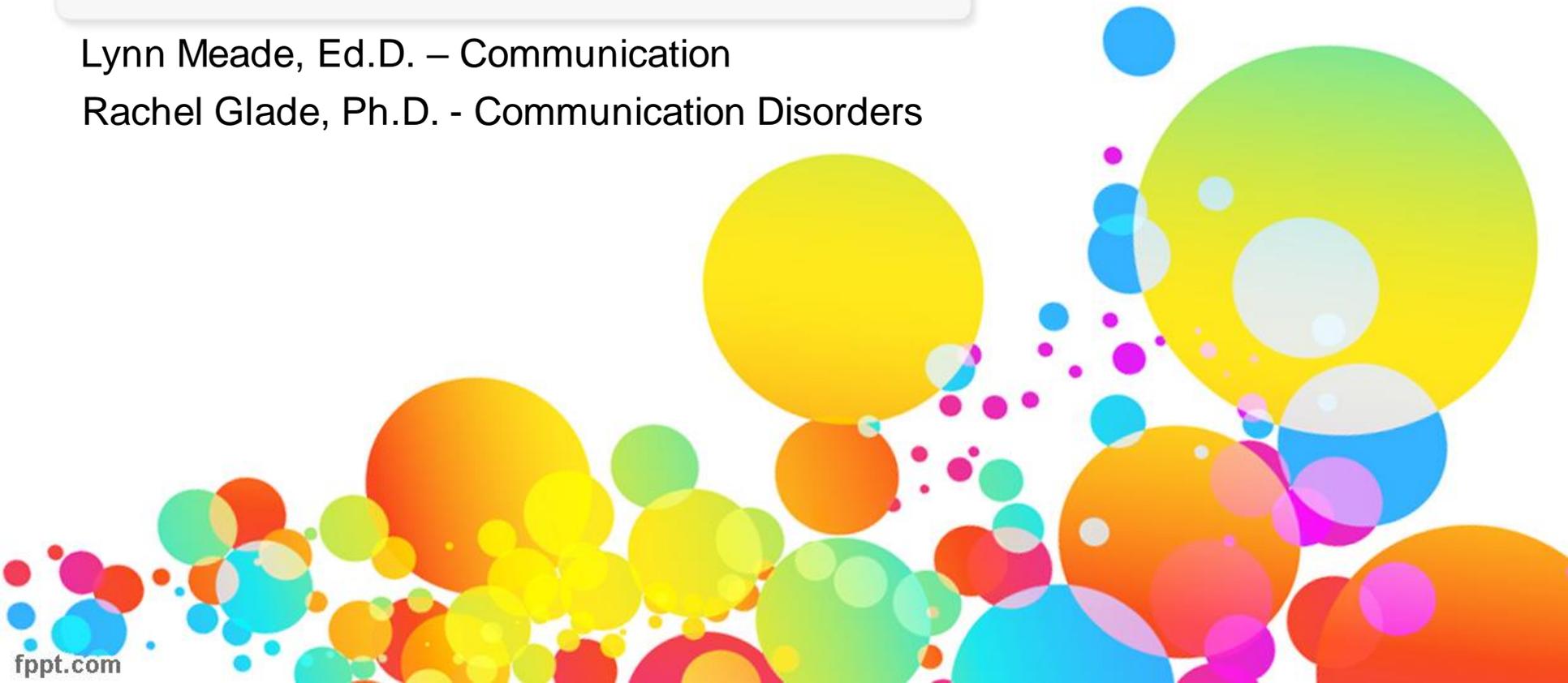


Creating Safe Spaces for Discussion

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What are some controversial topics
you discuss in your classes?



Why do you think students are afraid to speak out on challenging topics?

What does the literature say?

1. They are uncomfortable about conflict in general, in or outside the classroom
2. They are concerned with how their peers will perceive them if they voice anything but "middle-of-the-road" views on controversial topics
3. They expect to receive lower grades if they disagree with their professors in class
4. Issues of expertise (e.g., I am not an expert and do not want to look foolish, so I will not contribute to the discussion.)
(Lusk & Weinberg, 1994)



Creating Safe Spaces for Dissenting Views.....

Goal of our discussion:

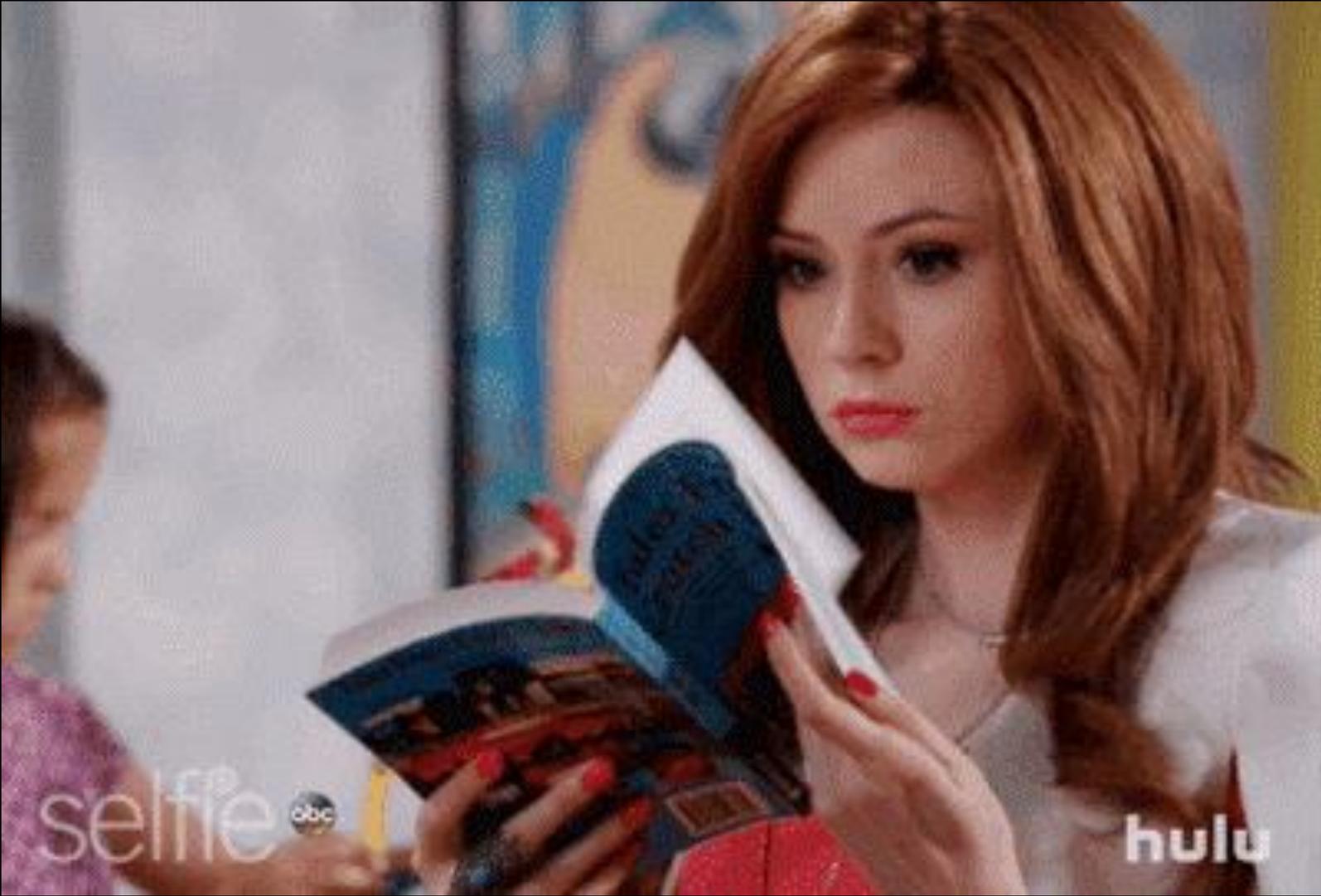
Managing difficult and controversial discussion topics.

"Teacher's role is not to resolve conflict, but manage it."

- Dr. Meade

Objectives

1. Define terms: safe space, brave space
2. Identify strategies for creating safe spaces and brave spaces
3. Create action plan for classroom use



selfie abc

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Safe Space

A place intended to be free of bias, conflict, criticism, or potentially threatening actions, ideas, or conversations.

An environment in which students are willing and able to participate and honestly struggle with challenging issues.

(Holley & Steiner, 2005; Merriam-Webster, 2018, NASPA 2017)



**What would a safe space look like in
your classroom?**

Pair & Share

Suggestions for Safe Spaces

Create opportunities to get to know your students

Mix up groups so that multiple perspectives are heard

When making examples, use diverse names and cultural references

Require drafts of assignments and provide feedback along the way

Be aware of your own assumptions of a student's surname or skin tone



Brave Space

Respectful but challenging dialogue

“Learning necessarily involves not merely risk, but the pain of giving up a former condition in favor of a new way of seeing things.” (Boostrom, 1998)



**What would a brave space look like in
your classroom?**

Pair & Share

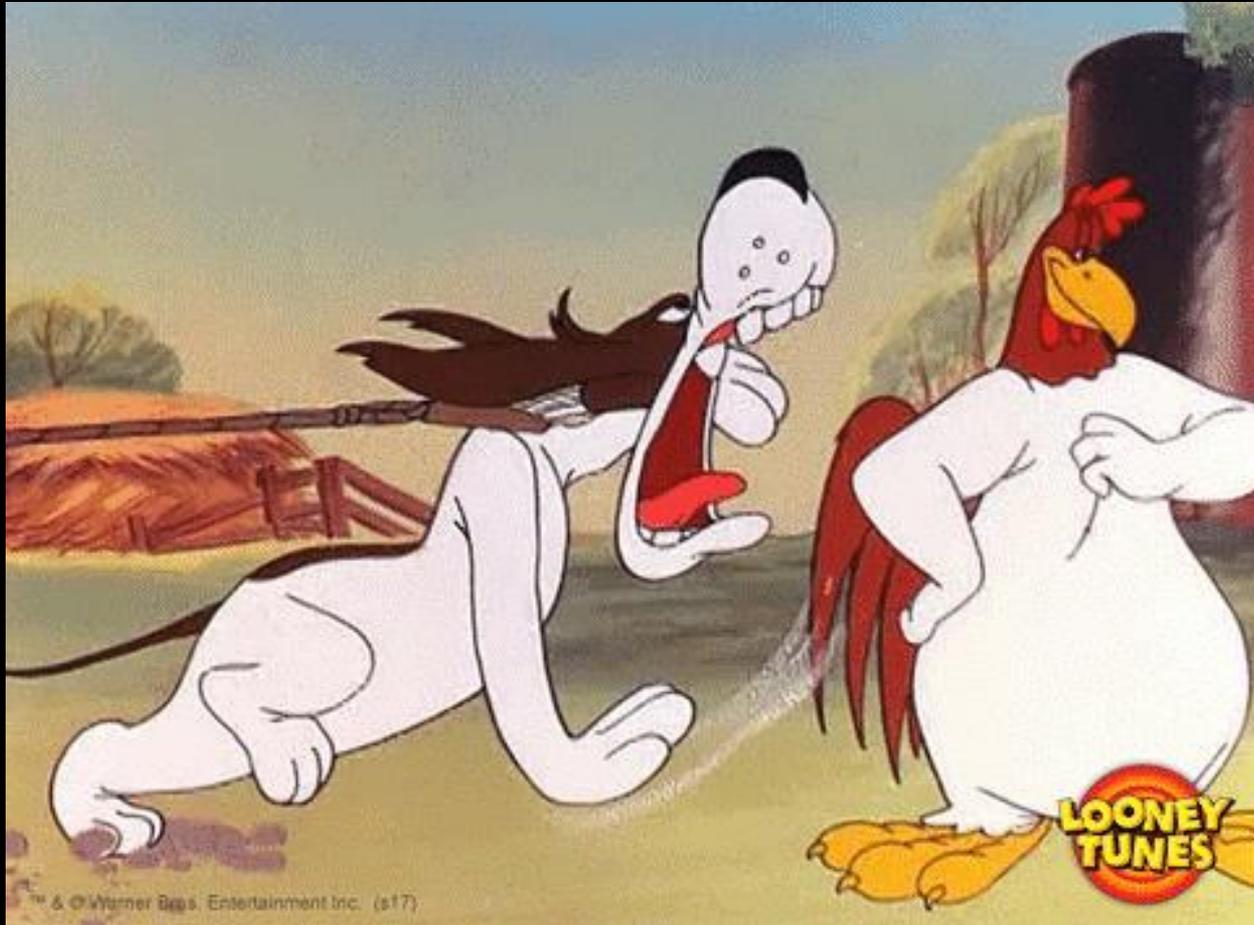
Suggestions on Brave Space

1. “Controversy with civility,” where varying opinions are accepted
2. “Owning intentions and impacts,” in which students acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the emotional well-being of another person
3. “Challenge by choice,” where students have an option to step in and out of challenging conversations
4. “Respect,” where students show respect for one another’s basic personhood
5. “No attacks,” where students agree not to intentionally inflict harm on one another

As much as we'd like to think students
will.....



A more likely reality....





What fears might faculty have in implementing safe and brave spaces?



Share your action plan....

**What is one strategy you
plan to use to create a
safe/brave space in your
classroom?**



QUESTIONS?

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