GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR TALKING CONSTRUCTIVELY ABOUT RACE

1. Use your leadership to put issues on the table—announcing the importance of the issue at the beginning of the semester
2. Ask not “if race is playing a role” but “how is race playing a role?”
3. Gather the facts about what role race is playing in your field.
4. Clarity about goals of these conversations.
5. Invite Storytelling in which race was named and When Stories are told, always ask about race and identity characteristics/facts
6. Courage to keep naming and asking “how is race playing a role?”/”how does race matter?”; encouraging students to be the ones to do this; important moment: when student raises it, and I initially find it unwelcome
7. Students were convinced that the topic was welcome
8. Nonjudgment
9. Separate the act from the actor (note: law is currently directly adverse to this)
10. Think systemically—look at the same issues at the next level of generality up (or down)
11. Recognize resistance in ourselves and in others—the discomfort of conscious incompetence
12. Recognize the diverse views about race operating in the world that the students are coming to the conversation with
13. Watch coded language (but what do you do?)
14. Remain in inquiry mode
15. These conversations must be disciplined, even when everyone agrees. Use the same modes of inquiry and refinement no matter which direction the conversation is going.
16. Remember: When the Truth is personal, its harder to unpack. Personal anecdotes are very tricky ground in these conversations. Five things to watch for:
    1. How to mine our personal experience for what is truly useful
    2. Watch for when the speaker take the authority of their own truth and try to overextend it.
    3. Beware of your own reaction: there are particular dangers both if you agree with the generalizations made and if you disagree with the generalizations (like similarities (filling in) and differences (over-inquiring?)
    4. Is the person using/misusing their own experience as authority?
    5. Remember that the speaker is taking a unique risk—Tread carefully
    6. Must have a uniform practice for unpacking these moments
17. Each speaker and leader has a unique competence/incompetence to make a point about race:
    1. Imagine the challenges that other people have to this conversation
    2. Remain conscious of how hard it is for my person of color/untenured/male/white colleague to always raise race
    3. Everyone will have different presumptions. For instance, a white person will presume that a person of color has it easier running this conversation.
    4. Remember that everyone, everyone, needs allies; sometimes those allies are most helpful different, not similar
    5. Think about how everyone might be an outsider to the conversation
    6. Think about your unique strengths in the conversation