

Discussion Covenant

A covenant is a contract, something we'll all abide by during the semester.

You have the right in this class to:

Ask questions. Always.

If you're asked to provide your thoughts or an answer, you can say that you're not ready to talk, or that you'd like to listen more before you speak, or that you don't know without ridicule from me or your classmates.

How do you ask questions on something you don't know to questions?

To miss class. If you're not feeling well, had a hard night, worked an extra shift, or were taking care of someone else, you don't have to come to class. You have four (4) absences to use as you will; anything after that, though, and you and I should talk. However, please do the classwork and the homework listed on the class blog (<https://mathcomposition.school.blog/blog-feed/>) for the day you miss.

I find this to be quite relaxing

To work with your classmates:

You can always work with a partner or as part of a small group for class work and homework.

And in the converse, you can always choose to work alone.

People make me awkward; thank you.

However, you must:

Be prepared. Our discussions will always revolve around a shared reading. Be caught up on the reading so you feel ready to engage your classmates in class.

How do you have a discussion, when no one else talks?

Be respectful. Always listen to what others are saying and think about what they're saying. When you respond, respond to their ideas, and if you disagree, make sure to start with, "What I hear you saying is..." and paraphrase what the other person just said. Once they confirm that's a good take, then explain why you disagree with their idea. Do not turn into a personal attack, that is, saying something like, "You're stupid, your idea is stupid, and you have a stupid haircut." That's not polite nor does it move the conversation in productive directions. Also, do not talk over other people. If need be, I'll break in and ask you to wait and listen to the person who has the floor.

I like all this.

These things that may make you feel odd but you also have the right to do:

It's okay to ask questions or to paraphrase what Dr. Bailie or the writer we're reading has said and/or written.

It's okay to mispronounce words. If you know there's a good chance that you'll mispronounce a word, say, "I'll probably mispronounce this, but..." and then speak.

It's okay to have a weird response to a question or a reading. Even if any answer or an idea that you say aloud may seem off, oftentimes it's not wrong. It's just that you're still working through the problem presented and have presented the class with a rough draft idea and/or answer. That's fine. I'll work with you to develop the idea and/or answer; moreover, I will not ridicule you for sharing.

So, how is it our right to debate pain that we inflicted? How can we discuss this without offending anyone? What is the polite way to do it?

How do you have an opinion on something you don't feel is your right to even debate? Example: The race question we were discussing in class; white people inflicted that pain on colored people.