

Breakout Room Assignments and feedback - ALWD Event with Russell McClain
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Each room will be assigned a specific topic related to classroom concerns. In your breakout room, discuss potential strategies and solutions (and questions!) and be ready to come back to report to the larger group. Please have one volunteer from each room who is willing to relay a summary of your dialogue and questions.

Breakout Room 1 - I worry about mispronouncing student names

- Student survey
- Write down name phonetically
- Upload video via Canvas where they give pronunciation
- Flipgrid so classmates can hear
- Have students write a “trick” or a phrase with rhyming to remember

<https://namedrop.io>

What about mixing up student names? Students of same race?

- Being mindful and careful
- Recognizing the importance of the issue
- Some institutions/deans will collect this information and share it with professors

RM - at the beginning of the semester, send an email to students and ask directly what name and pronoun they want, communicate that you want them to correct you - acknowledges your own imperfection but that also you are committed to getting it right. We are so afraid of making mistakes and being perfect that it may lead to inaction.

Breakout Room 2 - student X says something in class that I recognize as something possible harmful to some. What do I do?

- What about inflammatory chat comments? Esp when instructor was not aware
- Shut down chat and potentially follow up afterwards
- As soon as you become aware, shut down - if possible and manageable, address at the time
- If not possible - when and if we become aware, we should address at the next opportunity
- Consider taking proactive steps to prevent this from happening before it occurs - language in syllabus about learning environment, community norms, learning objectives
- Have a discussion early on about a professional learning experience

- Be aware of your institutional support if a student raises an issue from your class (dean support, DEI support may also be helpful to address conflict)

RM - again the fear of making a mistake. Highlight: transparency. Potential response: “I feel ill prepared to address what I am seeing in the chat at this moment. I don’t want to end class without acknowledging what I see in the chat right now. Perhaps what we can all do is to reflect on this experience and be prepared to hold dialogue in our next class when we have had a chance to process it.”

Breakout Room 3 - students feel dissatisfied about the discussion of something difficult, but won’t tell me why/how

Students are offended, and i can tell they have something to add, but they dont feel comfortable - how can i encourage discussion?

- To acknowledge that there is discomfort in the room and acknowledge that we are also vulnerable - that might help break the ice
- Consider punting to the next class to give people time to reflect
- If we are still on Zoom, allowing or encouraging discussion in the chat - chat has different degrees of exposure, people have various levels of comfort putting things in chat or maybe just to you or your TA privately
- Avoid letting a dominant position take over - offer counter points or counter narrative as a facilitator
- Have zoom office hours still be part of class, helps with students who may not feel comfortable going into your office
- Have TAs set hours
- Use anonymous notes or polling to get the read of the room throughout the semester as well

RM - lessons from this year - there are elements of increased access with Zoom which have benefits, so perhaps finding ways to bring that access with us. In terms of making space for different issues, we have to come prepared to articulate viewpoints. Marginalized students feel it is constantly left to them to bring things up, so we have to have the facility or fluency to bring those viewpoints to the forefront. Helps reduce burden on BIPOC students - balance with taking away agency and leaving burden, so return again to transparency and say “There are perspectives on this that I want to make sure are heard but i also don’t want to take away anyone’s voice.”

Breakout Room 4 - something in the material triggers painful memories or experiences for a student

- A lot of overlap from the other groups - prep ahead and be aware
- When things come up, we are not always aware if it does trigger, so consider having something in your syllabus about things that come up and a mechanism for students to report or seek support

- Make students aware of the services available to them at your larger institution

RM - there are things we can anticipate, things we cannot. Prepare for those you can. Growth mindset.

Breakout Room 5 - discussing problematic elements of material (cases) that aren't directly relevant to class topic

I worry that people don't think a white woman (or replace with an X educator) is capable of facilitating conversations about race

- The one way to do it wrong is to do nothing
- Might depend on the composition of class and the timing of the class (evening v day)
- Crim Pro professor who asked class how many individuals had been stopped by police, this was only black students - did this put them on the spot?
- Approach of one professor is to invite sharing of perspectives but balance with overburdening students

RM - teaches contracts, which is not ordinarily a SJ topic, with every subject matter SJ is there if you are willing to look for it. An 1850s contract case results in a woman not getting what she was promised - could be promissory estoppel alone, or talk about the fact that woman couldn't own property at times in our country and did not have the right to vote until 70 years after - opportunity for gender dialogue. We expect it in Con and Crim, but it can be there in other places as well. It may be worth a conversation or reflection on how we think about race in the legal writing curriculum and how we think about these issues.

We equate the inability/ineffectiveness of strictly adhering to "proper English" standard in language with "less than."

Entire List of Concerns Raised:

- Unblinding the first set of papers after grading them mid-October, and students of color have the lowest grades. Many students of color also have high grades--but all of the lowest are also students of color. What do we do?

- 3

- I worry students won't tell me about microaggressions I don't see

- 6

- Not knowing how to reach out to a struggling student/not wanting to seem to be pandering
 - 13
- I raise a sensitive subject that causes students to feel singled out
 - 15
- Saying something harmful and not having a clue I did it.
 - 0
- I worry about addressing microaggressions as to not appear like an "angry" black woman
 - 6
- Harmful discussions happening in Zoom chat or another place
 - 17
- I worry about accidentally offending students by saying the wrong thing
 - 10
- I worry about how to make space for my ASP students - identified for low GPA - to express feelings of lack of belonging, and maybe even to help them contextualize with concept of stereotype threat. I worry about sounding fatalistic, or even like I pity them.
 - 18
- I worry about inartfully presenting material for discussion, students become upset, students don't come to me but go to the Dean or Director of the Program.
 - 3
- Student uses an inappropriate or offensive word in class.
 - 18

- Not addressing bias in the law. Treating as if neutral. Offputting those whose experiences are not adequately addressed.
 - 13
- Misunderstanding why a student is not engaged
 - 12
- Discussing problematic elements of material (cases) that aren't directly relevant to class topic
 - 11
- I accidentally say something that doesn't land the way I thought it would and a student calls me out. How do I address?
 - 18
- students are offended, and I can tell they have something to add, but they don't feel comfortable speaking up. How can I encourage discussion
 - 15
- Something in the material (e.g., readings) triggers painful memory or experience for student
 - 15
- I worry that people don't think a white woman is capable of facilitating conversations about race.
 - 7
- I worry about misgendering students
 - 7
- Being challenged by white male students
 - 16
- Students feel dissatisfied about the discussion of something difficult, but won't tell me why/how
 - 20

- I worry about mispronouncing students' names.
 - 27
- Student X says something in class I recognize as possibly harmful to some. What do I do?