

Communication Guidelines for Safe/Brave Spaces

1. Welcome multiple viewpoints

Speak from your own experience by using “I statements.” Ask questions to understand the sources of disagreements.

2. Own your intentions and your impacts

Respect each other’s experiences and feelings by taking responsibility for the effects of your words. On the other side, if you have a strong reaction to something, let the group know. Be open to dialogue.

3. Work to recognize your privileges

Use this space to recognize and investigate your privileges (for example: class, gender, sexual orientation, ability). Honor the different experiences we all bring to this space.

4. Take risks: Lean into discomfort

We are all in process. Challenge yourself to contribute even if it is not perfectly formulated.

5. Step back

Share speaking time and try to speak after others who have not spoken.

6. Notice and name group dynamics in the moment

We are all responsible for this space. Be aware of how others are responding or not responding. Ask for a “time out” or dialogue if needed.

7. Actively listen

Use your energy to listen to what is said before thinking about how to respond. Notice when defensiveness and denial arise.

8. Challenging with care

Find ways to respectfully challenge others and be open to challenges of your own views. Think about how to question ideas without personal attacks.

9. Confidentiality

Share the message, not the messenger.

10. Break it down

Use simple language and background information when necessary. Ask for clarification if needed.