



# Designing Dialogue: Diverse Pedagogical Styles for a Discussion-Based Course

Manabu Taketani, M.A. | Higher Education & Student Affairs Ph.D. Student  
Yih Tsao, M.S. | Higher Education & Student Affairs Ph.D. Student

## Context:

### Hudson & Holland Scholars Program

Historically, the Hudson & Holland Scholars Program (HHSP) has been a scholarship and academic support program for high-achieving students from marginalized and underrepresented communities. HHSP is the largest merit-based scholarship program at Indiana University with over 2,400 students currently enrolled. - (Hudson and Holland Scholarship Program)

### A Discussion-Based Course: EDUC-U215 Foundations for Student Success at a Research University

Hudson & Holland Scholars enroll in a semester-long seminar course during their first year. The seminar course is EDUC-U215 Foundations for Student Success at a Research University, a three-credit course involving a lecture and a discussion-based class.

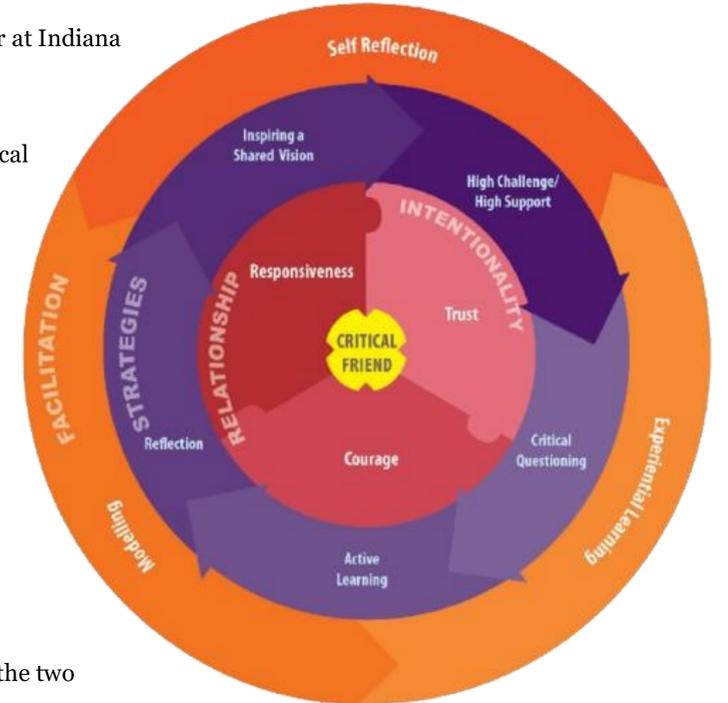
Multiple instructors are associated with EDUC-U215. On Tuesdays each week, all students (~260) enrolled in EDUC-U215 attend the same lecture led by one of the Instructor Team members assigned for the topic. On Thursdays, students are assigned to different discussion sessions with smaller class size (~20) led by individual Instructor Team members. Each Thursday, the instructors for the discussion sessions have the autonomy to present and lead the week's discussion related to the Tuesday lecture while collectively strive to achieve the shared learning objectives.

## Instructor Team Approach

- On Tuesdays, the Associate Instructors attend the EDUC-U215 lecturer led by a peer or a full-time staff member at Indiana University.
- On Wednesdays, the Associate Instructors attend a virtual meeting organized by the HHSP Director.
  - In the meeting, instructors share how their discussion course went the week prior.
  - Additionally, we utilize the meeting to share advice and tips with one another to better improve our pedagogical practices.

## Critical Friendship Model

- The Critical Friendship Model (CFM) is the framework utilized to understand and describe the interactions between two Associate Instructors (i.e., the two authors) of EDUC-U215.
- Costa and Kallick (1993) describe a **critical friend** as a trusted person who asks questions, shares ideas to be examined from a different perspective, offers feedback of a person's work as a friend, and takes time to fully understand the context of the work.
- The CFM is built between individuals and/or groups on a foundation of trust, courage and responsiveness.
- Once established, through the continual practice of critical thinking, active listening, reflection, inspiring a shared vision, and providing each other with high levels of challenge and support, the participants within the CFM improve on their practice/craft.

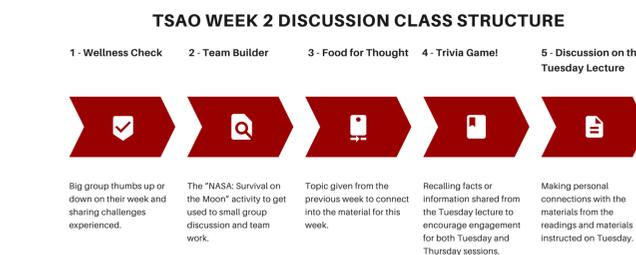
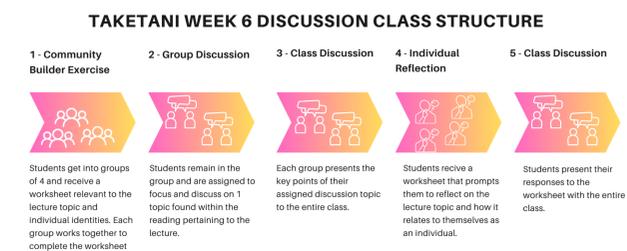
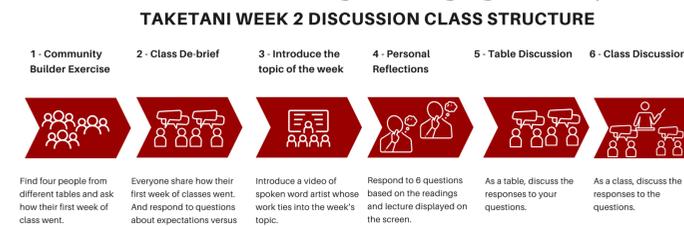


## Application & Benefits Observed

- As first-time Associate Instructors for this course, the weekly Instructor Team Meetings have provided valuable insights on effectively leading our discussion groups to achieve the learning objectives.
- While we appreciate the benefits of the team meetings, we wanted more timely feedback and advice. Therefore, the two authors decided to meet regularly between the two discussion sessions they lead.
- In the weekly Critical Friendship Meetings, each Associate Instructor shares the teaching experiences from their morning discussion session, including the activities and discussion questions they used, as well as any changes they plan to implement for the afternoon session (Hardiman, M. & Dewing, J. 2014).
- After one Critical Friend shares their experience, the other offers questions, feedback, and suggestions for improvement (Hardiman, M. & Dewing, J. 2014).

## Results:

### Diverse and Evolving Pedagogical Styles



## Reflection/Recommendations:

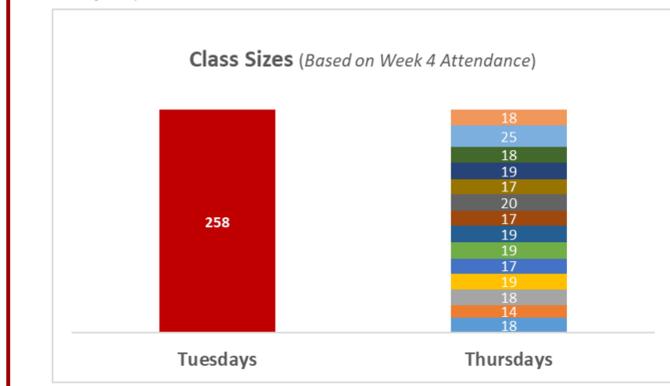
- By participating in the Team Instructor Meetings and in the Critical Friendship Meetings, the authors were able to enhance their discussion sessions by implementing activities shared by their peers.
- When the morning discussion session doesn't go as well as we hoped, the authors shared ideas on how to reframe their pedagogical approaches to foster more productive discussions during afternoon sessions.
- For courses with multiple Associate Instructors leading independent discussion sections, it would be helpful to encourage voluntarily pairing up or hold regular team meetings to share teaching practices. This collaboration can enhance their pedagogical diversity and development while supporting both teacher and student learning.

## References/Acknowledgement

Costa, A. K., & Kallick, B. (1993). Through the lens of a critical friend. *Educational Leadership*, 51, 49

Hardiman, M. & Dewing, J. (2014). Critical ally and critical friend: stepping stones to facilitating practice development. *International Practice Development Journal*, 4(1), 3-19.

Hudson and Holland Scholarship Program (n.d.). <https://hudsonandholland.indiana.edu/>



## EDUC-U215 Course Objectives

- To provide students with a network of support and opportunities for community-building
- To support students' acclimation to the environment of a research institution, specifically IU
- To facilitate students' ongoing engagement in identity development processes as a strong foundation for holistic success
- To cultivate opportunities for students to explore career development
- To support students' critical consciousness development and social action participation