

Mini-Dialogue Facilitation Plan

Group Members:

Heidi Judd & Hannah Luz

Topic:

Graduate school–intensity and depth of the program

Goal:

We recognize that being in a graduate program can be a very intense and challenging experience. In this dialogue, we hope to create a space for sharing our experiences and how to reimagine what graduate education can look like.

Part 1: Introduction

- Dialogue means sharing our experiences, validating and listening to one another, and understanding what we can learn from each other. In this moment, Heidi and Hannah will facilitate and support this process by creating an inclusive environment where everyone is seen and heard.
- We recognize that being in a graduate program can be a very intense and challenging experience. In this dialogue, we hope to create a space for sharing our experiences and how to reimagine what graduate education can look like.
- If we end up staying in academia or research, what is the culture we want to foster in these new departments and how do we want to mentor graduate students? What are some of the challenges and changes we may want to address in our current programs?

Part 2: Space

Depending on attendance, we will either have one group for discussion for less than 10 students. If there are more than 10 students, then we will split the groups accordingly into smaller discussion sections. In a perfect space, we desire students to be sitting in a circle so everyone can see one another easily as the dialogue unfolds.

Part 3: Community Agreements

For this mini-dialogue facilitation, the community agreements we will engage with are:

- Speaking for yourself and from your own experience.
- Listening to others to understand their experiences.
- Treating disagreement as an important component of dialogue and disagree with curiosity and respect.
- Monitoring personal speaking time so all participants have a chance to speak.
- Expressing your feelings to the facilitator if you become uncomfortable during the dialogue.
- You have the opportunity to pass.

Part 4: Facilitating Dialogue

When facilitating dialogue and asking critical dialogic questions, the general guidelines to follow are:

1. Ask the question

2. Pause for people to take notes for themselves
3. Invite sharing around the circle, with everyone being asked to speak for same amount of time (generally 60 sec)
4. Pause for a beat between speakers
5. Do not invite cross talk during the go-round
6. Pause after all have responded for listeners to review their notes and frame questions of genuine curiosity for later

Part 5: Questions

Question 1 (*Stage I: Group Beginnings: Forming and Building Relationships*) (5 minutes)

- What were your expectations before starting your graduate program? When you think about your experiences in your graduate program, what image, metaphor, or words come to mind?

Question 2 (*Stage II: Exploring Differences and Commonalities in Experiences*) (5 minutes)

- How have you experienced the intensity of your program? Are there specific moments that have stayed with you or that have changed your outlook? Perhaps ones that have made you feel successful or overwhelmed?

Question 3 (*Stage III: Dialoguing about Controversial “Hot” To pics*) (10 minutes)

- How intense should graduate school be? What are the consequences of that – good or bad? In your experience, how is this intensity to become the ‘best scholar possible’ balanced with being human?

Question 4 (*Stage IV: Action Planning and Collaboration*) (5 minutes)

- How can we collectively reimagine the graduate school experience where we can balance these expectations while giving us time to grow outside academic walls? What are some changes we could advocate for in our departments?

Conclusion:

Thank you all for taking part in this dialogue about your experiences in your graduate programs. We really appreciate you sharing with and listening to one another, and engaging in reimagining the graduate experience.