



## **Classroom Management: Creating Productive and Constructive Learning Environments**

[\*\(view online here\)\*](#)

Faculty strive to create learning environments that support respectful dialogue, intellectual risk-taking, and inclusive engagement. Classroom disruptions may interrupt learning spaces, however, and faculty should consider effective ways to navigate these moments, before they occur. Much of this work involves thoughtful and intentional planning, especially when forms of discourse are incorporated into learning activities.

This resource page offers practical strategies for managing classroom dynamics, especially when navigating conflict or discomfort. Drawing on evidence-informed practices and curated materials from leading university teaching centers—including The Ohio State University, Yale University, the University of Michigan, and the University of Maryland—these resources may help faculty prepare for and respond to challenging moments in the classroom. Whether planning a semester or responding to spontaneous classroom challenges, these strategies support faculty in cultivating learning spaces where students feel respected, heard, and empowered to grow.

### **[The Ohio State University Teaching & Learning Resource Center](#)**

<https://teaching.resources.osu.edu/teaching-topics/managing-classroom-conflict>

These resources are organized into strategies for faculty to consider before the semester, before a class, during a class, and after a class. Additional links provide more specific details for faculty.

### **Summary [\*\(from the OSU TLRC website\)\*](#)**

Navigating classroom conflict—and teaching students to do so as well—is crucial to ensuring your classroom is a welcoming and supportive space for all learners. It can help you transform difficult moments of discord into new learning opportunities. Disagreements during discussions are unavoidable, but the strategies outlined above will help you foster respect, reflection, and a space in which students are supported to grow and learn from their mistakes.

By engaging in evidence-informed teaching practices before, during, and after class, you set a positive example for students to follow in your classroom and in their communities beyond it.

- Before the semester: Consider appropriate content and assessments, craft syllabus statements, plan thoughtfully if you're inviting guest speakers, and anticipate difficult conversations.
- At the start of the semester: Shape a positive learning environment by establishing trust, being transparent about your course goals and expectations, and creating a classroom agreement to guide respectful dialogue.
- Before a class session: Prepare for discussion by considering alignment to course goals, educating yourself on the topic, setting clear expectations for participation, and developing a discussion lesson plan.
- During a class session: Notice when students are uncomfortable or distressed and offer opportunities for further conversation through office hours, written reflections, or anonymous feedback. Practice "calling in" (rather than "calling out") problematic comments made during class.
- After a class session: Reflect on conflicts that occurred and how they were managed—with students and on your own—and consider the changes you could make to inform your future teaching. Engage in professional learning to keep developing your approach to managing classroom conflict.

### **[Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning](https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/teaching/teaching-resource-library/constructive-conversations)**

<https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/teaching/teaching-resource-library/constructive-conversations>

Yale's Center for Teaching and Learning focuses more specifically on strategies for facilitating conversations on challenging topics. These resources may be particularly helpful for faculty using forms of instructional discourse as part of student engagement activities.

#### **At a Glance** *(from the Poorvu website)*

- Topics may be challenging when students disagree on a subject or discomfort surfaces. These topics can be varied: from politics and religion to disagreements on the basis of perspective.
- Topics can also become challenging throughout the course of the semester and year, especially during occasions of notable events or anniversaries, e.g., the U.S. presidential election.
- Pedagogy that doesn't turn away from discomfort often brings new perspectives into the conversation and allows for more rigorous and brave intellectual explorations.
- This page offers a variety of strategies that instructors can use for planned discussions and spontaneous conversation on challenging topics

## [University of Michigan Center for Research on Teaching and Learning](https://crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/disruption)

<https://crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/disruption>

CRLT resources address ways to “reduce and respond to disruptive or disrespectful student behavior in the college classroom.” Links lead to materials from workshops, developed by one of the oldest teaching and learning organizations in higher education.

- Understanding Disrespect and Disruption
- Reducing Incivility in the University/College Classroom
- Understanding Student and Faculty Incivility in Higher Education
- Strategies for Prevention and Response

## [University of Maryland Baltimore County Faculty Development Center](https://calt.umbc.edu/teaching/pedagogy/classroom-management-techniques/#redirecting)

<https://calt.umbc.edu/teaching/pedagogy/classroom-management-techniques/#redirecting>

The UMBC Faculty Development team gathered resources that “define disruption, analyze possible causes, and offer ideas on how to respond to students.” They offer annotated resources and support materials generated in faculty discussions sponsored through the center.

- Redirecting Disruptive Students: What is disruptive behavior?
- Preventing Disruptions
- Best Practices for Redirecting Disruptive Behaviors
- Annotated Resources

***Curated by Matthew Garrett, PhD, Professor and Director of UCITE***

*This information can also be found at*

<https://case.edu/ucite/teaching-resources/classroom-management-creating-productive-and-constructive-learning-environments>

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