

_____ 14. Avoid referencing pop culture without providing sufficient orienting context. (This would include making clearwhether you're citing a movie, comic book, band name, etc. so students can learn more if they're not familiar with the reference.)

_____ 15. Create structured opportunities for students to provide feedback on their experience of the learning environment and contribute ideas for improving it.

What other ways do you help facilitate students' sense of belonging in your class, discipline, or professional field? What else could you do?

Reflecting on Your Practice:
Applying Inclusive Teaching Principles

STRUCTURED INTERACTIONS

Providing or eliciting goals, protocols, processes that support equitable access and contributions to interactive elements of the learning environment – and disrupt patterns that reinforce systemic inequities.

_____ 1. Develop discussion guidelines or community agreements about interactions during class. (See examples at
crlt.umich.edu/examples-discussion-guidelines.)

_____ 2. Reflect upon those guidelines with students at strategic points throughout the term.

_____ 3. In facilitated discussions, use strategies for including a range of voices: e.g., take a queue, ask to hear from those who have not spoken, wait until several hands are raised to call on anyone, or use paired or small group conversations to seed larger discussion.

_____ 4. Give all students time to gather their thoughts in writing before discussing with the whole group.

_____ 5. Task students to work in pairs or small groups on brief, well-defined activities (with a timeline and specific goals/outcomes).

_____ 6. When possible, assign student groups/teams or provide criteria for student-formed groups/teams that help leverage diversity and avoid isolating students from underrepresented identities.

_____ 7. In presentations of group projects, guide students to share speaking responsibilities equitably.

_____ 8. At the beginning of group or team projects, create time and a process for students to discuss their respective strengths, personal learning goals, anticipated contributions, etc.

_____ 9. During long-term group or team projects, provide a process for students to reflect upon the team work/dynamics and provide constructive feedback to one another.

_____ 10. Give students regular opportunities to reflect upon ways their learning has been enhanced by interaction with classmates. This could be as simple as asking them to reflect on their learning at the end of a session with the question, "What did you learn from someone else today?"

_____ 11. Establish processes for ensuring you're giving equitable time and attention to each student.

What other strategies do you use to structure equitable and inclusive interactions among and with your students? What else might you do?

Reflecting on Your Practice:
Applying Inclusive Teaching Principles

CRITICALLY ENGAGING DIFFERENCE
Acknowledging students' different identities, experiences, strengths, and needs; leveraging student diversity as an asset for learning

_____ 1. Where relevant, highlight the range of (more and less visible) identities and experiences among the students
as assets for learning.

_____ 2. Reflect upon and share the ways your own identities shape your relationship to your work/the discipline.

_____ 3. Deliberately choose course materials and activities with a range of student physical abilities in mind.

_____ 4. Deliberately choose course materials with students' range of financial resources in mind.

_____ 5. Invite students to identify examples from their own arenas of knowledge or expertise to illustrate course concepts.

_____ 6. Use a background questionnaire early in the term to learn about individual students' past academic experiences, goals, concerns, or other information that would be useful for you to know as their teacher.

_____ 7. Welcome requests for documented accommodations as a chance to include everyone more fully in learning.

_____ 8. Communicate concern for students' well-being, and share information about campus resources (e.g., Counseling & Psychological Services, Sexual Assault Prevention & Awareness Center, Services for Students with Disabilities).

_____ 9. Ask students for concrete observations about content (e.g., simply describe an image, passage, or diagram)
before moving to analytical questions. This can provide everyone a common starting point, highlight students' different perspectives/approaches, and model analytical processes you want to teach.

_____ 10. Present course material in a variety of modalities (readings, diagrams, lectures, podcasts) rather than relying on one mode of engagement.

_____ 11. Try to accompany verbal instructions with a written corollary. (Multiple modes can be helpful to students with processing disabilities as well as non-native English speakers.)

How else do you acknowledge or affirm students' different identities, strengths, or needs in yourcourses?
What else could you do?

Teaching Into Conflict

KARLYN CROWLEY OFFERS ADVICE AND RESOURCES FOR HOW PROFESSORS CAN CULTIVATE AND MANAGE HARD CONVERSATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM.

By Karlyn Crowley

// March 16, 2022

In college classrooms across the country, faculty members are teaching while the world is watching the Ukrainian-Russian conflict unfold. Professors are navigating student responses to this historical event that range from shock, dismay, outrage and fear to deep sadness, while simultaneously managing their own internal emotional landscapes. Classrooms offer the opportunity to have difficult conversations in turbulent times. But those conversations can be hard—really hard. The good news is that there are simple tools to guide us as we hold up the power of the classroom as *the best place* for the exchange of ideas.

I once had the opportunity in a gender studies course to teach Christine Blasey Ford's testimony during Brett Kavanaugh's Supreme Court nomination hearing. My class time overlapped exactly with Blasey Ford's opening statement. There we were, 10 a.m., in the dark, as she prepared to share her experience of sexual assault in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Having taught challenging subject matter related to diversity, equity and inclusion and gender/race studies for 25 years, I confidently framed the hearings and anticipated the "triggers." "We are watching history *live*," I argued. Exuberantly, I claimed, "The classroom is ground zero for watching these hearings and grappling with them!"

So we began. At first, Blasey Ford started with a calm, measured opening as she led up to recounting her sexual assault. All seemed fine. Then, as Blasey Ford's narrative became more graphic and as her distress as an assault survivor who felt disbelieved and discounted became more apparent, the students, too, responded to her story and her emotion. She cried, and they cried with her. The room was full of weeping. As I looked around, students were anguished. I had underestimated their response. Did I make a mistake? Had I done something horribly wrong? Did I prepare them properly? My anxiety grew. Should I end the hearing early? Should I turn off the TV? Should I just stop?

Inwardly, I tried to slow my breathing, managing frantic thoughts while desperately wanting to make the "right" judgment call. Outwardly, I appeared calm. I let the hearing roll on. As we neared the end of class, I asked everyone to make a circle. At a minimum, I wanted to close effectively. Even if I said little to nothing, I could provide space for them to depart a bit more intact. I said, "Can we all just take a deep breath?" I purposefully looked around slowly into their expectant faces. Then I paused and said, "I want to acknowledge how hard that was. You all were witness to something truly powerful. It may have stirred feelings and experiences in you as well. Can we go around and have everyone say a word about where they are right now? You can say pass, if you need." It was hard for students to utter even one word.

Many students stayed after class, begging to talk. They shared painful stories of sexual harassment and violence, stories they had not previously disclosed. It was heavy. But they were also grateful. Grateful that they could be present for something so profound and grateful that they could choose how to respond to the epidemic of sexual violence. Blasey Ford named experiences that they, too, had encountered but did not have language for. One of the students has gone on to make responding to gender discrimination and violence her life's work in her community. That day changed all of us; it also changed me as a teacher. Here are some things I've learned managing hard conversations, whether they happen inside the classroom or beyond.

Have Courage

From the French and Latin, to be of heart, to *have heart*. An undergraduate mentor of mine used to say, "The classroom is the riskiest place, because it needs to be the safest place." We know that safety is relative; still, classrooms provide a way to practice risk.

Jay W. Roberts in Risky Teaching: Harnessing the Power of Uncertainty in Higher Education (Routledge (https://www.routledge.com/Risky-Teaching-Harnessing-the-Power-of-Uncertainty-in-Higher-Education/Roberts/p/book/9780367465957)) suggests that there is a cost to "playing it safe," which can lead to a "learning experience that is passive, inauthentic, and disengaging."

Educational theorist and Quaker Parker J. Palmer, in To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey (HarperOne (https://harperone.com/9780060664510/to-know-as-we-are-known/)), notes that "teachers, too, enter the classroom with fears." He writes, "Creating a learning space that is not closed down by fearful emotions requires a teacher who is not afraid of feelings."

Have courage that you are doing the right thing even—and especially—when you are afraid.

Create the Space

What do you hope people will feel and think at the end of class? We know that form follows function and vice versa, but how many times have we entered a difficult conversation without factoring in the role of space? Will your classroom space and setup make the problem more or less difficult to solve? Make the space support your goals. Should the conversation happen in the classroom at all or in a different setting? Circle, horseshoe or group stations? Music? Lighting? Props? Food? I once taught in a classroom with a kitchen— what a blessed place. If only every classroom could have one! Architect John Cary (https://www.johncary.us/about/) argues that we can design spaces that grant people dignity and promote justice. Refer to his book Design for Good: A New Era of Architecture for Everyone (Island Press (https://islandpress.org/books/design-good)) for inspiration on how space creates the communities we want to inhabit.

Frame the Conversation

Begin the conversation with a frame. A frame is a map. It can be a simple four steps: 1) here is what I hope we can accomplish today; 2) here is how we want to treat one another; 3) here is the shape of our time; 4) this is how we will close. The Frameworks Institute (https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/) is a think tank studying effective communication research on policy issues like equity, gun violence and health care. It offers powerful and productive frames for holding intractable conversations. One example the institute proposes: "Begin with a carefully chosen point of commonality—a shared value—that not only helps you connect, but opens people's thinking to the new perspective you bring." Starting the conversation with a few sentences on shared values is a frame that reminds people that they are interconnected, even when they disagree.

Establish Ground Rules

Stating ground rules gives students boundaries and parameters for difficult conversations. The good news is you do not have to create them. The class can create them together and quickly. You can say, "Take three minutes in small groups and make a list."

Other prompts to help students generate ground rules would include, "You know you are in a good conversation when …" or, its opposite, "You know you are in a bad conversation or flailing argument when …" Sometimes students can more readily identify the opposite of productive conversation. What were the qualities of that failed exchange and what can we learn to avoid?

Neuroscientist David Rock (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh5Egsa-bg4) developed the SCARF model (https://www.psychologytoday.com/sites/default/files/attachments/31881/managingwbraininmind.pdf) , a science-based approach establishing what people need to remain present in the conversation: status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness (or a sense of belonging) and fairness. Introducing the SCARF model is another way to approach a difficult conversation with an evidence-based frame.

Ground rules can also refer to ideas about psychological safety (https://rework.withgoogle.com/guides/understanding-team- effectiveness/steps/foster-psychological-safety/) ; "safe space" versus "brave space" (https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Policy_and_Practice_No_2_Safe_Brave_Spaces.pdf) frames are useful, as the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators helpfully defines the terms.

Hold the Space

Facilitating "productive discomfort" and creating a "pedagogy of discomfort" is the goal as Kathryn C. Oleson describes it in Promoting Inclusive Classroom Dynamics in Higher Education: A Research-Based Pedagogical Guide for Faculty (Stylus (https://styluspub.presswarehouse.com/browse/book/9781620368992/Promoting-Inclusive-Classroom- Dynamics-in-Higher-Education)). Drawing on the scholarship (https://www.jstor.org/stable/23211443) of educational researchers Michalinos Zembylas and Claire McGlynn, Oleson recommends faculty members consider a series of questions when preparing to lead a difficult conversation on charged topics: a) the "appropriateness of creating discomfort"; b) the "impact of discomfort"; and c) the "ethical implications of a pedagogy of discomfort." If you are clear about your answers to these three questions, then proceed with assurance.

Additionally, preparing yourself with classics in the field of conflict resolution bolsters confidence. Anything from the Harvard Negotiation Project is golden, including the canonical Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most (https://www.pon.harvard.edu/shop/difficult-conversations-how-to-discuss-what-matters-most/) . Another helpful text is Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments, and Bad Behavior (McGraw Hill (https://www.amazon.com/Crucial-Accountability-Resolving-Expectations-Commitments/dp/0071829318/ref=asc_df_0071829318/?).

Keep Tools in the Toolbox

Always have a backup plan. For example, if the conversation becomes divided and conflict-filled, consider pausing for students to journal or do a deep-listening exercise. I began incorporating deep-listening

exercises in classes after observing students increasingly shut down judgmentally about experiences and identities that they watched in a video or read about briefly but did not comprehend. A deep-listening exercise can be as simple as, "take three minutes to listen to your partner finish this prompt, reflect back what you heard, switch partners and discuss the conversation." Daniel P. Barbezat and Mirabai Bush's book, [Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning](https://www.wiley.com/enus/Contemplative+Practices+in+Higher+Education%3A+Powerful+Methods+to+Transform+Teaching+and+Learning-p-9781118435274) (Wiley (https://www.wiley.com/enus/Contemplative+Practices+in+Higher+Education%3A+Powerful+Methods+to+Transform+Teaching+and+Learning-p-9781118435274)) has such practical examples. [Relatedly, the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education](https://www.contemplativemind.org/programs/acmhe) (https://www.contemplativemind.org/programs/acmhe) has terrific resources that deepen conversation peacefully.

Finally, the late Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh, in [The Art of Communicating](http://harperone.com/9780062224668/the-art-of-communicating/) (HarperOne (http://harperone.com/9780062224668/the-art-of-communicating/)) demonstrates how to cultivate "mindful" and "compassionate communication," which is an essential skill to teach students for life and not just the classroom.

Close Well

Close the conversation with intention. This can be as basic as having everyone write one sentence on their takeaway on an index card (or tweet/chat), having students go around the room with a one-word takeaway, or asking students to turn to a partner and share closing thoughts. You can read a quotation or even, more boldly, have a moment of silence.

[Facing History](https://www.facinghistory.org/about-us) (https://www.facinghistory.org/about-us) is a wonderful pedagogical nonprofit that creates resources for teaching difficult historical subjects especially around issues of inequity and systemic oppression; here is its [list of opening and closing rituals](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/back-school-2021-building-community-connection-and-learning/establishing-opening-closing-routines) (https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/back-school-2021-building-community-connection-and- learning/establishing-opening-closing-routines) after challenging discussions.

Classrooms can model democracy. In a classroom, we solve conflict through talking, thinking and debating rather than through violence. Classrooms are a place where we can learn to talk rather than learn to fight. As bell hooks says in [Teaching to Transgress](https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203700280/teaching-transgress-bell-hooks) (Taylor & Francis (https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203700280/teaching-transgress-bell-hooks)), "The classroom is a location of possibility."

As a caveat to these guidelines, remember that sometimes things fall apart in difficult conversations. Even with these steps and our best intentions, the conversation can go sideways. That's OK: if it happens, you learned something and you can now try it again.

Another caveat—these practices can be harder when, because of one's identity, the classroom is already a space challenging your power as a woman, BIPOC and/or queer faculty member. Standpoint and location are critical to acknowledge when tackling hard conversations. Finding co-conspirators and also administrative support (provost, deans, chairs) when engaging in difficult or risky subject matter is crucial. Leaning in to your faculty-development office is another critical resource.

In the end, expanding our capacity to create authentic and powerful educational spaces is part of higher

M | **LSA** INCLUSIVE TEACHING
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Doing One's Own Personal Work on Privilege and Oppression

Overview

Inclusive teaching is not defined as a set of practices to implement nor is it a set of boxes to check. As defined by the Center for Research on Learning & Teaching (CRLT):

"Inclusive teaching involves deliberately cultivating a learning environment where all students are treated equitably, have equal access to learning, and feel welcomed, valued, and supported in their learning. Such teaching attends to social identities and seeks to change the way systemic inequities shape dynamics in teaching-learning spaces, affect individuals' experiences of those spaces, and influence course and curriculum design."

A key component to inclusive teaching is for an instructor to be self-reflexive regarding their relationship to privilege and oppression. This guide is intended for instructors who are preparing to implement meaningful inclusivity practices in their classrooms. It is intended as a starting place for instructors to think through their own relationship to, and experience of, privilege and oppression as a crucial part of the foundational work of inclusive pedagogy. This guide offers reflective questions for instructors to explore and provides suggestions for appropriate ways and forums to work through the personal challenge of anti-oppressive work.

This work is not intended to be a clear-cut path to a finish line. We must regularly address our relationship to privilege and oppression, identifying how they are made manifest in the different contexts of our lives. Although this guide provides resources and strategies, it is not intended to be the one opportunity for you to engage in your personal work. This guide can be used as a primer to fully engage in self-reflexive and exploratory practices regarding privilege and oppression.

Parts of this resource guide are derived from the recommended reading:

Robin DiAngelo & Özlem Sensoy (2010) "OK, I Get It! Now Tell Me How to Do It!": Why We Can't Just Tell You How to Do Critical Multicultural Education, Multicultural Perspectives, 12:2, 97-102, DOI: 10.1080/15210960.2010.481199

Goals

1. To encourage instructors to view the personal work they do on privilege and oppression outside the classroom as vital to inclusive pedagogical practices.
2. To relieve students who face oppression from the pressure of having to educate their instructors.
3. To provide some resources for instructors to begin doing their own work on privilege and oppression.
4. To provide a starting point for instructors who are engaging in this work for the first time.

Implementation

Personal work on privilege and oppression should be ongoing, but it must begin before the instructor enters the classroom. This resource is best used before you even begin planning your syllabus. However, there is no prescribed time to start this work as it is more important to simply start than to worry about when it is appropriate. Engaging in reflection and learning about inclusive teaching is always appropriate, no matter the time.

This resource is broken into three topics of discussion:

1. Why do we as instructors need to do our personal work first and continually?
2. What is our personal work?
3. How and where might we do our personal work?

Challenges

1. Approaching one's relationship to privilege and oppression requires a lot of vulnerability and personal accountability which can be emotionally taxing.
2. This personal work is time-consuming and requires commitment, time, and patience.

Citations

Adapted for use by The Program on Intergroup Relations, University of Michigan

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Carr, P. 2008. "But What Can I Do?" Fifteen Things Education Students Can Do to Transform Themselves In/Through/With Education. International Journal of Critical Pedagogy, 1(2): 81–97. (Summer 2008)

Pizaña, D. 2017. Understanding oppression and "isms" as a system. Michigan State University Extension.

Robin DiAngelo & Özlem Sensoy (2010) "OK, I Get It! Now Tell Me How to Do It!": Why We Can't Just Tell You How to Do Critical Multicultural Education, Multicultural Perspectives, 12:2, 97-102, DOI: 10.1080/15210960.2010.481199

Topic 1: Why do we as instructors need to do our own personal work first and continually?

In order to teach about or facilitate explorations of social identity, social relations, inequality, and social justice education, we must be willing to delve into these issues and concepts within ourselves. We ask our students to trust, take risks, question, and share their learning with us and others. To do so authentically, we have to be willing and ready to do the same. We need to be able to model sharing and vulnerability with others and yes, with students! As a result, students may better see what they can do and may need to do.

However, as mentioned in the overview, this ongoing personal work requires us to move away from formulaic approaches and "if-then" thinking. Just as practicing inclusive teaching is a lifelong process so is our personal work regarding privilege and oppression. Our experiences do not happen in isolation from the world around us and our personal work requires us to take on a critical lens as we examine historical and social contexts of privilege and oppression. Ongoing learning and context are key in our personal work and this point is summed up nicely in the following quote:

"The notion that a quick eight-step approach couch be used to have people become engaged in culture, learning, institutional change, diversity, racism, and many other highly complex areas of inquiry conflicts with the notion that critical learning and engagement involves an on-going process, not just a lesson plan…While content certain has a place in education, the context is pivotal to education and schooling (Carr, P., 2008, p. 81)."

Engaging in inclusive teaching requires us to explore our identities in relation to historical and social contexts. Just as we cannot teach a subject without having prior knowledge on it, we cannot expect to practice inclusive teaching without setting a firm foundation that is grounded in self-reflexivity and exploration. If we find ourselves looking for easy answers or quick fixes, we will undermine our effort to learn more about our identities, biases, privileges, ultimately preventing us from doing our personal work.

Lastly, when we feel like we just want to be told how to do this work or how to engage in inclusive teaching, it will be important to remember the following:

No one can tell you how to do it because: You need to see complexity. You need a basic understanding of how power relations work in society, and your own position in the matrix of these relations (DiAngelo and Sensoy, 2010)

No one can tell you how to do it because: One size does not fit all. You need to be able to consider both the macro (big picture) level of observable well-documented patterns, and the micro (individual) variation within that big picture (DiAngelo and Sensoy, 2010).

No one can tell you how to do it because: You need to understand the historical dimensions of intergroup relations. Our intergroup relations have not emerged in a vacuum, they are the outcome of our history (DiAngelo and Sensoy, 2010).

No one can tell you how to do it because: You need to be able to recognize patterns – within yourself and your society. Awareness of yourself as a socialized member of a number of intersecting social groups within a particular culture in a particular time and place (social location) will increase your multicultural vision (DiAngelo and Sensoy, 2010).

Topic 2: What is our personal work?

What do we need to work on? The content of our personal work related to intergroup dialogue facilitation varies by individuals – by who we are and who we wish to be. There is not a one size fits all approach when considering how we go about doing our personal work. The following are concepts and ideas for you to consider when starting this journey. For instance:

Our social identities and intersectionality.
We are not defined by one identity. Understanding our identities in relation to privilege and oppression is crucial to our self-reflexivity. One identity may grant us a certain level or privilege while another may experience a certain level of oppression. Intersectionality is an important lens that we must look through when engaging in our personal work.

Our identity socialization and development.
1. Our socialization has been ongoing since childhood. Our earliest interactions with our parents, teachers, and other personal connections helped shape our norms, values, roles, and rules. These messages are then reinforced by institutional and cultural socialization coming from churches, schools, television, media, etc. These enforcements result in dissonance, anger, dehumanization, violence, crime, and internalization of patters of power. From here, there are two paths to take, either we choose to do nothing an maintain the status quo, or we raise our consciousness by educating ourselves and reframing our socialization. For a visual representation, view the Cycle of Socialization diagram.
2. An exercise to aid in your reflection on the socialization of a particular identity is our "Mapping Social Identity Timeline activity." Consider going through this exercise to practice self-reflexivity.
3. Another exercise you may consider is our "Social Identity Wheel" activity. In this activity, you will reflect on the various ways certain identities impact your life and perceptions.

Our attitudes of conscious/unconscious bias.
1. If you are unfamiliar with unconscious/implicit bias, review our resource guide "Implicit Bias" that provides readings, videos, and a more comprehensive overview of the topic.
2. Being able to regularly check ourselves when we find a biased thought coming into our mind is critical personal work. At times we are aware that a thought we have is entrenched in a bias or stereotype we have associated with a group through our cultural socialization. Other times we are unaware that our thoughts and actions are biased, making it more difficult to acknowledge them. Whether they are conscious or unconscious, we must recognize that we all hold biases and that rather than deny this fact, we work to constantly check our bias and explore it further.

Our sense of group entitlement and/or oppression.
1. As referenced when discussing intersectionality, our identities shape our lived experiences. A white cisgender man has a different lived experience compared to a Black transgendered woman. Whereas the white cisgender man holds privileges through his identities that are part of dominant groups in society, a Black transgendered woman holds identities that are oppressed and othered in society. Therefore, we must examine ourselves as individuals but also as part of larger groups. We are constantly socialized through our interactions with each other and as part of larger social groups.
2. Consider reviewing our resource guide "Facilitation Through 'Perfectly Logical Explanations'" to learn more about dominant narratives and how perfectly logical explanations serve to reinforce and hinder dialogue.

Our personal experiences of privilege and oppression.
1. If you are new to discussing privilege, review our resource guide "An Instructor's Guide to Understanding Privilege" for more information.
2. Privilege and oppression are found throughout society. If you find that it is difficult to identify personal experiences of privilege and oppression, this is a sign of privilege in and of itself. Privilege lies in having an identity tied to the dominant culture in a society. If we are attached to this dominant culture, privilege and oppression can become invisible to us as we never have to consider our identities in a given setting. According to DiAngelo and Sensoy, "We do not tend to see ourselves as socialized group members, especially when we are in the dominant group (i.e., White, able-bodied, heterosexual)…Because we are in the dominant group and segregation is normal for us, we don't tend to see how alike we are in terms of a major organizing forces of society: race, class, and gender. This is a key dynamic of social dominance – one is allowed the privilege of seeing themselves as an individual rather than as a socialized member of a group."

Our understanding of societal inequality, oppression, privilege, power, and "isms".
1. Key to doing our personal work on these concepts is that we understand them in their different forms or manifestations. It is not enough to be aware of racism, sexism, ableism, classism, heterosexism, and other oppressive "isms" on the personal level. If we do not expand our understanding beyond our individual experience, we will fail to see privilege and oppression as systems, leading to an incomplete perspective. We must examine these concepts on a personal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural level in order to fully understand systems of oppression. For further reading, review (Pizaña, 2017).

2. Consider going through the activity "Invisible Knapsacks," which explores the connections between white privilege and white supremacy.

Our behavior that may sustain/challenge inequality/injustice.

1. Once we start to do our personal work, we open ourselves up to a choice with two options. We can either continue to maintain the status quo or we can disrupt the status quo. Doing your personal work is disruptive work as self-reflexivity is a critical component to dismantling systems of privilege and oppression. However, only focusing on ourselves limits our ability to sustain and challenge inequality and injustice. As stated throughout this topic, we find ourselves in a number of social settings and contexts, modifying our behavior accordingly. Tapping into these behaviors allows us to broaden our perspective outside of the personal level.

2. Each day we are presented with opportunities to examine our implicit bias, acknowledge our privilege, challenge the status quo, and critically examine our socialization. Choosing to ignore these actions serves to maintain inequality and injustice as what we do as individuals is not mutually exclusive from how we treat each other as a society. In Topic 3, we will provide a list of ways you can engage in behavior that challenges inequality and injustice. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive one as there are numerous ways to do one's personal work.

Topic 3: How and where can we do our work?

It is important that we do not use student space to do our own personal work. It is inappropriate and potentially exploitative to expect students to work with and process our "stuff". This may seem contradictory to the importance of mutual sharing and modeling, but that is not necessarily the case. It may be appropriate and useful to briefly own and share moments of our own struggles and learning – such modeling may afford students the opportunity to see how we continue to learn and struggle with social justice issues, and thus how they need to, but this should not be done with a focus on ourselves. Thus, modeling for students should be done with deep thought about the educational benefit for students and consideration of what and how to share.

Appropriate off-line venues and strategies may include (as examples):

- Undertaking some of activities/exercises and related readings on our own (perhaps the two books by Adams, Bell, & Griffin (2007) *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. Routledge. And Maxwell, Nagda, and Thompson (2011) *Facilitating Intergroup Dialogues*. Stylus.).
- Debriefing with our co-instructors or colleagues.
- Getting feedback from students (but see the cautions above).
- Working with allies and partners who are willing to and can support us… but not placing on them the burden of "educating" us.
- Finding opportunities to try new things…to work the edges of our comfort zones.
- Finding places and opportunities (conferences and workshops) where such issues are explored (e.g., NCORE, National Multicultural Institute, Social Justice Training Institute, Study Circles, Sustained Dialogues, White Privilege Conference, etc.).
- Seeing ourselves in a continual/lifelong process of learning and growing. As we gain more knowledge and skills, our perspective on privilege and oppression will evolve.
- Review the LSA Inclusive Teaching website resource guides and activity guides to deepen your knowledge on various topics related to inclusive teaching.

Strategies and mindsets outlined by DiAngelo and Sensoy include:

- Think in terms of structures and patterns, not individual acts and people.
- Understand that how we respond to the world (actions/practices/solutions) comes from how we see the world (perspective/theory/consciousness). When we see more complexity, we have more complex responses, therefore we must never consider our learning to be finished.
- Recognize that we are social beings, always in contextual and dynamic relation to one another. Teachers do not impart knowledge on their students, they co-produce it within a socio-historical framework and cultural context.
- Develop meaningful relationships with people who don't share your identity locations.
- Practice seeing and articulating both micro and macro-level analyses of any dynamic involving social groups. Ask: how is this situation (or my interpretation) based on my individual experiences with this individual, as well as based on the historical and socio-political patterns among the social groups we both belong to.
- Develop stamina and courage to talk about issues that you and your peers have been socialized not to talk about. Challenge your comfort zone. Begin to use language (privilege, socialization, power) that may have been foreign to you until now. Expect this to take time and practice.
- Understand how the experiences of people of color and other marginalized groups has been obscured in mainstream curricula, giving us an incomplete picture of our nation's histories. Read research and scholarship on multicultural education and ethnic group histories in continuation of your education.
- Subscribe to journals and websites that address culturally responsive teaching, such as *Multicultural Perspectives, Rethinking Schools, Radical Teacher,* multiculturalcanada.ca, and become active in your community's local historical association.
- Study history through films and books that take a critical perspective, such as the PBS fil series: *Race: The Power of an Illusion* and Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, or Chris Harman's *A People's History of the World*, and Eva Mackey's *The House of difference*.
- Join organizations and devoted to enhancing cross-cultural communication and skills.
- Understand that racism, sexism, classism, etc., are always operating in every social setting (not just when an incident occurs), and continually practice recognizing and articulating how they are operating.
- As you build your critical thinking skills, build your practice skills by working to challenge the manifestation of oppression that you see.
- Attend trainings on anti-racism. Participate in racial caucuses and other exercises designed to expose you to differing world views and experiences.
- Create a support network to find other multicultural educators.

DEI ONLINE COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL CHECKLIST

This checklist was developed at The University of Kansas by John Bricklemyer as part of the KU Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) Diversity Scholars program in 2017-2018. This checklist has been designed to be used in conjunction with the DEI Syllabus Assessment Tool from the Urban Planning program at KU when designing an online course to specifically address how to improve an online course'sclimate, pedagogy, and content from a DEI perspective. (DEI Syllabus Assessment Tool)

DESIGNING FOR INCLUSION – PRINCIPLE 1: ESTABLISH AND SUPPORT AN ONLINE CLASS CLIMATE THAT FOSTERS BELONGING FOR ALL STUDENTS

☐ **Online instructor-student rapport is built through:**
- Being organized.
- Starting the course with a welcoming email.
- Keeping all commitments.
- Responding to email promptly and consistently within stated guidelines.
- Consistent communication is provided through contributions to discussion boards and by sending periodic, general emails.
- Maintains consistent, virtual office hours.
- All student interactions are focused on providing motivation for student success.
- Providing students with an "icebreaker" introduction to the instructor and the instructor's teaching philosophy as a way for the students to get to know them.
- Also see the Establish community agreements and discussion guidelines by: section on page 3.

Additional information: Tips for Establishing a Rapport with Online Students and Instructor to Student Interaction Online

☐ **Online student-student rapport is built by providing socially-focused exchanges such as:**
- Guided online introductions.
- Icebreakers and exchanges of information such as backgrounds, majors, interests, contact information, and other information, as appropriate and desired by the student.
- Online activities designed to increase social rapport.

Additional information: Student to Student Interaction: Building Rapport in Online Courses

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☐ **Each student is treated online as an individual by:**
- Responding to each students' introduction posting with an individualized response.
- Providing individualized feedback on assignments.
- Follow up on lapses in a student's online activity with individualized emails. Additional information: Make a Personal Connection in Your Online Classroom

☐ **Address challenging online moments head-on by:**
- Addressing appropriate behavior in an online course up-front in your course syllabus and, as appropriate, in grading rubrics.
- Turning over abusive or threatening students to appropriate professionals at your institution.
- Individually contacting any AWOL students.
- Responding quickly to seemingly angry students.
- Providing feedback mechanisms to reduce back-channel complaining.
- Not being drawn in by personal comments or challenges.
- Keeping your focus on the class as a whole, while fine-tuning individual responses from this baseline.

Additional information: Difficult Online Students and Dealing with Difficult Students in the Online Classroom

☐ **Ask for feedback by:**
- Providing multiple avenues for students to provide input, such as email, discussion boards, surveys, and/or virtual office hours.
  Promoting the use of the above avenues with the students on a frequent basis.
- Offering a mid-semester course evaluation.
- Promoting end-of-semester formal course evaluations.

Additional information: How Unfavorable Student Feedback Improves Online Courses

DESIGNING FOR INCLUSION – PRINCIPLE 2: SET EXPLICIT STUDENT EXPECTATIONS IN ONLINE COURSES

☐ **Online assessment criteria are clearly articulated by:**
- Aligning your assessments' criteria to learning objectives.
- Ensuring assessment rubrics are clearly worded and available to students.
- Ensuring assessment instructions and feedback are clear and student-oriented when possible use the Transparent Assignment Template.
- Balancing formative and summative assessments.
- Providing examples of student assignments and/or online "norming" sessions to allow students to better understand how grading criteria will be applied. (Please also see the *Demonstrate exemplary work by:* section below)

Additional information: Assessing Your Students and A Teaching Intervention That Increases Underserved College Students' Success

☐ **Provide timely feedback to students by:**
- Providing an online instructor "presence" in the course.
- Providing guidelines on when students should expect feedback.
- Providing assessment feedback within the stated guidelines. Additional information: [Providing Effective Feedback in the Online Classroom](#)

☐ **Establish community agreements and discussion guidelines by:**
- Posting netiquette guidelines for online behaviors and interactions within this online course.
- Developing course ground rules, in conjunction with the students, outlining acceptable behaviors and interactions.
- Reinforcing adherence to these guidelines, as appropriate, by incorporating netiquette criteria and/or course ground rules in assessment rubrics.

Additional information: [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#) and [15 Rules of Netiquette for Online Discussion Boards](#)

☐ **Demonstrate exemplary work by:**
- Posting examples of students' work for selected assignments which communicates expectations, facilitate their understanding, helps articulate assessment expectations and standards, and models discipline-specific skills. Obtain students' permission to use their work using the form from CTE, which is available here: [CTE Student ConsentForm](#)

Additional information: [Designing Effective Online Assignments](#)

☐ **Model expected online behavior by:**
- Responding to student comments and questions within time frames set in the course syllabus.
- Providing general feedback to the entire class of specific assignments or discussions, while at the same time providing individual encouragement and comments to students.
- Providing feedback on graded assignments that both recognizes good work and makes suggestions for improvement.
- Modeling the right way students should communicate online. Additional information: [Best Practices for Teaching Online](#)

DESIGNING FOR INCLUSION – PRINCIPLE 3: SELECT ONLINE COURSE CONTENT THAT RECOGNIZES DIVERSITY AND ACKNOWLEDGES BARRIERS TO INCLUSION

☐ **Select content that engages a diversity of ideas and perspectives by:**
- Incorporating, as much as possible, a variety of perspectives by selecting course readings, textbooks, and other materials that don't systematically underrepresent, or are absent of, certain perspectives.
- Providing multiple perspectives on each topic of the course rather than by solely on a single perspective by selecting content by authors of diverse backgrounds and/or perspectives.
- Discussing contributions made to the field by historically underrepresented groups and explaining why these efforts are significant.
- Pointing out the shortcomings of material that is problematic or incorporates stereotypes.
- Providing content applicable to students' real-world experiences.

☐ **Work to build a fully inclusive culture by:**
- Providing multiple and diverse examples that speak across gender, work across cultures, and are relatable to people from various socioeconomic statuses, ages, and religions.
- Drawing on resources, materials, humor, and anecdotes that respect, and are sensitive to, the social and cultural diversity of your students.

Additional information for both sections: Creating Inclusive College Classrooms

DESIGNING FOR INCLUSION – PRINCIPLE 4: DESIGN ALL ONLINE COURSE ELEMENTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

☐ **Provide multiple means of representation by:**
- Incorporating alternate text (alt texting) that is informationally equivalent to the visual depiction of all images, figures, visuals, and maps. Additional information: Making Images Accessible and Accessible Images
- Providing accurate (97 – 99%) verbatim closed captioning (timed text) for all audio and video files, optimally, the captions should be enriched with relevant descriptive details in addition to spoken speech for video files. Additional information: Captions, Transcripts, and Audio Descriptions and Accessible Multimedia
- Providing live transcription for live/virtual events or taking other steps to make the event accessible. Additional information: Providing Captions for Live Online Events and Seven Steps for Setting Up an Accessible Virtual Exchange
- Providing keyboard shortcut capabilities for all interactive objects (including animations, games, videos, and other action objects) and online experiences to enable user access and navigation based on assistive devices. Additional information: Keyboard-Only Navigation for Improved Accessibility

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- Providing text which has been written for screen reader compatibility. Additional information: [Designing for Screen Reader Compatibility](#) and [Write Accessible Content](#). You might also try the FANGS screen reader emulator for Firefox to find out what the experience is like for users of screen readers.
- Naming documents so that they are properly and informatively labeled for easier navigation. Additional information: [Provide a Descriptive Document File Name andTitle](#)
- Designing data tables which are accessible and clearly understandable, cell by cell, when read by a screen reader. Additional information: [Creating Accessible Tables](#) and [How Can Data Tables be Made Accessible?](#)
- Convey information through multiple means in addition to—or instead of—color, suchas labels, captions, textual descriptions, patterns, textures, and other methods are used to share information. Additional information: [How to Design for Color Blindness](#)
- Creating digital files in accessible digital formats for access, usability, and digital preservation. Additional information: [Create Accessible Electronic Documents](#), [PDF Accessibility](#), [Microsoft Word: Creating Accessible Documents](#), [PowerPoint Accessibility](#), and [Creating Accessible Excel Documents](#)

Additional information: [Creating Accessible Electronic Content](#)

Provide multiple means of action and expression through:

- Providing a range of ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge.
- Allowing students to interact with course materials in a way that advances their learning.
- Reviewing all technology tools utilized in the course for accessibility.
- Providing scaffolding. Helping students build executive functioning skills by articulating the necessary steps between the granular mechanics and the big pictureoutcomes in a learning experience.
- Providing frequent opportunities for informal assessment and feedback on progress,and building into this process places where learners should stop and reflect before acting (see Principle 2).

Additional information: [Scaffolding Assignments](#), [Scaffolding Assignments: Designing Structure and Support](#), and [Effective Assignment Sequencing for Scaffolding Learning](#)

Provide multiple means of engagement by:

- Providing a variety of instructional material and assignment types within each online course module to accommodate different student learning pathways.
- Providing opportunities for group work and reminding students of the importance of collaborative skills in the workplace.
- Being open to student feedback for further diversifying course materials and assignments.

Additional information: [Student Engagement Strategies for the Online Learning Environment](#)

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DESIGNING FOR INCLUSION – PRINCIPLE 5: REFLECT ON ONE'S BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING TO MAXIMIZE SELF-AWARENESS AND COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

☐ **What are my identities, and how do others/my students perceive me?**
- Take inventory of the way your affiliations and identities – the readily evident ones as well as the ones that are less visible – may shape your perceptions and connections with others or their perceptions and connections with you.
- Consider which of your behaviors contribute to intercultural literacy and which do not.
- Monitor myself against defensive reactions.

Additional information: Want to Become More Culturally Competent? Start with your Cultural Self-Awareness

☐ **What are my implicit (or explicit) biases? Do I propagate, neutralize, or challenge stereotypes in my class?**
- Taking an honest inventory of the ways you might unconsciously or consciously be affected by or perpetuate bias. Proactively adjusting your behavior, and encouraging others to modify theirs to avoid creating a marginalizing course environment.
- Familiarizing yourself with the concept of stereotype threat and working to neutralize or intentionally discuss instances where stereotypes arise. Challenging stereotypes when evident in content, or in the spoken or written comments of students. Working to reduce your unconsciously held stereotypes in the future.

Additional information: How Do I Know if My Biases Affect My Teaching? and Top 5 UDL Tips for Reducing Stereotype Threat

☐ **How do I handle challenges from online students?**
- Cultivating reflective distance by asking yourself: what student behaviors trigger strong emotions in me, cause me to lose equilibrium, or otherwise distract my attention?
- Developing greater self-awareness of the ways you handle difficult moments can help to model constructive behavior for students (see Principle 2).

Additional information: Reflective Teaching: Exploring our own Classroom Practice

☐ **How might the ways I set up online course spaces and activities foster inclusion or dis-inclusion?**
- Understand what ways are you interacting with students and how is that perceived by them.
- Review the types of activities and assignments which you have chosen for whether they are inclusive of all students.
- Obtain feedback regarding any suggested course changes through the use of an informal, anonymous midterm survey of students.

Additional information: Utilize the Inclusive Practice Tool self-assessment (K-12 oriented, but it is applicable): Inclusive Practice Tool: Self-Assessment Form

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The five principles and some content were adapted for online learning from material provided in Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning (2018). *Guide to Inclusive Teaching at Columbia*.

Please provide any corrections or suggestions for improvement regarding this document to John Bricklemyer at jtbrick@ku.edu.

<u>Netiquette for Online Courses</u>

The following serve as guidelines for interactions with others in an online learning environment.

1. **Participate** - It is good internet etiquette to participate in online discussions and other collaboration activities to reinforce your own learning and contribute to the learning of the class.

2. **Be aware of your communication** - It is proper netiquette to be friendly with your classmates. Do not post potentially offensive, disrespectful, sarcastic or culturally insensitive comments. Be aware that your written words cannot be explained in person or interpreted by body language. Don't assume that someone 'knows what your mean'.

3. **Respect privacy** - It is proper netiquette to respect the privacy of everyone in the class. Don't share someone's personal information online without their permission.

4. **Stay on topic** – Questions, discussions and posts contribute to the learning process and engagement of the class. Staying on topic for a particular thread or post makes it easier for everyone to locate the information they need when they need it.

5. **Do not plagiarize**

6. **Use credible sources** - It is proper netiquette to cite credible sources when using quotes or paraphrasing in an online discussion, course activities or assignments. Use sources, including websites, which have good reputations for the information they provide.

7. **Keep an open mind** - Education is designed for the acquisition of knowledge. A mindset that is open to new possibilities, ideas and actions is considered necessary to acquire knowledge. If you cannot agree on anything with a fellow student or instructor, agree to disagree.

(Retrieved and adapted from http://www.networketiquette.net)

Other tips:

- **Identify yourself:**
  - Begin messages with a salutation and end them with your name.
  - Use a signature (a footer with your identifying information) at the end of a message

- **Include a subject line.** Give a descriptive phrase in the subject line of the message header that tells the topic of the message (not just "Hi, there!").

- **Use appropriate language:**
  - Avoid coarse, rough, or rude language.
  - Observe good grammar and spelling.

- **Use appropriate emoticons (emotion icons) to help convey meaning.** Use "smiley's" or punctuation such as :-) to convey emotions. See website list of emoticons at http://netlingo.com/smiley.cfm and http://www.robelle.com/smugbook/smiley.html.

- **Use appropriate intensifiers to help convey meaning.**
  - Avoid "flaming" (online "screaming") or sentences typed in all caps.
  - Use asterisks surrounding words to indicate italics used for emphasis (*at last*).
  - Use words in brackets, such as (grin), to show a state of mind.

  Avoid sarcasm. People who don't know you may misinterpret its meaning

DISCUSSION SESSION

After completing the Essential Modules, New GTAs will attend a discussion session. During this session they will interact with their peers as well as an experienced instructor while discussing how to apply the strategies they learned about in the Essential Modules into their own teaching roles.

BELOW IS A COPY OF THE FACILITATOR GUIDE FOR THE DISCUSSION SESSION

Facilitator Guide

Applying Principles of Effective and Equitable Teaching
New GTA Discussion Session | Monday, August 19th, 1-2:30 PM CT

These sessions are meant to give new GTAs space to discuss how to apply the strategies they learned in the two Essential Modules (Making Your Teaching Equitable and Evaluating Student Learning) they completed via Canvas.

Session Objectives:
1. Meet other new GTAs.
2. Think critically and creatively about how to engage and motivate students.
3. Gain specific strategies you can use to teach effectively and equitably.
4. Learn how to access campus resources to help you support your students.

We have included suggestions for how to manage each of the four discussions below (i.e., small group discussion and large group debrief, individual reflection, large group discussion). However, as the session facilitator you can decide how you would like to manage the discussions based on your session modality (i.e., in-person, via Zoom), the number of GTAs attending your session, and your preferred teaching style.

Discussion 1. Melting the Ice (Objective 1)
Small group discussion:
Share your name and discipline and any concerns you have about your new GTA appointment or about feeling ready for the semester to start.
Large group debrief:
What concerns came up in your discussion?

Discussion 2. Motivating Student Learning (Objective 2)
Small group discussion:
Discuss an example of an instructor or a class that motivated you to learn.
- What was motivating about the experience?
- How did you learn?
- How did the instructor facilitate learning?

Large group debrief:
What did your group identify as instructor behaviors that were motivating and facilitated learning? What can you take-away from these past experiences into your new role as a GTA?

Discussion 3. Creating an Engaging and Inclusive Climate (Objectives 2 & 3)

Small group discussion:

What can you do to create an engaging and inclusive climate that encourages learning for all your students? (Think about what you read in the "Making Your Teaching Equitable" module)

- What type of climate do you want to create in your classes? What ideas do you have for making all your students feel welcomed, respected, and included?
- What can you do to motivate students to learn? What ideas do you have for keeping your students engaged?
- What have instructors done in the past that worked well for you? (What worked poorly and what can you do that is the opposite?)

Large group debrief:

What strategies can you use to make all your students feel welcomed, respected, included and motivated to learn?

Discussion 4. Evaluating Student Learning (Objectives 2 & 3)

Small group discussion:

How do you know if students are doing well in the course? (Think about what you read in the "Evaluating Student Learning" module)

- What can you do to gauge whether students are learning?
- How might you help the students who are not grasping the course concepts?

Large group debrief:

How do you know if your students are learning? What strategies can you use to help students that are struggling to learn?

Attendance via Canvas Exit Survey

Please reserve 5-7 minutes at the end of the session to allow new GTAs to fill out the Canvas Exit Survey.

They can use the QR code on the flier at the front of the room. They will need to enter the **access code NewGTAFall2024**. This is how we are tracking attendance.

Resources for the Semester: Student Support and Campus Resources (Objectives 2, 3, & 4)

Below are some resource lists that GTAs may find helpful when prepping for the semester. We encourage new GTAs to check them out before the semester starts so they have a sense of what resources are available to them before they enter the classroom.

Student support and campus resources compiled by the Center for Teaching Excellence	Student support services compiled by the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
https://cte.ku.edu/student-support-ku	https://diversity.ku.edu/getsupport

Breakout modules

The goal of this component is to give new GTAs options to explore teaching strategies that are aligned with their discipline and role.

Below is a PDF Copy of Two Modules

Guiding Necessary Classroom Conversations about Systemic Differences

Teaching in the U.S. as an International GTA

Guiding Necessary Conversations in the Classroom about Systemic Differences

3.1 Guiding Necessary Conversations in the Classroom about Systemic Differences

Navigating challenging or sensitive conversations is a vital skill, especially in the classroom where discussions often touch on social identities and systemic differences. These topics can be particularly complex due to the diverse experiences and knowledge levels within any group. Traditionally, such discussions have been labeled "difficult conversations," which can inadvertently center discomfort rather than the importance of the topics themselves. Instead, framing them as "necessary conversations" highlights their educational value in developing students' cultural competency and critical thinking.

This module will provide resources to prepare you to guide discussions addressing race, gender, sexuality, and disability. These conversations are essential stepping stones in students' growth and ability to both understand and interact meaningfully with the complex world around them. Conversations about social identities and systemic differences therefore should not be treated as a temporary addendum to regular in-class discussions but rather as an integral part of your pedagogical approach.

In this breakout module, you will:

- Learn strategies for discussing social identities and systemic differences.
- Practice identifying and addressing offensive comments/behavior.
- Explore the benefits of creating ground rules for group discussions.
- Recognize challenges faced by students and instructors regarding racism, heterosexism, sexism, ableism, etc.
- Reflect on how your own subject position affects classroom dynamics.

The content of this module draws on Teaching Tolerance. Let's Talk: A Guide to Facilitating Critical Conversations With Students. Montgomery: The Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019.

3.2 Where to Start: Three Steps

While you can't control others' actions or guarantee a perfectly safe space, there are effective strategies to facilitate meaningful discussions on sensitive topics.

Step 1: Knowledge is Key

Familiarize yourself with relevant literature and listen to diverse, intersectional voices. This includes perspectives from various races, genders, sexual orientations, and abilities, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the topics.
Develop cultural competency to make broad connections across various fields. This will help you relate different experiences and issues, fostering a more inclusive learning environment.

Step 2: Set Ground Rules and Identify Challenges

Establish clear guidelines for discussions to ensure respectful and productive dialogue. Anticipate challenges students and instructors might face, such as lacking the vocabulary to discuss gender or personal experiences with ableism.
Thoughtful preparation can help create a more inclusive and productive dialogue, allowing students with diverse backgrounds to participate meaningfully.

Step 3: Learn Conflict Management Skills

Equip yourself with strategies to handle "hot moments"—instances when emotions run high, and the conversation becomes tense or confrontational.
Techniques such as de-escalation, active listening, and redirecting the conversation to constructive points can help manage these situations effectively.

By implementing these steps, you can create a classroom environment that embraces necessary conversations about social identities and systemic differences, contributing to students' growth and understanding.

Step 1: Know Your Stuff

To effectively lead discussions, it's essential to understand the topics deeply, which requires more than just reading. It involves interrogating your own subject positions and confronting personal biases to dismantle inequalities in both communities and classrooms.

Assess Your Readiness:

Reflect on Personal Comfort: Consider how comfortable you feel discussing race, disability, and other sensitive topics with friends, family, or students. Recognizing your current stance is crucial for preparation.

Diagnosing Personal Hang-Ups:

Reflect on Your Identity:

1. List Your Identities: Consider your membership in various identity groups (e.g., ability, race, gender identity, socioeconomic status).
2. Consider Your Experiences: Reflect on how these identities have shaped your experiences and assumptions.
   - What are my dominant and non-dominant identity groups?
   - How have my identities influenced my worldview?
   - What biases might I hold, consciously or unconsciously?

Evaluate Your Comfort Levels:

1. Identify Topics: List critical topics related to your class, such as racism, ableism, and gender discrimination.
2. Assess Comfort: Evaluate your comfort discussing each topic with students, using a scale (e.g., very uncomfortable to very comfortable).
   - Which topics make me feel least comfortable, and why?

- Which topics am I most knowledgeable about, and why?
- How do my experiences align with or differ from my students' experiences?

Address Specific Concerns:
1. Self-Education: Commit to learning more about areas where you feel unprepared through reading, workshops, and current events.
2. Create Supportive Spaces: Ensure your classroom encourages open discussions and is a place where students feel safe to share.
   - What specific concerns do I have about leading conversations on systemic differences?
   - What resources or knowledge do I need to address these concerns?
   - How can I create an inclusive and supportive classroom environment?

Find Community Support:
- Seek Colleagues: Form or join a group of colleagues to discuss and share strategies for facilitating critical conversations.
- Online Communities: Engage with online forums or groups focused on social justice and teaching.

Plan for Difficult Conversations:
- Prepare for Emotional Responses: Be ready to manage strong emotions that may arise during difficult conversations.
- Use Structured Activities: Have backup plans like deep-listening exercises or journaling to help manage classroom dynamics.

Step 2: Pedagogical Approaches to Equitable Teaching

Gathering Students on Common Ground

Miscommunications and "hot moments" in the classroom often stem from imprecise language, ignorance of the subject matter, or lack of experience. For instance, a straight male student might struggle to discuss gender and sexuality due to his normative status, which hasn't required him to think deeply about these topics. Conversely, a student with a disability may have faced ableism all her life but lacks the critical frameworks to articulate her experiences. While students are increasingly aware of social identities and inequalities, no one, including the professor, is perfect. Establishing basic frameworks and vocabulary is crucial for providing students with a common foundation from which to grow.

Equity in the Classroom Starts Early:
Kim Case Syllabus Challenge: Use this challenge to analyze your syllabus for potential improvements that infuse diversity and inclusion throughout your course.

Establishing Ground Rules and Easing into the Conversation

Set Ground Rules Early:
- Involve students in developing ground rules to foster open and respectful communication.
- Be transparent about the process and ask students what resources or guidelines they need to feel comfortable participating.

Model and Teach Social-Emotional Skills:
- Teach and model skills such as managing emotions, showing empathy, establishing positive relationships, and making responsible decisions through role-playing and real-life scenarios.

Provide Continuous Feedback and Reflection Opportunities:
- Encourage regular reflection on class discussions and adherence to ground rules through quick write-ups, group reflections, or class discussions about successes and areas for improvement.

Gradually Introduce Difficult Topics:
- Build trust and comfort by starting with less controversial topics, then gradually introduce more difficult subjects as students develop their discussion skills.

Utilize Thoughtful Questioning Techniques:
- Use Socratic questioning and other techniques to deepen discussions, encourage critical thinking, and prompt students to consider multiple perspectives.

Incorporate Multiple Perspectives and Voices:
- Use diverse texts and resources to ensure discussions are inclusive and reflective of various experiences and viewpoints.

Create a Safe Physical and Emotional Space:
- Arrange the classroom so all students can see and hear one another, and ensure the environment is welcoming and inclusive with visual displays and materials reflecting student diversity.

Resources:

- The "Navigating Difficult Dialogues" handout from the KU Center for Teaching Excellence provides sample ground rules and strategies for scaffolding difficult discussions [Appendix A].
- Anticipating Student Needs
- Prepare for Student Reactions:
- Use the "Responding to Strong Emotions" table to help manage classroom dynamics effectively [Appendix B].
- Content Warnings:
- The University of Michigan Inclusive Teaching website offers insights on using content warnings to support students' mental and emotional well-being.

Further Reading:

- Carol Anderson's White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide
- Robin DiAngelo's White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism

Step 3: Handling Hot Moments in the Classroom

Strategies for Productive Conversation

Preparation is key to helping students ask questions, express ideas clearly, and engage thoughtfully. Balancing safety and risk in classroom discussions is essential. Topics such as the existence of racism or homophobia, which are supported by substantial evidence, are not up for debate. Instead, focus debates on finding solutions or examining related policies.

Managing Heated Discussions:

- **Respectful Tone:** Maintain a respectful tone and address conflicts proactively.
- **Clear Rules:** Set clear discussion rules from the start and remind students as needed.
- **Address Discomfort:** Recognize and acknowledge discomfort, addressing microaggressions and emotional responses.
- **Focus on Solutions:** Facilitate productive dialogue by encouraging diverse viewpoints and focusing on solutions.

Addressing Microaggressions

Microaggressions are subtle, often unconscious slights or insults based on group identity, which can escalate classroom tensions. These behaviors often come from well-intentioned individuals unaware of the harm they cause. Topics like racism, sexism, and ableism can evoke strong emotional responses, touching on deeply personal issues. Derald Wing Sue highlights that discussions around race and identity involve more than intellectual analysis; they engage feelings of anxiety, fear, guilt, and anger [Appendix C]. Addressing microaggressions effectively involves recognizing these behaviors and intervening to prevent them from derailing discussions. Educate yourself on microaggressions and implement strategies to address them constructively, ensuring all students feel respected and supported.

Resources:

- Refer to the handout on microaggressions for concrete examples and guidance on identifying and addressing these issues in your classroom [Appendix D].

Conflict Resolution and Intervention

Effective conflict resolution involves getting the conversation back on track when it becomes too heated. Arguments can be a necessary and important aspect of intellectual exchange, but all involved must engage openly and civilly. Your reactions matter and set the tone for the discussion.

Key Resources:

- Making the Most of 'Hot Moments' in the Classroom from the University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) [Appendix E].
- Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom by Lee Warren, Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard University [Appendix F].

Campus Safety Resources

The University of Kansas offers various resources for instructors concerned about student disruptions, threats, harassment, assault, discrimination, disabilities, or mental and physical

health. Refer to the attached document on where to go when you are concerned about a student for more information [Appendix G].

3.3 Moving Necessary Conversations Online

An online learning environment offers specific advantages and challenges for handling difficult conversations. Asynchronous discussions provide students time to think, reflect, and gather resources before responding. This can be empowering for those who find speaking up in class uncomfortable, such as introverts or English-language learners. These forums also allow themes to emerge and develop over time, which is beneficial for addressing evolving issues or current events. Additionally, instructors have more time to consider how to respond and intervene if discussions become intense or hurtful.

However, online platforms may encourage students to express themselves more freely, sometimes leading to hasty or poorly phrased comments. It's important for instructors to monitor discussions closely and intervene when necessary, as the permanence of online comments can have lasting negative impacts on the class community. Addressing problematic behavior promptly is crucial to maintaining a respectful and productive learning environment.

Keeping Online Discussions Productive

Establishing clear guidelines for online conduct is essential. Consider implementing a code of conduct that includes:
- Respecting others' opinions even if you disagree.
- Avoiding plagiarism and giving credit for others' work.
- Being open-minded and considerate of others' feelings.

For example, a collaborative space for creating rules in your online course could include:
- Do not attack others' ideas simply because you disagree.
- Give credit where it is due.
- Be open-minded and considerate of others' perspectives.

Doug Ward from the KU Center for Teaching Excellence uses the following in his online classes in Digital Content Strategy (feel free to use it or adapt it!): "As with all live and online discussions, please be considerate of others. Appreciate others' differences and differences of opinion. Don't berate others' thoughts or comments. By all means, challenge assumptions and interpretations but do so in a collegial manner. Great ideas often evolve from disagreement, but no one is served by put-downs and snarky commentary. We all have different levels of knowledge depending on the topic, so be helpful and use common sense. Also, keep in mind that written comments can come across in unintended ways. Again, be considerate."

Additional Resource:

The policy from [The Conversation](#) provides an excellent guide to interacting online.
By establishing and enforcing clear guidelines for online discussions, you can create a respectful and productive learning environment, even in a virtual setting.

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Navigating Difficult Dialogues

Some topics can lead to challenging and potentially heated discussions in the classroom. Some are connected to course content, whereas others may be a reaction to current events or crises weighing on students' minds. *How can instructors create a positive climate for classroom discourse about difficult or divisive topics, whether they are anticipated or unexpected?*

Commit to an inclusive classroom climate.
- Acknowledge the range of perspectives and emotions that are likely present around the topic. Be careful to not assume that individuals from the same "group" (e.g., cis women) have the same views.
- Promote free and fair exchange of ideas. It is critical that conversations be inclusive of multiple views to help students to build capacity to think critically and learn from other perspectives.

When possible, prepare in advance for difficult discussions.
- Frame the conversation by identifying a clear purpose, objectives, and discussion prompts.
- Set guidelines and ground rules for discussion- consider collaborating as a class on these.
- Set the tone- highlight the importance of respecting others' perspectives, avoiding generalizations, and not asking others to 'represent' a group you perceive them to belong to.

Scaffold difficult discussions for your students.
The strategies below can be employed for both prepared and impromptu discussions.
- Ask students to try to understand other perspectives before reacting (e.g., listen, ask questions, restate other view before offering own, or write essay arguing for position with which they most disagree).
- Be an active facilitator (reword questions, correct misinformation, reference relevant course material)
- Include everyone through think-pair-shares, small group discussions or reflective writing
- Manage contentious interactions by setting aside personal reactions and treating hot moments as learning opportunities. Do not allow personal attacks or avoid it- help students step back and think about the issue productively, by making it a topic of general discussion or a writing exercise.
- Ask (ALL) students to think about how their views have been shaped by their identities.
- Save time at the end of the discussion to summarize it, and gather student feedback (e.g., a "minute" reflection paper)
- Build rapport and community in your class, such as by incorporating peer learning (with diverse pairs or groups) or by asking students to reflect on how their learning is enhanced by interaction with classmates (e.g., "What did you learn from someone else in today's class?"
- If an impromptu discussion gets too heated too fast, consider taking a break from the discussion (or deferring to the next class period) to address some of the pre-emptive strategies suggested for prepared discussions.

Apologize effectively if you offend someone or make a mistake.
- Don't minimize (e.g., say, "It was just a joke" or "Why do you have to be so sensitive?")
- Don't put conditions on the apology (e.g., "I'm sorry if you were offended," or "I'm sorry but…")
- Acknowledge what went wrong and take responsibility for what you did: "I'm sorry that I offended you, I'm sorry I told a story that… "
- Take steps to address the behavior: "I'm going to get better informed and make sure I do not do that again."
- Move on- don't make this about you.

Particularly for dialogues sparked by local, national, or international crises:
Consider which students (and instructors) are most vulnerable. Individuals whose identities are marginalized and/or underrepresented on campus may feel afraid, unwelcome, or drained and fatigue.
- Be sensitive to the ways these feelings can affect students' abilities to engage in class.
- Make special effort to include the voices and perspectives of individuals from marginalized groups in course

materials and discussions. Avoid implicitly (or explicitly) activating stereotypes.
- Be prepared to intervene and manage "hot moments" if negative discourse arises.
- Help students feel supported by acknowledging the conflict and creating opportunities for reflection and empathy.
- Be aware of "self-care" strategies to help students (or yourself) cope with distress and fatigue.
- Direct students to other resources that can provide emotional support or help them respond to and cope with bigotry, incivilities, and more.

Inform yourself on the ways in which your discipline and course themes relate to thecontroversy, and to civil, informed discourse more generally.
- Identify issues raised by the crisis that resonate with your course themes, be prepared to give them special attention.
- Address diverse perspectives on the issues within your field and model for your students how to weigh issues and evidence and make informed decisions.
- Consider how your own background and cultural influences might affect your teaching of these issues. *Does the material provide an accurate representation of various perspectives?*
- Consider how your field/courses can contribute to the development of students' skills in civil discourse. *How can this be an opportunity for them to learn and practice foundational democratic skills, like evidence-based critical thinking, and informed and reasoned speaking and listening?*

Visit http://cte.ku.edu/resources-inclusive-teaching for more information.

Sample Ground Rules
Principles for Constructive Engagement, Adapted from Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introductionto Key Concepts in Social Justice Education. Edited by James A. Banks.
1. You don't know what you don't know. Strive for Intellectual Humility.
2. Everyone has an opinion. Opinions are not the same as informed knowledge.
3. Let go of personal anecdotal evidence and look at broader societal patterns.
4. Notice your own defensive reactions, and attempt to use these reactions as entry points forgaining deeper self-knowledge.
5. Recognize how your social positionality (such as your own race, class, gender, sexuality, ability-status) informs your reactions to class material and to others in the class.

From the University of Michigan Center for Research on Teaching and Learning Website.
1. Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. Challenge orcriticize the idea, not the person.
2. Listen carefully to what others are saying even when you disagree with what is being said. Comments that you make (asking for clarification, sharing critiques, expanding on a point, etc.)should reflect that you have paid attention to the speaker's comments.
3. Be courteous. Don't interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking.
4. Support your statements. Use evidence and provide a rationale for your points.
5. Allow everyone the chance to talk. If you have much to say, try to hold back a bit; if you arehesitant to speak, look for opportunities to contribute to the discussion.
6. If you are offended by something or think someone else might be, speak up and don't leave it forsomeone else to have to respond to it.

For more examples like this see http://crlt.umich.edu/node/58410.

Discussing Critical Topics with Students

Use this graphic organizer to think ahead about how you can create emotional safety in your classroom. The suggested strategies are general; use your knowledge of yourself, your students, and your classroom culture to create a specific and personalized plan.

RESPONDING TO STRONG EMOTIONS

EMOTION	STRATEGIES TO USE IN THE MOMENT	YOUR PLAN
Pain/Suffering/Anger	Check in with the students. Model the tone of voice you expect from students. If crying or angry students want to share what they are feeling, allow them to do so. If they are unable to contribute to the class discussion, respectfully acknowledge their emotions and continue with the lesson.	
Blame	Remind students that the systems that benefit from and sustain inequality took a long time to build. These systems hurt all of us, but we can work together to end them.	
Guilt	Have students specify what they feel responsible for. Make sure that students are realistic in accepting responsibility primarily for their own actions and future efforts, even while considering the broader past actions of their identity groups.	
Shame	Encourage students to share what is humiliating or dishonorable. Ask questions that offer students an opportunity to provide a solution to the action, thought or behavior perpetuating their belief.	
Confusion or Denial	When students appear to be operating from a place of misinformation or ignorance about a particular group of people, ask questions anchored in class content or introduce accurate and objective facts for consideration.	

Teaching Tolerance. *Let's Talk: A Guide to Facilitating Critical Conversations With Students*. Montgomery: The Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019.

Tool: Recognizing Microaggressions and the Messages They Send

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership *(from Diversity in the Classroom, UCLA Diversity & Faculty Development, 2014).* **The first step in addressing microaggressions is to recognize when a microaggression has occurred and what message it may be sending. The context of the relationship and situation is critical.** Below are common themes to which microaggressions attach.

THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION EXAMPLES	MESSAGE
Alien in One's Own Land When Asian Americans, Latino Americans and others who look different or are named differently from the dominant culture are assumed to be foreign-born	• *"Where are you from or where were you born?"* • *"You speak English very well."* • *"What are you? You're so interesting looking!"* • A person asking an Asian American or Latino American to teach them words in their native language. • Continuing to mispronounce the names of students after students have corrected the person time and time again. Not willing to listen closely and learn the pronunciation of a non-English based name.	You are not a true American. You are a perpetual foreigner in your own country. Your ethnic/racial identity makes you exotic.
Ascription of Intelligence Assigning intelligence to a person of color or a woman based on his/her race/gender	• *"You are a credit to your race."* • *"Wow! How did you become so good in math?"* • To an Asian person, *"You must be good in math, can you help me with this problem?"* • To a woman of color: *"I would have never guessed that you were a scientist."*	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. All Asians are intelligent and good in math/science. It is unusual for a woman to have strong mathematical skills.
Color Blindness Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to or need to acknowledge race.	• *"When I look at you, I don't see color."* • *"There is only one race, the human race."* • *"America is a melting pot."* • *"I don't believe in race."* • Denying the experiences of students by questioning the credibility /validity of their stories.	Assimilate to the dominant culture. Denying the significance of a person of color's racial/ethnic experience and history. Denying the individual as a racial/cultural being.
Criminality/Assumption of Criminal Status A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant based on his/her race.	• A White man or woman clutches his/her purse or checks wallet as a Black or Latino person approaches. • A store owner following a customer of color around the store. • Someone crosses to the other side of the street to avoid a person of color. • While walking through the halls of the Chemistry building, a professor approaches a post-doctoral student of color to ask if she/he is lost, making the assumption that the person is trying to break into one of the labs.	You are a criminal. You are going to steal/you are poor, you do not belong. You are dangerous.
Denial of Individual Racism/Sexism/Heterosexism A statement made when bias is denied.	• *"I'm not racist. I have several Black friends."* • *"As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority."* • To a person of color: *"Are you sure you were being followed in the store? I can't believe it."*	I could never be racist because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you. Denying the personal experience of individuals who experience bias.
Myth of Meritocracy Statements which assert that race or gender does not play a role in life successes, for example in issues like faculty demographics.	• *"I believe the most qualified person should get the job."* • *"Of course he'll get tenure, even though he hasn't published much—he's Black!"* • *"Men and women have equal opportunities for achievement."* • "*Gender plays no part in who we hire."* • *"America is the land of opportunity."* • *"Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."* • *"Affirmative action is racist."*	People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. The playing field is even so if women cannot make it, the problem is with them. People of color are lazy and/or incompetent and need to work harder.

Adapted from Sue, Derald Wing, Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation, Wiley & Sons, 2010.

Tool: Recognizing Microaggressions and the Messages They Send

THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION	MESSAGE
Pathologizing Cultural Values/Communication Styles The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/White culture are ideal/"normal".	• To an Asian, Latino or Native American: *"Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal." "Speak up more."* • Asking a Black person: *"Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down."* • *"Why are you always angry?"* anytime race is brought up in the classroom discussion. • Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school setting.	Assimilate to dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside. There is no room for difference.
Second-Class Citizen Occurs when a target group member receives differential treatment from the power group; for example, being given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color.	• Faculty of color mistaken for a service worker. • Not wanting to sit by someone because of his/her color. • Female doctor mistaken for a nurse. • Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer. • Saying *"You people…"* • An advisor assigns a Black post-doctoral student to escort a visiting scientist of the same race even though there are other non-Black scientists in this person's specific area of research. • An advisor sends an email to another work colleague describing another individual as a *"good Black scientist."* • Raising your voice or speaking slowly when addressing a blind student. • In class, an instructor tends to call on male students more frequently than female ones.	People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn't possibly occupy high status positions. Women occupy nurturing positions. Whites are more valued customers than people of color. You don't belong. You are a lesser being. A person with a disability is defined as lesser in all aspects of physical and mental functioning. The contributions of female students are less worthy than the contributions of male students.
Sexist/Heterosexist Language Terms that exclude or degrade women and LGBT persons.	• Use of the pronoun *"he"* to refer to all people. • Being constantly reminded by a coworker that *"we are only women."* • Being forced to choose Male or Female when completing basic forms. • Two options for relationship status: married or single. • A heterosexual man who often hangs out with his female friends more than his male friends is labeled as gay.	Male experience is universal. Female experience is invisible. LGBT categories are not recognized. LGBT partnerships are invisible. Men who do not fit male stereotypes are inferior.
Traditional Gender Role Prejudicing and Stereotyping Occurs when expectations of traditional roles or stereotypes are conveyed.	• When a female student asks a male professor for extra help on an engineering assignment, he *asks "What do you need to work on this for anyway?"* • *"You're a girl, you don't have to be good at math."* • A person asks a woman her age and, upon hearing she is 31, looks quickly at her ring finger. • An advisor asks a female student if she is planning on having children while in postdoctoral training. • Shows surprise when a feminine woman turns out to be a lesbian. • Labeling an assertive female committee chair/dean as a *"b____,"* while describing a male counterpart as a *"forceful leader."*	Women are less capable in math and science. Women should be married during child-bearing ages because that is their primary purpose. Women are out of line when they are aggressive.

Making the Most of "Hot Moments" in the Classroom

'Hot moment': a sudden eruption of tension or conflict within the classroom. How might you handle such a moment? How can you take advantage of it as an opportunity to advance student learning?

General ideas to consider
- Think ahead about how you might handle difficult classroom dynamics -- and what aspects of your course content might produce them.
- If tensions arise, do acknowledge them, in the moment or later.
- Be flexible with your plans: if students are intensely attuned to an issue, let it have the time and attention it needs. Use the intensity to facilitate students' learning.

"Know yourself. Know your biases, know what will push your buttons and what will cause your mind to stop. Every one of us has areas in which we are vulnerable to strong feelings. Knowing what those areas are in advance can diminish the element of surprise. This self-knowledge can enable you to devise in advance strategies for managing yourself and the class when such a moment arises. You will have thought about what you need to do in order to enable your mind to work again."
--Lee Warren (Derek Bok Center, Harvard), "Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom"

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Specific strategies to consider

- If tensions arise, **let yourself take a moment** to decide whether to address the issue immediately in the classroom, take it up separately with individual students, or raise it in the next class meeting. Consider counting silently to 10 before speaking or reacting.

- **Remind students of your class discussion guidelines**. If you haven't already established them, propose a few key ones to guide the conversation moving forward out of the 'hot moment'—e.g., no personal attacks, no interrupting, openness to hearing a range of perspectives.

- Give students a moment to gather their thoughts: **allow them to write individually** about the statement, perspective, or exchange in question before discussing it as a group. Consider asking them to connect it to course themes and concepts.

- If you feel unprepared to deal with a question, comment, or topic in the moment, **mark it as something the class will come back to** at the next meeting – and then raise it at the next meeting when you feel more prepared.

- Where appropriate, seek to **clarify the student's point**. Often students say inadvertently insulting or marginalizing things when they are genuinely struggling to understand a new perspective or feel the intellectual discomfort of having their familiar views challenged. If you think a comment is coming from such a place of cognitive struggle, you might give the student a chance to explain the questions or confusions behind their remark: "What do you mean by X?" Or "I heard you saying Y; is that what you meant to say?"

- **Try to depersonalize** insensitive or marginalizing statements. You can model for students how to acknowledge a comment's potential offensiveness or devaluing of other perspectives in ways that critique the statement and not the speaker: e.g., rather than "X's comment," you can refer to "the last comment about Y…. what does it leave out?" Or you might speak of the effect of "these words," without attributing motive to the speaker: "When I hear these words, I respond like this…" You can also depersonalize by acknowledging, when appropriate, that a widely-held view has been raised: "Many people share this perspective. What might their reasons be?" And then: "And why might others disagree or object to this position?"

- When appropriate, **validate the student's contribution**. You might say, "Thank you for raising that perspective. It's widely held, and you provide us an opportunity to talk about it--and for me to explain why we're challenging such a perspective in this class." Or "You're clearly thinking very seriously about this topic and raising important questions we need to think carefully about."

- Find a way to **connect student comments meaningfully to course material or learning goals**. Does the course focus on writing skills? The moment could be an opportunity to discuss the critical importance of the words we choose or assumptions we make. Does your course focus on the use of evidence to test hypotheses? Perhaps this is a moment to think together about evidence in a different context. Is it a course where you've emphasized trial and error as an important process in the pursuit of knowledge? If so, you can highlight in a hot moment that mistakes can often be critical learning opportunities--if we reflect upon and learn from them.

- Use index cards or small sheets of paper **to let all students share anonymously** a brief response to the topic or tension that has erupted. You can read these aloud right away or take them out of class to have some time to analyze them as a whole—and share what you learned in the next class.

- Ask the class as a whole, "What just happened here?" **and facilitate a dialogue** about the topic and/or the class dynamics, encouraging them to share their perspectives and ask respectful questions of one another.

- After discussing intense issues, **guide students to reflect individually and/or collectively** on the issues raised and the perspectives they heard on these issues.

- **Talk outside of class** with the students most directly involved in the moment, to show your commitment to their success in the course and to help them learn from the experience.

- **Connect with your own support network**, especially if you felt targeted or personally affronted by whatever emerged in your classroom. It can be very helpful to process your responses with trusted colleagues or friends in order to return to the classroom with confidence and optimism.

- Other ideas?

--from *University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT)*

MANAGING HOT MOMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

by Lee Warren, Derek Bok Center

Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University

Source page: http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/hotmoments.html

Sometimes things seem to explode in the classroom, and what do we do then? Knowing strategies for turning difficult encounters into learning opportunities enables us to address important, but hot, topics—religion, politics, race, class, gender—in our classroom discussions.

Hot moments occur when people's feelings—often conflictual—rise to a point that threatens teaching and learning. They can occur during the discussion of issues people feel deeply about, or as a result of classroom dynamics in any field.

For some instructors, hot moments are the very stuff of classroom life. They thrive on such moments, encourage them, and use them for pointed learning. Others abhor hot moments and do everything possible to prevent or stifle them. For them, conflict prevents learning.

Fortunately all of us can develop techniques to handle the unavoidable difficult moments. Using them can open doors to topics formerly avoided and classroom dynamics formerly neglected. Most importantly, exploring these tensions can lead to deep learning.

The challenges of dealing with hot moments are 1) to manage ourselves so as to make them useful and 2) to find the teaching opportunities to help students learn in and from the moment.

Strategies suggested here rest upon the assumption that it is the teacher's responsibility both to help students learn something from the moment and to care for and protect all the participants, perhaps particularly the student(s) who has generated the hot moment. This does not mean that discomfort can be avoided: sometimes learning about hot topics is difficult and uncomfortable. But no one should be scapegoated. Everyone should be protected so that learning can happen.

A TRUE STORY
"We were ten weeks into Introduction to Afro-Am and were discussing Louis Farrakhan," a young instructor told me. "Near the end of section, a very smart Jewish woman said, 'Only uneducated black men would believe in Farrakhan.' Six black men in the class turned on her and attacked. "Class ended, and she ran out of the room, down the hall, in tears."

"I went after her and told her that if she was ever going to understand this stuff she had to go back the next time and listen very hard to what those guys, highly educated, say about why they might believe in Farrakhan.

"I then went back into the classroom. Luckily the men were still there, still talking about the incident. I told them that if they were ever going to get it, they had to listen very hard to why a Jewish woman might think that only the uneducated would believe in Farrakhan."

This young man was able to turn a hot moment into a profound learning opportunity for his students. He did it by keeping his head, not taking sides, and letting both groups know that they would gain immeasurably by understanding the arguments of the other side.

FINDING TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MOMENT

It's not easy to see the teaching opportunity when a student says she doesn't think the U.S. should have gone to war to prevent the Holocaust "because they weren't Christians"—or when a male student makes a joke about irrational numbers being female—or when one student heatedly says, "The trouble with you is you talk all the time and never listen!"—or when the Jewish student says that only uneducated black men would believe Louis Farrakhan.

How we think about the moment

- The first route to making such unanticipated and difficult occurrences productive lies in how we think about the moment—as instructors. If we can get out of our own emotional confusion, we can begin to see the heat as an opportunity to explore different views about the topic. In the case above, for example, it could be helpful to students to examine why someone might think that religious affiliation was a reason to go or not to go to war.
- We can also use the image of leaving the dance floor of the discussion and our emotions and going up to the balcony. From there we can look for a relevant meta-level issue that the hot moment raises. Often the difficult statement illustrates the complexity of questions being discussed, as in the instance of the Jewish student's remarks about Farrakhan. Such a comment presents an immediate example of Jewish/African-American political difficulties.
- It helps sometimes to think about listening for "the song beneath the words" of the student. What is the sub-text? What is the student really saying? Why is this coming up at all, and why at this time? Often students can't articulate clearly what they are thinking. After double-checking our impressions with the student, we can use this information to further the conversation.
  For example, the student in the holocaust story was African-American. Her sub-text might have been that we needed to deal with the United States' own race issues before taking on those of other nations. That idea is certainly a valid one for discussion in contemporary international politics. Had the instructor been able to bring this to the surface, rather than avoiding her remarks altogether, the class would have come away with enriched understanding.

Helping the students think about it

- To help students think productively about issues raised during hot moments, establish discussion norms early in the term, or at the moment if necessary. Don't permit personal attacks. Model norms that encourage an open discussion of difficult material—by being open to multiple perspectives and by asking all students to argue their point responsibly.
- We can take the issue off the student who has made the offensive remark and put it on the table as a topic for general discussion. Say something like: "Many people think this way. Why do they hold such views? What are their reasons?" and then, "Why do those who disagree hold other views?" This protects the student while also encouraging others who disagree to understand a view they dislike and then to argue their position later.
- Another strategy is to require that all students seek to understand each other's perspectives, as a prerequisite to understanding the subject at all. Ask them to listen carefully to the other point of view, to ask questions, and then to be able to restate or argue for that position. This can work for the hottest of subjects.
- Ask students to write about the issue, either in class, as a reflective and hopefully calming exercise followed by discussion, or outside of class. You can ask them to do some research on the subject and write a more balanced essay. You might require them to argue the position they most disagreed with.

- Sometimes it is important to talk with students outside of class, particularly those who have been most embroiled in the hot moment. Help them to learn something substantive from the experience—about themselves, about others, about possible positions, about the topic as a whole, and about how to voice their thoughts so that they can be heard, even by those who disagree. These conversations can save a student and keep them coming to class with an open and learning mind.
- If a student breaks down as a result of the original outburst, acknowledge it, and ask them if they would like to remain in the classroom or leave for a while. At the end of class, find the student and ask if you can be of any assistance. In extreme cases, urge them to see a counselor.

Getting the students to do the work
- Ask students, when things get hot, to step back and reflect upon what they might learn from this moment. This can move the discussion to a level that helps everyone see what issues have been at stake and what the clash itself might mean. I've seen this work in a class in which a white student and an African-American student were wrangling at length and without apparent movement toward any understanding. When the teacher asked all students to explore what they might learn from this, the discussion shifted gears quickly. They began to think about the difficulties in black-white communications when different belief systems were at work, the reasons for those difficulties, and possible ways to bridge the gaps.
- Another strategy is to ask students to think about how their reactions mirror the subject at hand and what they might learn from their own behavior. Often groups act out in their own discussion the topic under discussion. For example, when discussing how women's remarks are often ignored in business settings, the class or the instructor may be ignoring the remarks of women in the class. Seeing this and talking about it in the moment can enhance people's understanding of the issue.

Don't avoid the issue
- When hot moments occur because of inter-student dynamics, in ways not related to the subject matter, it can still be important to address the issue, even in a math or physics class. For example, if a student complains about another's speaking behavior, it is tempting to go on as if the outburst hadn't occurred. However, a discussion about who speaks and who doesn't and why, and how to enable the quiet ones to make room for themselves and the talkative ones to listen, could help every student in the room and make room for a greater diversity of ideas in the class.
- Or if a student makes a joke like the one about irrational numbers being female, it could be useful to stop to examine why and how men make such jokes and how they affect women's experience in math and science classes. It might be helpful to the men to understand why the women get upset by their good-humored jokes and to the women to understand how to counter them. A discussion of this sort could open the classroom to far greater collaboration the rest of the term.
- To ignore such remarks has its own consequences. Students learn that such behavior is OK and that they are not protected from it. They miss the opportunity to learn about their own behavior and its consequences. And they miss the opportunity to have a more open classroom in which a wider range of ideas can be explored.
- It is, of course, almost always useful to talk about the moment outside of class with the individuals involved, to give them support, and help them to learn from the experience.

Having a fallback position

If you are unable to find a workable position in the moment, defer. Tell students that this is an important issue and that you will take it up at a later time. You then have time to plan strategies. This approach lets all the students in the room know that you take such occurrences seriously.

MANAGING OURSELVES

We often forget that a primary task is to find ways to manage ourselves in the midst of confusion.

Hold Steady. If you can hold steady and not be visibly rattled by the hot moment, the students will be better able to steady themselves as well and even learn something from the moment. Your behavior provides a holding environment for the students. They can feel safe when you appear to be in control; this enables them to explore the issues. Your behavior also provides a model for the students.

Breathe deeply. Take a moment. Collect yourself. Take time if you need it. Silence is useful—if you can show that you are comfortable with it. A pause will also permit students to reflect on the issues raised. Deep breathing is an ancient and highly effective technique for calming adrenaline rushes and restoring one's capacity to think.

Don't personalize remarks. Don't take remarks personally, even when they come as personal attacks. Such attacks are most likely made against you in your role as teacher or authority figure. Remembering to separate self from role can enable you to see what a student is saying more clearly and to actually discuss the issue. It's not about you. It's about the student and his or her feelings and thoughts, though often articulated clumsily and from an as yet unthought through position.

Don't take remarks personally when they are about issues that you feel strongly about, or even about groups of which you are a part. Again, remember that both you and the group will be better served if you can keep some distance from the comments and find ways to use them to enhance people's understanding.

Don't let yourself get caught up in a personal reaction to the individual who has made some unpleasant remark. It's easy to want to tear into a student who is personally offensive to you. To do so is to fail to see what that student and his or her ideas represent in the classroom and in the larger world. If you take the remarks personally, chances are you will not be able to find what there is to learn from them.

Know yourself. Know your biases, know what will push your buttons and what will cause your mind to stop. Every one of us has areas in which we are vulnerable to strong feelings. Knowing what those areas are in advance can diminish the element of surprise. This self-knowledge can enable you to devise in advance strategies for managing yourself and the class when such a moment arises. You will have thought about what you need to do in order to enable your mind to work again.

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Videos. The Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard University has made two videos that can help people process difficult moments and develop strategies for confronting them. Each comes with a Facilitator's Guide. See the Bok Center website for information on how to obtain these videos:

Race in the Classroom: The Multiplicty of Experience
Women in the Classroom

A version of this "tip sheet" appeared in the *NEA Advocate,* October 2000.

Where to go when you have a concern about a student?

KEY: 1= contact initially 2= contact for further consultations R= options for referring students to get help on campus	Dept. of Public Safety	Counseling & Psychological Services	Student of Concern Review (SCRT)*	Program Coordinator Dept. Chair	Student Health Services	Human Resources	Student Access Center	KU CARE Coordinator	Office of Civil Rights & Title IX
Your concern is about a student who:	864-5900	864-2277	864-4060		864-9500	864-4946	864-4064	864-9255	864-6414
Mental and Physical Health — Is having difficulty due to illness or death in family		R		1			R		
Appears to have a chronic illness or immediate medical problem	Call 911 if severe		2	2	R		R		
Appears to have an eating disorder		R	1		R				
Shows signs of alcohol or drug abuse		R	1						
Seems overly emotional (e.g. aggressive, depressed, demanding, suspicious)		R	1	2					
Talks about homicide or suicide	1	R	2	2					
Disabilities — May have a disability							R		
Appears to have a learning problem; may need diagnostic evaluation							R		
Has a serious problem with test/presentation anxiety		R					R		
Needs help with test taking, learning strategies, time management, tutoring							R		
Harassment, assault, & discrimination — Reports sexual harassment or civil rights discrimination		R				R			1
Is a victim of sexual assault **visit sapec.ku.edu/resources1**		R			R			R	2
Is a victim of violence, stalking, or intimidation		R			R			R	2
Disruptions and Threats — Continuously disrupts class and refuses to stop			2	1			R		
Displays anger or hostility inappropriately		R	2	1					
Writes or verbalizes a direct threat to another person	1		1	2					
Poses an immediate threat to self or others	Call 911	R	2	2					
other — Is suspected of cheating				1					

*Submit a concern (care report) at studentaffairs.ku.edu/student-concern-review-team   **updated 01/04/2021**

Teaching in the U.S.: What to Expect as an International GTA
KU CTE New GTA Orientation Conference Breakout Module

12.1 Introduction: What to Expect as an International GTA

As an international student, you bring valuable experience to the University of Kansas (KU) and your classroom. As one KU international GTA put it, "What you get to bring to the classroom is an authenticity about experiences growing up with another world view in a country that many will not ever go to. I bring those perspectives into my classroom as a way of opening perspectives and conversations about parts of life that they may not have considered before."

You may feel nervous about teaching in another country or in another language; maybe you are even teaching for the first time ever! This module is about what to expect teaching in a university in the U.S., tips for communicating effectively with students, and how to work well with supervisors and professors.

After this module, you will be able to:
- Explain the main characteristics of U.S. university classrooms and students
- Identify areas of difference and similarity between your educational experience and the U.S. education system
- Manage the expectations of your supervising professor and students
- Better understand and perform your role as a GTA at KU
- Communicate more effectively across language and cultural barriers that you encounter

12.2 Podcast: Navigating Cultural and Language Barriers as an International GTA

Listen to the podcast on "Navigating Cultural and Language Barriers as an International GTA" featuring two international graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) at the University of Kansas. Andriyana Baran from the Department of Slavic, German, and Eurasian Stuides; and Kyungmin Jung from Film and Media Studies share their experiences and strategies for overcoming challenges.

Action:

- [Listen to the podcast](#)

Below are some key insights and advice for new GTAs shared during the conversation:
Overcoming Language Barriers:
Practice switching between languages to improve fluency.
- Write down idioms and phrases, read extensively, and practice with peers.
- Build a support network within the community to enhance language skills and confidence.
Building Connections:
- Engage with departmental colleagues and supervisors for advice and support.

- Participate in informal discussions and events to foster relationships.
- Join communities like CTE's International Teaching Assistant Learning Community (ITALC) for additional support and resources.

Balancing Academic and Personal Life:
- Prioritize preparation to manage teaching anxiety.
- Set specific goals each semester to improve teaching skills.
- Dedicate specific times for research and study to avoid burnout.

Managing Cultural Differences:
- Understand and adapt to different teaching approaches and classroom dynamics.
- Encourage students to ask questions and admit when you don't have all the answers.
- Be aware of and address cultural differences in attendance policies and student responsibilities.

Handling Classroom Challenges:
- Establish clear discussion rules to maintain a respectful and productive environment.
- Address microaggressions and emotional responses proactively.
- Focus on solutions and encourage diverse viewpoints during discussions.

Navigating Personal Well-being:
- Seek support from campus resources and avoid struggling alone.
- Connect with friends, family, and others who share similar experiences.
- Recognize and celebrate personal accomplishments, such as navigating the visa process and adjusting to a new country.

12.3 U.S. Educational Context and Your Role as a GTA

U.S. Educational Context

First, **watch this short (~ 2 minute) video** to listen to International GTAs talk about the challenges they had in the U.S. classroom.

Next read through this International Teaching Assistant Guide from the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University [Appendix A].
The guide will provide:
- An explanation of High school preparation & the U.S. university system
- General characteristics of U.S. classrooms and classes at KU
- GTA duties and responsibilities
- Additional resources you might find in your department and in print

Depending on where you are from, there may be many differences between what you will experience at KU and what the norm is in your home country.

Your Role as a GTA

Lastly, look over this handout "Advice for International GTAs" [Appendix B] for advice about working with students and supervisors. In this handout, KU Political Science Professor John Kennedy gives advice based on his experience living in China and working with many international graduate teaching assistants here at KU. As a GTA, you must balance the expectations of your supervising faculty member, your students, and yourself. When you are new to a role and new to a place, it's sometimes difficult to know what the expectations are! Hopefully, this handout and the other resources proved on this page will help clarify what is expected of you.

Additional Optional Resources

If you would like more guidance on teaching in the U.S., check out the optional resources below.
- "Teaching in America: A Guide for International Faculty" – This video from Harvard is older now, but the advice from international faculty is still relevant and accurate today. The video covers many different aspects of teaching in the U.S. It is about 45 minutes long, and if you are new to the U.S., it will be a very helpful introduction for you.
- Recognizing and Addressing Cultural Variations in the Classroom (see p. 3-18), produced by the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence Intercultural Communication Center at Carnegie Mellon: This is a guide for faculty teaching international students, but pages 3-18 contain primary differences between American university contexts and international contexts. These comparisons may be helpful to you if this is your first time studying in the U.S.

12.4 Communicating Effectively as a GTA

Communicating effectively with your students is extremely important, and you may be nervous about this if English isn't your first language or if you speak with a different accent than American students are used to.

First, watch this video for 10 tips about how to communicate more effectively with your students.

- Many American students and some faculty have had little experience interacting with people from other countries or cultural backgrounds. Sadly, as an instructor, you may encounter students who ask discriminatory or ignorant questions or even make racist or xenophobic comments about you or other students. Even when these things are done out of ignorance, this behavior is not acceptable. This reading gives guidance on how to respond when people make these types of remarks [Appendix C]
- If you do not feel comfortable responding directly to the student or you need guidance about what to do, you should first go to your supervising professor for advice. If this does not resolve the situation or perhaps a professor is the one making the discriminatory comment, you may want to seek advice from the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (diversity@ku.edu) or International Support Services (iss@ku.edu). We want you to feel valued and safe here at KU!

Additional Optional Resources about American English:

- A handout [Appendix D] from Vanderbilt with common English phrases for the classroom and advice on language for "office hours."
- This website focuses on pronunciation skills for American English. Improving your stress, intonation, and rhythm in speaking American English will make a big difference in your comprehensibility.
- This website is excellent for listening and pronunciation practice. Book recommendation: English Communication for International Teaching Assistants (2nd edition) by Gorsuch, Meyers, Pickering & Griffee (2012).

Additional Optional Resources about Discrimination or Mistreatment:

- Here is an online tutorial that explains Addressing Racial Bias and Microaggressions in Online Environments.
- As a GTA, you have representation from the GTA labor union, the Graduate Teaching Assistant Coalition (GTAC). Your employment is governed by a contract negotiated by GTAC with the university. GTAC also provides support and representations for students who have problems with their departments or the university. If you have questions about your rights as a student worker or you have a problem related to your job that the university is not resolving, you can reach out to GTAC through their website or Facebook page.

International Teaching Assistants Guide

by Stacey Kizer, former CFT Program Coordinator

Faculty and graduate student teaching assistants from different parts of the world often find much that is unexpected when they teach in an U.S. classroom. Teaching in U.S. universities can be quite different from teaching in other countries, especially in terms of expectations for both teachers and students. Understanding these differences can help us to improve our teaching and prevent misunderstandings in the classroom.

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Characteristics of the U.S. classroom

The U.S. university system

The U.S. university system commonly consists of four years of study at a post-secondary institution. These years of study are at the "undergraduate" level and are commonly called freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years, though you might sometimes hear freshman referred to as 'first years."

In the U.S., university students may come from very different backgrounds and may take courses for very different reasons. In some countries, university students take courses only within their chosen major. In the U.S., however, universities value a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes study across many disciplines. Students therefore take courses in a variety of disciplines to fulfill general education requirements in addition to taking courses within their major. Because of their varied backgrounds and varied reasons for taking a course, there can be many different types of students with different preparation for the course, especially in introductory courses.

> "Think carefully about what are the particular challenges you face (linguistic, embodiment, religious, cultural) and strategize around them. Do not expect that they will disappear. They won't. You have to acknowledge them in order to overcome them."
>
> – ITA, Political Science

Typical high school preparation

Generally, at the high school level, students take a broad variety of classes without special emphasis in any particular subject. Students are required to take a certain minimum number of mandatory subjects, but may choose additional subjects ("electives") to fill out their required hours of learning. Mandatory subjects typically include: science, math, English, and social sciences. … *(There is a lot of variation in the quality of high schools students attend. Some come from very competitive private schools or public schools in higher income areas. Other students may come from rural areas or schools with fewer resources that may not have even had a science lab or a teacher qualified to teach advanced science and math classes. This is another reason that students enter KU with different levels of preparation for university classes.)*

University costs & payment

The families of U.S. undergraduates pay large amounts of money for costs associated with college (tuition, supplies, room and board). … *(Many students take loans to pay for college, especially if their families can't afford to pay for their tuition, and the average KU student works 20 hours/week.)*

The following scenario illustrates an interaction a TA might have in which student privacy is an important concern.

During your regular office hours in mid-October, the father of one of your first-year students calls. He explains that his daughter received a deficiency report in your course. The father is concerned about his daughter's adjustment to college, and he wants to talk with you about her performance in your class, asking specifically about attendance and grades. What should you say?

1. "I'll have to check with your daughter to make sure it's okay for me to discuss her grades with you."
2. "I'm not at liberty to share that information. I encourage you to discuss this with your daughter.
3. "Your daughter is an adult now and her grades are really none of your business. Good bye.
4. "Unfortunately, your daughter is doing poorly. She got a D on the first test and an F on the second."

When choosing how to respond, you might consider:

- All incoming students are given the opportunity to sign a release form allowing Vanderbilt to share their grades and other academic information with their parents or other legal guardians (about 85% of students sign the release). One concern in this situation is that the student may or may not have signed that release form. The other concern is that the person calling may or may not actually be the student's parent.
- Response 1 is a reasonable option. Talking to the student allows an instructor to investigate both of these concerns. Response 1 should also involve checking with the registrar to determine if the student has signed a release. While this isn't necessary (since response 1 involves asking the student for permission anyway), this minimizes the risk that the instructor takes.
- Response 2 is also a reasonable option. An instructor can let the parent know that the student has access to her grades (via OAK or the instructor) and encourage the parent to talk to the student about her grades.
- Response 3 may be taken as rude. It also would be inaccurate if the student has signed the release form.
- If the student has not signed the release form, Response 4 violates the student's right to privacy and is illegal.

Student privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of students' academic records. Grades and other academic information are to be given to individual students only, and they alone can approve the sharing of their academic information with third parties. All incoming students are given the opportunity to sign a release form allowing Vanderbilt to share their academic information with their parents or legal guardians. A TA cannot discuss a student's grades with that student's parents without first confirming that the student has signed the release. Please note that sending grades to students via email is not considered secure enough for FERPA. TA's should make students aware of this and request permission to send grades by email. If the students grant the TA permission to send grades via email, then the TA may do so. Another option is to post grades to Blackboard, which is considered more secure than email.

General characteristics of the U.S. classroom

Students ask questions and share opinions

In general, the learning environment in the United States and at Vanderbilt is highly interactive, and teacher-student relations and communications tend to be relatively informal. As a result, U.S. students ask more questions and give their opinions more freely than in many other higher- educational systems.

Teachers encourage students to have independent opinions and to make the course relevant to their own interests and goals. Students are often casual with teachers, especially those they like and respect. They also appreciate the chance to discuss viewpoints that do not necessarily agree with the teacher's ideas.

The classroom environment tends to be Informal.

Although there are many differences in social, economic, and educational levels in the U.S., there is a theme of equality that runs through social relationships. The notion of equality leads students to be quite informal in their general behaviors and relationships with others.

The informality of dress, posture, and speech, especially the common use of the first name, can be shocking to some international students and scholars. It is not

uncommon for students to use slang in the classroom, or as a part of their ordinary conversations with instructors or other students. This list can help you understand some of the common slang you might hear your students using.

Many international students and staff comment on informal dress on U.S., which is generally very casual. You will see students going to class in shorts and t-shirts. Instructors' clothing may also be informal, although it is typically more formal than that of the students.

Students expect instructors to appear friendly and open to interaction. Students in the U.S. respond well to "immediacy cues," or verbal and nonverbal communication that reduce the psychological and physical distance between instructors and students (LeGros and Faez, 2012). U.S. students tend to respond well to instructors who make eye contact, smile and nod, or use other nonverbal means to indicate that they are listening carefully to the student (Teven and Hanson, 2004) . Students also tend to respond well to positive verbal cues, such as inviting students to speak or verbally rewarding students' contributions (Neuliep, 1997). Students can perceive instructors who do not exhibit these cues as being unfriendly or uninterested in the class or the students–and can therefore be less willing to learn (Fitch and Morgan, 2003).

In addition, feedback in the U.S. tends to be affirmative and non-authoritarian. Although it's important to correct students misperceptions, instructors often do so by noting something positive before giving the corrective feedback.

Instructors strive to make classroom communication clearly structured and accessible to all students. Instructors in the U.S. tend to use "low context" communication, or language that does not assume a high level of knowledge about the subject (Eland, 2001; LeGros and Faez, 2012). Instructors assume responsibility for student understanding; failure of a student to understand is often perceived as the instructor's failure to be clear rather than the student's failure. This feature of the U.S. classroom results in part from the varied backgrounds of U.S. students. It can be dramatically different from classroom practices in some other cultures, where high context communication assumes that listeners bring a similar set of knowledge and experience to the classroom.

Instructors in the U.S. also tend to use language and nonverbal cues that are structured to promote easy understanding (Chaudron and Richards, 1986). Lecturers in the U.S. classroom often use phrases that alert students to the expected progression of the class period as well as the most important elements of the lecture. For example, an instructor might say something like, "Today, we are going to begin by reviewing material from the last class; we are going to highlight the *three most important* elements of your reading; and we are going to briefly discuss your homework assignment." This type of structure differs dramatically from that observed in some cultures, but can be very helpful when working with U.S. students (Tyler, 1992; Williams, 1992).

Students expect multiple assignments throughout a semester.
In some countries, the only "assignments" given to university students are end-of-semester final exams; students are therefore expected to manage their own studies during the semester. In U.S. college courses, students are typically given more structured activities and assignments during the semester, both to help the students manage their studies and to give students and instructors ongoing information about student learning.

TA duties and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of teaching assistants at Vanderbilt vary greatly from department to department. While your specific duties might differ from this list, here is an overview of some of the most common responsibilities a TA might have:

- Reinforcing basic lecture material through discussion sessions, introductory lectures, or lab sessions
- Providing exam review assistance
- Holding office hours
- Directing students to additional resources
- Answering questions
- Assessing student work
- Maintaining clear and complete records

TAs are usually under the direct supervision of the professor of record for the course in which the TA is assigned. It's important to think carefully about the role you're being asked to perform and to clarify any questions you have with the professor of record. … you might start with:

- *What are the specific tasks you wish me to undertake?*
- *Do you want me to attend the lectures in the course?*
- *Are there solutions for the problems (or specific issues to look for in grading papers) or will I be expected to generate them myself?*
- *Which specific dates on the course schedule affect me and how much time should I plan in order to perform my duties?*

"Be confident. You must trust yourself and understand that language is only a tool to communicate. Your language can be bad but if your answer is helpful, the students are willing to listen to you. Be humble. Don't feel ashamed if you did not completely understand a conversation with your students. Ask your students for clarification.
Be active. If students do not come to ask you during the class, go to ask them. Before class, talk to them about what's new this week. After class, talk to them about how they about feel the class. You have to get feedback in order to improve your work. Talk more, you will gain more."

– ITA, Physics & Astronomy

Most departments have general guidelines for the number of hours you'll be expected to spend on TA duties including class preparation, in-class teaching and office hours for students. Ask for clarification if these guidelines aren't provided.

Grading

Grading can be a source of stress for TAs. How do you know if you're being fair in your assessment of student work? What do you do when a student questions a grade? How will you find the time to read all of those student essays or grade those problem sets? You can establish grading criteria and rubrics, provide written feedback to students, make grading more time efficient, and talk to students about grades. To overcome this challenge, you can read the CFT's Teaching Guide on Grading Student Work.

Maintaining proper boundaries & Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unsolicited, or undesired attention of a sexual nature and is a violation of federal law.

If a student reports being sexually harassed to a TA, the TA has a responsibility to make sure the incident is reported to the Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services Department (EAD).

The TA may opt to encourage the student to report the incident to the EAD, then follow up with the EAD

to make sure the incident has been reported. Alternatively, the TA may report the incident to the EAD directly.

Consensual relations

Consensual sexual relationships are prohibited between a student and any TA who teaches that student. Since a TA is in a position of power over a student, any relationship would either be a conflict of interest or give the impression of a conflict of interest. To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, TAs are advised to keep their office doors open when consulting with students.

Additional resources

In your department:

- Talk to experienced TAs in your field of study. They can be great sources for advice about teaching. You can talk with American or international TAs to get practical help with many of your questions about teaching. Most will be glad to help because they remember what it was like to teach for the first time.

- Observe others who are teaching the same or similar subject as you are. Ask another TA or professor if you can attend their class for several days. Take notes on how they present the material, deal with student questions and use visual aids. Model the good teaching practices that you observe.

- Ask questions of your supervising professor. Prepare your specific questions in advance and make an appointment to see your professor. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Even your professor was a beginning teacher at some point in time.

In print:

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International Graduate Teaching Assistants (IGTA), Professors, and the Students

John Kennedy, Professor of Political Science, University of Kansas

As a GTA, you have three sets of expectations: (1) Your Expectations, (2) Student Expectations and (3) Professor Expectations

Professor

⇩

GTA

⇧

Students

Although there are institutional and cultural differences between American universities and international (outside the USA) universities, there are some general tips that can help you work as a GTA in an American University.

Professors: Communication and Expectations
Many GTAs wonder, "How much freedom do I have regarding the section material and how I run the undergraduate discussion section?"

There are two extremes. (a) the professor gives you complete freedom, that is, you are on your own; (b) the professor completely manages every detail and gives you little or no authority to run the section or lab.

| (a) Complete Freedom | Middle | (b) No Freedom |

Most professors are somewhere in the middle. How do you know what kind of professor you have (complete freedom, middle or none)? Ask other experienced GTAs in your department. These GTAs will have some good advice and can let you know what to expect.

Some issues to think about:
- Grading and grading sheets especially if there is more than one GTA in the class. How do you grade the student assignments and exams? How do you coordinate grading with other GTAs?
- What does the professor expect to see at the end of the semester (grade sheet, all the assignments and exams or just the letter grade?)
- Find out what your professor expects you to do and then ask questions before the class begins.

1

Students: Respect and Responsibilities

Respect the undergraduate students. They are not kids. In fact, they are close to the same age as many GTAs.

You already have a level of respect from the students before you walk into the class due to your position as a GTA. Therefore, you do not have to worry about gaining the students' respect, but you need to be aware that you can *lose* their respect.

Examples of ways to lose respect:
(a)   If you do not know the answer, then say so. Do not pretend to know or fake it. Typically, students will know if you are faking an answer. In an American university, undergraduate student are encouraged to ask questions. If you do not know the answer, the best response is: "This is a good question. I do not have the answer, but will get back to you."
(b)   Another example is contradictions in the lecture or the textbook. Avoid contradicting the professor in sections or labs. If the students point out a contradiction between the professor's lecture and the textbook, then tell the student you will check with the professor and get back to them. You want to avoid tell the students that the textbook or the professor is wrong because this might confuse the students and make it difficult to determine what to study for the exam or quiz. Also, the professor may have a reason for this, but did not communicate it with the GTAs.

In general, it is the GTA's responsibility to help students understand the lecture and the text as well as the exams and assignments.

Typically, during the sections or labs, the GTA does not just repeat or present another lecture to the students, but rather to help students discuss the material or apply the material in labs, exercises and in-class (section) activities.

In the sciences, this may be more straightforward lab assignments, but in the social sciences it can be more challenging to get students motivated and involved in the activities.

For example: What happens when none of the students in your section ask questions or discuss the lecture or textbook in your discussion section or lab? One way is to prepare for activities ahead of time just in case there is downtime or extended silence in the classroom. You can also bring this up with the professor or other more experienced GTAs.

What is your responsibility, and what is the responsibility of the professor? This will vary from one professor to the next, but there are some general practices.

o Student cheating: If you discover a student cheated on an exam or plagiarism in an assignment, then bring this to the attention of the professor. There is no need for you to confront the student. Let the professor deal with the student.

o Excuse for missing an exam: Have the student see the professor and let the professor decide if this is OK or not.

o Serious personal problems that hinder the student's performance in class or sections. You should refer the student to the professor.

o Most KU undergraduate students are very good, and sections or labs can be a fun and rewarding experience for the GTA and the students, but there are always particular students or situations you may confront:
- A student who continually harasses you for a grade change. If this occurs, then let the professor know and then refer the student to the professor.
- A student who comes to sections or labs completely unprepared. If this occurs, then do not let the student monopolize all your time in the section or lab to get caught up. Typically, tell the student to come to your office hours to get caught up so you can work with most of the class (other students) during the section or lab time.
- A student shows up for the first time in your section or lab at the end of the semester. If this occurs, you should refer them to the professor, and let the professor decide how to deal with the situation.
- If there is a serious problem with a student you have the professor deal with the situation and you can also check: Resources for Difficult Issues in Student Behavior : https://studentaffairs.ku.edu/resources-difficult-issuesstudent-behavior

Resources:

Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities Article 22

Resources for Difficult Issues in Student Behavior
https://studentaffairs.ku.edu/resources-difficult-issues-student-behavior

Netiquette
http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

FACULTY FOCUS

INEFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Responding to Microaggressions in the Classroom: Taking ACTION

April 30, 2018 ⬚ Tasha Souza, PhD

The term "microaggression" was coined in 1970 to name relatively slight, subtle, and often unintentional offenses that cause harm (Pierce, 1970). Since then, a substantial body of research on microaggressions has demonstrated their prevalence and harmful effects. (Boysen, 2012; Solorzan, et. al., 2010; Suárez-Orozco, et. al., 2015; Sue, 2010).

Whether an observer, the target, or the unintentional perpetrator of microaggressions, faculty often don't know how to respond to them in the moment. We may feel frozen (if the observer) or defensive (if the target or perpetrator). How we respond can shift the communication climate from supportive to defensive, which can have an adverse effect on student learning and comfort (Dallimore, et al, 2005; Souza, et al, 2010). Despite the feelings of paralysis or

reactivity that tend to emerge in response to microaggressions in the classroom, certain practices can be implemented to increase the likelihood of maintaining a supportive climate. The following communication framework is offered as one of many possible response strategies to help faculty feel better equipped to effectively respond when a microaggression occurs. I developed this framework (first introduced in Chueng, Ganote, & Souza, 2016) as an interactive response one could take to a microaggression by a student in the classroom. The acronym and steps below provide a guide on how to take ACTION rather than feeling frozen when faced with a microaggression.

Ask clarifying questions to assist with understanding intentions.

"I want to make sure that I understand what you were saying. Were you saying that…?"

Come from curiosity not judgment.

- Listen actively and openly to their response.
- If they disagree with your paraphrase and clarify a different meaning, you could end the conversation. If you suspect they are trying to "cover their tracks," you may consider making a statement about the initial comment to encourage learning.

"I'm glad to hear I misunderstood you, because, as you know, such comments can be…"

- If they agree with your paraphrase, explore their intent behind making the comment.

"Can you tell me what you were you hoping to communicate with that comment?"

"Can you please help me understand what you meant by that?"

Tell what you observed as problematic in a factual manner.

"I noticed that . . ."

Impact exploration: ask for, and/or state, the potential impact of such a statement or action on others.

"What do you think people think when they hear that type of comment?"

"As you know, everything speaks. What message do you think such a comment sends?"

"What impact do you think that comment could have on …"

Own your own thoughts and feelings around the impact.

"When I hear your comment I think/feel…"

"Many people might take that comment to mean…"

"In my experience, that comment can perpetuate negative stereotypes and assumptions about… I would like to think that is not your intent."

Next steps: Request appropriate action be taken.

"Our class is a learning community, and such comments make it difficult for us to focus on learning because people feel offended. So I am going to ask you to refrain from stating your thoughts in that manner in the future. Can you do that please?"

"I encourage you to revisit your view on X as we discuss these issues more in class."

"I'd appreciate it if you'd consider using a different term because it is inconsistent with our course agreement regarding X…"

When practiced, the ACTION framework can be a tool that is quickly retrieved out of your mental toolbox to organize your thoughts and unpack the microaggression in a way that addresses the situation and cools down tension. When students make comments that are microaggressive in the classroom, doing nothing is a damaging option (Souza, Vizenor, Sherlip, & Raser, 2016). Instead, we can engage thoughtfully and purposively in strategies that maintain a positive climate that is conducive to learning and models the skills needed in responding to microaggressions in any context (Souza, 2016).

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International Teaching Assistants Guide

by Stacey Kizer, former CFT Program Coordinator
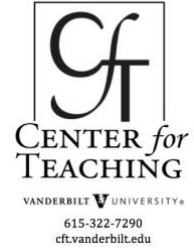
Important teaching skills

Talking about your command of English

Early in the course, you should acknowledge that English is not your first language, and ask your students to let you know when you speak too quickly, quietly, or if students don't understand something. Throughout the course, you might keep these tips in mind:

- When speaking, make eye contact with students in the class (which is not a norm in every culture). By doing so, you will be able to discern who looks confused and address questions as they arise.
- Face students while speaking. It can be difficult to remember to turn around – especially in the case of blackboard work – but you might get into the habit of writing the information on the board first, and then turning around and speaking.
- Use lots of demonstrations, props, and illustrations to supplement instruction.
- Write key words on blackboard/overhead/PowerPoint, particularly when your pronunciation of the word is unclear. Hand-outs prepared ahead of time can help students follow instruction.

Speaking with confidence

One of the most important things you can do to establish a good tone in your class is to speak with confidence. Some tips that may help:

- Remember that the students want you to do well. They have chosen to come to your class to learn and they want you to be successful.
- Remember to try and conceal any signs of nervousness or anxiety. Much of the nervousness you feel is not usually seen by others.
- Concentrate on your topic. Come to class prepared with an outline of the lecture. This should not be a written speech, but an outline that you can freely speak from rather than read from.
- Think positively instead of focusing on your fear. Positive thinking is a step in overcoming nervousness.
- Make strong eye contact with your students and use good body language to convey your confidence.

Asking & answering questions

Dealing with student questions is a recurring challenge for ITAs in the classroom, lab, and during office hours. Knowing certain phrases that are often used in structuring a question can help you identify students' questions and to ask questions to students.

Asking questions

Here are some useful opening expressions that lead up to questions:

- *I wonder if you could tell me….(I was wondering if you….)*
- *I'd like to know….*

Often, when you ask a question, you may not get enough information in reply, or not get the answer that you intended/expected. This result means you will have to ask for additional information or to ask your question in a different way (rephrase it) so that it is better understood. You could say:

- *Could you tell me more about….?*
- *Would you mind telling me more about….?*
- *I'd like to know more about….*
- *Something else I was wondering about was….*
- *Sorry, that's not really what I mean. What I'd like to know is…*

When you are asking a question, it is important to give students 7-10 seconds to answer. You may have to restate the question or offer other prompts or tips in order to direct them.You should ask your students questions throughout your lesson. Don't wait until the end of your lesson to learn if your students have understood the topic you're teaching. Pause at the end of each main idea and ask them a few questions to see if they can apply what you've taught them. Ask them to provide an example, to work a sample problem or to supply some missing information.

Answering questions

There are a number of conventions that can be useful in answering questions. For example, you may need to delay answering a question while you think for a brief moment or look at your notes, etc. Here are some expressions for when you need to delay your response:

- *Well, let me see…*
- *Well now…*
- *Oh, let me think for a moment….*
- *That's a very interesting question.*

If you do not know the answer, you may want to say:

- *I'm not sure. I'll have to check…*
- *I'm not really sure.*
- *I can't answer that one right now.*
- *I'm sorry, I really don't know.*
- *Let me get back to you (on that one).*

Or, if you think the question is not directly on topic:

- *That's something I'd rather not talk about just now.*
- *I wonder if you'd hold that question for later?*
- *Let's go back to _____*
- *To get back to our initial question, ...*

Or if you do not understand the question:

- *I'm sorry, but would you mind repeating that?*
- *Excuse me, but I didn't quite follow that.*
- *Would you say that again in a different way?*
- *Are you asking me to explain _____?*

Additional resources for asking questions:

- [Academic Spoken English](). This search engine helps you to look up phrases used in spoken academic English based on the wording, the speaker, or the type of transcript involved.

Office hours

Holding office hours is an important responsibility for many TAs at Vanderbilt, yet many international TAs are unfamiliar with this type of instructor-student interaction. Office hours are generally held weekly in 1 or 2 hour blocks of time when class does not meet. You should announce your office hours at the first class meeting, and repeat them throughout the semester. You can also request that students make an appointment to see you during office hours once or twice during the semester. The office hours tips below are from *Teaching Matters: Skills and Strategies for International Teaching Assistants*, which is available at the Peabody library.

Greeting student when they arrive at your office

Make the student feel welcome by using eye contact, smiling, gesturing toward a chair, and appearing eager. As you get to know students, your openers can be adjusted to their personalities.

- *Hello. Would you like to see me?*
- *Hi, _____ (name). Come in and have a seat.*
- *Hi, _____ (name). Have a seat. What can I do for you?*

Engaging in chitchat and getting to the point

Briefly engage in chitchat to help the student feel welcome and comfortable. But generally, this type of exchange is brief and you may need to direct students to the point of their visit. Usually, it is best not to assume that you know why the student has come to see you unless appointment was set up for a specific purpose.

- *So, what are you here to talk about?*
- *Okay, let's see what you've got.*
- *Do you want to talk about the homework?*
- *Let's deal with that question first. evaluations."*
- *There's a lot to go over. Let's get started, okay?*
- *You wanted to know about ___. Do you want me to talk about the basics?*
- *Would you like to try working through a problem? Would that help?*

Using pencil and paper

As you discuss a topic with the student, writing down unclear points can help to resolve communication problems. You can then give the paper to the student to take with them. You can also draw a diagram on paper can clarify a concept, or ask the student to do so to demonstrate his or her understanding.

Expressing disagreement/saying "no" politely

Sometimes students want to question a grade you have assigned. Or a disagreement might arise when a student cannot solve a problem and feels frustrated by the course material. Control these situations by acknowledging the student's viewpoint while maintaining your position. Use polite phrases so that "no" doesn't sound so strong. Present good reasons for your decision so the student will understand your point of view. If the disagreement is serious, or the problem cannot be resolved, it may be best to terminate the meeting. Reschedule for a later time when the student has had a chance to think about what the two of you have discussed. Remain calm, even if the student is angry or begins to cry. Politely bring the meeting to a close.

- *I can see your point, but …*
- *Yes, but on the other hand …*
- *I really wouldn't put it that way, because …*
- *I'm not sure why you chose …*
- *I think you've missed one important fact, which is …*
- *I know this isn't what you want to hear, but …*
- *I'm sorry you don't accept my decision, but I have to stand by it.*
- *Okay, let's stop for now. If you still feel this way in a couple of days, we can talk again.*

Bringing closure

Close the meeting by guiding the discussion to an end.

- *Do you think we've covered everything?*
- *Why don't you look it over and come back next week if you have questions?*
- *Let me know if you need any more help.*
- *I'm here twice a week, so you can come back on _____.*
- *Think about it for a day or so; then we'll talk again.*

- *Okay, then. So I'll see you in class.*
- *Maybe if you have any other questions about the test, you can come see me next week.*

Additional resources for office hours:

- [Using Office Hours Effectively.](#) This article provides more information about why students will visit you during office hours and read some tips for interacting with students.