

# Annual Science Education Open House

## Facilitating Effective Discussions Workshop

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# Learning Objective

- By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:
  - ✓ Plan and implement effective strategies to ensure an inclusive and engaging discussion in any classroom setting

# Outline

- Introductions
- Why use Discussion?
- Developing Meaningful Questions
- Facilitating Discussions in Class
- Challenges...and Solutions

# Introductions

# What is the Purpose of Discussion in Higher Education?

- Establishing subject matter relevance motivates student learning (Kember, Ho, & Hong, 2008)
- Peer discussion improves student learning (Smith et al., 2009)

# Why use Discussion?

It is touted as one of the most effective and widely used teaching strategies in higher education.

Dallimore et al., 2004

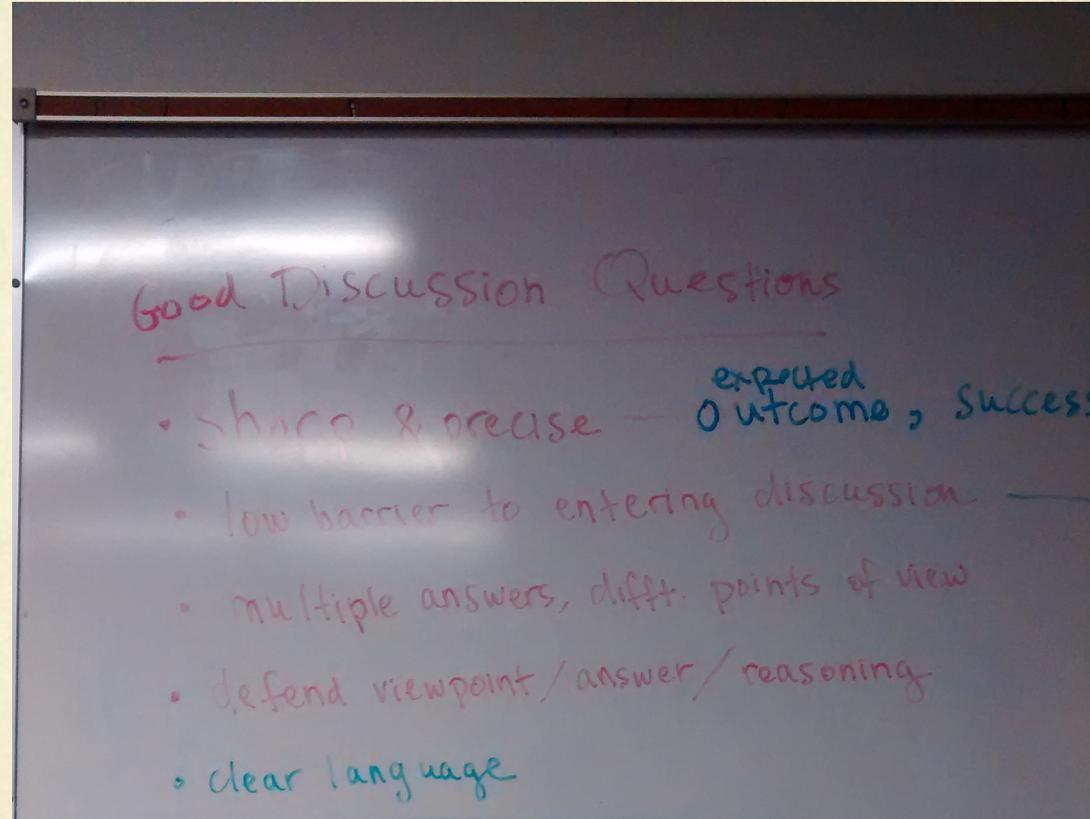
**Q: What are/would be the goal(s) of discussion in YOUR class?**  
*(small group discussion w/ flipcharts)*

- Effective discussions can:
  - ✓ Increase the learner's understanding of the subject matter
  - ✓ Promote the development of effective communication, active listening, and presentation skills
  - ✓ Encourage an appreciation for diverse points of view

# Generating Questions

**Q: What makes a good question for discussion?**

(pair-share)





# Facilitating Discussion

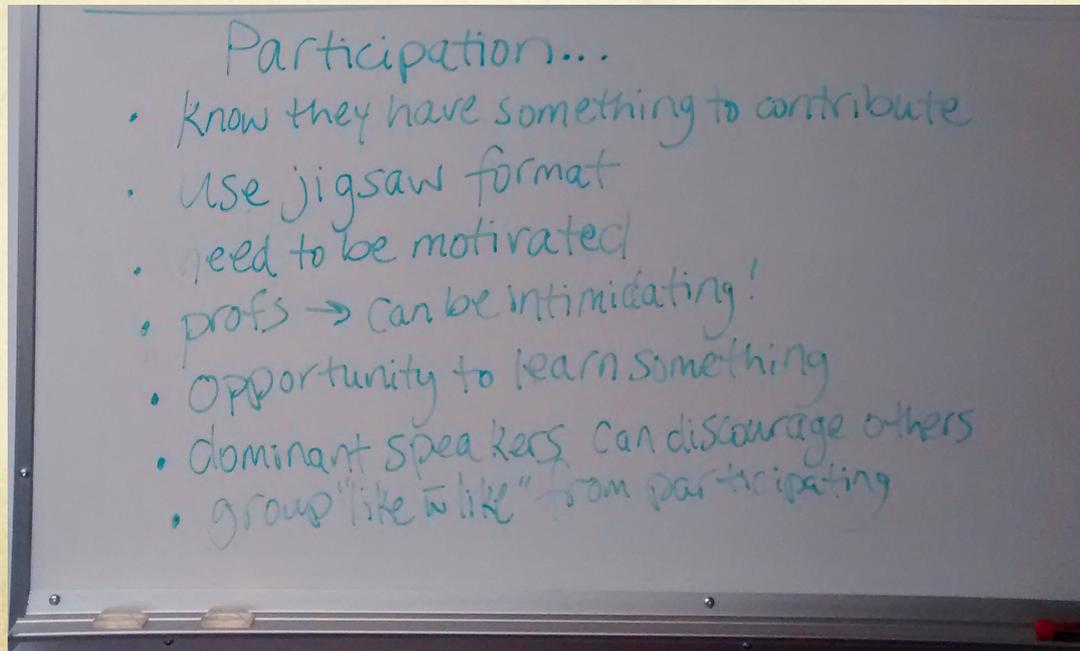
What are some strategies that you've used or have seen us use here?

## Strategies

- Think-pair-share
  - Distribution of answers determines pairs
  - observe facilitation styles
  - layer questions to build momentum
    - make it interesting
  - give students Qs beforehand
  - assign moderator/recorder role to quieter students
  - remove yourself → students should talk to each other
  - Set up as a class practice
  - assign students to groups → collective responsibility
  - open-ended Qs

- Consider your own participation in class discussions as a student:
  - When were you most likely to participate?
  - When were you least likely to participate?
  - What are the characteristics of an effective discussion?

(think-pair-share)



# Challenges

- What are some of the challenges you envision or have experienced with leading discussions?
- What are some potential solutions?

*(small group discussion w/ flipcharts)*

# Summary

- General purpose of discussion
- Generating questions
- Facilitating discussion
- Anticipated challenges and potential solutions

# References

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