



Brave Space Guidelines

What Is a Brave Space?

A community space where different points on a journey of learning and growing are supported and engaged.

Community members engage in critical dialogue through conscious questioning and active listening. While all are expected to make their best effort to be respectful, there is an understanding that someone may say something that results in unintentional offense and hurt feelings for those around. A primary assumption of brave space is that everyone speaks with the positive intent of seeking greater knowledge and understanding.

The Center for Women in Technology at UMBC supports women, underrepresented groups and their allies in computing and engineering fields. All individuals with different life experiences and ideas are encouraged to learn from one another in the CWIT Center (ITE 452), CWIT Living Learning Community, CWIT courses, and programs.

This is not a comprehensive list of guidelines, but rather a roadmap to keep in mind when using this space to help keep it a place where all members of the UMBC community can come to learn, grow, and be.

Challenge Yourself:

- **Recognize that your experiences, values, and perspectives** are unique to you. Strive to learn about experiences other than your own, and seek permission to ask questions about other people's experiences (e.g. "Would you be willing to tell me more about...").
- **Avoid language that implies that all people belong in a majority group and abstain from stereotyping.** If you don't know how someone identifies, and you need to know, ask them instead of making assumptions and labeling them. (e.g. ask "How do you identify?" instead of "You're gay, right?")
- **Recognize and respect the range of emotions** that you and others may experience. Please be thoughtful about how your emotions and behavior may impact others based on their experiences.
- **Intent is important, but it does not trump impact.** Recognize and own the impact of your words and actions. Also, practice forgiveness and generosity: remember that this is a space where we are all learning and growing.

Respect Others:

- **Be respectful of privacy** and/or confidentiality when requested. If you are not certain it is for consumption beyond this space, DO NOT share another's private story — even if you omit names and details. Be careful not to "out" others and be particularly mindful of how you might unintentionally out someone when you see them outside of the community.
- **Listen to and acknowledge** the ideas, feelings, and/or experiences of others and avoid attacking or debating the validity of someone else's experiences.
- **Practice forgiveness:** remember that this is a community where we are all learning and growing.
- **Be mindful of sexually charged topics, language and perceived behavior** as we all come from different cultural and life experiences, and have different boundaries.