

# Teaching a Discussion Lab

Chiyeon Hwang

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## How to Incorporate and Moderate Engaging Discussion

- 1) Communicating your attitude
- 2) Creating a sense of community
- 3) Modeling expectations
- 4) Facilitating discussions
- 5) Providing feedback

## Classroom Background

EALL 282: Modern Korean Literature in Translation

Number of students: 20

Independent instruction

Student-centered  
(instructor as facilitator)



Methods:  
-small group discussion  
-class discussions  
-interactive/fun activities  
-lecture



## Communicating Your Attitude



## 1. Communicating Your Attitude

- Be present! You have to *want* to be there
- Convey interest in the subject and your students
- Show up to class prepared
- Be engaging (attentive listening and thoughtful responses)
- Focus on collaborative learning

## Class Activity

**Once the music starts, stand up and move around the room.**

**When the music stops, turn to the person closest to you and listen for the question to be answered. You cannot choose the same person twice.**

**For each round, share your name and department first before sharing your response. You will be given about 1-2 minutes to share your responses.**

**When the music starts up again, thank your partner and continue moving around the room.**



## Creating a Sense of Community



## 2. Creating a Sense of Community

- Learn everyone's names and get to know them
- Understand the local culture in Hawaii and the unique student body
- Incorporate fun activities to gradually build camaraderie and mutual support
- Arrange mixed small groups
- Emphasize the value of learning through the sharing of diverse perspectives/ideas



## Modeling Expectations



## Facilitating Discussions



### 3. Modeling Expectations

- Demonstrate quality work  
(i.e. presentation and thought-provoking discussion questions)
- Foster positive interactions
- Thoughtful feedback regarding students' contributions to class discussions:  
Call students by name, clarify points made, comment specifically on either content/method (way of critical thinking) and/or make connections by referencing to points shared by students
- Hold yourself accountable as an instructor to your own standards, expectations, class rules, etc.

### 4. Facilitating Discussions

- Consider framework and come prepared with guidelines: What are the goals for today's discussion? What *needs* to be explored/analyzed? What do you hope for students to learn?
- Guide discussions by asking open-ended questions within the context of the discipline and encourage students to conduct their own dialogue.
- Refrain from asking questions just for the sake of asking and resist the urge to reveal "the right answer".
- Thoughtful responses take time; don't be afraid to wait.

## Providing Feedback



## Today's Takeaways

your attitude

→ students' attitude

safe and positive learning environment

→ engaging discussion

thoughtful feedback

→ improves students' learning

## 5. Providing thoughtful feedback

- Specific rather than general
- Constructive: Rather than criticizing students' work, focus on ways to help them improve. Show *how* to analyze through critical thinking in order to strengthen their argument.
- Consider the needs of each student. Provide feedback for improving performance to help achieve success.
- Timely and in appropriate amounts (e.g. verbally in class, by email, feedback on written assignments, etc.)



Thank you and have a wonderful semester!

[chiyeon@hawaii.edu](mailto:chiyeon@hawaii.edu)