



UNIVERSITY OF
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Principles for Promoting Positive Learning Environments

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Adapted from the [Strategies for Promoting Positive Learning Environments](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/strategies-for-promoting-positive-learning-environments) webpage:

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Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

A positive learning environment encompasses the psychological, social, cultural, and physical factors that shape how students learn, influencing their motivation, wellbeing, and success (Rusticus et al., 2023). It comprises three interrelated dimensions: personal development (growth opportunities and emotional climate), relationships (quality of social interaction and mutual support), and system maintenance and change (structure, clarity, and openness to innovation).

When students feel accepted and valued, they engage more deeply and perform better academically. High-quality learning environments are associated with greater satisfaction, stronger academic outcomes, improved emotional wellbeing, and reduced burnout (Rusticus et al., 2023).

This resource offers seven practical strategies for promoting positive learning environments across face-to-face, hybrid, and online contexts.

Altogether, this multifaceted construct reflects intentional and unintentional actions, explicit and implicit messages, and a range of socioemotional influences that collectively shape the climate in which learning unfolds (Ambrose et al., 2010).

For further information, visit:

- [Office of Institutional Commitments - EDIA](#)
- [Office of Indigenous Engagement](#)
- [Protected Disclosure and Research Integrity Office](#)

Strategy 1: Cultivate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Represent diverse voices, address systemic barriers, and design inclusive pedagogical approaches that validate all students' identities and ways of knowing.

Our learning spaces are diverse and present unique opportunities for cultivating equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Planning	Action	Considerations
Content Representation and Diversity		
Incorporate multiple perspectives and diverse voices in your course content.	Invite guest speakers to present course content and create new opportunities for students to engage with course content. As you introduce content in your course, constantly ask yourself: "Why should a student care about this?" Consider your own material and the diversity of students in the class.	Not all participation and engagement in your course needs to be spoken. A no-tech approach: Offer a prompt and ask students to write an anonymous response on a note card. Ask them to swap cards and then swap again. Start a class discussion with a few students reading aloud the card in front of them.
Revisit existing course content and identify opportunities to update readings, videos, or other multimedia content from new or different perspectives in the field.	<u>Include authors and scholars from diverse backgrounds</u> (gender, geography, Indigenous, minorities).	Acknowledge limitations in your knowledge.
Revisit your course content and identify whose voices, perspectives and experiences are represented and whose are absent.	Use examples that reflect on diverse contexts, not just Western/North American scenarios and include cases where marginalized communities are the experts and not just subjects of study.	Recognize intersectionality and how different identities intersect with power and privilege.
Identify systemic barriers in your discipline: are there some groups that have been marginalized, or how power dynamics manifest in your field. Address those barriers explicitly in your teaching.	Employ storytelling, case studies, collaborative works, problem-based learning as alternative pedagogical approaches.	Frame EDI as relevant to the discipline, not just "political correctness." Frame EDI as justice work, not charity or niceness.

Student identity and Inclusion

Learn about the demographics of your courses and do not make assumptions of common background knowledges or experiences.

Practice meaningful territory acknowledgements based on where you are teaching from or invite students to share the acknowledgement for the land they live on.

Create an anonymous [survey](#) or [discussion topic](#) where students can share their experiences. You can use this information to adapt the course delivery and engagement expectations throughout the term.

Learn the correct pronunciation of your students' names

Use gender-inclusive language (avoid "guys" and use "everyone", "folks", "scholars" instead. Share your pronouns.

Do not make assumptions about students based on appearance or name, and never require students to disclose personal information.

Pedagogical approaches

Design protocols for addressing difficult conversations about identity, systemic inequity and power relationships.

Validate and provide examples of diverse forms of knowledge, such as [Indigenous ways of knowing](#) (not just academic/Western epistemologies)

Avoid stereotypes, even well-intentioned ones

Create spaces for dialogue and students' reflection on their own positionality.

Offer multiple ways to demonstrate learning and allow students to draw on their cultural backgrounds.

Encourage [critical self-reflection](#) on one's own position and privileges without requiring students to be "representatives" of their identity groups. Create optional rather than mandatory sharing opportunities for personal experiences.

Anticipate language barriers and plan support for that (such as glossaries, time for processing)

Use warnings for potentially triggering topics and material (violence, trauma, discrimination)

Working towards EDI is an ongoing work, so try to stay current with best practices, language and concepts.

Plan for low-stakes assignments to reduce high pressure situations that can create disadvantages for students.

Use frequent, smaller assessments throughout the term rather than relying heavily on midterms and finals and incorporate formative assessments that provide feedback without significant grade weight.

Students from marginalized groups may face additional stressors (financial pressure, caregiving responsibilities, systemic barriers) that can disproportionately impact performance on high-stakes assessments.

Additional Resources:

- [University of Calgary. Office of Indigenous Engagement. \(2021\). *Cultural protocol.*](#)
- [Whose Land. \(2021\). *Territories by land.*](#)
- [CAUT. \(n.d.\). *Guide for territorial acknowledgements in Alberta.*](#)
- [University of British Columbia. \(n.d.\). *Distance Research Guide: What is a land acknowledgement?*](#)
- [University of British Columbia. \(n.d.\). *Rethinking the Course Syllabus: Considerations for Promoting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*](#)
- [University of Calgary | OIC. \(n.d.\). *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility \(EDIA\).*](#)
- [University of British Columbia. \(n.d.\). *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization in Designing, Teaching & Learning.*](#)

Strategy 2: Establish Community and Presence

Build belonging through intentional community activities, clear course structure, and consistent instructor visibility that connects students to each other and to you

Establishing a sense of community and presence in your course can help increase students' sense of belonging and subsequently make them more confident in their roles and responsibilities in the course, with one another, and with the teaching team.

Planning	Action	Considerations
<p>Structure and clarity:</p> <p>More structure works for most undergraduates, without harming those who don't need it. Incorporate more structure into your course design by establishing clear course objectives, setting clear expectations from students and providing clear instructions for assignments.</p> <p>Design learning activities and assessments which provide opportunities for students to engage with their peers, receive formative feedback, and practice skills-based activities.</p>	<p>First Day/Week Strategies</p> <p>Create a list of shared values or guidelines during the first class and post the list somewhere that students will see regularly, such as on the front door where they enter or on the home page of D2L.</p> <p>Use the first-class session for a substantive community-building activity rather than just reviewing the syllabus. Consider having students interview each other and introduce their partner to the class or facilitate a low-stakes collaborative activity related to course content.</p> <p>Share your own story and teaching philosophy to model vulnerability and authenticity. Explain why you're passionate about the subject and what you hope students will gain from the course.</p>	<p>Monitoring and adjusting</p> <p>Periodically return to the shared values or community guidelines that the class created to ensure that they still align with the needs of the group. Refine these guidelines as needed.</p> <p>Conduct mid-term feedback using anonymous surveys or reflection activities to gauge how connected students feel and identify students who may be isolated.</p> <p>Pay attention to participation patterns and reach out to students who seem disconnected from the course community.</p>
<p>Icebreakers and community building activities</p> <p>Plan intentional icebreaker activities for the first week that go beyond basic introductions. Consider activities that reveal</p>	<p>Ongoing community presence</p> <p>Small group activities provide a low-pressure way for students to form a community. Provide some structure for group activities and teach students</p>	

<p>shared interests, learning goals, or common challenges students face in the discipline.</p> <p>Design progressive community building activities throughout the term, not just at the beginning. Early-term activities might focus on names and interests, mid-term activities on collaborative problem-solving, and end of term activities in celebrating growth and achievements.</p>	<p>how to participate in small groups. Assign and rotate roles within groups.</p> <p>Provide weekly updates or summaries via email and the News tool in D2L.</p> <p>Implement “community check-ins” at the start of each class – quick activities that help students connect before diving into content (eg. Think-pair-share on a course-related question, brief sharing of recent learning experiences).</p>	
<p>Peer connection strategies:</p> <p>Build in peer mentoring or buddy systems where students are paired or grouped to support each other throughout the course.</p> <p>Design opportunities for students to share their expertise</p>	<p>Instructor presence</p> <p>Be visible and accessible both inside and outside of class. Arrive early and stay late (if possible) to chat informally with students.</p> <p>Participate in discussion forums and respond to student posts in ways that show genuine interest in their thinking.</p> <p>Use video announcements or messages periodically to maintain a personal connection, especially in online courses.</p> <p>Share appropriate personal anecdotes that relate to course content to create connection.</p> <p>Collaborative learning tools</p> <p>Use collaborative digital learning tools where students can see each other’s contributions and build on collective knowledge.</p> <p>Create course-specific communication channels where students can share resources,</p>	<p>Assessing Community Building Efforts</p> <p>Include questions about community and belonging in course evaluations to gather feedback on what strategies were most effective.</p>

<p>or unique perspectives with classmates (eg. “expert panels” where students present topics they know well).</p> <p>Modality-specific planning:</p> <p>For online courses:</p> <p>Plan synchronous sessions that prioritize interaction and community over content delivery. Use asynchronous tools for content and reserve synchronous time for discussion and connection.</p> <p>Create a “virtual coffee chat” schedule where students can drop in for informal conversations with you or peers.</p> <p>Design discussion forums with clear guidelines that encourage substantive engagement rather than perfunctory responses.</p> <p>For face-to-face responses:</p> <p>Plan classroom layouts that facilitate interaction (e.g. small group configurations).</p> <p>Schedule regular “mix-up” activities where students work with different classmates to expand their network within the course.</p>	<p>ask questions, and support each other.</p> <p>Implement think-pair-share activities regularly to ensure every student has a voice before whole-class discussions.</p> <p>Supporting students</p> <p>Create a Q&A thread in the learning management system where students can post questions and peers can answer them, building a collaborative problem-solving community.</p> <p>When students struggle, frame it as a normal part of learning and connect them with student resources on campus.</p>	<p>Track participation in community building activities to gauge engagement levels.</p> <p>Monitor discussion forum participation to identify students who may need additional support in connecting with peers.</p> <p>Inclusive community building</p> <p>Create space for students to share their preferred names, pronouns, and any relevant information about their identities without making it mandatory.</p> <p>Recognize that some students face barriers to synchronous participation (work schedules, caregiving responsibilities) and provide community building options.</p>
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Additional resources:

- [Taylor Institute of Teaching and Learning. University of Calgary \(2025\). *Class representatives: A formative feedback strategy for teaching development. Lesson 2: Foster an inclusive and accessible learning environment*](#)
- [Taylor Institute of Teaching and Learning. University of Calgary \(2025\). *Creating a sense of community in online courses.*](#)
- [Taylor Institute of Teaching and Learning. University of Calgary \(2025\). *Community before content.*](#)

Strategy 3: Design Accessible Course Content

Provide multiple ways to engage with materials so every student, regardless of ability or circumstance, can fully access and participate in course content.

Designing accessible course content provides students with multiple ways of engaging with course materials and ensures that all students, regardless of ability or need, can access course content.

Planning	Actions	Considerations
Incorporate multimedia materials into your course outline, such as podcasts, audio files, videos, social media content, and readable PDFs.	Conduct regular “technology audits” in which you check accessibility to digital content, such as broken links, restricted access to content, or other barriers to materials.	Create a shared discussion topic or other collaborative space where students can post questions/answers about accessing course content and materials. This will help students engage with each other, encourage problem-solving and self-directed learning skills, and increase visibility of issues related to accessing content.
Use D2L Accessible Templates to develop your course shell, which has been designed to meet accessibility standards.	Interact with course content with students during class-time, modelling the use of tools or application of skills that students are learning.	
Plan for technology failures and have backup options available (eg. downloadable content if streaming services fail, online activities of the LMS goes down).	Test your course content with accessibility checkers (built into Word, PowerPoint, D2L) and address identified issues promptly.	
Create a clear process for students to request additional accommodation or modifications and communicate this in your outline.	Provide documents in multiple formats (PDF, Word, HTML) when possible.	Normalize the use of accommodation by mentioning them (eg. Captions or transcripts or recorded lectures are available for everyone).
Chunk content into manageable segments rather than overwhelming students with lengthy readings or hour-long videos.	Build in processing time after presenting complex information – not everyone thinks or responds at the same pace.	

Use consistent formatting and layout throughout the course so students can easily locate information.	Build flexibility into deadlines and policies where possible.	
Use consistent and clear language throughout the course, avoiding unnecessary complexity.	Acknowledge that students have complex lives and provide alternative extensions or arrangements when possible.	
Recognize students might have financial limitations, so provide advance notice of costs. Consider open educational resources and free alternatives.		

Additional Resources:

- [University of Calgary. \(n.d.\). ELearn. Design templates for accessibility and custom layouts.](#)
- [University of Minnesota. \(2021\). Promote digital accessibility. Accessible U.](#)
- [University of Minnesota. \(n.d.\). Start with the 7 core skills. Accessible U.](#)
- [WAVE. \(n.d.\). Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool](#)
- [Cast. \(n.d.\). The UDL Guidelines](#)

Strategy 4: Model Compassion and Communication

Set clear, flexible communication pathways and demonstrate empathy in feedback, deadlines, and daily interactions to support students' confidence and trust.

Modelling compassion and communication provides students with a clear understanding of how to navigate your course, what they can expect from you, and what you can expect from them.

Planning	Actions	Considerations
Establish clear communication pathways between you and your students, such as office hours, email, or phone preferences, and contact information for the teaching team.	Be available 15 minutes before and/or after class to connect with students and answer questions. Connect with students personally. Use their names. Model sharing pronouns.	Maintain multiple points of contact with students using D2L communication tools and regular check-ins throughout the term.
Map out assessment deadlines to ensure that students have enough time to process and incorporate feedback between assignments. Use positive and flexible language in your course outline , such as including a statement about the process of requesting extensions or support for students who are unable to attend class due to illness or other reasons.	Provide extensions on a per-student basis or for the entire class, depending on the context and emerging needs. Check in with students who have missed a class or two. Be mindful about the tone, amount, and balance of feedback provided. Personalize and/or add warmth by recording audio or video feedback.	Check in with students a few days before the deadline or assessment to see where students are at and if they anticipate any barriers to completing the requirements.
	Communicate changes to deadlines or assessment details via multiple channels, such as the News tool in D2L and class-wide emails.	Send a note congratulating students who were successful on an early exam or paper or who substantially improved. Reach out to those who didn't do so well and express your willingness to help them.

Additional resources:

- [Harvard Medical School. \(2022\). *Role Modeling to Demonstrate and Strengthen Empathy Development.*](#)
- [University of Calgary. \(2019\). *Self-Compassion in the Classroom: Three Things You Can Do in Five Minutes.*](#)
- [University of Manitoba. \(2021\). *Bringing compassion to the online learning environment.*](#)
- [University of Manitoba. \(n.d.\). *Compassionate pedagogy.*](#)

Strategy 5: Promote Mental- Wellbeing and Health

Reduce anxiety through low-stakes assessments, normalized help-seeking language and proactive connections to campus supports throughout the term.

Promoting [mental wellbeing and health](#) in your classroom can improve student learning experiences, quality of communication, and overall attainment of course learning outcomes.

Planning	Actions	Deliberations
<p>Apply Universal Design Principles in your learning activities and assessments.</p> <p>Balance workload by considering course level, co-requisite or co-curricular course requirements, and disciplinary context.</p>	<p>Build a community and help students feel connected to each other. Consider using Team-based learning in your course. Incorporate activities or practices where students work together on a single shared product (collaborative document for lecture notes, brainstorming a list together).</p>	<p>Consider using part of the first session for a class-wide getting-to-know-you activity or community building activity.</p> <p>Talk to students about your office hours, explain what they are for, and encourage them to come to them early in the semester, even just to talk.</p>
<p>Consider providing multiple practice opportunities and low stakes assignments that are known to alleviate anxiety and build mastery in students.</p>	<p>Provide clear instructions on assignment expectations, criteria for grading, and late submission policies.</p>	<p>Invite a critical friend to review your course outline for tone, checking for language that might unconsciously cause stress in students.</p>
<p>Actively destigmatize mental health challenges by using positive language in your course outline and daily communication with students. Language that normalizes asking for help and invites affected students to open a dialogue with the instructor lowers stress in all students.</p>	<p>Help students identify the cause of anxiety in your course by building in reflective moments. Consider using reflective questions like: Which assignment is causing me stress? What is my plan for preparing for the exam/completing the assignment? Could I do better if I got some help? How can I change the way I prepare or practice for the exam?</p>	<p>Increase your awareness of mental health and wellness among students by learning how to recognize warning signs of distress, compromised mental health, and poor wellbeing. Prepare a list of student support offices (academic and otherwise) to share with students.</p>

Additional resources

- [Ohio State University. \(2017\). *Carmen common sense: Best practices. Teaching and Learning Resource Center.*](#)
- [University of Calgary. \(2019\). *Student Mental Health and Well-Being: Supportive Teaching and Learning Practices.*](#)
- [Wake Forest University. \(n.d.\). *Teaching During Times of Tragedy or Crisis.*](#)
- [University of Calgary. \(n.d.\). *Using Mental Health and Wellness as a Framework for Teaching and Learning.*](#)
- [*Using Mental Health and Wellness as a Framework for Course Design \(2017\)*](#)

Strategy 6: Facilitate difficult discussions and engage in respectful dialogue

Establish shared ground rules and thoughtful facilitation practices that create safety for students to engage honestly with challenging, divisive, or emotional topics

Difficult discussions are an integral part of the learning process and, given our current social and political climate, are increasingly unavoidable in classroom settings. It's vital to lay a foundation of instructor care and classroom community before we ask students to take on this challenging, sometimes vulnerable work. A positive learning environment is essential to facilitating difficult discussions respectfully where all students feel safe to participate. When students trust that their contributions will be heard without judgment or hostility, they are more likely to engage authentically and take intellectual risks.

The guidelines below support teachers in leading discussions about tough, emotional, or divisive topics. When facilitating these conversations, it helps to set clear boundaries and ground rules. It is especially important to be explicit about expectations for respecting a range of perspectives and experiences in the room when facilitating these discussions.

Planning	Actions	Considerations
<p>Planned Discussions</p> <p>Consider what the emotions in the classroom indicate about the relevance of the topic at hand.</p> <p>Reflect on whether your existing course materials can serve to inform the conversation, provide an anchor point, or establish appropriate boundaries.</p> <p>Think about how this discussion might align with course objectives related to critical analysis, considering diverse viewpoints, or developing clear argumentative frameworks.</p>	<p>Spontaneous Discussions</p> <p>Expect the unexpected—students may raise controversial topics when you least anticipate it.</p> <p>You'll need to respond right away, even if your response is to pause and figure out the best way to handle it.</p>	<p>Consider reaching out to your support network, particularly if the classroom situation felt personally directed at you or challenged your sense of professional safety. Taking time to reflect on your reactions with trusted colleagues or friends can help you regain perspective and re-enter the classroom with renewed confidence and a constructive mindset.</p>
<p>Consider establishing ground rules or discussion guidelines with your students. You might facilitate a collaborative process where students generate these agreements together, or you could present a prepared set of guidelines and invite students</p>	<p>Validate the student who brought up the issue, keeping in mind that classmates may respond differently. Consider whether you're equipped to dive into the topic at that moment.</p>	<p>What discussion formats will best further your goals? What guidelines will be important to establish? How much time should you devote to this discussion? What resources will you have in place to support</p>

<p>to adapt them as needed. Having these community agreements in place provides a useful reference point if tensions arise during discussion.</p>	<p>Take a quick pulse of the class to see if there's interest in discussing it.</p>	<p>your students beyond this discussion?</p>
<p>It can be helpful to give students common reference points from the outset—this keeps the conversation focused and anchored in real examples. Some options include assigning readings about a particular case, having students choose their own articles to share with the class, or screening a brief video to launch the discussion.</p>	<p>If the class wants to talk about it but you need more time, acknowledge this while setting aside a future class period for the discussion. Offer students some ways to get ready for the discussion. After the discussion, guide students to reflect individually and/or collectively on the issues raised and the perspectives they heard on these issues</p>	
<p>Including everyone’s perspectives in a whole class discussion can be challenging. Consider using small group discussions to create space for students who might not otherwise participate. This format can encourage contributions from those who feel their perspectives are marginalized as well as students who want to explore ideas they're still forming. Allocate time for summarizing the discussion and gathering student feedback at the end of the class.</p>	<p>Check in outside of class with the students most directly involved in the moment, to show your commitment to their success in the course, to help them learn from the experience, and to learn from them more about their experience of the discussion.</p>	

Adapted from:

- [Making the most of hot moments in the classroom \(n.d.\)](#)
 A handout developed by the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan to offer instructors ways to make the most of "hot moments" as learning opportunities.
- [University of Michigan. \(n.d.\). Guidelines for discussing difficult or high-stakes topics.](#)

Additional resources:

- [CRLT c/o University of Michigan. \(n.d.\) *Current events in the classroom.*](#)
- [University of Michigan. \(n.d.\). *Guidelines for classroom interactions.*](#)
- [University of Michigan. \(2025\). *Promoting Democracy: Fostering Skills for Better Civil Discourse.*](#)
- [Faculty of Focus. \(2024\). *Utilizing Conflict Management Strategies to Navigate Difficult Classroom Discussions.*](#)
- [Compact. \(2024\). *Better Discourse: A Guide for Bridging Campus Divides in Challenging Times.*](#)
- [Flinders University. \(n.d.\). *Theory Into Practice Strategies: Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues.*](#)
- [Cornell University. \(n.d.\) *Managing Classroom Conflict.*](#)

Strategy 7: Address Disruptive and Harmful Behaviors

Prevent and respond to disruptions by setting clear expectations, preparing your teaching team, and de-escalating with care, consistency, and student dignity in mind.

Academic staff, teaching assistants and teaching support staff play an important role in setting expectations and maintaining a positive, inclusive learning environment. As with any other classroom management issue, if challenging circumstances arise that substantially disrupt the learning environment, or pose health and safety concerns, you may request assistance from Campus Security.

Planning	Actions	Considerations
<p>Make a list of both productive and disruptive types of behavior in your course context.</p> <p>Outline the process by which disruptive behavior will be addressed.</p> <p>Include a statement about your commitment to inclusive and equitable learning environments in your course outline.</p>	<p>Engage students as partners in preventing and addressing harmful behaviors by educating students about expectations for conduct and behaviors. Ensure students understand classroom and lab safety requirements and understand how safety concerns or disruptive behaviors will be addressed.</p> <p>Provide regular reminders of the need to follow established ground rules and safety procedures.</p> <p>Let students know that if any member of the teaching team (course instructors, GATs, support staff) believes that the health and safety of the class is at risk for any reason, they may choose to pause or cancel the class, tutorial, or lab.</p> <p>If a disruptive situation emerges during a class, tutorial or lab including, disrespectful or confrontational behavior or non-compliance with health and safety measures we advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a moment to collect yourself so you can respond to the situation thoughtfully 	<p>Establishing agreements helps prevent disruptive behavior and allows you to react effectively in the moment. In addition to using your course outline to set academic expectations, you can also utilize it to create classroom behavioral expectations.</p> <p>Regularly check-in with the teaching team to learn about any potential issues or challenges that are emerging in the course.</p>

	<p>and use strategies planned out ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite the disruptive student(s) to speak with you privately to discuss the situation. This might require pausing the learning activity or stepping outside of the room with the student(s).• Start a conversation from a place of wanting to learn more about cause of disruptive or confrontational behavior and how it can be resolved.• Avoid calling out an individual student or group of students in front of the class.• Avoid making judgements and assumptions about the cause of the behavior. Beginning with this premise can help de-escalate situations in the moment.• If the situation is disruptive to other students' learning you may ask the student to leave the learning environment.• If the situation is immediately threatening to the safety of others, you may pause or cancel the learning activity, and call Campus Security (403-220-5333) if needed. Please note	
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	that this should be a last resort measure.	
<p>Design peer-support and collaborative learning activities where students can meaningfully engage with one another throughout the course.</p> <p>Establish ground rules or discussion guidelines with your students at the beginning of the course to set up the tone of these activities.</p>		<p>Following a disruption, document the details about the incident, including the time/date/location, the behavior of the student, the actions you took and how the situation was resolved in the moment.</p>
<p>Develop strategies for addressing disruptive or harmful behaviors in advance, designed for your specific course context.</p> <p>Ensure all members of the teaching team (GAT, lab assistants, etc.) can recognize harmful and disruptive behaviors. Discuss strategies for addressing these concerns in advance.</p>		

Additional Resources:

- [University of Calgary. \(2021\). *Helping students in distress.*](#)
- [University of Calgary|Student Conduct Office \(2020\). *Student conduct in the virtual classroom.*](#)
- [University of Washington. \(n.d.\). *Best practices for managing disruptive behavior.*](#)
- [University of Manitoba. \(n.d.\). *Conflict management.*](#)
- [University of Waterloo. \(n.d.\). *Conflict Management for Instructors.*](#)

Conclusion

Creating positive learning environments is an ongoing, intentional practice that requires commitment from all members of the academic community. The seven strategies outlined in this resource work together to support student success, belonging, and engagement. These strategies are not implemented in isolation but interact and reinforce one another to create learning environments where all students can thrive.

The University of Calgary is committed to supporting instructors in this essential work. Connect with the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and other campus resources as you continue developing practices that promote positive learning environments for all students.

References

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. Jossey-Bass.

Rusticus, S. A., Wilson, D., Casimiro, L., Gallucci, L., Hall, N. C., Hudson, M., Lo, A., & Van Nuland, S. (2023). An exploration of classroom climate in Canadian postsecondary education and its relation to student outcomes. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.20343/teachlearninqu.11.6>