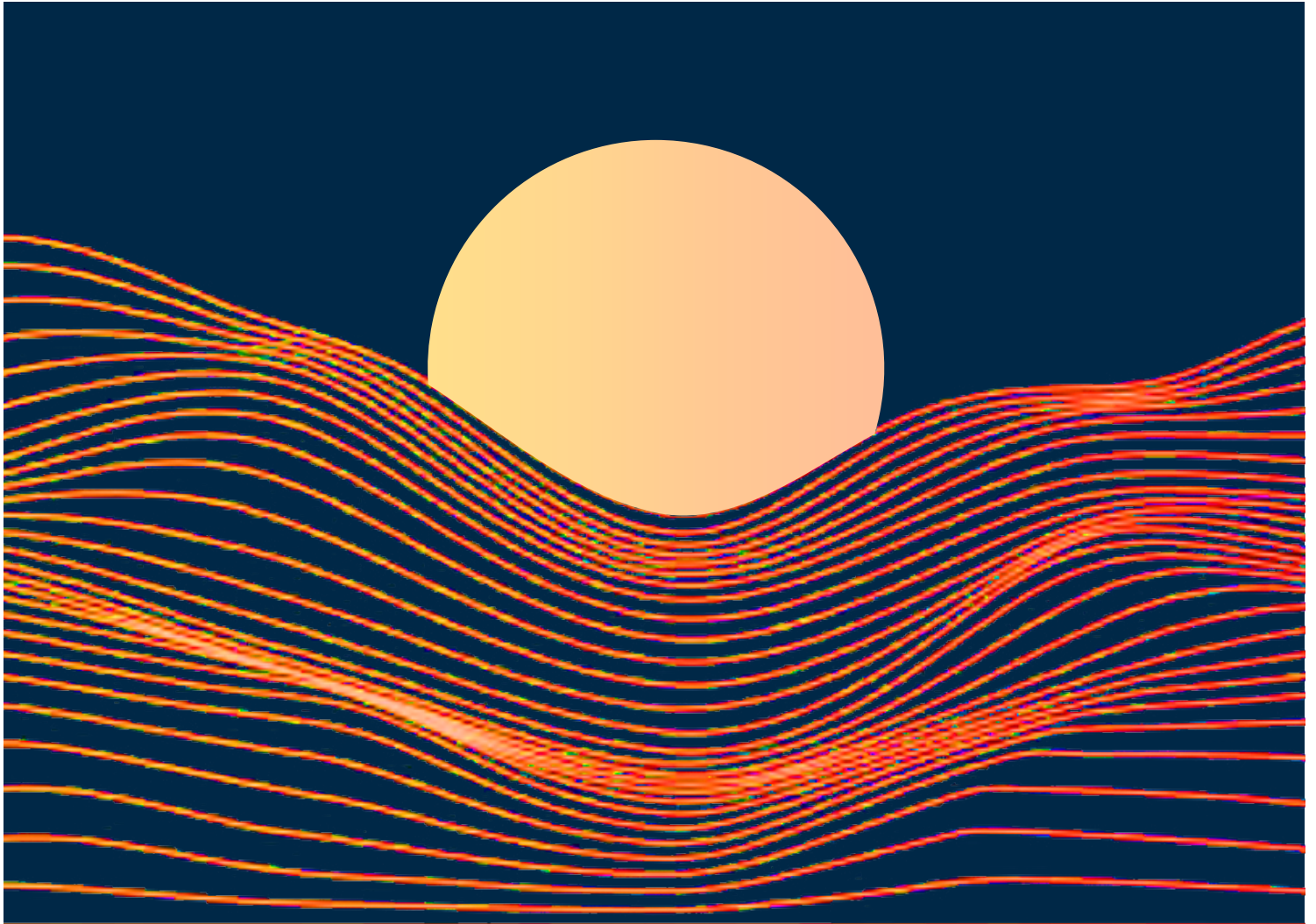


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# THE MORNING AFTER

**Managing the Day(s) and Week(s)  
after Election Day**





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### **About this Guide**

When the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education joined AAC&U in 2023, it brought a decade of research and resources focused on higher education's role in democracy and "all things political" on US college and university campuses. The research included more than two-dozen qualitative campus climate studies to explore norms, attributes, and behaviors, of highly politically engaged colleges and universities. The campuses were diverse in their missions, types, sizes, locations, and student populations served. Findings from those studies have been vetted in 100+ workshops, sustained conversations, and conference presentations with educators nationwide. Publications on this research are available on the AAC&U website under IDHE focus areas [Politics 365](#) and [Elections as Teachable Moments](#).

IDHE emphasizes creating norms, building relationships, and fostering behaviors conducive to student political learning for and institutional responsibilities to democracy. Events like the Morning After an election can reinforce or help reshape learning for democracy.

Some topics covered here have legal implications, but the guide does not, nor is it intended to, provide legal advice.

### **Acknowledgements and Appreciations**

The foundational research for this guide required teams of people plus volunteer campuses that are too numerous to name here. A few people played significant and longstanding roles. IDHE thanks former IDHE team member and researcher Margaret Perez Brower at the University of Washington Seattle for co-designing and overseeing the data collection, analysis, and writing for the original case studies. IDHE also thanks former IDHE team members Ishara Casellas Connors at Texas A&M University, College Station, Jodi Benenson at the University of Nebraska Omaha, and Adam Gismondi at the Harvard Graduate School of Education for their data collection, analysis, and writing contributions.

IDHE also thanks the American Democracy Project at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities for their partnership involving 10 AASCU participating campuses.

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October 23, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

In workshops, presentations, and discussions with educators over the past year, I often began by asking participants to describe their feelings about teaching and working on campuses in the current political climate. “Anxious,” “worried about my students,” “overwhelmed,” “unprepared,” “afraid,” and “exhausted,” topped the lists, with “hopeful” and “cautiously optimistic” popping up intermittently.

At AAC&U’s Institute for Democracy & Higher Education, we are deeply aware of the challenges—and opportunities—facing senior leaders, faculty, staff, and other campus leaders throughout the year.

This resource provides ideas for preparing for and managing “the morning after” on college campuses—the days and weeks following Election Day. We present seven topics for consideration, each followed by links to relevant examples and resources. This document also clarifies who should act. Combined, the ideas call for compassion, courage, and commitment from the entire campus community.

We are also here to help. If you have questions, do not hesitate to submit an inquiry to the [Campus Conflict and Conversation Help Desk](#), created by IDHE in partnership with the [Sustained Dialogue Institute](#). Say it is urgent, and we will respond as quickly as possible.

Elections should not merely be endured; they provide countless teachable moments to enhance student learning for and institutional commitment to democratic principles, practices, and public problem-solving. We hope that the ideas in this guide will help people with diverse identities, ideologies, and lived experiences work together to design and safeguard a democracy that works for everyone.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Thomas".

Nancy Thomas, Executive Director  
Institute for Democracy & Higher Education  
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## I. DEFEND ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND YOUR INSTITUTION'S AUTONOMY TO EDUCATE FOR DEMOCRACY

**Who Should Act:** Institutional Leaders, Deans, Department Chairs, Trustees, and Regents

**The Landscape:** In 2024, the Academic Freedom Index—developed by global scholars and maintained by the V-Dem Institute—reported that the U.S. ranks below 70 of the nations measured by AFI in academic freedom and is declining. Since 2021, more than 150 bills have been introduced in 35 states aimed at undermining higher education's autonomy and academic freedom. Additional threats include executive orders and budget adjustments. A May 2024 report by the American Association of University Professors highlights legislative efforts to reduce faculty tenure protections, control course content, ban teaching “divisive concepts,” and mandate “neutrality.”

Furthermore, Pen America's 2024 report, *America's Censored Classrooms*, notes that state legislatures have enacted 47 direct restrictions on classroom teaching since January 2021. These restrictions are often framed as efforts to promote “institutional neutrality,” “viewpoint diversity,” or to combat antisemitism and inequality—goals that deserve critical examination. These actions follow years of attempts to diminish diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on campuses and to suppress honest discussions about the history of racism in the U.S., as well as the broader narrative of “liberal indoctrination” and “woke” values. Although many of these initiatives have faced legal challenges, they continue to create a chilling effect on political discourse and teaching.

### Ideas

- **Defend Academic Freedom:** Clearly and publicly assert that academic freedom is vital for both student learning and democracy. Faculty and staff need to know that they have the support of institutional leadership when engaging with policy questions, democratic principles, and the current state of U.S. democracy, including the threats posed by growing extremism, white nationalism, backsliding civil rights, disinformation, and censorship. Research and teaching about matters of public affairs are precisely why colleges and universities have academic freedom.
- **Resist the Neutrality Trap:** Disruptive protests, legislative directives, pressures from donors and board members, and a desire for political cover have resulted in more than a dozen universities adopting neutrality policies. Consider taking a more nuanced position. Take a stand *for* democracy. Speak out to reinforce democratic norms like inclusion, equity, truth, and accountability. Condemn injustice. Then, couple statements with opportunities for learning and discussion.
- **Celebrate Kamala Harris:** In his concession speech in 2008, candidate John McCain acknowledged the election of Barack Obama as the nation's first Black president as historic. He said, “This is a historic election, and I recognize the special significance it has for African Americans and for the special pride that must be theirs tonight.” Kamala Harris' candidacy deserves recognition as progress toward a more inclusive democracy.

## II. SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MORNING AFTER NORMS, BEHAVIORS, AND DECISIONS

**Who Should Act:** Institutional Leaders, Deans, Directors, and Chairs

**The Landscape:** Institutional leaders may feel that they must appear stoic and decisive in the face of conflict. However, the responsibility for navigating the political climate on campus should be shared by the entire community, not just a select few leaders.

### Ideas

- **Build a Collaborative Team:** Create a small working group that includes diverse stakeholders, especially those who are likely to interact with students the Morning After: faculty, student affairs staff, diversity and inclusion offices, and mental health counselors. Include students too. Be sure to invite respected contrarians who will ask tough questions about a decision or approach. Use the most inclusive approaches possible for decision making. Consider forming ad hoc teams at the deans' and chairs' levels if your institution is large.
- **Reflect on Past Elections:** Analyze campus experiences from the 2016 and 2020 elections. What resources were available? What strategies were effective or ineffective? Conducting this analysis need not be exhaustive; a representative team can help reconstruct the most successful approaches.
- **Share a Compelling Vision for Post-Election Norms and Behaviors:** Your campus may have updated conduct codes, emergency procedures, and approaches to speech and protest over the past year. This suggestion here is more aspirational and visionary: tell the campus community what norms and behaviors you expect to see. Consider attributes like truth, inclusion, fairness, compassion, good will, and shared responsibility for each other. Set the tone by sharing a vision for a campus community that works for everyone.
- **Celebrations:** Spirited pre-election engagement (parades to the polls, entertainment while people wait in line to vote, fact checking clubs) correlates with increased student participation in elections. Electoral learning and fun can coexist. But does that apply to the morning after? Regardless of the outcome of the presidential race, the nation is deeply divided, and a win for one candidate might feel like an existential threat to supporters of the other candidate. In our research, we visited one campus where, years after an election, students expressed bitterness because supporters of the winner were "dancing on cars." There are no easy answers here. Create spaces for celebration and for commiserating. See Section III for ideas for students feeling threatened by the election outcomes.
- **Be Visible, Listen:** Presidents and Chancellors are already managing post-pandemic recovery, enrollment challenges, legislative interventions, and campus protests. A September 2024 report on effective presidential leadership identified seven near-Herculean competencies of effective leaders: trust-building, resilience, communication skills, team building, emotional intelligence, courage, and data acumen. Try to take comfort in reaching a difficult milestone this year. Listening, being visible, and emphasizing community might make the job easier.

### III. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS (AND OTHERS ON CAMPUS) TO COME TOGETHER AND EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS

**Who Should Act:** Institutional Leaders, Staff

**The Landscape:** Our research indicates that students often feel frustrated or angry when national events, crises, or disasters occur and they want to learn more, find support, or engage in discussion. Students will expect this in their classes and meetings the Morning After. It will help faculty and staff if they can point to planned convenings and other opportunities to gather and talk.

#### Ideas

- **Consider the Timing:** Plan several weeks of activities, perhaps more, since we do not know when the election results will be finalized. Create a webpage with event dates, times, and locations. Indicate whether they are open to all students or designated for specific groups. Share the URL with all faculty and staff and distribute it via course or communication systems. This list will be a vital resource on the mornings following the election.
- **Offer both intergroup and intragroup (affinity) group options:** We usually suggest convening people representing diverse identities, ideologies, and lived experiences to talk through their differences. Here, we recommend offering both intergroup and intragroup (affinity) group options for processing the election results. If tensions are high, start with informal affinity group gatherings before transitioning to structured intergroup engagement activities. Leverage campus offices and programs that already foster intergroup relationships, such as dialogue centers, offices for diversity, equity, and inclusion, civic engagement centers, interfaith organizations, and disciplinary clubs.
- **Create Informal Gathering Spaces:** Designate informal areas on campus for reflection, sharing, and companionship. Reserve rooms and cover walls with paper where students can write their thoughts and feelings. Provide markers, snacks, and beverages, allowing students to express themselves freely, with or without discussion.
- **Support Learning:** Recognize that all academic disciplines hold public relevance. Explore learning opportunities within departments and disciplinary clubs.
- **Be Creative:** Consider organizing a large open space with “stations” where faculty from various departments can discuss the election’s implications from multidisciplinary perspectives. Implement structured elements such as staggered admissions and small group rotations to manage flow and prevent chaos.



## IV. ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SOME STUDENTS WILL BE UPSET: Design Responses That Are Compassionate and Empowering

**Who Should Act:** Campus Community

**The Landscape:** The stress surrounding the 2024 election is palpable, and students feel it, too. According to the [Pew Research Center](#), 65% of U.S. adults often feel “exhausted” by politics, and 55% report feeling “angry.” At IDHE, we are concerned that this chaos and exhaustion could cause Americans to abandon democracy, allowing undemocratic forces to gain traction. On a personal level, the [American Psychological Association](#) identifies politics as a significant source of chronic stress, which can result in sleep disturbances, irritability, and obsessive thoughts.

### Ideas

- **Deploy the Expertise of Counseling Services:** Work with the campus mental health counseling center to offer one-on-one and group sessions for those experiencing distress. Compile a list of available resources, including contact numbers and hotlines.
- **Teach Coping Skills:** Provide students with coping strategies for navigating the uncertainty of the election. For instance, [Stanford University](#) offers five ways to cope with election stress, while [UC Berkeley](#) has eleven tips. The University of Michigan’s website focuses on managing “information overload” and the effects of “other people’s speech/actions” on well-being.
- **Address Fears:** Not all distress requires mental health support; some students may feel understandably anxious about campaign promises around [deporting immigrants](#), legal action against protesters and people with dissenting views, and [threats to LGBTQ+](#) communities. Acknowledge these concerns and reassure students, faculty, and staff that their concerns matter. Communicate where they can find support.
- **Teach Students the Knowledge and Skills They Need to Act:** [Research shows](#) that students facing discrimination and hostility due to their identities experience heightened psychological distress. Encouraging advocacy and activism can serve as a powerful tool for enhancing well-being. Focus on transforming conflict into opportunity by helping students identify actionable steps. We recommend using IDHE’s Institutional [Self-Assessment Tool](#) to compile a list of opportunities for students to develop leadership, facilitation, organizing, and advocacy skills. Create a webpage to share these learning opportunities, knowing it can evolve over time based on feedback and suggestions.
- **Facilitate Participation in Broader Efforts:** Guide students in joining national and regional initiatives, such as the [“Take Action”](#) page from the American Civil Liberties Union and SLSV’s [Student Voting Network](#).



## V. PREPARE NOW FOR CLASSES AND INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS THE MORNING AFTER

**Who Should Act:** Faculty and Staff Who Will Teach, Meet, or Work with Students in the Days and Weeks Following Election Day

**The Landscape:** Faculty and staff are often the first point of contact for students in the aftermath of the election, and they face significant pressure in this role. Our research indicates that educators who treat post-election classes or interactions as if nothing happened may come across as oblivious or uncaring. Students need to feel valued, understood, and supported by faculty and staff. Strong faculty-student relationships correlate with student success, and it is crucial for educators to foster an inclusive learning environment. Below are our ideas, along with guidance for two specific scenarios.

### Ideas

- **Be Prepared:** Do not wait until election night to plan how you will address post-election discussions with students. Two key considerations are: (a) establishing group agreements and (b) navigating open expression and inclusion (see the sections on page 8 and 9).
- **Share Responsibility:** Before Election Day, discuss with your students how to manage potential tensions and conflicts after the election. Solicit their input on managing politicized conversations.
- **Resist Partisan Pressure to Remain Neutral:** While educators should remain nonpartisan (avoiding endorsements or criticisms of candidates or parties), they can still discuss political and policy perspectives and consequences. Consider where you stand on maintaining neutrality or silence in the face of injustice and undemocratic practices, especially fulfilling the academy's responsibility to advancing a robust and inclusive democracy that works for everyone.
- **Decide on Disclosure:** Determine in advance whether you will share your opinions about the election results. If you choose not to disclose, students may speculate about your views; if you do share, some may worry about bias in treatment or grading. In our research, we found that students appreciated professors who disclosed their political leanings and provided a mechanism for students to express concerns about perceived bias, such as a comment box or an "ouch" rule. Students simply want to be treated fairly.
- **Reflect on Your Comfort Levels:** Be transparent with students about your concerns regarding managing post-election discussions. Ask them to help navigate these conversations.
- **Avoid Treating Classes or Meetings as Therapy Sessions:** While it is important to acknowledge emotional distress and its impact on learning, keep class discussions focused on the results and their implications for people and policy. Listening and reflecting with empathy are reasonable responses.
- **Connect Your Discipline to Democracy:** All academic disciplines hold public relevance. Relate your subject matter to broader societal issues, communities, and democratic principles.
- **Consider the Possibility of Violence:** While it may seem unlikely, it is important to be prepared for the possibility of campus or classroom violence. Consult your administration about safety protocols and keep emergency contact information readily available.

**(a) Set and Use Group Agreements for Classroom and Campus Discussions and Activities**

Many educators establish group agreements (norms or ground rules) to create a positive learning environment. Review these agreements to ensure they are suitable for politically charged discussions.

Group agreements can be set by proposing norms as a facilitator and asking students to accept them or by co-creating norms with students. Co-created norms tend to be easier to enforce but require additional time to establish.

Here are some agreements we like:

Agreement	You could say...
Assume Goodwill	“We want to create opportunities for people to test out and improve how they say things. Assume good intentions.”
Listen for Understanding	“Try to listen to gain understanding of ideas that are not your own. Show you are listening by reflecting back what you hear. We want to encourage different perspectives so we can all learn from them.”
Express Discomfort	“If you are offended or uncomfortable, say so and say why. We will talk it through.”
Disagree without Being Disagreeable	“It’s OK to disagree—in fact, we want to hear all viewpoints on a topic—but it’s not OK to personalize or demean someone else.”
Ask Curious Questions	“Ask questions of each other and think ahead about how to phrase a question. Come with an open and inquisitive mind.”
Silence is Acceptable	“Many people are uncomfortable with silence, but I, as your professor/facilitator, am not. It is important to let people reflect before responding. Pausing is a valuable tool for cooling off if a discussion gets heated.”
Maintain Confidentiality	“What is said here stays here. What is learned here leaves here. Keep who says what confidential.”
Share Responsibility for the Success of this Class or Discussion	“This is a tough concept because the assumption is always that the people running a class or facilitating manage all tensions or problems. I am going to rely on all of you to share the job of making this discussion work for everyone.”
Share Airtime	“Be aware of how much (or little) you are sharing. If you are talking a lot, hang back. If you are not participating much, try to lean in.”
Cell Phones Off	“Give the group your full attention.”

Group agreements can serve as a helpful tool when addressing disruptive or disrespectful behavior. If a student becomes difficult, you can point to the group agreement and then ask, “Can you think of a different way to express that?” Teach students to articulate their views assertively while ensuring a respectful atmosphere. Solicit the group’s support in upholding these agreements. (For more on setting and using ground rules and managing challenging behaviors in the classroom, see [Readiness for Discussing Democracy](#).)

## (b) Protect both People and Speech

As educators, we want all students, including those who might be in the ideological minority, to be able to express their views. In our research and discussions with faculty, we found that faculty and staff members do not want students to shut down or to self-censor. But they also want to draw lines at speech that reinforces negative stereotypes or that is derogatory, discriminatory, or dehumanizing, especially toward disadvantaged groups. The current political climate puts a spotlight on this challenge.

### Ideas

- **Educate, Don't Regulate:** Focus on teaching students how to craft an argument, examine multiple perspectives, find common ground, and create fresh solutions rather than censoring what they say.
- **Be Proactive:** Before Election Day, engage your students about how they wish to navigate difficult discussions. Give them scenarios and ask them how they want to manage them. Remind them of group agreements: avoid personalizing, reflect before speaking, support opinions with evidence and facts. If you have a student who has crossed a line before, have a conversation with that student outside of class to understand their motivations.
- **Facilitate Expression:** Have students write down their thoughts before sharing. Or break students into pairs to practice expressing differing views.
- **Invite Diverse Perspectives:** Encourage students to explore and articulate viewpoints they may not personally support. Play devil's advocate to introduce unexpressed perspectives.
- **Model Desired Behavior:** Avoid disparaging or humiliating students. Avoid gloating or melting down over election results. Instead, ask curious questions and listen for understanding.
- **Reframe Comments:** Guide students to focus their remarks on policies, not people.
- **Worst Case Scenario:** Hatred, intimidation, personal attacks, disparaging remarks, and indecency have no place on a campus much less in the classroom. Students might invoke their right to unfettered speech, but that does not mean the speech cannot be challenged. Be prepared to respond in the moment.
- **Seek Help if Necessary:** If you believe that a student's behavior will be unmanageable, consult with your chair, dean, or supervisor before taking further action like asking the student to leave. Seek advice from university counsel regarding any speech that could create a toxic learning environment, potentially violating Title VI or Title IX standards.

## VI. CHALLENGE DISINFORMATION

**Who Should Act:** The Campus Community

**The Landscape:** Disinformation poses a serious threat to society. Misleading campaigns, false statements by politicians, and malicious social media reports can exploit fears, reinforcing extremism, hate, division, and even violence. Disinformation campaigns can undermine public health, economic security, free and fair elections, the peaceful transfer of power, national security, and community safety. Given its pervasive nature, disinformation can be challenging to counter, especially in real-time, and those who spread it are often adept at doing so.

### Ideas

- **Understand the Political Context:** Challenging disinformation may be perceived as partisan, but it is not. Some candidates and their supporters fear the truth. Efforts to silence educators (and the media) for fact-checking can stifle open discourse. While confronting disinformation can be political, it is not inherently partisan, even when it questions specific candidates or parties.
- **Use an Evidence-Based Approach:** When encountering unsupported claims, address the claim with data and facts.
- **Share Responsibility for Corrections:** When someone relies on misinformation in class or a discussion, turn to the group. Ask, “Does anyone want to offer a different perspective?” Consider taking a few minutes for fact-checking in real time or assigning a fact-checking task for the next class. Try to make the process feel collaborative rather than confrontational.
- **Debunk the Most Egregious Lies:** The list of falsehoods this election cycle is too long to cover here, but we call out two of the most outrageous claims: that the 2020 election was stolen and that immigrants are dangerous. In their post-election guide, Students Learn Students Vote advises campuses to build trust in elections and refute the lie that the election was “stolen.” Another good resource is The Myth of Voter Fraud published by the Brennan Center for Justice. Brookings offers multiple briefs on immigration policy and the value of immigrants to the nation.
- **Teach Media Literacy:** Use resources like the European Union’s disinformation toolkit, which provides a syllabus covering what disinformation is, why it spreads, and how to respond. For a historical perspective on propaganda, visit the Critical Disinformation Studies website at the University of North Carolina. Mike Caulfield from Washington State University offers an open-source textbook on the SIFT (Stop, Investigate, Find better coverage, and Trace claims to the original source) method for enhancing digital literacy.
- **Leverage Library Resources:** College libraries are committed to educating students on identifying disinformation and verifying facts. Share your library’s resources with students, along with other tools for combatting disinformation. Check out initiatives from institutions like St. Louis Community College, Purdue University, and Portland State University.
- **Encourage Fact-Checking Clubs:** Support students in forming fact-checking clubs and direct them to resources like the College of Staten Island Library’s list of fact-checking sources.
- **Address Free Speech Concerns:** Whether disinformation is protected speech is complex. While we do not advocate censoring fake news, lies, and disinformation, we encourage countering with evidence-based responses and discussion. In a learning environment, scrutinizing and correcting unsupported viewpoints is essential to student learning.

## VII. PREPARE FOR STUDENT UNREST OR PROTEST

**Who Should Act:** Institutional Leaders, Deans, Chairs, Staff, and Faculty

**The Landscape:** Regardless of the election outcome, some students will express their frustrations through protests. As the American Civil Liberties Union stated in an [Open Letter to College and University Presidents](#), students at public universities have the right to assemble and protest. While private institutions can impose stricter regulations, they should still uphold their commitment to expressive freedoms and protest as a valid form of civic engagement.

### Ideas

- **Educate, Don't Regulate:** Offer students opportunities to learn about the history and best practices of successful social movements, including [whether protest works](#). Incorporate discussions and relevant content into classes, campus publications, and co-curricular activities. Northwestern University's article "[How Do People Make Change?](#)" and Columbia University News's coverage of "[The Power of Social Movements in Effecting Change](#)" are good starting points. Consider [insights](#) from social movement scholars Francesca Polletta (UC Irvine) and Marshall Ganz (Harvard) on effective practices.
- **Provide Alternatives to Protest:** Encourage campus discussions and open forums, as recommended in Section III. Focus on relationship-building and active listening rather than attempting to change minds or promote consensus around a policy or issue.
- **De-escalate Potentially Violent Protests:** Refer to [guidance](#) from the Center for American Progress on preventing political violence. This guidance emphasizes modeling respectful behavior, condemning violence and intimidation, and protecting the integrity of elections. [Our research](#) indicates that institutional leaders can defuse tensions by actively listening to protesters' grievances, reflecting on their concerns, and involving students in discussions about institutional responses.
- **Establish Content-Neutral Restrictions:** Implement reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions for all student gatherings, not just those anticipated around the election. Ensure these restrictions are content-neutral, like [guidelines](#) from Wesleyan University.
- **Update and Clarify Institutional Policies:** The American Council on Education's 2024 Issue Brief titled "[Preparing for a Potentially Tumultuous Fall on Campus](#)" recommends a comprehensive review and update of policies to align with the institution's mission and the current political climate. Policies include free expression policies, nondiscrimination policies, student conduct codes, [crisis management plans](#), and communication strategies. Clearly define the decision-making processes and departmental roles, ensuring all leaders understand their responsibilities in managing protests or unrest. Make sure these policies are accessible and effectively communicated to students, faculty, and staff to foster trust and reduce the risk of escalation.

## CONCLUSION

We acknowledge the significant level of conflict campuses have faced over the past year. To assist campuses in this challenging environment, AAC&U's IDHE has published a slate of resources:

- A [discussion guide](#) on balancing expressive freedoms with inclusion on campus.
- In partnership with the Sustained Dialogue Institute, a [Campus Conflict and Conversation Help Desk](#) that addresses individual inquiries from faculty, staff, and institutional leaders navigating difficult “quicksand moments” in teaching, convening, and decision-making.
- A conceptual framework aimed at fostering a more aspirational, equitable, and inclusive democracy, accompanied by supporting resources to help colleges and universities serve as civic spaces for discussing and [Re/Designing Democracy](#).

In this guide, we urge all stakeholders on campuses to actively participate in fostering learning, discussion, and community in the days and weeks following the election. Some of our most challenging yet vital suggestions include:

- Taking a stand for academic freedom and the institution's autonomy to educate for democracy.
- Rejecting pressure to remain neutral in the face of undemocratic rhetoric and practices. Celebrating pivotal moments in history, including the candidacy and potential election of the nation's first woman of color as president of the United States.
- Creating diverse opportunities for students (and others) to gather in inter- and intragroup settings.
- Supporting faculty and facilitators in enhancing the quality of discussions both inside and outside the classroom.
- Sharing with the campus community the challenge of wanting to hear all perspectives while simultaneously countering dehumanizing speech.
- Standing for truth and facts.
- Encouraging expressive freedoms by educating students as leaders and agents of social change.
- Embracing conflict as an opportunity for learning and strengthening campus community.

Engaging with these and other ideas presented in this guide will reinforce higher education's role in redesigning and defending a democracy that works for everyone.

We look forward to hearing how the Morning(s) After goes!



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**About AAC&U:** The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is a global membership organization dedicated to advancing the democratic purposes of higher education by promoting equity, innovation, and excellence in liberal education. Through our programs and events, publications and research, public advocacy, and campus-based projects, AAC&U serves as a catalyst and facilitator for innovations that improve educational quality and equity and that support the success of all students. In addition to accredited public and private, two-year and four-year colleges and universities, and state higher education systems and agencies throughout the United States, our membership includes degree-granting higher education institutions around the world as well as other organizations and individuals. To learn more, visit [www.aacu.org](http://www.aacu.org).



**About IDHE:** The Institute for Democracy & Higher Education (IDHE) is an applied research and resource center that works to advance learning for and institutional commitment to educating for a democracy in question. IDHE supports these focus areas: envisioning and redesigning democracy; fostering campus climates for political learning and engagement; advancing discourse and discussion-teaching; balancing expressive freedoms, inclusion, and academic freedom; and using elections as teachable moments. IDHE launched twelve years ago at Tufts University, and at the end of 2023, moved to the president's office at AAC&U. IDHE achieves its mission through research, resource development, advocacy, and campus support.