

## VIDEO HANDOUT: RESPONDING TO STUDENTS

How an instructor responds to what students say can make a huge difference in the way they participate in discussions. Every student comment is an opportunity to keep building a culture of respectful discussion. Slowing down to think about how you are responding to your students can help you become more aware of how you may be either supporting or unintentionally shutting down participation in discussion.

Responding to Students video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4KJ-DpkJR4>

### **Give students accepting responses when they answer a broad question.**

If you ask a broad question, then a variety of relevant student responses are acceptable, and they deserve accepting responses. If a student gives a confusing response, ask follow-up questions, maybe rephrase the response and then ask if you got it right. If a response is off-topic, you can point that out and restate the question.

### **Maintain gentle control of the discussion.**

If some students become long-winded, sometimes you need to politely cut them short by asking them to wrap up their thought, or by summarizing for them and tying it back into the topic yourself. Try to moderate, not dominate the discussion yourself.

### **Make a habit of asking other students what they think of a student idea.**

Encourage students to agree, add to other students' ideas, or disagree respectfully. Remind students that disagreeing with someone's idea is not a judgment of that person. Avoid responding yourself to every student comment.

### **Be genuinely curious about student ideas.**

By showing that you really want to understand what your students are saying and thinking, you are communicating that everyone's ideas are worthy. Take time to probe and ask clarifying questions before moving the discussion along.

### **Use wait time.**

After asking a question, pause for three or more seconds before taking responses. This gives time for all students to think about their answers, and encourages deeper, more thoughtful student responses.

## **Video discussion prompts (discuss any that you find interesting):**

- Was there anything in the video that surprised you or that was particularly striking?
- Do you have questions about using strategies shown in the video? What challenges might you face using them with students, and how might you deal with them?
- What are some fairly neutral accepting responses that you could use?
- What could you do to encourage more-thoughtful responses from students?
- How could you encourage more-respectful disagreement?
- What are ways you might deal with student responses that are inaccurate, long-winded, confusing, or accurate?

## REFLECTIVE TEACHING DIAGRAM

Research has found that thinking about teaching as a cycle that involves planning for instruction, teaching lessons, collecting evidence, reflecting, and making adjustments with the goal of improving learning, can all help instructors make the subtle shifts to continually improve their practice over time. You can use this diagram to help visualize the steps in a reflective teaching cycle and then think about how to engage in this type of iterative process.

