



## Quick Study Series:

# Engaging Students in Deliberative Dialogue

Whether discussing local policies or global issues, students often lack the tools to engage in thoughtful, respectful dialogue. As public discourse becomes increasingly polarized, faculty are looking for guidance on how to foster deeper understanding, develop critical thinking, and teach students to navigate disagreement productively. But many instructors don't know where to start—or how to ensure discussions remain focused, productive, and grounded in evidence.

## A Proven Strategy for Teaching Through Dialogue

Deliberative dialogue is a structured approach that helps students engage with multiple perspectives, examine the tradeoffs of complex issues, and develop reasoned viewpoints. This method deepens the communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills employers demand while teaching students to navigate disagreement productively and facilitate conversations that drive innovation and progress.

This five-part Quick Study series equips instructors with the practical strategies needed to embed deliberative dialogue across disciplines and course formats. Whether you're new to this approach or ready to refine your practice, these actionable modules provide everything you need to prepare students for meaningful conversations that support learning and civic readiness.

## What Instructors Gain

- **Ready-to-Use Teaching Strategies** to help students engage respectfully, think critically, and communicate more effectively.
- **Practical Guidance** to help you choose discussion topics and plan activities.
- **Effective Facilitation Techniques** that help you manage conflict, navigate misinformation, and ensure that students gain exposure to multiple perspectives.
- **Real Classroom Examples** from experienced faculty demonstrating how to prepare students, launch dialogue, and guide meaningful debriefs.

# The Institutional Impact

Institutions that support deliberative dialogue can:

- **Foster a stronger learning environment:** Create classrooms where students actively engage with challenging topics, think critically about multiple perspectives, and participate in meaningful discussions without fear of judgment or attack.
- **Build a culture of respect and inquiry:** Cultivate more harmonious campus environments where multiple perspectives are valued and reasoned debate becomes the norm.
- **Prepare career-ready students:** Students gain skills to facilitate collaboration, build consensus across differences, and lead thoughtful problem-solving in professional settings.
- **Cultivate civic readiness:** Prepare graduates who are collaborative leaders who can bridge divides and rebuild trust in their communities.

## Explore the Full Series

All five Quick Studies will launch together in September 2025. These scaffolded courses are flexible, focused, and designed for faculty who want to make a difference in how students engage and learn.

1. **What Is Deliberative Dialogue?**  
Explore how deliberative dialogue differs from traditional college classroom discussion and debate and how it helps build students' civic awareness of complex issues, critical thinking, and communication skills.
2. **Integrating Deliberative Dialogue into Your Course**  
Incorporate deliberative dialogue into your course in a purposeful way by selecting timely topics, essential resources, and planning assessments to evaluate the learning.
3. **Preparing for Deliberative Dialogue Through Practice**  
Equip students for deliberative dialogue by setting community norms, teaching active listening, and creating low-stakes practice opportunities to build student confidence and communication skills.
4. **Launching a Deliberative Dialogue**  
Apply a structured framework to present relevant issues, revisit community norms, and outline multiple stances on complex issues to jumpstart productive classroom dialogue.
5. **Facilitating a Deliberative Dialogue**  
Guide students through deliberative dialogue by facilitating structured discussions, addressing common challenges, and using debriefing strategies.

## Featured Experts

### **Quincy A. Bevely, PhD**

Vice President, Institutional Diversity,  
Equity, and Inclusion  
Providence College

### **Nicholas Longo, PhD**

Co-director, Dialogue, Inclusion, and  
Democracy Lab  
Providence College

### **Graham Bullock, PhD**

Faculty Director, Deliberative Citizenship  
Initiative  
Davidson College

### **John Rose, PhD**

Professor, School of Civic Life and Leadership  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel  
Hill

## Featured Faculty

### **Sarah Bunnell, PhD**

Associate Professor, Psychology and  
Director CATL  
Elon University

### **Sandy Marshall, PhD**

Associate Professor, Geography  
Elon University

### **Jennifer Uno**

Associate Professor, Biology and Associate  
Director, CATL  
Elon University

### **Sarah K. Donovan, PhD**

Professor, Philosophy and Division Chair of  
Humanities  
Wagner College

### **Kristina Meinking, PhD**

Professor, Classical Studies  
Elon University