

DISRUPT CONGRESS @ HOME

HOW TO HOST A TEACH-IN

TOOLKIT - GAZA SUMMER SCHOOL

CODEPINK

TEACH IN:

A series of lectures and discussions on a subject of public interest ***focused on taking action***

Sample teach in agenda: from [Black Alliance for Peace](#)

Before:

- **Form a planning committee.** Who in your group is a good speaker/facilitator? Who is a good researcher? Consider also a moderator, time keeper, designated videographer+photographer, etc. Assign volunteers.
- **Locate [your congressperson's](#) office in your district**
 - Check the congressional calendar to see when they are in session in dc vs when they're home in your district
- **Scope the location in advance.** Find out if civilians can go in, if groups are allowed, etc.
 - Talk to their staffers to find when they are in office or have upcoming events
 - Can try to get an official meeting with them esp if they are 'progressive'
- **If you can't get into the building,** find a spot directly outside their office to host your teach in. A public courtyard, park, etc. **Look for accessible spaces.**
- **Choose a focused topic and create an agenda.** UNRWA funding, weapons manufacturers, AIPAC funding, ecocide, human rights abuses + international law, history of apartheid/the Nakba, etc.
 - Consider your objectives - what should people walk away with?
 - Prepare a speech or presentation that can be done without a screen/projection
 - Consider handouts of popular speeches, pamphlets, etc.
 - Encourage participation - ask questions, let folks talk to each other, make connections with our lives

- Consider interpreters for spanish/asl/other common languages in your community
- End with an action item!
- **Create lots of visuals** - signs, banners, stickers, handouts, etc.
- **Outreach** - to community members to attend *and* to coalition partners to co-lead
- When your plan is in place, **submit the [local support form](#)** to ensure staff is in the know and gets you the resources you need

During:

- Be clear in your message!
- Be visible! Wear lots of pink, bring signs, and consider [creative visuals](#)
- Encourage participation! Teach-ins are meant to be collective
- Be flexible! And aware of your surroundings!
- Record everything
- Be passionate! Often staffers will agree with us, will listen, and might even share what you've said

After:

- Debrief with your team - what went well? What was unexpected? Did your target audience receive your message?
- Follow up with your audience

Reminders:

- Know your local law regarding recording protests, disruptions, being on capitol property, etc. Connect with your local National Lawyers' Guild Chapter
- keep recording if people tell you to stop unless you'll be arrested. record audio if they won't let you record video. (know local consent law)
- Consider sending out a post-action press release by submitting [local support form](#)
- If you can, provide water and/or food to enrich folks and connect with *all* your community members

Gaza Summer School Session One: *Disrupting Congress at Home - Tips from our Disruptors in DC!*

This **Monday, June 3rd**, led by course leaders **Moataz Salim and Julia Norman**, we will equip ourselves with strategies on *how to inform others on Palestine* and *disrupt our members of Congress when they're back home this summer*.

- **Congress-focused action:**
- GOP is pushing through more money and weapons to Israel, and is passing anti-Arab/islamophobic & pro-Zionist legislation for organizations and in higher education.
 - Not just about their votes for specific bills...we can respond to the letters they are drafting, the witnesses they are choosing/committee activity as well.
 - Not only useful for chasing bad Dems/exposing- also for requesting actions, marker bills, public statements from 'good reps'.
- **Disrupting**
 - Includes disruption speaking events with interjection and protest
 - The value: pressure on politicians/power of public shaming, shutting down normalized dialogue, confronting them for their complicity
 - Building Confidence or getting over the hump: they work for you, getting over illusion that the members are inaccessible or know more than you
 - Bird-dogging (walking alongside them on their way somewhere and asking questions, demanding answers).
- **Other options for action**
 - if you are not comfortable interrupting, it is important to approach members after events with a serious conversation, bring a buddy to record in case they ignore you, dismiss you
 - Sit-ins in-offices
 - Teach-ins outside or inside their offices (toolkit above).
 - "Wake-up calls"
- **How to Find/ Using Resources to find your member/get in contact:**
 - Keep track of upcoming donor events/town halls
 - Twitter/X
 - Member Website
 - Good to familiarize yourself with recent letters they've signed, votes on key bills (Anti-Semitism Awareness Act, Israel Security Supplemental)
 - If you are in an urban area, think about neighboring members/nearby districts.
 - Restaurants they eat at frequently.
- **Planning ahead: when are they in the District?**
 - June 17-21 District
 - July 15-19 District
 - August

- **Other Key Points**

- Organize, organize, organize; strength in numbers and different roles for different people