

Guidelines for Discussions on Anti-Black Racism

1. **Name the discomfort:** The fastest way to dispel discomfort is to address it head on. If you are feeling uncomfortable with anti-Black racism, *name what you are feeling!* Labeling and bringing emotions out into the open allows them to be examined with a more objective eye; you are then observing your emotion, not being controlled by it.
2. **Your impact is everything:** Stating intentions early can help avoid misunderstandings. However, if a peer is hurt by something you did or said, your intention is no longer the focus; *the impact of your words or actions is more important.* Apologize if you harmed someone, accept feedback graciously, and decide how you want to learn from it.
3. **Keep a learner's mindset:** Seek to understand, before being understood. Your experience is valid and real, but that does not make it universal. In response to a new concept or difficult feedback, think: "I am grateful to have received this new information and can now choose how I want to integrate and use this information."
4. **Use sound academic arguments; refer back to the text:** When attempting to make a statement that is not from direct and immediate personal experience, it should always be backed by an academic resource.
 - a. **Discuss like a scholar:** Be cautious of generalizations and unsupported claims, be wary of logic fallacies, and watch for misleading data.
 - b. **Check your sources:** What are the biases present in the sources you have cited? What are the sources of their data?
 - c. **Form complete rhetorical arguments:** When making a claim, use logic and back up your assertions with evidence.
5. **Use appropriate language:** Adopt a zero tolerance policy for racist language and abusive terms. Inform students when terms are anachronistic, and update your language as you learn; some terms may have been acceptable in the past but are no longer respectful terms.
6. **Make all voices heard:** Look around the room; do most people look like you? If so, how can you make sure less represented groups are represented in the discussion? Before speaking up, ask, "Does saying something add something critical too the discussion, or does it take an opportunity away from an under-represented voice?"
 - a. **Ask your classmates what they think!** Outside of creating space for peers to speak, nominating (naming) a peer in discussion also has a huge positive impact on engagement and builds a stronger community.

Adapted From: Chen, S., Houston, A., & Cooper, A. (n.d.). *The anti-racist discussion pedagogy: An introductory guide to building an anti-racist pedagogy in any discipline through instructor reflection, clear communication guidelines, and inquiry-based discussion.* Packback.

[Anti Racist Discussion Pedagogy 1.pdf \(unc.edu\)](#)