



Student Activism Support Toolkit

Use These Tools and Resources to
Help Build Trust and Relationships
with Student Activists

Student Affairs Forum





How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is a part of a series of EAB resources to help student affairs leaders build trust and strong relationships with student activists.

We Recommend These Resources Be Used In This Order:

1

Assess Your Institution's Current Status and Receive Resource Recommendations

EAB's *Student Activism Support Audit* helps your team assess how you support and build relationships with student activists. Your results will direct you towards the most helpful resources based on your answers

▶ [Click here to access the Student Activism Support Audit](#)



**Student Activism
Support Audit**



**Student Activism
Support Toolkit**

2

Review Recommended Resources and Explore Other Possible Initiatives to Implement

EAB's *Student Activism Support Toolkit* provides worksheets, briefings, guides, best practice highlights and resource highlights to help student affairs leaders build strong relationships with activists

If you haven't completed the audit yet, use the link above to take the audit prior to reviewing this toolkit



**Student Activism
Support
Implementation
Guide**

3

Create an Implementation Plan

EAB's *Student Activism Support Implementation Guide* provides a template for you and your team to make an implementation plan for each of the initiatives identified through the audit and reviewing the toolkit

▶ [Click here to access the Student Activism Support Implementation Guide](#)



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SECTION 1

Offer Just-in-Time Resources and Tools

Start building in-roads with activists by providing resources and tools during key moments

SUBSECTION 1

Centralize and Update Activist Resources

Use these tools to ensure the information and resources student activists need are up-to-date and accessible

- Student Activism Resource Hub– Highlighted Peer Examples
- Student Activist Information Search Activity
- Identify Current Resources - Worksheet
- Pivot Resources to Maintain Accessibility Amid Rapid Change - Worksheet
- Resource Highlight: Free Speech Policy Audit and Compendium



Student Activism Resource Hub

Make it easy for student activists to find the information they need by creating a central resource page. Below are examples of student activism resource page elements:

A Compendium of Activism Page Elements from Other Institutions

- ▶ **Federal, State and Local Guidance Regarding Activism**
[Florida State University's](#) activism webpage offers on-campus and local information about free-speech, advocacy opportunities, and decision-making processes
- ▶ **Campus Policies Related to Activism**
[Seattle University's Activism page](#) lists polices related to on-campus activism and links to the code of conduct. They also offer a [demonstration cheat-sheet](#)
- ▶ **Institutional Decision-Making Processes**
[North Central College](#) offers an interactive flow chart to help students navigate the many opportunities available to get involved in advocacy on and off campus
- ▶ **Opportunities for Skill Development**
[Antioch College's Bootcamp For Activism](#) is an annual three-day intensive skill building experience for activists. Topics include self care, public speaking, and action planning
- ▶ **A Student Affairs Statement of Support for Activism**
[Colorado University's Student Affairs Activism Statement](#) clarifies how the department views activism and the role they hope to play in helping activists advocate for positive change
- ▶ **Self-Care Guidance**
[The University of Michigan's Self-Care Guide](#) for activists, advocates and allies directs activists to self-care resources and provides additional self-care guidance
- ▶ **On-Campus Activist Organization Directory**
[American University's activism page](#) links to the student org directory, but automatically filters the results for political, environmental, gender/sexuality and advocacy organizations.
- ▶ **COVID-19 Specific Demonstration Guidance**
[George Washington University](#) offers a safety guide for students interested in participating in demonstrations or protests during COVID-19
- ▶ **External Organizations of Interest to Activists**
[Macalester College](#) provides a directory of local policy and justice organizations, and a directory of similar student organizations at Macalester
- ▶ **Information About the History of Activism on Campus**
[Stanford University created an interactive timeline map](#) for students to explore the history of activism on campus by decade and location



Student Activist Information Search

Understanding Accessibility Of Information and Resources For Activists on Your Campus

Directions

Use this tool to walk through steps an activist on your campus might take to find information, resources or guidance. Using only your institution’s website, fill-in the below table to identify gaps in information or accessibility.

Activist information related to...	Current location	Accessibility rating	Up-to-date?	Priority rating
Time, place, and manner definitions and guidance				
Free speech zones				
Restricted areas				
Reservations				
Prohibited behaviors				
Sound amplification				
Literature distribution				
Chalking				
Temporary structures				
Social media policy				
Federal or state laws related to activism				
Student rights, responsibilities, or expectations				
Staff and faculty responsibilities				
Protesting safely				
Activist self-care				
Other:				
Other:				

Next Steps

Use the *Student Activist Support Implementation Guide* to create plan to prioritize updating the resources listed on this sheet



Identify Current Resources

Select Available Resources On Your Campus Which May Be Helpful For Student Activists

Directions

Use this worksheet to identify resources currently available that you would might add to a centralized activist resource hub

Content	Current location	Up-to-date?	Notes
		Yes/No	

Next Steps

- Identify who needs to be looped in to create a centralized activist page
- Identify who is accountable for updating or retrieving the content for the webpage
- Establish a timeline
- When finished create a plan for how you will advertise the page



Pivot Resources to Fit the Context

Identify Resources To Pivot to Be More Accessible or Helpful for Activists

Overview:

2020 demonstrated there is great value in pivoting existing offerings to meet student needs when the context changes substantially or rapidly. Using this exercise, identify resources that could or should be altered to adjust to a rapidly changing environment.

Practice Sample Scenario:

COVID-19 limited in-person interactions and students' ability to return to campus. At the same time, activism has spiked due to recent events. It is essential students continue to have access to important information related to activism, even though in-person gatherings are limited.

Key Questions to Consider:

- How has our ability to communicate with students changed? (example: students may no longer see posters on campus)
- How have student preferences changed? (example: students are now using social media more)
- What is the most effective way to provide information or resources in this new environment?

Information/ resource	Current location/ format	Can students access it?	How could we update the location or format to ensure accessibility?	Could we add more information to increase relevance during this time?	Next steps:
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			
		Yes/No			

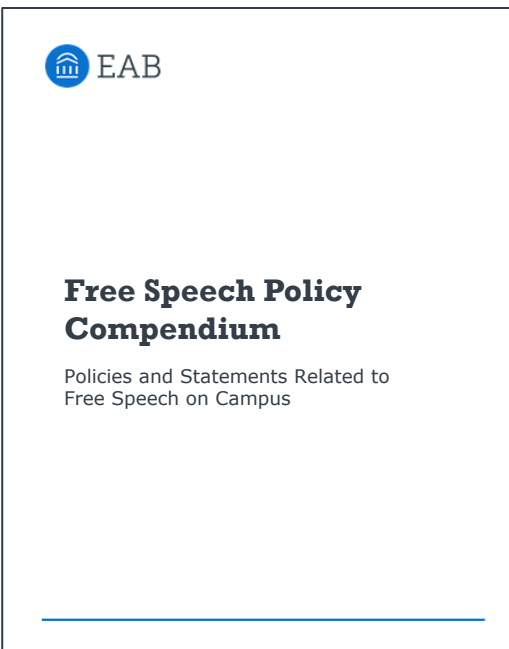
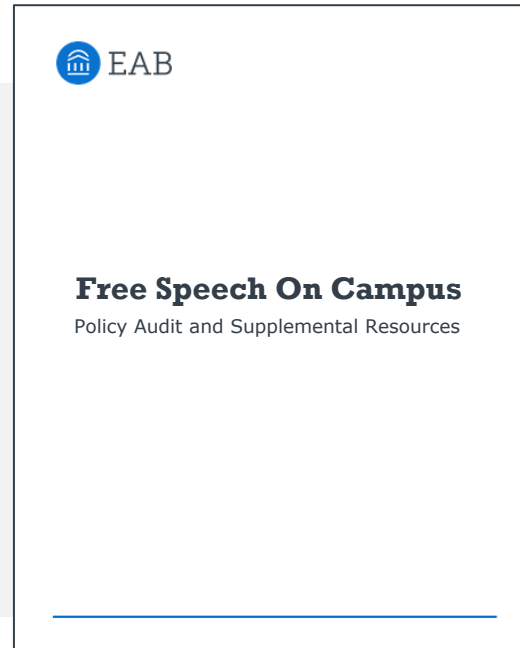


Resource Highlight: Free Speech Policy Resources

Resources to Help Evaluate and Compare Your Institution's Free Speech Policies

Use EAB's **Free Speech on Campus: Policy Audit and Supplemental Resources** toolkit to evaluate and update your free speech policies. We recommend a two-step process:

- 1** Audit current policy elements related to free speech
- 2** Consider a stand-alone free speech policy



To help institutions re-evaluate their own policies and statements related to free speech on campus, EAB developed a **Free Speech Policy Compendium**. The following compendium features policies on free expression, literature posting, and external speakers, as well as official statements on free speech from more than 20 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.

- ✓ Free Speech Policies
- ✓ Free Speech Statements
- ✓ Reading List

SUBSECTION 2

Provide Support Throughout the Activism Lifecycle

Use these tools to provide support to activists during key moments

- Proactive Outreach from The University of Michigan - Best Practice Highlight
- Acknowledging the Cost of Activism - Briefing
- Activist Self-Care Resource Center from the University of Michigan - Best Practice Highlight



Best Practice Highlight: Proactive Outreach

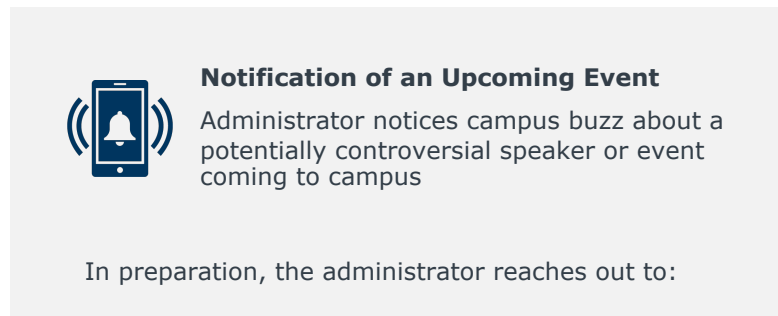
When an administrator at Michigan is notified or made aware of an upcoming event, such as a controversial speaker, they proactively reach out to the event organizers and possible protestors. With event organizers, administrators help students prepare for onsite protests by doing things like a walkthrough of the space and talking through possibly tense situations. With possible protestors, administrators will reach out to have a conversation about their rights, campus policies, and event venue rules.

This approach is mutually beneficial to students and the institution because it provides administrators with more insight about upcoming events, strengthens relationships between students and administrators, increases students' preparation and awareness of resources, and reduces the potential for a tense or regretful exchange.

How the University of Michigan Prepares for and Interacts with Potential Activists Through Proactive Guidance



Illustrative Example



Event Organizers

- Administrators reach out to event organizers to ensure that they are prepared to manage onsite protests
- Administrators and students do a walkthrough of the space, collaborate on logistics, and plan for possible tense situations

Possible Protestors

- Administrators reach out to students and/or student organizations that are for and against the event and might plan to protest
- Administrators and students have a conversation about their rights, campus policies, and event venue rules

Benefits to Students and the Institution

- ✓ Provides administrators with more insight about upcoming events
- ✓ Strengthens relationships between students and administrators
- ✓ Increases students' preparation and awareness of policies and resources
- ✓ Reduces the potential for conflict



[EAB's Controversial Events Template](#) provides a mechanism to use with campus partners to elevate controversial speakers/events and promote early planning.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.



Acknowledging the Cost of Activism

Student Affairs Leaders Know Activism Can Be Taxing for Students

Activism can be physically and emotionally exhausting for students. Student activists invest a significant amount of time, energy, and passion into their causes of interest and this can have adverse effects on a multitude of factors such as academic performance and personal health.

Activism-Induced Exhaustion

“Students aren’t just rabble-rousers. These activists care enough to take on the incredible emotional burden and work of standing up for what they believe. I’ve seen activists who dedicate so much of themselves to the cause that **they pay the cost in physical and emotional exhaustion**. Their commitment significantly impacts them as a person and as a student.”

*Vice President for Student Affairs
Private Baccalaureate College*

Progressive institutions are providing follow-up engagement to support activists as they recover. On-call counselors, facilitated small group dialogues, and dedicated community reflection spaces offer students and others affected by activism the opportunity to heal. Other examples of recovery support are more creative, such as delivering thank you letters and care packages to activists to thank them for their ongoing commitment to bettering the institution.

Progressive Institutions Provide Resources to Help Activists Practice Self-Care and Acknowledge the Positive Impacts of Student Activist Efforts



On-call counselors made available to students who need immediate and ongoing support



Dedicated community reflection spaces bring together students, faculty, staff, and community members



Facilitated small group dialogues connect students with like-minded peers to learn about institutional resources



“Thank you” letters and care packages demonstrate appreciation for students’ ongoing commitment to bettering the institution



Best Practice Highlight: Activist Self-Care Resource

Overview

Activism often takes an emotional toll on students, not only because of the gravity of the issue's students protest, but because of the stress that comes with organizing protests on top of their academic workload.

A Self-Care Resource Guide for Activists, Advocates and Allies

The University of Michigan's self-care tips for activists, advocates and allies helps activists prioritize their well-being, acknowledges the challenges activists face, and humanizes both the employees and the students who access this page in the process

M STUDENT LIFE
COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Self-Care Tips for Student Activists, Advocates, and Allies

- ▶ Take care of your body
- ▶ Set clear and unmovable boundaries
- ▶ Be self-aware of triggering sources and the impact of social media
- ▶ Have interests outside of activism
- ▶ Find your relaxation
- ▶ Notice and honor emotions
- ▶ Celebrate the small successes

▶ Free Apps To Check Out

▶ Self-Care Quotes

Special thanks to Jessica Banes, MA, LPC from OSU who shared this packet.

Why Self-Care Tips For Student Activists Matter

- ▶ Students can **quickly and easily use the self-care tips** as a source of just-in-time support
- ▶ The resource itself **represents an acknowledgment** and validation of the hardship's student activists face while advocating for a cause
- ▶ Throughout the list are **reminders of the comprehensive wellness resources available** through the counseling center, **encouraging students to reach out** if they need help

Source: [Self-Care Tips for Student Activists, Advocates, and Allies](#), University of Michigan.

SUBSECTION 3

Set Staff Up for Success with Student Activists

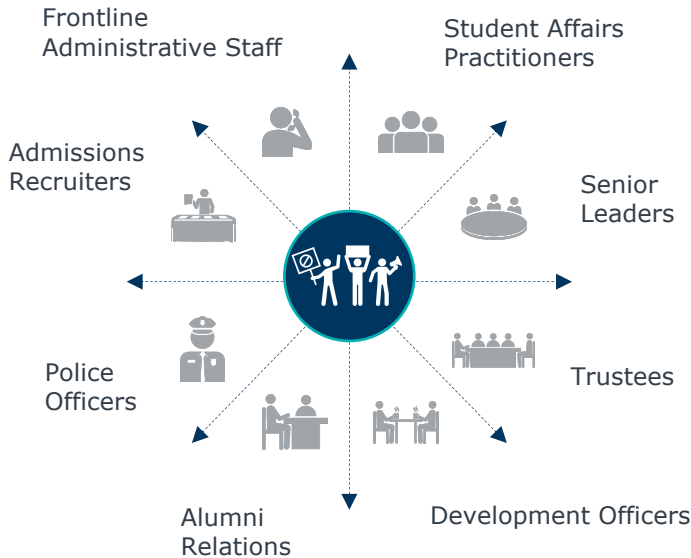
Use these tools to provide staff the information and resources they need to help support student activists

- Ensure Staff Have the Answers Activists Need - Briefing
- Activism Internal Briefing Template
- Debrief Discussion Guide
- Activism Tabletop Case Study Exercises



Proactively Provide Activism Context for Staff

Staff Across Many Departments Receive Questions from Activists



A Variety Of Staff Are Prompted To Respond To Activism Questions Or Statements Without Background Information

Wasn't there a huge protest about that viral social media post?

Who is the best person to talk to about campus police brutality?

What is the university doing to ensure Black student voices are heard in decision making processes?

Why isn't the University responding to the unrest about COVID-19 response?

Create a Topic-based Activism Briefing to Help Staff Answer Difficult Questions from Activists and Offer Better Responses in the Moment

Campus Activism Internal Briefing

Sample Categories and Questions

Overview

Short summary of the activism topic

Understanding The Issue

Brief explanation about:

- *What students are asking for or demonstrating about and why*
- *What is already happening at the institution that might address students' concerns*

Articulating The University's Response

Brief explanation of the institution's response strategy so far

Longer-Term Initiatives

Explanation of what the institution expects to do moving forward

Recent Top-of-Mind Topics For Activists On Campus

What is important to activists advocating for this cause right now?

Contact Information

Who should administrators/staff contact for more information?

Who should external constituencies contact for more information?

Who to contact with information about new activists interested in this topic ?

Benefits

- ✓ Equips staff with just-in-time, easily accessible information
- ✓ Provides ready-to-use scripting for tense interactions
- ✓ Helps direct stakeholders to institutional next steps
- ✓ Format is easily tailored and updated for key campus groups

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.



Campus Activism Internal Briefing Template

Purpose of the Tool

Use this template to develop an internal briefing with key information and talking points regarding student activism on campus.

Six Essential Components to Campus Activism Internal Briefing

1 Overview

2 Issue Background

3 Institution's Response

4 Longer-Term Initiatives

5 Recent Top-of-Mind Topics for Activists On Campus

6 Contact Information



Activism De-Brief Conversation Guide

Team Debrief

When: A few days after an activism flashpoint or incident

Who: Staff involved with the activism event

Debrief with your team after an activism event or milestone to capture lessons learned. Schedule a meeting a few days after an activism event with those involved in the incident response, facilitation and planning. Use discussion questions below to guide your conversation



Discussion Questions

- What worked well?
- What do we need to do differently next time?
- What additional training, guidance, or resources might we need next time?
- Were the team roles clear? Is there anything we need to do to clarify who is responsible for what if this scenario were to happen again?
- Do we need to clarify anything with university leadership?
- What policies or protocols could we develop to improve the quality or efficiency of a future response to a similar situation?
- What do we need to do to follow up?
- Who is responsible for the follow up?



Activism Tabletop Case Study Exercises

Purpose: Below are three prompts that can be used as tabletop exercises for institutional leaders, student affairs divisions, and individual departments.

Respectfully Correcting Inaccurate Information

After a Black At Instagram page surfaces related to your institution, the Black Student Union leadership collaborate with alumni on a set of demands for the institution. The group prepares a set of demands and posts them to social media, speaks to local news outlets and creates a change.org petition. The statements and demands call for changes that the institution has “ignored for years” which indicates a “lack of appreciation and respect for black students”. You know that the institution has made significant progress on some of the demands and has been unable to make progress on others due to legal, state or federal restrictions. How correct the information circulating while ensuring the activists and alumni feel their voices are heard and valued?

Discussion Questions:

- Does your institution have a tracker for progress on demands submitted from student organizations?
- Has your institution responded to the Instagram page? If not, what would you need to include in the response to ensure students, alumni and the community understand you appreciate and value these student voices?
- Who would you need to loop in?
- Since the demands and message are spreading rapidly on social media, do you plan to respond on social media as well? If not, how will you reach the same readers who received the information via social media?

Responding To a Viral Social Media Post

Over the weekend, three students post a video on the popular app, TikTok. The video depicts the students, dancing to a popular rap song in one of their rooms. Two of the students are wearing blackface while all three rap along, using racial epithets repeatedly as they occur in the lyrics.

By Monday, the video has been widely shared among students on social media. The video is quickly brought to the administration’s attention Monday morning. By the end of the day, students are organizing a sit-in on campus to protest the lack of administrative response, discipline, and the “racist culture” at your institution. In addition to student pushback, you’re fielding calls from alumni and donors asking how you plan to respond to the incident.

Discussion Questions:

- Does your institution currently have a social media policy or 24/7 policy for student behavior? If so, what does that policy mandate around discipline or educational interventions for this type of situation? If not, what follow-up steps (if any) should the institution take with the individual students involved?
- How can you support students, faculty and staff from marginalized identity groups after this incident? How can these moments be used to prompt discussion and change on campus?

Bringing Activist Voices Into Decision Making Processes

Your institution recently received a grant to promote gender inclusiveness on campus and adjust current physical signs and resources which undermine gender equity. It’s a new semester, which means a new group of student activists are arriving on campus and current activists are returning.

Discussion Questions:

- How would you use this as an opportunity to engage and strengthen trust with new student activists?
- Which groups would you reach out to for input?
- How would you gather input? (try to think beyond a committee or taskforce student representative)
- How would you communicate progress and the use of the grant to students? How would you ensure this information was received by fringe activist leaders on campus (not just the student body president)?

SECTION 2

Bring Activist Voices Into Decisions

Expand current efforts to incorporate student input to ensure student activists are heard

SUBSECTION 1

Solicit Student Perspectives Early and Often

Use these tools to bring the voices of student activists closer to decision-making processes, ensuring activists feel heard, regardless of the outcome

- [Generating Notecard Insights from Dickinson College - Best Practice Highlight](#)
- [Proactive Roundtable Discussions from Sam Houston State University - Best Practice Highlight](#)
- [What Is Fair Process? – Briefing](#)
- [Fair Process Practice Activity](#)
- [Social Justice Internship from Emory University - Best Practice Highlight](#)



Best Practice Highlight: Generating Notecard Insights

Like many other campuses, Dickinson College faced pressure to address concerns regarding diversity and inclusion on campus from a group of student activists. After an initial demonstration, Dickinson students hosted a town hall meeting on campus culture that drew more than 700 attendees.

At the meeting, each student attendee was given a notecard to share one problem with Dickinson's culture and one potential solution. With guidance from student life staff, an affiliated student group collected the notecards and synthesized them to identify key themes. These themes were the foundation for a list of "asks" that students delivered to administrators to address their concerns with the campus culture.

This structured approach to cataloguing students' concerns can help a freewheeling discussion or unproductive town hall meeting map to particular goals and outcomes. Attendees can feel heard by the institution and administrators have a clear understanding of the top priorities and concerns of the broader campus community.

Dickinson College Enhances Town Hall Meeting with a Notecard Exercise

- 1 Initial Demonstration:** Local "Why We Wear Black" movement staged a demonstration in campus dining hall
- 2 Town Hall Meeting:** More than 700 attendees discussed campus culture at a "call to action" meeting (organized by students)
- 3 Notecard Exercise:** Attendees were asked to share their top concern and proposed solution on notecard (see below)
- 4 Key Themes:** Students synthesized notecards to identify key themes, with guidance from student life staff



The Asks: Students deliver a list of "asks" to administrators, grounded in the notecard exercise's findings

Notecard Questions

1. What is one problem with Dickinson's campus culture?

2. What is a potential solution?

Benefits of The Notecard Exercise

- ✓ Gives a voice to all attendees and clarifies top concerns
- ✓ Allows a town hall meeting to be mapped to goals or outcomes
- ✓ Empowers students to create a list of asks that reflect a range of opinions



Best Practice Highlight: Proactive Roundtables

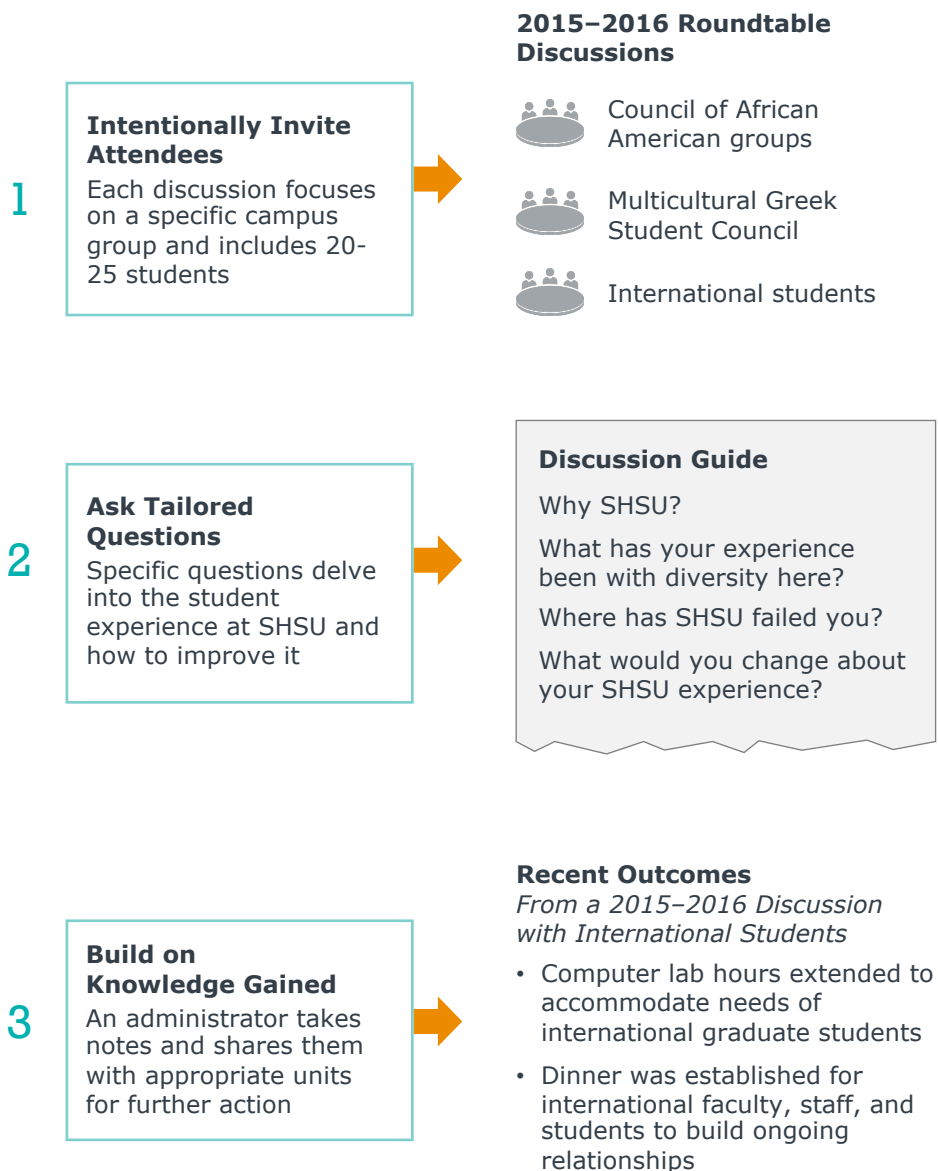
Sam Houston State University (SHSU) reworked their long-existing roundtable discussions by strategically inviting attendees, asking tailored questions, and acting on knowledge gained through these interactions.

The roundtable discussions occur monthly with students who are part of a specific campus group. At the discussions, SHSU administrators ask tailored questions about students' experiences at the institution and current issues that might have an impact on their experience going forward.

For institutions that already have a discussion forum for students and administrators, consider rethinking your approach to focus on potential hot-button issues with specific student groups.

Sam Houston State University's (SHSU) Targeted Roundtable Discussions

How SHSU Strategically Invites Attendees and Tailors Questions





What Is Fair Process?

Student Affairs Leaders Play Many Roles with Many Competing Urgent Priorities

Ensuring communication extends beyond need-to-know details often falls to the bottom of the to-do list



Thorough communication about emergent or non-emergent decisions easily falls to the bottom of the list priorities.

However, **if communication regarding university decisions, initiatives or flashpoints misses the mark with students, it can lead to damaged trust with activists**, further increasing obstacles to building strong relationships with activists

Often, Good Intentions To Incorporate Student Voices, Don't Always Translate

Administrator Intention

Engage with students to understand their perspectives



Administrator Action

Incorporate SGA input

Activist Perception

✗ "They never even ask us for input, or just ask one group"

Explain decisions to those who will be affected



Send an email notifying them of the decision and impact

✗ "What could be preventing them from doing x,y,z?"

Provide clarity regarding expectations moving forward



Communicate expectations via a **university newsletter**

✗ "They won't do anything about it" *they didn't read the newsletter

Use a Framework to Ensure Crucial Communication Boxes are Checked During Chaotic Moments

Fair Process: a commitment to **seeking the perspectives of those who will be affected before making a decision** that will impact them. *Fair Process is NOT a commitment to consensus.*

Three Fundamental Elements of Decision-Making within a Fair Process Framework



1 Engagement

Creating space and time to hear the perspectives of those who will be effected by a decision



2 Explanation

Prioritizing explaining the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who has been involved or affected by it



3 Clarity

Providing a clear explanation about what is expected moving forward after a decision.

“Fair process helps me remember everything I already know about great leadership but will likely forget when I am under immense pressure or stress, which is often in my role. This has been especially important when communicating with staff about decisions or new initiatives – when I think through the questions, I feel like I am checking all the important communication boxes”



Practicing Fair Process

Use this exercise to practice using fair process by discussing how you would ensure each component of fair process is incorporated using the case study.

What does this look like?

For example: this group of Student Affairs Administrators are considering adding a new mentorship program on campus



Engagement	<i>How have we sought the perspectives of those who will be affected? If not, how can we?</i>	✓	Consult with relevant student organizations or hold a virtual forum
Explanation	<i>How do we plan to communicate why we chose to implement or not implement?</i>	✓	Brainstorm likely student concerns and provide an FAQ with the decision notification
Clarity	<i>How do we ensure students understand what to expect from us moving forward?</i>	✓	Provide an implementation timeline and regular updates across formats popular among students (social media)

Case Study Description:

Your institution recently received funding to replace symbols of oppression on campus. The university created a taskforce to put the funding to best use. The task force is primarily composed of student affairs professionals. There is a statue on campus commemorating a confederate general, a building on campus is named after a donor who supports organizations fighting marriage equality, and your mascot has been criticized for years because it represents a harmful stereotype of a local Indigenous tribe. You only have enough funding to fully address two symbols of oppression.

Use the Framework and Questions Below to Practice Using Fair Process



Engagement

Who, or which groups, will be affected by this decision most directly? How can we seek the perspectives of those who will be affected? Should we talk to multiple groups together or to individual groups or students? Has anyone advocated for these changes before? How can we engage them?



Explanation

How do we communicate why we chose direct the funding towards one initiative and not another? What important pieces of information (limitations, incentives, opportunities) are essential to understanding why we made this decision?



Clarity

How do we ensure students understand what to expect from us moving forward? What is our timeline?, who is accountable for making progress?, how will we communicate that and provide updates? Do we plan on addressing other initiatives that we could not address this time?



Best Practice Highlight: Social Justice Internship

Emory University's Social Justice Internship Elevates Student Voices

Emory student activists submitted a list of demands in 2015 sparked by the Mizzou protests. As a result, Emory launched a commission on racial and social justice to address each demand. Recognizing that students wanted to be more closely involved with decision-making processes, Emory created a racial and social justice internship program. These paid internships gave students the opportunity to be involved throughout the process of bringing the demands to fruition on campus.

How It Started

Student Activism Sparks Change

- Emory students submit demands sparked by Mizzou protests (2015)
- The Commission On Racial and Social Justice (CRSJ) is created to address each demand (2015)
- The **Dean's Racial and Social Justice Internship** is created under CRSJ (2016)

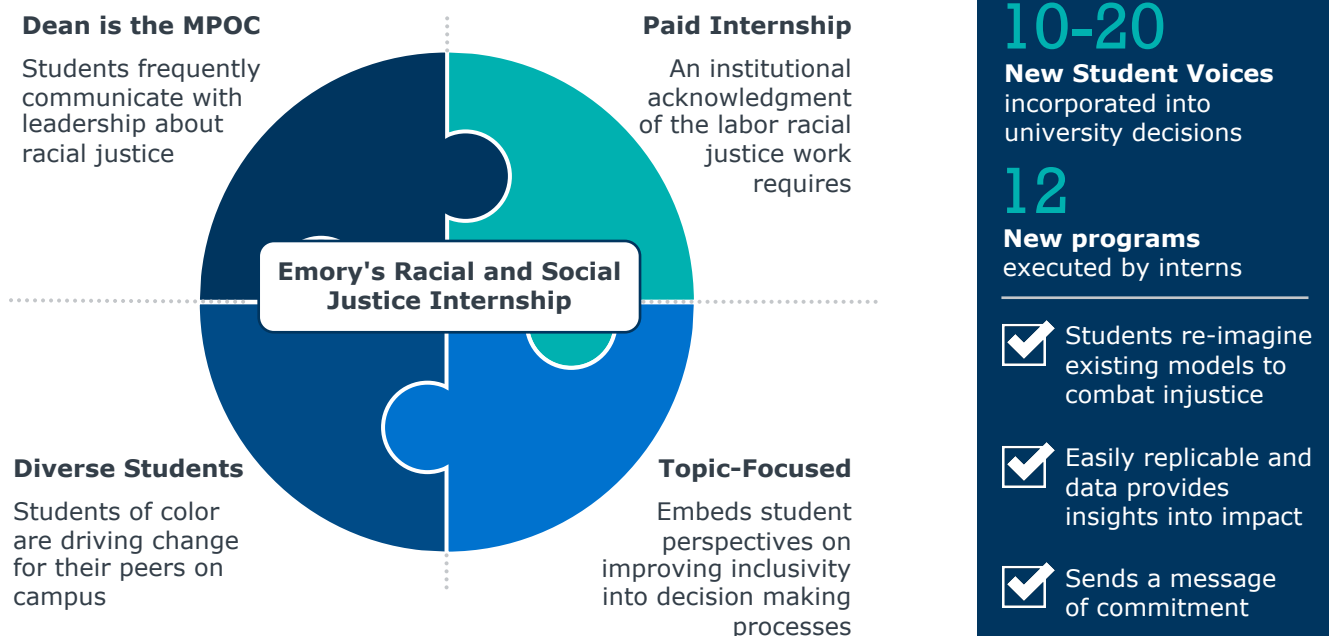
Program Logistics

- Designed to directly involve students of color in advancing racial justice at Emory
- 4-7 paid interns assigned to each Dean

Intern Responsibilities

- **Connect** monthly with the Dean and peers to identify problem areas and priorities
- **Create** initiatives to leverage resources to better support students of color on campus
- **Communicate** with peers about CRSJ progress and programs and communicate priorities to leadership

Key Elements of the Program



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

SECTION 3

Provide Activist Skill Development Opportunities

Add educational value by providing opportunities to enhance advocacy skills

SUBSECTION 1

Offer Professional Development for Activists

Use these tools to create opportunities for activists to advance their career while advocating for causes they care about

- Activist Resume Builder Tool
- Best Practice Highlight: BEST Program from UCLA
- Best Practice Highlight: Alumni and Activist Lunch from Clemson University



Activist Resume Builder Tool

Purpose:

Students invest significant time, energy, and passion into activism, which can have adverse effects on personal health or academic performance. However, activism can also be a valuable experience for students as they learn new skills and are inspired to future action.

To help students recognize the skills that they might gain through their involvement with activism, you can add language about specific skills and competencies to your existing resume builder tools and career development resources on campus. Use the language below as a guide to developing language that best fits your students.

Skill Category	Sample Language



Best Practice Highlight: UCLA's BEST Program

Overview

UCLA's BEST grant program funds provides activists a structured avenue to advocate for their chosen cause. Student activists accepted to the program receive funding and guidance to implement a social justice initiative on campus. Students develop their advocacy skills and gain valuable experience for their resume, all while working to improve campus culture

After Crafting a Thorough Proposal, Activists Receive Implementation Support Across the Year



Craft a program proposal

An instructional video and rubric help students create a proposal, reviewed by a BEST leader before submission.



Draft a budget and event calendar

Students fill in a **provided activity sheet** to plan initiative events and milestones for the entire academic year, and a **budget** for their initiative



Implement the initiative

While implementing their program, students attend meetings with their **mentor**, **enrichment workshops** and an **end of year activism symposium**

Student Activists Receive Tangible Resources

\$3K - \$10K

Of funding for student-led initiatives to support under-served communities at UCLA

6-8

 Student projects funded each year

Past BEST Student Projects:



'Beautiful Minds' de-stigmatizes mental health in Muslim communities & provides mental health resources to Muslim students



A conflict resolution series to empower underrepresented student groups by providing restorative practices training

Activity Mapping Sheet

A template to guide activists through creating a year-long implementation plan

- ✓ Quarterly week-by-week activity planner
- ✓ Activity budgeting sheet: food, transportation, space, materials
- ✓ Project goal statement



Download [here](#)

Proposal Evaluation Rubric

A rubric used to judge the proposals submitted by students

- ✓ Specific evaluation criteria for project rationale, implementation plan, leadership skills, and grant outcomes
- ✓ Process suggestions



Download [here](#)



Best Practice Highlight: Alumni Activist Lunch

Overview

Many student activists have no plans to end their involvement with activism after they leave college. Helping students build connections and network is an important part of supporting their development. That's what Clemson aimed to do through their lunch series to foster ongoing dialogue between students and alumni.

Following a period of increased activism, Clemson University received interest from alumni in connecting with current students and activists. At the lunches, alumni and activists discuss current challenges and brainstorm solutions.

Benefits of the Alumni Activist Lunch

- ✓ Connect students with experienced and successful alumni
- ✓ Engage a group of traditionally underrepresented alumni
- ✓ Rekindle alumni connection to the institution



Passionate Activists

Students are vocal about their thoughts on how to improve university life



Interested Alumni

Affinity group and individual alumni expressed interest in diversity and inclusion issues



Lunch Series Fosters Ongoing Dialogue

- Clemson hosts monthly luncheons between students and alumni
- Student Affairs invites 1-2 individual alumni and 20-25 students per month
- Discussion is about sharing challenges and brainstorming solutions

COVID-19 Lowers Barriers to Engagement

Significantly reduced costs and planning time to host, and Zoom ensures alumni can easily attend without leaving their homes

SUBSECTION 2

Offer Opportunities to Enhance Advocacy Skills

Use these tools to create opportunities for activists to enhance their advocacy skills

- Activism Bootcamp from Antioch College - Best Practice Highlight
- Embed Activism Content Into Leadership Trainings from Swarthmore - Best Practice Highlight



Best Practice Highlight: Activism Bootcamp

Overview

In 2020, the Coretta Scott King Center for Cultural and Intellectual Freedom hosted *Bootcamp for Activism*, a three-day intensive skill building experience for activists of all levels. The bootcamp focused on providing key skills for essential activists like power mapping and social media organizing. Registration was open to both students and community members, providing additional networking opportunities.

Program Highlights



Three-day bootcamp offering intensive skill-building for student activists



Participants brainstorm direct-action initiatives for causes they care about and **potentially secure up to \$10,000 in funding to bring their programs** to life, allowing them to deploy their skills in a real-world setting



Skills-focused sessions ensure participants can gain experience in key competencies **like power mapping, social media organizing, and public speaking**

“Bootcamp for Activism” Keynote Speaker: Phillip Agnew (a former student activist)



“ With every time you raise up your voice, a chapter is being written. With every time you stand inside an area with someone who doesn’t look like you, and see humanity in someone across the aisle, a chapter is being rewritten in the history of our country. So let’s do it together. Let’s work together. **There’s a lot of work to do, but we’re the only people who can do it.**”

Making It Work on Your Campus

- ✓ Are there **existing trainings** you could combine to create an intensive training like this?
- ✓ Are there **community activists or experienced upperclassmen** that you could bring in as co-facilitators?
- ✓ How can you align a training like this with the **needs and skills of your students?**



Best Practice Highlight: Embed Activism Training

Swarthmore College includes a dedicated session on campus activism in their annual leadership retreat for cultural center student leaders. The session is facilitated by Swarthmore staff and includes content such as demystifying institutional governance and highlighting opportunities for students to be involved in college decision-making processes. (On the right, you can see the title and some of the key messages of the session.) Swarthmore is continuing to include this content in different ways for students.

If you are thinking about embedding activist-centric education into existing initiatives, you might consider existing opportunities like leadership retreats, student organization meetings, engaged citizen initiatives, or social justice retreats.

Swarthmore College Leverages Student Mindshare During Leadership Retreats to Incorporate Activism Education



Annual cultural center leadership retreat now includes a dedicated session about student activism



Session lasts 90 minutes and it is facilitated by Swarthmore staff



Key messages include demystifying governance processes and sharing existing opportunities for students to be active in institutional decision making



The content has since been used in other settings, including a retreat for student government executive board members

Diving Into The Session

“Navigating for Change: Effective Communication and Organizing”

Key Messages

- Understanding the organizational structure of the staff of the Dean's Division and President's Office and therefore the system students are working in
- Understanding who the key players are within our current structure and who the most accessible staff members are, those who you can go to first for support or information
- Understanding the limits to the power and capacities, of staff within the system, especially in focusing on the President's Office
- Learn to develop effective plans of action, to realize the change you'd like to see
- Practice planning an event and map out which staff students should engage with first

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