

EDU 310/610: AMERICAN SCHOOL DISCUSSION SECTION
COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENTS: Fall 2020

Collaborate to Develop Ideas and Community

- Engage in Active Listening to understand rather than to respond; do dialogue rather than to debate, and to develop ideas
- Build community and be inclusive

Respect and Pay Attention to Each Other

- Pay attention when someone is sharing
- Listen with all senses/with your heart-slow down as part of Active Listening
- Accept need to “fidget” or move, look down to take notes, or avoid eye contact, etc. and that this does not always reflect disinterest
- Ask questions in a respectful manner of curiosity to understand, not to “debate”
- “We can disagree and still love each other unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist” - [Son of Baldwin](#)

Embrace equity, not equality

- Recognize and support that some students, particularly BIPOC* and other marginalized students, may “take up more space” in discussions to disrupt dominant norms
- Speak from “I” perspective and when an experience does not pertain to you/your experience, use the opportunity to listen *to learn*

Safety in the Classroom

- BIPOC* and other marginalized folks may step out if conversation is unsafe (failure to use trigger warnings, not correcting certain language when asked, talking over and not responding to requests to stop, etc.)
- Discomfort, unlike safety, is embraced. Discomfort is a space to be challenged to grow, which is the process of all learning.

When to speak out/when to listen

- Sometimes it is time to listen; sometimes it is time to use one’s position of power or advantage in the classroom to interrupt when things are moving in an unsafe direction.
- It is not always clear 100% of the time when to interrupt and when to listen; this is part of the discomfort that comes with growing.
- Saying the “wrong thing” or being called in to the learning process is never as harmful or hurtful as the experience of racism, sexism, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, etc.
- To name harm is a labor of caring enough for the other person to help them grow/learn. Conversely, we choose to receive that way rather than defensively.