Professor Noreen Lape

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**INTD 250: Speaking and Writing Across Difference**

**Course Description**: Is it possible in this age of extreme polarization, canceling, and self-silencing to engage in dialogue with people who think differently from us?  And, if it is possible, how do we do it and why even bother? These are some of the fundamental questions that frame this course. Together we will engage in important inner work, co-construct a dialogic space, and learn to interact effectively with each other – all skills essential to participating in democratic dialogues. Along the way, we will consider important topics like the way intersectional identities inflect dialogue; the connection between dialogue, cancel culture, and democratic inclusion; the nature of civil/uncivil dialogue; the transformative power of mutual understanding; the way complex polarization affects dialogue; the impact of social media on dialoguing across differences; and the psychology of threat. We will also explore a variety of public conversation models from which we will learn facilitation tools: curious questions, open listening, interventions when dialogues get tense, creating dialogue questions, finding common values, reflecting on privilege, doing choicework, and engaging stakeholders. These skills will prepare you to engage in dialogue on campus and in your communities.

This course will be unique because there will be multiple guest faculty instructors as well as two high-profile speakers facilitating discussions with you about the connection between democracy and dialogue.

**Your subsequent paid employment, should you choose to be student dialogue facilitators in the spring, will be based on your overall performance in the course.**

**The Dialogist-in-Residence:**  Lily Gage (’23) is our Dialogist-in-Residence. Lily’s job is to assist you with your work in this class, and then continue to coordinate and support your efforts as dialogue facilitators on campus and in the community.

**Learning Outcomes:**When you successfully complete this course, you will be able to:

* recognize how multiple identities that shape our interactions with one another
* use multiple tools to facilitate and sustain dialogues across differences;
* reflect on why and how those tools affect dialogic interactions;
* analyze the potential of dialogue to foster democratic inclusion;
* create a dialogue across differences intervention for college classrooms;
* communicate how intellectual differences inform all academic disciplines;
* explain how the position, power, and privilege of participants inform dialogues.

**Texts:**

Nicholas V. Longo and Timothy J. Shaffer, *Creating Space for Democracy*

Readings on Moodle

**Ungrading:** This course is “ungraded.” Ungrading is an equitable grading practice that has arisen from research that shows traditional letter grades are not valid or reliable, meaning they don’t measure what we think they measure (student learning), and they don’t measure the same characteristic or skill every time (i.e. not all Cs, for example, reflect the same level of performance or mastery). What do grades do? They reflect opportunity gaps, affect students’ mental wellbeing, magnify inequities, and encourage cheating, to paraphrase Josh Eyler in a forthcoming book. I prefer to position myself as a coach and not a judge; you are accountable to a coach who gives you guidance on how to succeed at something. As a coach, I want to motivate you to be curious and to learn, help you measure your learning and assess your own areas for improvement, and lead you on the path toward mastery.

To that end, I have been experimenting with ungrading. In this course, in which you are learning to be co-creators of teaching and learning environments, it is particularly important to practice ungrading. Still, the college requires that I give you a letter grade at the end of the course. Here’s how we will get there:

* When you complete an assignment, I will give you feedback but no grade. My feedback comes in the form of margin notes accompanied by an approximately five minute, voice recorded close reading of your work. (You may request that I send you a written instead of a voice endnote.) You my then revise an assignment after you receive feedback.
* Prior to submitting an assignment, you can always bring a draft to my office, and I can give you feedback before you finish it.
* Self-evaluation and self-reflection are essential to ungrading, so I will ask you to reflect on your learning throughout the semester.
* At the end of the course, I will give you a self-assessment questionnaire that we will meet and talk about. One question will ask you to suggest a grade. While I do reserve the right to adjust your recommended grade, I trust you to assess your performance fairly and accurately.

**If this approach ends up undermining your learning in any way, please come talk to me at any time about your progress in the course. You can even ask me for a grade.** Ungrading is meant to be freeing, not anxiety-inducing. Without the burden of grades, I hope that you will feel free to pursue the interesting questions that arise for you in the course, take risks, and deepen the quality of your thinking.

**What is Required of You**

**Preparing for Class**: Moodle is the home base for the course. While the “Schedule of Assignments” provides an overview of the course, you should follow the plan as articulated on the Moodle page. I will let you know in specific detail what you should be reading, viewing, and/or writing about to be fully prepared for our discussions. The assignment prompts as well as explanations of satisfactory work will also be on the Moodle module as well. If you are planning an absence, the Moodle will let you know what you are missing.

**Participation:**Please see the Community Guidelines drafted by the class. These are located on the Moodle.

**Allowed Absences**: I don’t lecture much; I prefer to design courses around student-centered collaboration. In class, I will prompt you to discuss readings, offer interpretations, engage in dialogue, and help each other to formulate thoughts – orally and in writing. The class is highly interactive, and you will need to be present to engage with the material and learn and be part of our learning community. If you are absent a lot, you not only jeopardize your learning but also your paid opportunity to be part of Dickinson’s dialogue team.

That said, I do recognize the need for sick days and personal days every now and then. If you end up having persistent problems, let me know so that I can direct you toward college resources like the Wellness Center. If you start accumulating absences – meaning more than three – and you do not notify me and/or respond to my emails, I will become concerned about you, and I will alert the [CARE Team](https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20226/student_life/3540/5).

**Projects and Assignments:**

These are brief summaries. I will have more detailed instructions for you when we discuss each upcoming assignment.

1. Audio Journal of Experience Interning with a Student Dialogue Coordinator
	* You will work in teams with an experienced Student Dialogue Coordinator for 1-2 hours per week throughout the semester. You will have a choice of three teams: the November election team (Matt Craig and Etsub Taye), the athletes and non-athletes team (Evan Connery), and the student senate team (Ben Lundi). Once you are on a team, your lead SDC may ask you to attend team meetings; prepare for upcoming dialogues; and/or attend dialogues to observe, facilitate, or assess.
	* In your OneNote Notebook, you will keep a bi-weekly audio journal in which I prompt you to
		+ talk about what your team did, what you contributed, and what you learned. In addition, or
		+ talk about how you are meeting the course learning goals.
2. Essay on Democratic Inclusion and Unify Challenge College Bowl (5-6 pp.)
	* For this assignment, you will be matched with a student for a one-on-one conversation across differences. (So, a conservative student from a community college in Texas might be matched with a liberal student from a four-year public university in Illinois.) For about an hour, you will discuss 16 hot-button issues like mental health, gun laws, immigration, and free speech on campus.
	* Write an essay (4-5 pages) in which you draw on class readings and your experiences with 1.) your Unify America College Bowl partner and 2.) your participation in a reflective structured dialogue with classmates to consider how dialogue can foster democratic inclusion.
3. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Service-Learning Projects
	* DXD has been asked by a subcommittee of the DEI committee to help them create programming for MLK week in January. Your two projects will address different audiences: faculty with limited class time and faculty willing to devote a whole class.
		+ For faculty who do not want to devote an entire class period: You and a group of peers will be assigned a division (Arts, Humanities, Social Science, Natural Science), and together you will make a 5-minute film. First, you will briefly discuss what MLK thought about dialoguing across differences, and then you will interview faculty in that division about what are the controversial, “across-difference” topics that have social justice implications.
		+ For faculty who do want to assign an entire class period: You will each individually write a 6-8 page plan for an activity (e.g. reflective structured dialogue) that faculty can use in class that day.

All papers (drafts and final versions) should be word-processed and follow standard formatting: double-spaced; 12-point font; right hand corner numbering; and title, name, and date on first page.  Throughout the paper, the citations and documentation style should be consistent according to current MLA, APA, or Chicago style.

**Plagiarism**:  Plagiarism is copying the words and/or ideas of another person (published or not) and submitting them as your own.  When you plagiarize, you do not comprehend the course material, and you do not learn.  If you are accused of plagiarism, there with be an academic conduct hearing, and potential consequences include an F for the assignment, required withdrawal from the course with a penalty grade of F, stayed suspension, suspension from the college, expulsion, or revocation and withholding of diploma.  Cheating includes re-purposing a paper that you wrote for another course or turning in one paper for two courses without the permission of both professors.  If you are confused about the complicated rules regarding documenting research, please ask me.  I can help.   Enrollment at Dickinson represents a commitment to abide by the College’s principles of academic integrity. Please read [Dickinson's plagiarism and academic integrity policy](http://lis.dickinson.edu/library/documents/Academic_Integrity_Info.pdf).

Your use of ChatGPT or other AI applications is prohibited at this time.

**Where You Can Go for Support**

**Connecting with Me:** It is common for college students to check in with their professors throughout the semester.  I have had talks with my students about lingering questions from class discussions, topics for upcoming writing assignments, questions about drafts in progress, ideas about possible majors and future careers, among many other things. As your professor, I am here to talk about the course, the assignments, and bigger questions about how you are spending your time at Dickinson. You can also come to me if you have any issues or concerns.  If I cannot solve them, I will be able to find someone on campus who can help you.

I am available to meet after class and by appointment. If you want to meet after class, you can use the scheduler on the Moodle page. In the past, I have found that making myself available by appointment is a good way to support my students who have full and changing schedules. There are other times I can meet between 8:00-5:00, M-F. Please do not hesitate to email and ask for an appointment at a different time.

[**The Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center**](https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing_program/567/norman_m_eberly_writing_center)**:**The MWC consists of both English and foreign language writing tutoring services. The English writing tutors work with native and nonnative speakers of English, and the foreign language writing tutors work with writers of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson’s trained peer writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor’s preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, and edit your writing – among other things.

You have the option to meet with tutors online or face-to-face in the MWC, which is located on the first floor of Waidner-Spahr Library. For online appointments, tutors will send you a Zoom link prior to your scheduled time. Please show up promptly for both online and face-to-face appointments as there will be a ten-minute grace period after which the tutor may no longer be available.

To schedule an appointment for an online or face-to-face appointment, use our [**WCONLINE scheduler**](https://dickinson.mywconline.com/)**.**

**Reference Librarians:**  The library employs several reference librarians, trained professionals who help library users find information. Our class liaison is Ian Boucher. Whether it be for this course or any other, you need never become frustrated by your research. Instead, you can ask a reference librarian to help you find sources related to your topic. They can help you find information (books, articles and more), choose the most relevant databases, improve your research strategy, critically evaluate information, and cite sources properly**. You can schedule an online or in-person consultation with a librarian via the link located on the top right of our course Moodle page.**

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities*:***Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would hinder your access to learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ADS, email access@dickinson.edu, call (717) 245-1734, or go to the ADS office in Room 005 of Old West, Lower Level (aka "the OWLL").

If you’ve already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please follow the guidance at www.dickinson.edu/AccessPlan for disclosing the accommodations for which you are eligible and scheduling a meeting with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss your accommodations and finalize your Access Plan. If test proctoring will be needed from ADS, remember that we will need to complete your Access Plan in time to give them at least one week’s advance notice.

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*The policies, procedures, assessments, and/or schedule in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better student learning.*

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| **DATE** | **TOPIC** | **READINGS** |
| T, 9/3 | Introduction to the course, connection exercise, community guidelines |  |
| F, 9/6 | How do our intersectional selves surface in this work? with Prof. Katie Schweighofer | * Implicit bias test;
* Deborah Cameron and Scott Kulick, “What Has Gender Got To Do With Sex?: Language, Heterosexuality and Heteronormativity” (Moodle)
* Cathryn Bailey and Susan K. Freeman, "Queered Outrage: Reclaiming Anger Amid Facile Calls for Campus Civility" (Moodle)
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| T, 9/10 | What is the difference between dialogue, discussion, deliberation, and debate? Why are we doing dialogue?**Meet the Student Dialogue Coordinators, choose a team, and learn about the work you will do** **Discuss assignment #1: guidelines for the audio journal**  | * Daniel Yankelovich, “What Makes Dialogue Unique” (Moodle)
* Nick Longo and Timothy J. Shaffer, "Discussing Democracy: Learning to Talk Together" (13-38)
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| F, 9/13 | Is civility a necessity and/or a problem in dialogue? | * Teresa Bejan, “Is Civility a Sham?” TEDTalk (Moodle)
* [“When Civility is Used as a Cudgel Against People of Color”](https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/03/14/700897826/when-civility-is-used-as-a-cudgel-against-people-of-color) (Moodle)
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| T, 9/17 | How can dialogue foster democratic inclusion? | * “Campus Argument Goes Viral as Evergreen State Is Caught In Racial Turmoil” (Moodle)
* “Speaking Frankly: Cancel Culture” (Moodle)
* Sigal Ben-Porath, “Do I Belong Here? Inclusion and Harm” from *Cancel Wars*(Moodle)
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| F, 9/20 | How can dialogue foster democratic inclusion?**Discuss assignment #2 and Unify America Challenge College Bowl** | * Sara A. Mehltretter Drury, “Cultivating Dialogue and Deliberation through Speech, Silence, and Synthesis” (69-79)
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| T, 9/24 | What is it like to dialogue across differences? | * We will do a reflective structured dialogue facilitated by Lily and the SDCs.
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| F, 9/27 | What role does social media play in dialogue across differences? with librarian Ian Boucher | * Ronald J. Deibert, "The Road to Digital Unfreedom: Three Painful Truths About Social Media" (Moodle)
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| T, 10/1 | Visit with Manu Meel, CEO of BridgeUSA | * Manu Meel, “Columbia U.'s Firestorm Is Just the Beginning. Here’s How Philanthropy Can Respond” (Moodle)
* Manu Meel, “How Gen Z Leaders Are Strengthening Our Democracy” (Moodle)
* Please attend the DXD sponsored Clarke Forum talk at 7:00 pm in ATS
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| F, 10/4 | What is political polarization and how does it impact dialogue? What can we do about it? with Prof. Rui Zhang | * Ezra Klein, excerpt from *Why We're Polarized* (Moodle)
* Eli Finkel et al., “Political Sectarianism in America: A Poisonous Cocktail of Othering, Aversion, and Moralization Poses a Threat to Democracy"
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| T, 10/8 | How do we construct dialogic spaces that minimize perceived risks and threats? with Prof. Kirk Anderson | * Bessel Van Der Kolk, “Brain-Body Connections” (Moodle)
* **Assignment #1 due**
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| F, 10/11 | What is the role of a facilitator in a dialogue?What does the facilitator do when the threat level goes up? | * "Disruption, Dialogue, and Swerve," Jill DeTemple and John Sarrouf
* Case studies/hypotheticals
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| T, 10/15 | What is the role of a facilitator in a dialogue?What does the facilitator do when the threat level goes up? | * Continue with case studies/hypotheticals
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| F, 10/18 | How does questioning style – curious v. skeptical v. combative – affect whether dialogue supports or undermines nonthreatening-spaces and democratic inclusion? | * Monica Guzman, “Curiosity,” “Perspective,” and “Friction” (Moodle)
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| T, 10/22 | FALL PAUSE |  |
| F, 10/25 | How can full spectrum listening and looping be used to sustain non-threatening spaces and democratic inclusion? | * Kate Murphy, “Listening to Your Curiosity” and “I Know What You’re Going to Say”
* Amanda Ripley, “Complicating the Narratives”
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| T, 10/29 | **Discuss video assignment #3.**Where do I start when it comes to making a film? How do I work collaboratively with a group across differences? | * Workshop: Technical training with Brenda Landis from Academic Technology
* Workshop: Starting Group Work by Calling In Differences
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| F, 11/1 | How does the reflective structured dialogue model work?  | * John Sarrouf and Katie Hyten, "Creating Cultures of Dialogue in Higher Education" (85-96).
* Lizzy Cooper Davis, “The Free Southern Theater’s Story Circle Process” (128-139).
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| T, 11/5 | How do I create effective questions for a reflective structured dialogue? | * Workshop: Creating Dialogue Questions
* **Each video group submits a one-page summary of what they found out about King’s view of dialoguing across differences and a list of faculty interviewees.**
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| F, 11/8 | How does intergroup dialogue work?How do you create a “shared understanding of values” – step one of the intergroup model? | * Stephanie Hicks and Hamida Bhagirathy, “Education Justice Using Intergroup Dialogue” (119-127)
* Workshop: Values Exercise
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| T, 11/12 | How do you prepare people for the conversations about privilege and marginalization that inform intergroup dialogue? | * Workshop: Privilege for Sale
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| F, 11/15 | How do National Issues Forums work? **Discuss assignment #3 activity plan.**   | * Jean Johnson and Keith Melville, “The National Issues Forums” (140-146)
* National Issues Forums, “Free Speech and the Inclusive Campus” (Moodle)
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| T, 11/19 | How do you engage people in deliberation? | * Workshop: Choicework Exercise
* **Each group hands in a storyboard.**
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| F, 11/22 | How do you edit your video in iMovie? with academic technologist Brenda Landis | * **Workshop: Editing in iMovie**
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| T, 11/26 | How do student-facilitated discussion teams work? | * Jeff Prudhomme and Shannon Wheatley Hartman, “What If? The Interactivity Foundation and Student-Facilitated Discussion Teams” (147-158)
* Workshop: Working with Stakeholders
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| F, 11/29 | THANKSGIVING BREAK |  |
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| T, 12/3 | Visit with Katharine Hayhoe, Professor in Public Policy and Public Law Science at Texas Tech University and Chief Scientist for the global conservation organization, The Nature Conservancy. | * Please attend Katharine Hayhoe’s talk at the Clarke Forum on December 4 at 7:00 pm.
* **Meet with Lily this week to show her a 30 second draft of your video.**
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| F, 12/6 | How does Hayhoe work across (religious) difference -- especially as it relates to climate change?   |  |
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| T, 12/10 | What insights can your peers bring to your final projects? | * Workshop: Peer Review
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| F, 12/13 | MLK Day Project Videos Due | * We will watch them together as a class. I will invite the DEI committee.
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| **Final MLK Day Project Papers are due on Friday, December 20 at 2:00 pm.** **You may hand the paper in earlier if you so wish.** |