



# Student Union Assembly

## Community Agreements

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Community agreements are a set of basic ground rules that we ask participants in the space to follow. The goal is to create an open and inclusive space so that every individual has the ability to flourish. This is a living document we may revise throughout the year.

### **Language Matters**

We use language to understand each other, and using language thoughtfully both assists understanding and makes the space more welcoming to everyone.

- 1. Use appropriate gender pronouns as stated**

In this space we will not make assumptions how people identify or what pronouns they use, but rather allow people to let us know themselves and then respect that.

- 2. Use Inclusive and Respectful Language**

We use inclusive language not because we're politically correct, but because it's accurate, fair, respectful and necessary. Inclusive language simply means language that avoids marginalising people who are already marginalised. It's language that is accessible and meaningful to a wide audience.

- 3. Avoid Gendered Language**

Example, use: you all, everyone, y'all, folks. Not "you guys."

- 4. Respect Chosen Language**

Respect and use the language that people use to describe themselves, and avoid making assumptions with respect to language. If you're not sure, ask. For example, although some people prefer "people first" language, this is not universal for all people or even all people within a group (e.g. "people with disabilities" vs "disabled people").

Furthermore, not all communication is through verbal language. Be aware of body language and strive to be respectful (e.g. scoffing, rolling eyes at a speaker)

### **One Mic, One Speaker**

Only one person speaks at a time, the person recognized by the presiding officer. Show respect by not interrupting the person speaking. Provide your full respect and attention while the person is speaking.

### **Use I Statements**

Better to use "I feel, I think, I believe" instead of generalizing everyone thinks the way you do.

### **Challenge the Idea or Belief, Not the Person**

You can always challenge the idea or belief, not the person. Ideas are not people, but people identify with and embrace them. Sometimes they think the idea is the truth when the reality is

that it is not. Those who embrace ideas sometimes feel persecuted when it is not them, but the idea that is in question. You are not your ideas, but the awareness behind them.

### **Mistakes are awesome...**

Mistakes show us what we need to learn, take this experience/training as a learning experience and challenge yourself to learn things you never knew before. Mistakes are awesome when you learn from them.

### **Oops! Ouch! Check in!**

Not everyone will be entering the Assembly with the same level of knowledge and experience. if you accidentally use a harmful term or make a harmful statement, take responsibility.

Example: If someone makes a statement that you find hurtful, say "Point of Personal Privilege - Ouch!" and let them know why - and if you have said something that was found hurtful, say "Oops!" and do your best to apologize and avoid it in the future. Don't be overdramatic in your apology or overcompensate and make a big deal about it. Hold yourself accountable for your actions. Finally, educate/check in: explain (or ask someone else to explain) why the statement was hurtful and what a better alternative would be in the future. This creates an opportunity for understanding. We will learn from one another, we each bring our knowledge and experiences to the Assembly.

### **No performative nonsense**

It's a bad look, don't do it. Apologize and move on.

### **Calling people in, not out!**

If someone says a hurtful statement that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, you may choose to address it at a later point. In some circumstances, it may be best not to address a particular instance in front of everyone, this may lead to perceived public shaming. If you feel the need to correct something in public to education the group on something they may not be educated on, be sure to take an educated tone, rather than attacking.

### **W.A.I.T**

(W.A.I.T = Why Am I Talking? Or Why Aren't I Talking?)

If you usually answer questions or speak up, make space. If you are normally someone who doesn't speak up, this is your opportunity. "Why Am I Talking"— is for the people who dominate the discussion and do not let others talk; they may keep saying the same things. It is important to ask the questions: "Why Am I Still Talking?" and "Have I Said What I Needed to Say? On the flipside of W.A.I.T. — "Why Aren't I Talking" is for the people who sit quiet and don't say much or anything. It is important to ask, why? Is the group not respecting them, do they not feel safe to talk, speak, share, etc.?

### **Expect unfinished business**

There are many instances that bring up in-depth conversations that won't be finished in the amount of time allotted. There are opportunities to finish these discussions with folks at another time.

### **De-Acronize! Let's take vocab breaks**

Let's strive to make sure everyone is on the same page, including acronyms. If you need something broken down, or if you think we should break down a word or phrase, ask for it. Additionally, members of the space are encouraged to motion to speakers using Jargon Giraffe/Peace sign as a way to signal them to de-acronize or explain without interrupting them. Example, use: City on a Hill Press instead of CHP, University of California Student Association for UCSA.

### **No false accusations.**

Assume best intentions.

### **Take care of yourself**

There might be times during this space when issues come up for you. Be sure to take a moment when you need it.

### **Don't be a jerk.**

No abusive behavior; bullying will not be tolerated inside or outside the space. (e.g.: anti-harassment)

### **Generalizing/Representing Communities**

Keep in mind that representatives are the spokespeople of their respective organizations, not every student who could potentially join or affiliate with said organizations. When representatives speak, they do so for their organization (e.g. "The BSU representative does not represent all 800 black people on this campus")

### **F is for Friends**

Be welcoming to new folks and patient when they aren't familiar with Robert's Rules or general meeting procedures. The Parliamentarian can be called upon at any time to give a brief 5-10 minute refresher on Robert's Rules and/or Community Agreements (e.g.: promote an inclusive environment)