

THE DISCUSSION PROJECT

School of Education | University of Wisconsin–Madison

Learn to Discuss Discuss to Learn

Why Discussion?

Discussion in university classrooms is critical for learning content and skills in every discipline. The statement that “those who talk, learn” makes sense: substantive and well-facilitated talk shifts the learning work from instructor to student. Not only does discussion foster higher engagement in learning, it also builds intellectual community that connects students to their peers and to our institution.

Professional Development

The aim of the Discussion Project professional development series is to strengthen our campus-wide capacity to create welcoming, engaging, and academically rigorous classroom environments in which students experience productive classroom discussions.

The 3-day in-person or seven 2-hour online session course employs a learn-by-doing model to engage instructors in techniques for running successful small and large group discussions.

- Over 700 UW-Madison instructors from every school and college and across 160+ departments have now taken the Discussion Project.
- In each course session, a cohort of up to 25 instructors from across disciplines and roles meets to learn together.
- The course is free and open to any UW-Madison instructor –faculty, academic staff, and graduate students.
- The course is especially beneficial for instructors new to campus (whether new or veteran teachers) to connect with colleagues from across campus.

Research Study

In the 2022-23 academic year, the Discussion Project will be developing and testing a suite of tools for describing classroom discussion and instructor practice, and we will demonstrate how the suite of tools can work together to understand the benefits of classroom discussion and the Discussion Project course (in-person version) for student academic success.



For more information and to apply to take a course, please visit our UW-Madison website: [The Discussion Project](#)