



## Anticipating & Preventing Difficult Situations

- Create a brave space (see below)
- Lay out norms and expectations at the start of the semester
- Continue reminding students of these expectations throughout
- Foster constructive engagement (see below)
- Inform students when they will encounter potentially harmful content and give them *agency*

### Brave Spaces

A brave space is one where people feel comfortable sharing the uncomfortable. Creating these spaces in the classroom is a key feature of inclusive teaching. There are five elements to brave spaces. A common feature to each of these is that students have ownership of their own opinions, which in turn means taking responsibility for these opinions:

- Controversy with civility
- Owning intentions and impacts
- Challenge by choice (students may step in and out of conversations)
- Respect
- No attacks

*Brave spaces must be actively fostered for them to succeed and to benefit students.*

### Principles for Constructive Engagement

adapted from Sensoy & DiAngelo (2014)

1. Strive for intellectual humility. All knowledge is partial; therefore, we must all constantly ask questions and reflect. None of us know everything about anything.
2. Everyone has opinions. Opinions are not the same as informed knowledge.
3. Look beyond personal anecdotal evidence and look at broader societal patterns.
4. Notice your own defensive reactions and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self-knowledge.
5. Recognize how your social positionality (e.g., race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, religious preferences, etc.) informs your reactions to those you work with and learn from in this course.

## Reacting to Difficult Situations

### *In the moment:*

- Ask students to pause and reflect
- Use “I” statements
- Address directly
- Revisit guidelines/norms/community standards

### *After the moment:*

- Check in with individuals involved
- Report anything necessary (e.g., Title IX)
- TAs and AIs report incidents to supervisor (or supervising professor if it fits)
- If necessary, make space in the next class or in the syllabus to further address the issue