

# QUESTIONS FOR DIVISIVE ISSUES



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## **PURPOSE:**

To offer examples of questions used in real Essential Partners dialogues on divisive and polarizing issues.

## **NOTES ON THIS RESOURCE:**

These are some vetted dialogue questions to have better, deeper conversations about several hot-button topics.

Remember that all questions are suited to meet a specific purpose, so choose and adjust the language according to your own needs and context.



# SAMPLE QUESTIONS

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## **Dialogue on Gender Expectations**

- Talk about a gender expectation or a stereotype of your gender that makes it easier for you to be who you really are in public spaces and/or the workplace.
- Talk about a gender expectation or stereotype of your gender that makes it harder for you to be who you really are in public spaces and/or the workplace.
- Share an experience of your gender in public spaces and/or the workplace that highlights something you would want to address, change, or explore further.

## **Dialogue on Experiencing Racial / Ethnic Differences**

- What life experience has most significantly taught you about encounters across racial/ethnic difference?
- Share an experience that you've had when you became aware that race, ethnicity, or bias about another core identity was a significant factor in your work and/or personal life.
- Share an experience you have had with people of different races or ethnicities that left you feeling hopeful for you and this campus or higher educational community?
- Share an experience that left you feeling there was still work to do.
- What is a place you see a need or an opportunity for this campus or higher educational community to further relationships across differences of race or ethnicity?
- What are resources in your community that could address that need or opportunity?

## **Dialogue on Guns and Gun Violence**

- Could you tell us about a life experience that has shaped your beliefs about firearms and firearm issues?
- When you think about the proper role of firearms in communities, what's at the heart of the matter for you? What do you most care about?
- Most people, within their overall conviction and values commitments on issues like this, have some areas of less certainty or places where they feel pulled in different directions, whether by competing values, feelings or relationships with others. Could you speak about places where this might be true for you on this issue?

## **Dialogue on Electoral Politics or a Specific Political Issue**

- Can you share a formative personal experience that shaped your current political beliefs or partisan identity?
- What has your relationship been to the issue / the politician / the political group?
- Can you share an experience that caused you to re-examine your beliefs, whether you did or did not ultimately change you position?
- In what ways have you felt out of step with the party or groups you generally support? In what ways do those groups not fully reflect what's important to you?