



Community Commitments

Creating an inclusive classroom is an active partnership between everyone at the Five College Center for World Languages—staff, students, mentors, and conversation partners alike.

In your sessions:

- **Understand that language learning necessarily involves making lots of mistakes.** Take risks and support others in their risk-taking.
- **Remember that learning a language also entails engaging with a culture or cultures.** Embrace this opportunity and approach it with curiosity, openness, and respect.
- **Share responsibility for including all voices in the discussion.** If you tend to have a lot to say, make sure you leave sufficient space to hear from others. If you tend to stay quiet, challenge yourself to contribute so others can learn from you.
- **Listen respectfully and patiently.** Don't interrupt or engage in separate conversations while others are speaking. Use attentive, courteous body language.
- **Practice self-reflection and self-control.** Think ahead of time about what issues may hit a nerve with you and how you might deal with that. If a difficult dialogue is already taking place, try to stay in touch with your own emotions and prevent them from driving your response.
- **Take pairwork seriously.** Remember that your peers' learning is partly dependent upon your engagement.
- **Respect others' right to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own.** Be open to hearing their perspectives and to changing your perspectives based on what you learn from others.
- **Recognize that your words have effects on others.** Speak with care. If you learn that something you've said was experienced as disrespectful or marginalizing, listen carefully and try to understand that perspective. Consider how you might handle things differently in the future.
- **Address patterns that are troubling or that may be impeding full engagement by you or others.** If something makes you uncomfortable, if possible, acknowledge it immediately.

Assume good intention on the part of the speaker *and* point out the impact of what was said. Ask for assistance and support from your course organizer or the program director.

- **Be empowered to add to this list.** Think together with everyone in your session about other practices, behaviors, or standards you want to see upheld. Share your suggestions and additions with your course organizer or the program director. Return regularly to this list and consider it a living document.

Adapted from excellent resources from the University of Michigan Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, and Washington University of St. Louis Center for Teaching and Learning

Five College Center for World Languages

79 South Pleasant St, Suite 100

Amherst College, AC Box 2264

Amherst, MA 01002

USA

[FCCWL website](#)

p: 413-542-5264

e: fclang@fivecolleges.edu



© Five Colleges, Incorporated

[Staff login](#)
