

# Challenges

Breakout Rooms

# Instructions

Look at the specific scenarios outlined on the next slide and discuss what challenges the smallest circle might face in these scenarios.

Note down at least 1 challenge per scenario.

You might have varied “smallest circles” in the breakout room. That’s okay. We are trying to identify the barriers that might keep classroom members from feeling safe, from feeling a sense of belonging, from attaining their full potential in that classroom.

You don’t have to disclose who your smallest circle is if you don’t wish to.

# What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	language Pacing Not knowing social expectations
Assessments	Time restraints affect students unequally
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	Social expectations about the relationship

# What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fear of expressing their opinions: think others won't understand or want to hear their opinions</li><li>• Unable to articulate their ideas in english well- then their classmates don't validate their opinions</li><li>• Interpret question/instructions incorrectly</li><li>• Feeling less valid/worthy</li><li>• Fear of getting in trouble for not understanding the instructions</li></ul>
Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Misunderstanding assessment criteria</li><li>• Peer evaluations discount contributions (because of shyness, lower level of english proficiency, etc.)</li><li>• May have the correct ideas, but receive fewer grades because they're not able to articulate their ideas as well.</li></ul>
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1-on-1 conversation might never happen</li><li>• Fear of being seen as not hard-working, someone who doesn't care, being categorized</li></ul>

# What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	<p>Who are the students that usually don't speak up in the class</p> <p>May find it more difficult to initially engage or speak, e.g. from language concerns or edu background etc., but noting those aren't determinative + potential to claim power through act of sharing/speaking</p>
Assessments	<p>Types of essay questions or exam formats are designed based on a specific education format, so if you're from a different location or edu background, you have to learn the mode of assessment in addition to the material</p>
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	

# What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	Different modes of preferred communication, language barriers, accessibility to technology (online classes) - forced to do asynchronous classes, confidence in speaking up in in-person classrooms
Assessments	Singular type of assessments with standard way of grading can restrict various types of learners who might not show their understanding in uniform ways
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	Language barriers, confidence in approaching those they might find intimidating or unapproachable, fears that they might not understand their concerns/perspective

# What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	Language barrier may make the student not feel comfortable with participating in class or asking questions.
Assessments	May have difficulty understanding test questions or effectively demonstrating their knowledge.
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	Fear of seeming stupid. Professors not always willing to put in the effort to help students with language issues or do not deal with them respectfully.

## What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	Concerns about being able to contribute and be understood, especially with limited time ESL learners may not feel comfortable with verbal language in a group Difficulties with volume of voice Ability to contribute
Assessments	Student's lack of agency in assessment type/content -strategies to alleviate: allow choice in type and weight of particular assignments Negative feedback/grades can impact student's self reflection of belonging in classroom/discipline -words of affirmation from TAs/instructors, be encouraging
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	Anxiety, intimidation, pressure



# What challenges do you think the smallest circle will face during:

Classroom discussions/activities	<p>Finding assignment groups</p> <p>Loss of participation marks out of fear to look bad in front of others</p> <p>One may not feel comfortable to participate certain forms of discussions</p> <p>May go with another person's opinion without discussing their own and allowing meaningful discussion</p> <p>Poor peer evaluation inside small groups</p>
Assessments	<p>Different cultural upbringing, thus difficulty complying with sometimes vague assignment descriptions -&gt; worse grades.</p> <p>Also, prejudice playing into assessor's judgement due to the name of the student.</p>
1-on-1 conversations with the biggest circle	<p>e.g. student vs. instructor; TA vs. instructor. Thinking the instructor as an authority could cause fear, so that one cannot express oneself effectively. cultural difference</p>