



# Difficult Conversations in the Classroom

Teaching and Learning Resources for Higher Education

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## CETL Teaching Tips

- [Hot Moments in the Classroom: A Communication Framework to Cool Tension](#)
- [Managing Difficult Moments](#)
- [Microaggressions](#)
- [Preventing Group Conflict](#), with [the 5 min. Video](#)
- [Trigger Warnings](#)
- [Using Word Clouds to Discuss Sensitive Topics in Class](#)
- [Silence in Discussion? Pause and Write](#)

## Civility Project: Three-Part Workshop Series

Guest speakers Stephen Henderson from WDET and Nolan Finley from the Detroit News speak of how the Civility Project can inform classroom discourse in this three-part series. [eSpace pages](#) include main points, recordings, and related resources.

## Videos

*From the Inclusive Teaching free online course through Columbia University.*

- [How Can I Teach Challenging, Controversial, and Sensitive Content? \(6 minutes\)](#)
- [Talking It Through: Consultation about Teaching a Sensitive Topic \(4 minutes\)](#)

## Tools and Activities

[Inquiry and Discourse Toolkit](#) (Georgetown U)

The [Navigating Difficult Conversations module](#) is one of five free, self-paced courses on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Pedagogy and Practice (Queen's University, 12/2019).

[Teaching in the Current Political Climate](#). (2017 Feb 1). CRLT Blog. Center for Research on Learning and Teaching. University of Michigan. Retrieved from <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/node/94910>

## Articles

- [Complicating the Narratives \(The Whole Story, 2019\)](#). A guide to treating “controversial issues differently--based on how humans actually behave when they are polarized and suspicious.”
- [Knowing When to Teach Current Events \(Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014\)](#): “5 questions faculty members should ask themselves before they weave a recent controversy into their courses”
- [Promoting Disagreement: How to Debate and Not Die \(Open Faculty Patchbook, 2018\)](#)
- [2 Students Tried to Talk About Abortion. It Spiraled Out of Control \(Chronicle of Higher Education, 9/2019\)](#). *An example of how even while student organizations may make efforts to respectfully discuss controversial issues, external organizations are likely to inflame these efforts for their own political benefit, even at the cost of student safety.*

## Scholarly Articles Related to Conversations on Race

Murray-Garcia, J. L., Harrell, S., Garcia, J. A., Gizzi, E., & Simms-Mackey, P. (2014). Dialogue as a skill: Training a health professions workforce that can talk about race and racism. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 84, 590–596.

Sue, D. W. (2013). Race talk: The psychology of racial dialogues. *American Psychologist*, 68, 663–672.

Sue, D. W., & Constantine, M. G. (2007). Racial microaggressions as instigators of difficult dialogues on race: Implications for student affairs, educators, and students. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 26(2), 136–143.

Sue, D. W., Lin, A. I., Torino, G. C., Capodilupo, C. M., & Rivera, D. P. (2009). Racial microaggressions and difficult dialogues on race in the classroom. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 15(2), 183–190.

Sue, D. W., Rivera, D. P., Capodilupo, C. M., Lin, A. I., & Torino, G. C. (2010). Racial dialogues and White trainee fears: Implications for education and training. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16, 206–214.

Sue, D. W., Rivera, D. P., Watkins, N. L., Kim, R. H., & Williams, C. D. (2011). Racial dialogues: Challenges faculty of color face in the classroom. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 17, 331–340.

Sue, D. W., Torino, G. C., Capodilupo, C. M., Rivera, D. P., & Lin, A. I. (2009). How White faculty perceive and react to classroom dialogues on race: Implications for education and training. *Counseling Psychologist, 37*, 1090–1115.

Willow, R. A. (2008). Lived experience of interracial dialogue on race: Proclivity to participate. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 36*, 40–51.

## **Books**

Bolgatz, J. (2005). *Talking race in the classroom*. New York: Teacher's College Press.

Sue, D. W. (2015). *Race talk and the conspiracy of silence: Understanding and facilitating difficult dialogues on race*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

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