

DePaul Student Organization

Post-Election Toolkit

VOTER
FRIENDLY
CAMPUS
DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

Post-Election Toolkit

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A LETTER FROM OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Dear Student Organization Leader:

DePaul University has had the fortune of working with you and your peers in leadership positions throughout the years and especially during the 2020 Presidential Election. We in OSI strive to Make Good Things Happen, and help students contribute positively and in a non-partisan way to the DePaul Community.

In this toolkit, you will find resources for officers/leaders and groups, as a whole, as we approach the election and for the hours, days, weeks, and months after. The tools are meant to be used either individually or together as a whole guide. You are encouraged to take what you need to tailor to the needs of your specific organization.

We recognize that election seasons bring personal and organizational challenges. The Office of Student Involvement, the Division of Student Affairs, and the university as a whole are here to support and assist you as you navigate this time.

Please contact our office via email at studentorgs@depaul.edu for any further questions.

Sincerely,
The Office of Student Involvement

CAMPUS RESOURCES

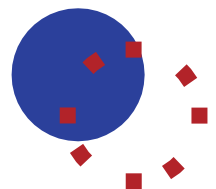
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS – OFFICE INFORMATION

- [Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs](#)
 - Number- 312-362-5494
 - [Virtual Office](#)
 - Email- veteransaffairs@depaul.edu
- [Athletic Academic Advising](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7550
- [Center for Students with Disabilities](#)
 - Number- 312-362-8002 or 773-325-1677
 - [Virtual Office](#)
 - Email- csd@depaul.edu
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7290
 - [Virtual Office](#)
 - Email- deanofstudents@depaul.edu
- [Health Promotion and Wellness](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7129
 - Email- hpw@depaul.edu
- [Multicultural Student Success](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7325
 - [Virtual Office](#)
 - Email- omss@depaul.edu
- [New Student and Family Engagement](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7360
 - [Virtual Office](#)
 - Email- parents@depaul.edu
- [Residential Education](#)
 - Number- 773-325-4211
 - Email- resed@depaul.edu
- [Office of Student Involvement](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7361
 - studentorgs@depaul.edu
- [University Counseling Services](#)
 - Number- 773-325-7779 or 312-362-692

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS RESOURCES

These offices are still available in this virtual setting to assist you in preparing and processing the election. You will be able to reach out to them about these as you approach this time individually, as a student leader, and within your student organization.

In case of an urgent or life-threatening emergency, please call 911, go to your nearest emergency room, or (if you are on campus) call Public Safety (773) 325-7777



CAMPUS RESOURCES

DeHub and Voter Friendly Campus

Visit the Voter Friendly Campus DeHub page

Learn more about:

- Events on campus related to the election
- Resources about voting and the election
- Updates/reminders regarding registering to vote and voting



Join the Voter Friendly Campus page!



General Considerations

Officers consider the following:

- General Guidelines
 - Set ground rules
 - Responses to behaviors/issues
 - Set expectations
 - Set boundaries
 - Troubleshooting of scenarios and responses
 - Facilitator designation
- Prior Election
 - How to remain non-partisan in conversation
 - Identify [resources](#) available to:
 - Get Registered
 - Get Informed/Educated
 - Get Out & Vote
- Post-Election
 - How to remain non-partisan in conversation
 - On/Off Campus Resources available
 - Events
 - Opportunities to debrief

Student organizations consider the following:

- Ground Rules
- Expectations
- Boundaries
- Conduct Expectations
- Goals
- Purpose

Post-election and moving forward:

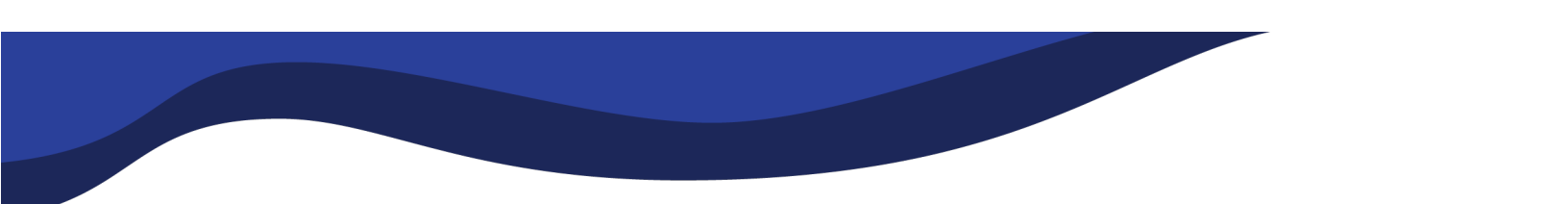
- Learn about campus resources/events
- Utilize meeting time to discuss weeks following the election
- Continue conversations on how this relates to your group's mission

Facilitating Political Dialogues Workshop

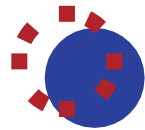
- **Be prepared:** You don't need to be an expert on a topic, but you should have a road map in mind for the direction the conversation should go. Know the issue, any written materials that the group will have to consider, and follow (at some times more closely than at others) a discussion guide for the entire dialogue (all sessions). You simply can't get away with "just showing up" to facilitate a dialogue, even if you have a co-facilitator.
- **Use probing, open-ended questions that do not lead to yes or no answers:** Ask participants to think about the values that underlie their opinions or to clarify a point or paraphrase someone else's point. Here are some others to consider:
 - What do we value regarding this issue?
 - Where are the conflicts in this issue that we have to work through?
 - What seems to be the key point here?
 - Can we get to the crux of the disagreement here?
 - Can you give an example to illustrate that point?
 - How does that point relate back to what said earlier?
 - What would be a strong case *against* what you just said?
 - Does anyone want to raise a point that we may have missed?
 - Do you think that others share your view?
 - Do we need to do some "homework" on this issue, to find more information on the point just raised?
 - Why is this issue so difficult?
 - What have you heard the group saying so far about this issue?
 - How does this make you feel?
 - What values or concerns underlie your views?
- **Set the right tone, energy, and pace:** You are the keeper of the pace and tone of the dialogue. Gauge the level of energy in the room, how distracted people are. Check in with everyone at the beginning ("How's everybody doing today?") even if it is not about the issue under consideration. Stand if you need to generate energy; sit down if the group is moving right along and needs little intervention. Don't hesitate to have everyone stand up and wiggle a bit if the energy level is low. (We've even asked groups to do some 30-second thumb-wrestling.)
- **Establish clear ground rules - discuss each and get an agreement from the group to abide by the ground rules:** If you have time, let the group craft the ground rules, but if you don't, make sure they review and approve a standard set. Revisit them at the beginning of each session. Encourage people to speak to each other and not you. Discuss how people will participate, by talking spontaneously, by raising a hand, by holding a talking stick or other item, by tipping a name tag if interested in talks. If the group is large, perhaps participants will have to signal to be recognized, but generally the discussion will flow more smoothly if participants respond spontaneously to each other.

For controversial political issue discussions, it is a good idea to give the group some examples of the kinds of things they may hear and what the group norms should be. Tell the group, for example, if you are going to insist on factually accurate statements rather than opinions. Tell the group if you want them to take risks with language, framing, or problem-solving, but that you expect them to be open to suggestions and new ideas.

- **Monitor the progress of the group:** Loosely keep track of who is talking and who hasn't had a fair share of the air. Keep track of comments that are glossed over or ignored completely, and come back to those points. If you need to, ask someone on a break or after a session why she or he may not be participating or is otherwise disengaged from the group. Work with that individual to solve any problems with the group process. Remember, this is not a debate. If participants forget this, don't hesitate to ask the group to revise the ground rules.
- **Help the group look at different points of view:** Good discussion materials help. But sometimes things come up during conversations that call for the consideration of another perspective. Ask participants to consider a point of view that hasn't come up so far.
- **Get comfortable with silence:** Silence is not a bad thing - it allows time for reflection. Explain to the group up front that you are comfortable with silence and will not be intervening to stop what many might view as an awkward silence.
- **Be aware of cultural dynamics and personality differences:** Different people communicate with different styles. Some speak their mind while others listen and keep their thoughts to themselves. As facilitator, it is your job to understand these dynamics and help everyone in the group feel appreciated.
- **Err on the side on nonintervention:** You want people to talk to each other, and a good facilitator is often invisible. You should make that clear from the beginning that they should not always be looking to you to ask the questions and guide the discussion. Encourage them to ask questions of each other. Resist the urge to respond to each comment.
- **That said, know when and how to intervene:** It is important to have the group pause so that you can capture the major points of a discussion, clarify a position, or move a discussion forward. Know when a topic has been talked through thoroughly and then move on.
- **If you can, practice:** At home with your family, or in conversations with your friends or at work, practice the arts of clarifying, active listening, paraphrasing, reflecting back, linking ideas, and summarizing.
- **Or better yet, ask someone in the group to summarize:** This can be difficult and you don't want to put someone on the spot. But you also want the group-not you as facilitator-do the talking.
- **Know when the group is talking about the nature of the problem, a vision of the problem solved, solutions, or something else:** Groups get frustrated when they bounce around from issue-identification to solution wars. People feel that their views are being discounted if they express a concern and someone instantly responds, "Oh, that's easy to fix. Just do this. Now the real problem is..." Keep loosely to the discussion guide, which should be written to guide conversations on the topic, definitions, what is being done, and action.
- **Keep track of the time:** If you need to move the group along, do so. If a conversation is animated but will get the group completely off track in terms of time, then pause the conversation for a "process check" and ask the group to decide: should we continue with this conversation and possibly need to add more sessions? Should we move on? Leave plenty of time at the end to identify things that were left open-ended and to debrief (plus/delta) the session.

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- **Know how to use a "parking lot":** A parking lot (or "bin") is a nifty tool for getting groups back on track without insulting someone who is talking or has moved the conversation off track. Using either a sheet of newsprint paper or a section of a board, write "Parking Lot." Explain that when participants feel like they have an idea, question, or comment that is off-topic, or causes the conversation to turn in another direction, that they are encouraged to write their point on the board. Do not forget to return to your parking lot, however, even if to say, "We may not be able to get to this... "
 - **Be prepared for common facilitation challenges:** You know them: the shy, or dominant, or angry, or unfocused, or longwinded, or inaccurate, or confrontational participant (see **Troubleshooting** for suggestions).
 - **End gracefully:** Ask for final comments. Evaluate the session. Thank everyone for participating.
 - **Get together and share experiences and tips:** Get together with other facilitators, share stories, and brainstorm responses to problems.

Adapted from the "Facilitating Political Dialogues Workshop" from the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education.



Guided Meditation to Practice Grounding, Breathing and Soothing

Provided by Health Promotion and Wellness

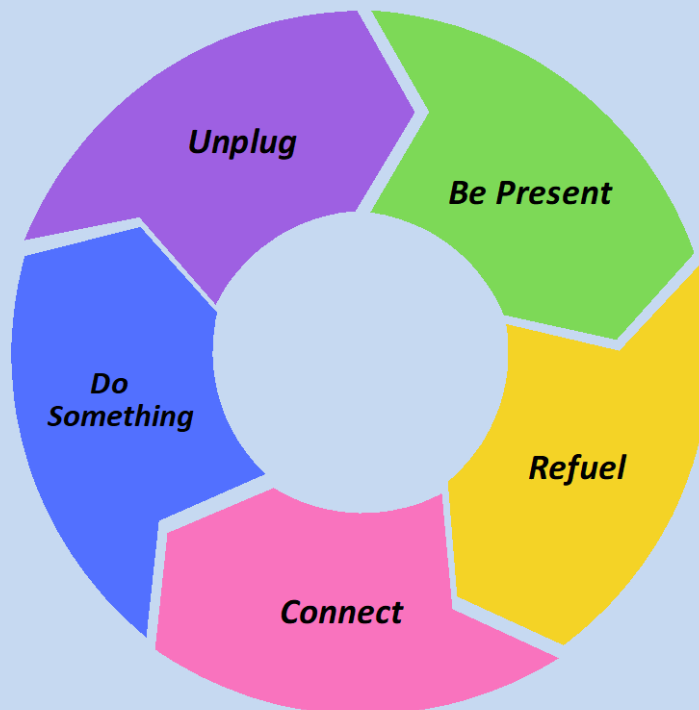
It can be difficult to read and do meditation so read the following steps and then close your eyes and do what you remember. Or you can read each step and then try out that step and move gently from one step to the next. This is to help you notice your body and become more aware of how its feeling and what it may need. While also calming your mind, body and spirit.

- 1. Find a comfortable posture with both feet on the floor and leaning so that your back feel supported (you can also lie down or sit with your legs crossed if that feels comfortable),** allow the eyes to gently close. Or, lower your gaze. Take a few deep breaths in and out. Noticing your breath coming up from your stomach, to your chest and up to your throat and out through the mouth or nose. Continue to focus on your breathe and feel it throughout your body. As you exhale, relax and sink lower in your seat.
- 2. Now bring attention to the areas of contact that your feet and body have with the ground.** Lean into your body, notice the feeling of the ground beneath you. Maybe wiggling your feet and toes and tapping the ground. Feeling the weight of your body and leaning into it so you can relax and sink deeper in your position.
- 3. And now shifting your focus to your thighs and back where your body meets the chair, ground or surface.** Notice where there is contact, just allowing the ground and the chair or other support objects to hold and support your body without you needing to do anything. Continue to breathe deeply from your stomach all the way up to your chest and up and out your nose or mouth. Try open mouth exhales and envision pushing away the stress and overwhelm you may be feeling.
- 4. Then, move your attention to your back.** Where does your back touch the chair or wall or other support object? Can you feel the difference between where there is contact and where there is none? How does your back feel? Are there any aches or pains?
- 5. And now moving your attention to your hands,** feeling into your hands. Maybe noticing what they're touching. Perhaps the chair, your thighs, the other hand. And now take a moment to notice your entire body. You can do a quick body scan from feet to your head and just notice how your body feels. Are there any aches or pains or tension? Where in your body do you need more attention, awareness and comfort?
- 6. Now open your awareness.** Feel your entire body sitting here in this moment on this chair.

Election Stress Kit

Tips and resources to cope with the current
national discourse

Brought to you by Penn State Harrisburg
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)



UNPLUG: Limit your consumption of social media and the 24-hour non-stop images. It's important to stay informed, but creating boundaries is important.

BE PRESENT: Use reflection to recognize your inner thoughts and feelings. Be curious and non-judgmental and give yourself permission to feel the way you do. Although avoiding can be useful, "stuffing" or ignoring strong emotions can have negative impacts.

REFUEL: Focus on restoring yourself with rest and healthy food. Drink water and try to limit caffeine. Move a little every day. Take a walk; look at the sky; be in nature. Journal or meditate. Make art or watch funny videos. Read something fun.

CONNECT: Engage with supportive friends and allies. Talk about current issues, if needed, but be aware of when you're feeling overwhelmed. Not everyone will share your perspective, so it's OK to limit your topics and avoid heated conflict. Reach out to supportive services on-campus, including CAPS.

DO SOMETHING: Channel what you're feeling into positive, meaningful activity. Be informed and proactive around issues that matter to you. Find ways to engage in your community through advocacy in ways that fit for you.

UNPLUG

Stay informed, but know your limits:

Monitor how you feel after news consumption. Feeling preoccupied or even upset by national events may be a sign to cut back on your news intake and limit social media discussions.



Consider scheduling a short block of time in the morning and one in the evening to catch up on news without checking for every new update during the day.



During “digital breaks,” take time to focus on something enjoyable, such as a hobby, exercising, being in nature or spending time with family and friends.

Check out [this video](#) for some more tips for “unplugging” during a stressful election time.



BE PRESENT

Consider practicing **self-compassion** as you work through challenging or uncertain times. Try some of [these](#) exercises compiled by Dr. Kristin Neff, a renowned researcher of self-compassion.

Grab your phone and your earbuds and head outside for a guided [mindful walk](#) to de-stress.

SELF-SOOTHING

Self-soothing is a quick and effective way to reduce the intensity of negative emotions.



Sight

Low lighting
Soothing colors
Sleeping masks
Coloring books
Pinterest Collages

Touch

Soft things
Cuddle things
Massage
Hot/cold shower
Heated/weighted blanket



Sound

Calming noise
ASMR videos
Nature sounds
Guided meditations
Binaural beats

Smell

Aromatherapy
Fresh air
Candles/incense
Comforting smells



Taste

Strong flavors
Warm drinks
Eat slowly
Nostalgic flavors

www.blessingmanifesting.com

Top Meditation Apps by Downloads in the U.S. for 2018

sensortower.com

Overall Downloads

- 1 Calm
- 2 Headspace
- 3 Insight Timer
- 4 Aura
- 5 Simple Habit
- 6 Breethe
- 7 10% Happier
- 8 BetterMe
- 9 Pacifica
- 10 Abide



[This](#) Youtube channel offers introductory videos to mindfulness and guided meditations.

CAPS would like to acknowledge that mindfulness originated in Eastern spiritual traditions, namely Buddhism, and has since been popularized in Western countries in ways inconsistent with its original purpose.

Listen to nature and [soothing Tibetan singing bowls](#)



Grounding



Grounding strategies can help us get in touch with our bodies and surroundings in the present moment. Pause what you are doing and pay attention to what you can see, hear, smell, and touch in your environment.

REFUEL

Balance

A national election during COVID? Focusing on your well-being is more important than ever! Trying to keep a balance in most areas of your life will help you roll through challenging days more smoothly and keep you on the road to wellness!



Eating and Nutrition

For tips, guidelines, and health information, this is a [great resource](#)!

And here's a [helpful nutrition resource](#) from PSU!

You can also check out the Penn State Harrisburg [WE CARE Food Pantry](#).



Sleep

Is your sleep schedule irregular? Are you sleeping more than you want to be? Are you having [trouble falling asleep](#)? If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," you may benefit from these sleep hygiene tips and resources!

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/sleep-hygiene>



Exercise

PSU Campus Recreation offers a TON of FREE virtual group fitness classes for students!

See the calendar here:

<https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/fitness-wellness-group-fitness>

Popsugar offers [more resources](#) for healthy habits!

CONNECT

Five ways to build stronger connections

01 Write a letter

02 Pick up the phone and call

03 Ask meaningful questions

04 Answer questions with honesty

05 Connect via video

COMPASS

Robert Reffkin, Founder & CEO

Why Connect?

- ♦ To decrease loneliness, stress, depression, and anxiety
- ♦ To acknowledge collective trauma and experience solidarity
- ♦ To experiencing love and belonging
- ♦ To give and receive care and compassion

Connecting Virtually

- ♦ Zoom dance party
- ♦ [Netflix Party](#)
- ♦ [House Party App](#)
- ♦ TikTok Challenges
- ♦ Virtual group workouts

- ♦ [Amazing support groups](#) for EVERYONE and all topics!
- ♦ Virtual book clubs
- ♦ Virtual karaoke on Google Hangouts

Spiritual Connection

Spirituality can be one way to connect with yourself, others, nature, or a higher power(s).



[Loving-kindness meditation](#)

Find local or online spiritual communities

[Animal/Nature live cams!](#)

Connecting..connecting.... connecting....

Zoom fatigue is real, but sometimes it's our only option. So how do we connect without MORE stress? Try these tips:

- Establish "no screen" blocks of time in your day – times when you don't have classes, meetings, etc. (See "UNPLUG" above)
- While turning off your camera during class can be a relief, make sure you don't do it all the time. Leaving your camera on, even if you can only see your instructor and one other brave student, can help you feel connected and more focused on content.
- Avoid multi-tasking. Even though it can be tempting to use more than one device at a time or check emails and respond to texts while Zooming, focusing on the content of the meeting will actually give your brain a break! And we all need a bit more peace and focus right now!

DO SOMETHING

It can be challenging to stay motivated when everything around us seems chaotic and scary. But doing something – some action, no matter how small – can lessen some of the uncertainty.

What you do doesn't need to be political – taking a step to stand up for or stand in for a person or a cause or the environment means *we're not powerless*. Check out the ideas on this page!



Learn
about
Vision
Boards
[here.](#)

[Activism, service and generosity](#) are a few ways to promote a sense of empowerment and contribution when we may be feeling helpless. Want to have a voice in local or national politics? [Check this out](#) for ideas! Simply want to support a cause that you care about? You can volunteer [locally](#) or for a chapter of a national organization. [Start here!](#)

Connect with your Values

Identifying what is important to us can be one way to foster motivation. Try one of the values card sorts below and then consider how you can express your values on a daily basis.

- [Online values card sort](#)
- [Printable version](#)

Lean on your STRENGTHS

Knowing your strengths can help you address problems more effectively and engage in activities that generate confidence and purpose. Try taking the [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#) to identify your strongest traits.



[CLUBS AND ORGS at Penn State Harrisburg!](#)

Wholeness


Think about what makes you feel whole, grounded, or like *you*.
It can be helpful to consider Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



Image from simplepsychology.org

Guiding Open Group Discussions & Discourse in a Virtual Setting

1. **Consider having a co-facilitator assist with time-keeping and managing the chat/technological functions of the meeting.** This will allow you to focus your full attention on the conversation.
2. **Consider beginning with a focusing or grounding technique.** Before you begin the discussion, it is important that you, as the facilitator(s), prepare to hold emotional space for others. This can include [journaling](#), [deep breathing](#) or [mindfulness](#) practices. Once the group comes together, it is helpful to also lead participants in a grounding exercise (such as journaling, deep breathing, mindfulness, or asking reflection questions). Doing so allows space for all participants to come into the conversation by pausing first and readjusting their attention and awareness to the subject at hand.
3. **Co-Create Group Norms.** Develop group rules and norms collaboratively. *Facing History and Ourselves* has an excellent resource for [Contracting for Remote Learning](#) which provides a step-by-step guide to discussing shared expectations for the conversation in a deliberate manner that ensures all members are heard and respected and differences of opinion are valued. It also discusses the importance of creating a [brave space](#) and helping students [speak up without tearing down](#).
4. **Allow for the justifiable wide-range of emotions to be expressed.** Be mindful that anger, sadness, anxiety and fear are real and valid. Avoid trying to [police or manage emotions](#). Similarly, avoid examining someone's emotional response as a character flaw. Instead, you can find ways to support members in [processing their emotions](#) and possibly exploring options for [channeling these emotions](#).
5. **Consider the [racial trauma](#) experienced by members from historically marginalized identities.** It is important to acknowledge that members from historically marginalized groups, and individuals holding BIPOC identities, in particular, often experience chronic racial trauma due to ongoing injustice and systems of oppression. Related, some members of the group may need to disengage at certain points in the conversation. Consider these actions as a [form of self-care](#) for said members by providing them with the space to engage as they see fit.
6. **Recognize and [understand your own privilege](#).** Engage in self-reflection about the power dynamic inherent in the conversation (race, gender, social-economic, religious, sexual orientation, ableism, etc.). As noted by Oluo (2018), "when we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find opportunities to make real change" (p. 65).
7. **Ask open-ended questions and reflect back meaning.** In a virtual setting, it is sometimes difficult to know if one is being heard, given people are quite literally muted. As the facilitator, reflect back what you heard the participant say by paraphrasing or [reflecting meaning](#). This technique is particularly helpful when a participant has been vulnerable or has expressed an opinion that may spark debate or emotional responses from others. It is also important to check in for clarity and accuracy when reflecting meaning, as well as to invite further elaboration of their reflections.

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8. **Allow time for creating collective next steps (if applicable) and encourage [self-care](#).** Help members channel their collective energies towards proactive steps within their control. This can include time to brainstorm ways to get involved locally or with a cause that is meaningful to them. Taking action can help cultivate feelings of agency and connectedness. It is also important to stress the importance of self-care and staying healthy during difficult and stressful times.
 9. **Provide a list of additional resources** from the University so that students can follow-up should they desire. This can include [University Counseling Services](#), [Health Promotion and Wellness](#), and [Religious Diversity and Pastoral Care](#).

Additional Resources and Tips

- **15 Things Therapists Do When They're Anxious Watching the Debates:**
 - https://www.huffpost.com/entry/things-therapists-do-anxious-watching-debates_15f7caf45c5b61229a0584bbc
- **Race talk and facilitating difficult racial dialogues:**
 - <https://ct.counseling.org/2015/12/race-talk-and-facilitating-difficult-racial-dialogues/>
- **Start Talking:** https://ctle.utah.edu/inclusiveteaching/resources/challenging_situations/Start_Talking_full_book_pdf.pdf
- **A Counselor's Take on Civil Discourse:** <https://www.thrivepointe.com/2018/08/a-counselors-take-on-civil-discourse/>
- **Election 2020 What? So What? Now What? A Reflection Guide for Small Groups: Post-Election Support for Difficult Conversations:**
 - <https://www.facinghistory.org/post-election-support-difficult-conversations>
- **Election 2020: Engaging Students in Civic Discourse:**
 - https://snfagora.jhu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Election2020_Engaging-Students-in-Civic-Discourse_.pdf
- **Day After Election Guide:**
 - <https://inclusiveva.org/day-after-election-guide/>

Adapted from College of Education, Counseling Equity & Social Justice Committee, October 2020



Office of Student Involvement

Student Organizations

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(773) 325-7361

Visit our [Website](#)

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