



WELCOME

‘Hot moments’ in the classroom (& office)

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How to handle 'hot moments' in the classroom (& office)?

*Knowledge sharing session by
Central Diversity Office &
Teaching and Learning Centre*

Machiel Kestra (CDO) & Erjo Beitler (TLC)



Program

- Establishing ground rules
- Institutional context by CDO Machiel Keesstra
- Tips for creating a safe learning environment and dealing with hot moments by TLC trainer Erjo Beitler
- Sharing personal perspectives via a safe dialogue by Machiel Keesstra
- Small group discussions
- Q&A
- Closure

Establishing ground rules for interaction

- Our goal is to understand each other, not to convince each other
- Respect each others' identities, perspectives and boundaries
- Confidentiality
- Don't interrupt
- No personal attacks
- Avoid generalisations
- Assume positive intent
- The presentations will be filmed



Institutional context

- Support & resources for affected students & staff
- Academic Freedom
- Code of Conduct
- Dilemma's

Support and resources for affected students & staff

- Financial, psychological support
- Info on cf. exam exemptions etc.
- Active approaching of directly affected individuals?

The screenshot shows the University of Amsterdam website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the university logo, search, and user profile icons. Below the navigation bar, there is a section titled "Help in a crisis" with a background image of a person looking out a window at a cityscape. The text below the image reads: "Last modified on 11-09-2023 11:49" and "Has your home country been hit by a crisis, such as war or a natural disaster? Have you or your family been affected and does this put you at risk of study delays, financial difficulties or mental health problems? The UvA can offer support in various ways." Below this, there is a section titled "Show information for your study programme" with a dropdown menu. The text below this section reads: "You're currently viewing general information. Choose your study programme to see additional information that's specific to your study programme, such as deadlines, regulations and contact details." At the bottom, there are six cards providing more support resources: "Student counsellors", "Study adviser", "Student psychologists", "Emergency Fund", "Profiling Fund", and "AUF: support for refugees".

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Information for [enrolled students]

Topics

Show information for programme: What is your study programme?

Help in a crisis

Last modified on 11-09-2023 11:49

Has your home country been hit by a crisis, such as war or a natural disaster? Have you or your family been affected and does this put you at risk of study delays, financial difficulties or mental health problems? The UvA can offer support in various ways.

Show information for your study programme

You're currently viewing general information. Choose your study programme to see additional information that's specific to your study programme, such as deadlines, regulations and contact details.

Student counsellors
The UvA student counsellors are available to support you in case of special circumstances that affect your study...

Study adviser
The study adviser can help you with questions about your curriculum, your planning or personal circumstances th...

Student psychologists
Are you having mental health problems that interfere with your studies? UvA's psychologists offer various types of...

Emergency Fund
If you are a UvA student or PhD candidate facing financial difficulties because of an emergency, you can apply to t...

Profiling Fund
The UvA Profiling Fund offers financial assistance to students who have incurred a study completion delay d...

AUF: support for refugees
The Amsterdam University Fund (AUF) provides grants to refugees who are studying at the UvA or are about to sta...

Health, well-being and safety >

Academic Freedom, the university and public debate

According to Stolker-commission's 2023 report for UvA:

- Academic freedom & diversity (of perspectives, experiences, etc.) are interdependent
- Academic freedom pertains to academic expertise – freedom of speech pertains to other domains
- University leadership should generally remain neutral in order to not infringe upon acad. freedom of its staff (and students)
- Given the authority ascribed to academics, they should be more cautious when engaging with a public debate

(<https://www.uva.nl/en/content/news/news/2023/06/stolker-committee-no-institutional-abuse-but-academic-freedom-must-be-guarded.html>)

Code of Conduct

"Staff and students are considerate of each other.... and respect interpersonal differences...

Unacceptable behaviour comprises any behaviour on the part of a staff member or student that is stressful to the person on the receiving end, because it either jeopardises or injures the other person's bodily or mental integrity." (From UvA's 2020 Code of Conduct)

"distribution of information in whatever form is only permitted during a debate, on designated signs/screens or following written consent (provided it doesn't serve commercial purposes and cannot reasonably be considered offensive, insulting or indecent to others) ... (also) applies to/in: affixing of posters, flyers, putting documents in pigeon holes, putting down of magazines, stands" (UvA's 2015 Framework House Rules)

(<https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/policy-and-regulations/codes-of-conduct-and-social-safety/code-of-conduct-of-the-uva.html> ; <https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/policy-and-regulations/operational-management-general/framework-for-house-rules-and-code-of-conduct.html>)

Dilemma's in maintaining rules & code

- Academic Freedom implies no censorship nor imposing of 'balanced views' on events: does this grant free space to 'academic activism', which might be stressful for minorities?
- 'Unacceptable behavior comprises any behavior' that is 'stressful to the person on the receiving end': how much resilience should we expect of students & staff?
- Demonstrations inside UvA buildings are not permitted: difficult to maintain without escalation.



Spanningen over de Gaza-oorlog zijn 'een grote uitdaging voor het hele onderwijsveld', zegt minister Dijkgraaf

==> we must create a campus culture of solidarity.



Sharing experiences in small groups

- Have you experienced hot moments in class recently?
- How did you feel?



‘Hot moments’ – a definition

‘Hot moments occur when people’s feelings rise to a point that threatens teaching and learning’

(Warren, 2006).

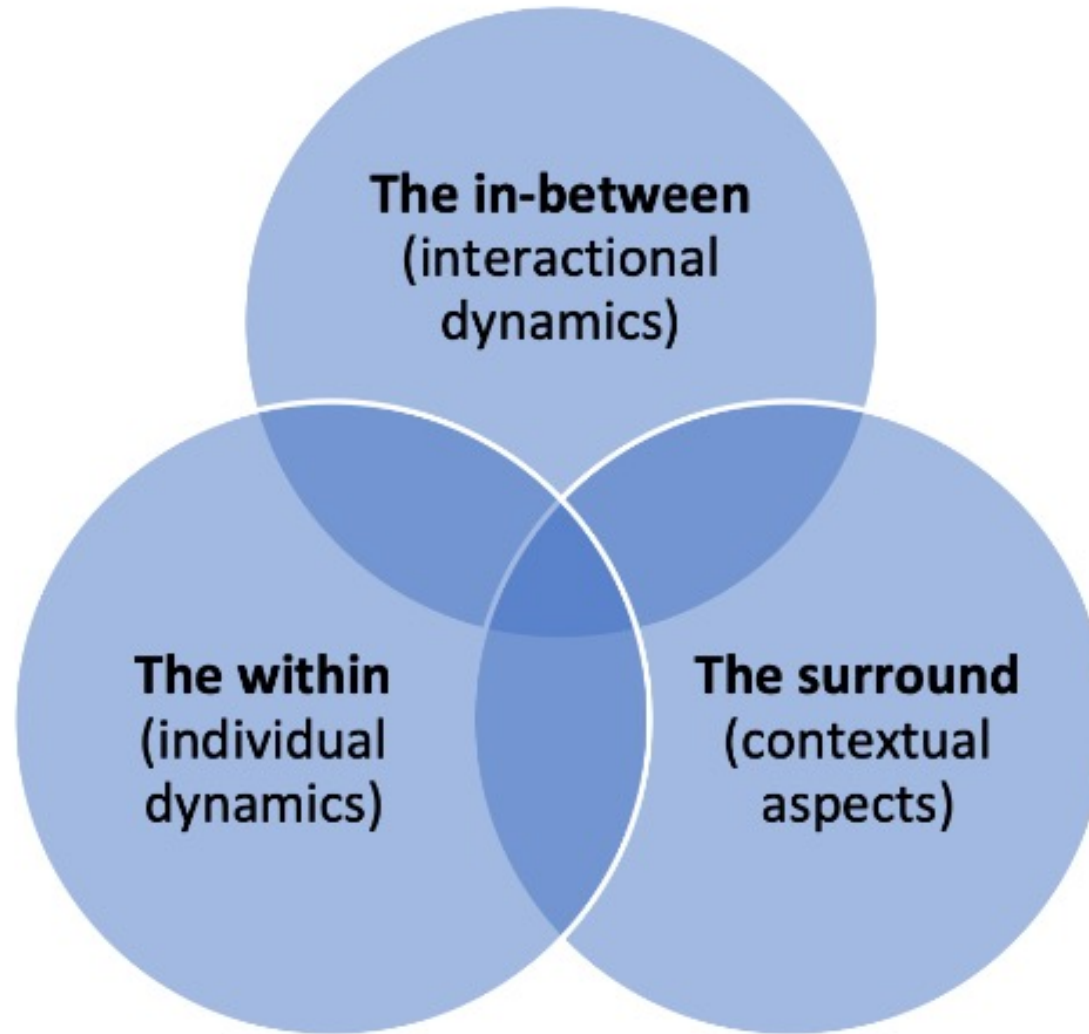
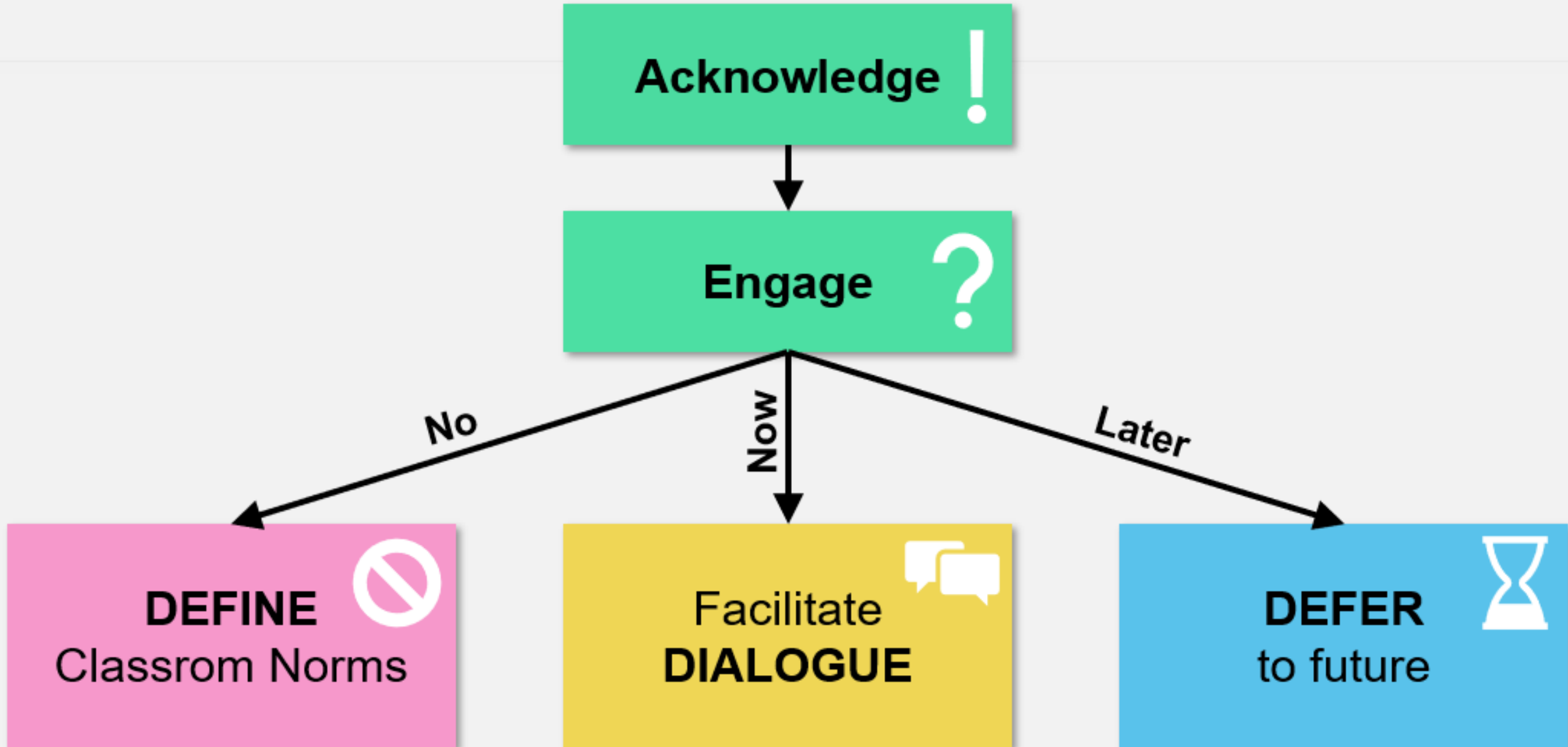


Figure 1. Three interrelated levels of hot moments dynamics

[Ramdas, S., Slotman, M., & Van Oudenhoven-Van Der Zee, K. \(2019\).](#)

Create a safe learning environment *with* discomfort

- Define clear rules for interaction, together with your students
- Create opportunities to get to know each other and build trust
- Define your goals and expectations in discussions
- Encourage active listening
- Use different ways of expression
- Learn to recognize (subtle) inequalities
- Know yourself
- *Oops, ouch*



Tips

- **Take a breath, slow down**
- **Postpone your judgement**
- **‘Move to the balcony’**
- **No reaction is also a reaction**
- **Hot moments can be valuable learning opportunities**
- **Try to read the ‘subtext’ of comments**
- **Take the issue off the student**
- **Give a writing task**
- **A dialogue \neq discussion**
- **Check-out**



Sources

[Harlap, Y. \(2013\). Preparing university educators for hot moments: Theater for educational development about difference, power, and privilege. Teaching in Higher Education, 19\(3\), 217-228.](#)

[Ramdas, S., Slootman, M., & Van Oudenhoven-Van Der Zee, K. \(2019\). The VU Mixed Classroom Educational Model. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.](#)

[TLC website on hot moments](#)

[Website for Transition Makers Toolbox](#)

[Wansink, B., Mol, H., Kortekaas, J. & Mainhard, T. \(2023\) Discussing controversial issues in the classroom: Exploring students' safety perceptions and their willingness to participate*. Teaching and Teacher Education, volume 125.](#)

[Warren, L. \(2006\). Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom. Cambridge, MA: Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning.](#)

Why (not) avoid a conversation on the violence?

- People report alienation, depression, lack of motivation etc when these disturbing events are not at all discussed in class/office.
 - However, people often feel forced to take a position in this complex and charged conflict.
 - Discussion and debate often leads to polarization
- ==> Find a way to learn from each other while avoiding polarization.

Sharing personal perspectives via 'Campus Dialogue' by CDO

Facilitated and structured Ketji Koti Table dialogue:

1. How or when did you experience yourself as different, special and vulnerable in the past two weeks? What feelings did this evoke in you? And now that you're telling this?

2. How can we support each other to continue to listen and remain open-minded in contact with others? When you imagine this, what feelings does it evoke in you?

Schema of Ketji Koti Table dialogue structure

Preparation

- 1 Forming couples
- 2 Topic presentation and dialogue question
- 3 Silence - for 1 minute

Dialogue part I

- 4 First speaker - for 3 minutes
- 5 Silence - for 1 minute
- 6 Listener speaks - for 2 minutes

Dialogue part II

- 7 Second speaker - for 3 minutes
- 8 Silence - for 1 minute
- 9 Listener speaks - for 2 minutes

Conclusion round of dialogue

- 10 Shared reflection - for 5 minutes
- 11 Plenary discussion
- 12 Goodbye - and possibly change of dialogue couples

If possible

Next round of dialogue

Repeat from step 2 with next dialogue question

Alternative options for creating & holding space

- 'Modelling' a personal dialogue between individuals with different affiliations on their perspectives and emotions
- Avoid discussion of facts, history, politics, interpretations etc., agree to disagree
- Explore shared values and goals
- Complementary to dialogue: artistic contributions (poetry, music);
- Always start with safe/brave space rules.

(cf. <https://studiumgenerale-eindhoven.nl/nl/programma/dialogoog/in-dialogoog-over-de-gebeurtenissen-in-israel-en-gaza-37125/>)



Sharing experiences in small groups

- How can today's tips help you to turn a hot moment into a learning opportunity?
- And what is still stopping you from doing so?



What options do I have?

[UvA FDO's](#)

[TLC courses](#)

[TLC tips](#)

Apply for CDO's Campus Connection support:

<https://tinyurl.com/CDO-CCsupport>

