

Ground Rules for Well-Being in the Law
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Confidentiality. Everything said in this class is strictly confidential, unless the speaker specifically says it isn't. And to ensure confidentiality of others, if we discuss other people who are not in the class, we will avoid using their real names or other identifying information. Also, while it's ok to talk with other enrolled students outside of class, care should always be taken to ensure confidentiality and the subjects discussed should always be constructive, never divisive. Finally, as a matter of confidentiality, we all agree not to record each other during class.

Listen respectfully. Try not to interrupt others, turn to technology, or engage in private conversations while others are speaking. Use attentive, courteous body language. And remember that the goal of class discussion is not for everyone to agree; it's for everyone to have a chance to learn and gain new insights.

Speak with care. In addition to listening to each other respectfully, we also agree to act respectfully when we speak. If you tend to have a lot to say, make sure you leave sufficient space to hear from others. It's also especially important that if you learn that something you've said was experienced as disrespectful or marginalizing, try to understand that perspective. Learn how you can do better in the future. In this same connection, it's also important that we not try to "one-up" people by saying things like "my situation was way worse than what you just said." Finally, you are certainly not required to speak. You always have the option of passing if you do not feel comfortable.

Reflecting on your own reactions. If you are offended by anything said during discussion, acknowledge your reactions publicly, when appropriate. But also work to notice your own defensive reactions when they happen and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self-knowledge, rather than as a rationale for closing off. Try to differentiate between safety and comfort. Accept discomfort as sometimes necessary for growth.

Be open to new and diverse perspectives. Consider points-of-view that differ from your current thinking and be willing to explore new ideas. Be careful about assumptions and generalizations you make based only on your own experience. Think critically about the factors that have shaped your perspectives.