



TAKING THE TEMPERATURE OF CAMPUS DISCUSSION: A STUDENT-CENTRED APPROACH TO TEACHING THROUGH CONFLICT

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Introduction

- My background:
 - Free expression meets teaching and learning (and SoTL)
 - Focus group research with political science undergraduate students
- Research questions:
 - How do undergraduate students perceive the health of campus discussion?
 - What are some of the determinants of healthy and unhealthy discussion?
- What is different about this project:
 - It moves from the abstract (e.g. first principles) to the practical
 - It is rooted locally within our own institution
 - It directly connects student experience with teaching training and mentorship

Methodology

- 1) Anonymized questionnaire via Qualtrics (open to all current undergraduate students)
- Recruitment methods:
 - Random 50% sample of undergraduate student emails
 - Posters with QR codes
 - Email invitations to campus groups, administrators, professors, etc.
- Questionnaire elements:
 - Demographic information (gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, politics, age)
 - Climate related questions → health of campus discussion
 - Comfort related questions → health of student participation
 - Preparedness related questions → shortcomings and opportunities

Methodology

- 2) In-person focus groups (open to all current undergraduate students)
- Recruitment method: completing Qualtrics questionnaire and conveying interest → email invitation and scheduling
- Focus group questions:
 - What makes a classroom discussion healthy?
 - What makes a classroom discussion unhealthy?
 - Do you feel comfortable sharing your opinions publicly outside of the classroom (on campus and online)?
 - If you could improve campus discussion outside of the classroom (on campus and online), what would you do?

Data Collection & Analysis

- 1) Questionnaire

- Data analysis to assess undergraduate student perceptions
- Create a partial snapshot and examine potential patterns based on demographic information
- Goal of 500 questionnaire responses

- 2) Focus Groups

- Goal of 100 focus group participants (\$25 gift cards)
- Record conversations and create transcripts
- Sorting of substantive quotes into thematic categories

Knowledge Mobilization

- In May of this year, we will organize a mini-conference or 'teaching retreat' open to faculty across campus
- Present data from the undergraduate student questionnaire and focus groups as an introduction and foundation for a day of panels and workshops
- Goals for the project:
 - Engage the undergraduate student population
 - Provide additional resources to teachers in the Queen's community to foster healthy discussions on campus
 - Contribute to SoTL literature and pluralistic dialogue