



SOCC Ground Rules:

For Group Discussions about Diversity, Human Rights and Equality

- 1.) Contributions are welcome and open discussion is encouraged with respect to your college's Student Conduct Code. In order to have productive discussion participants must be honest with others and themselves.
- 2.) While there's no such thing as a completely "safe" public forum for discussing difficult topics, if you do not want your comments repeated outside of the group, preface your remarks with request for confidentiality and the group will honor your request.
- 3.) Assume that everyone participating is doing the best they can to listen and understand the topics presented.
- 4.) Never demean, devalue, or in any way embarrass people for their experiences should they choose to share in class. Humor is welcome but shaming behavior is not.
- 5.) Practice respectful inquisitiveness about others, not cultural tourism. It is better to admit that we know very little about a different person or culture and to gather information, than to make assumptions.
- 6.) Allow each person to speak without interruption.
- 7.) Acknowledge that inequalities of privilege and power according to race/ethnicity, nationality, class, gender identity, age, religion, socioeconomic status, physical or mental disability, and sexual orientation exist in our social structure
- 8.) Acknowledge definitions, terms, and examples discussed as samples of institutional and structural conditioning and misinform us about our own group identity and about others.
- 9.) Agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned a new way to respect and embrace difference. Also agree not to blame victims for the condition of their lives.
- 10.) It's okay to feel anger, confusion, frustration, fear, and sadness while participating. Realize the more often you participate in discussions and spend time learning about diversity issues, you will also feel acceptance, reconciliation, trust and empathy for others. The more we know about differences, the more comfortable we will be with our diverse people in our global community.