



*expected*. For closed topics, they may recognize the discussion as related to how the topic came to be "closed" and what evidence or processes contributed.

- - Perennial issues are the recurring questions that are applicable across time

perceived as “pushing” a perspective, the perception of the classroom as a space for open discussion will be deeply undermined. You may also simply be uncomfortable sharing your opinions as you engage in political discussions. If it isn’t contributing to student learning and makes you uncomfortable, there is no reason to force this into a discussion.

Remember, your discipline has specific connections to political topics that can help focus these dialogues. These connections may not be immediately apparent to students, providing an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the broader field in which they are being educated (e.g., how research in your discipline is, or isn’t, funded).

You also set an example for your students as far as how to engage in dialogues that include varied perspectives and opinions. Maintaining a focus on political tolerance, defining what constitutes evidence in the discussion in a way that fits the topic, and showing appreciation for all viewpoints that are shared will help alleviate some of the fear that may be associated with political dialogues.

Above all, remember that the stress you feel related to some topics are likely felt by your students as well. In creating an expectation of political tolerance, you may also emphasize the importance of avoiding harm in any form, for you or your students.

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