



Idaho State University

Resources for Handling Difficult Conversations in the Classroom

During challenging times, our classrooms are spaces for students to share contrasting ideas about current events and happenings, understand diverse perspectives, and learn how to respond to difficult conversations in a civil and respectful manner. While tackling tough topics in the classroom is an important part of our job as educators, we have all had moments when we were challenged to determine how to address these topics and engage our students in ways that reinforce and maintain a considerate and respectful classroom climate. In order to support your efforts, the Office of Academic Affairs has collected various resources that may help you facilitate fruitful classroom discussions regarding current political and social issues.

Handling Difficult Moments in the Classroom

Making the Most of “Hot Moments” in the Classroom:

<https://www.skidmore.edu/cltl/documents/HotMomentsHandoutCRLT.UMICH-Aug2017.pdf> (University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching)

Managing “Hot Topics” In and Out of the Classroom:

https://www.csuchico.edu/ourdemocracy/_assets/documents/managing-hot-topics.pdf (California State University, Chico)

Inclusive Moves: <https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/inclusive-moves#navigating-difficult-moments> (The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University)

Classroom Discussion

Guidelines for Classroom Interactions: <https://crlt.umich.edu/examples-discussion-guidelines> (University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching)

Guidelines for Online Conversations:

<https://tilt.colostate.edu/ProDev/TEF/pdfs/GuidelinesOnlineConversations.pdf> (Colorado State University)

Managing Difficult Dialogues: <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/difficult-dialogues/> (Vanderbilt University)

Creating Safe Classroom Environments:

<https://www.uww.edu/learn/improving/aboutdiversity/approachdiversity/safeclassroom> (University of Wisconsin Whitewater)

Teaching and Learning in a Tense Election Season: <https://crlt.umich.edu/blog/teaching-and-learning-tense-election-season> (University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching)