

MEMSA Race Reading Group Ground Rules

The MEMSA Race Reading Group aims to cultivate a welcoming, inclusive and open environment. Importantly, we want our meetings to be engaging and intellectually stimulating! In the interest of creating and maintaining the space we envision, please read and follow these ground rules for our monthly meetings. Thank you and please let us know if you have any questions (memsa.ucla@gmail.com).

Perspectives

Differing perspectives (including critiques of the readings) are most welcome, so long as they engage with the texts, are rooted in evidence, held with humility, open to revision, and above all expressed with respect and sensitivity toward all participants. We also recognize that everyone has an opinion. Opinions, however, are not the same as informed knowledge grounded in research. Depending on the topic and context, both are valid to share but it is important to acknowledge the difference in our contributions to discussion.

Respect

Talking about race can be challenging and uncomfortable. We will treat others with respect and listen openly to their perspectives on the texts. That is not to say that we will not address problematic statements, but that we will do so as part of a discussion rather than a debate. Rather than convince everyone in the room to hold a particular view of the reading, our goal is to share and discuss a variety of views. Our primary goals are to learn, grow, and share. We acknowledge that we may be at different stages of learning and we trust that people will do the best they can. Remember to ask for clarification and be mindful to not assume. We are here to explore, discuss, and even challenge ideas, not each other.

Speaking time

It is fundamental that we give space and time to fellow attendees to speak. If you have a tendency to dominate discussions, consider taking a step back and help the group invite others to speak. If you tend to stay quiet, challenge yourself to share ideas so others can learn from you.

Learn from one another

We are all here to learn from our diverse perspectives on the texts and will ask questions about things we are unsure about. We will be open to changing our minds and will make space for others to do so as well. Be mindful of differentiating between safety and discomfort. Discomfort can be necessary for growth.

No recording

To facilitate open discussion, we all agree not to record our discussions or speak about specific individuals' contributions to discussion outside of the meetings without their consent.

For resources on academic freedom, see: <https://equity.ucla.edu/know/freedom-of-speech/>

These ground rules may be modified to meet DEI needs throughout the academic year.