Here are some ideas for learning activities that may spark ideas. Consider activities that promote consensus rather than polarize (such as debates). You’ll find more details here.

1) “Yes, and…” discussion (rather than “No, but…”). This encourages critical listening and the consideration of other viewpoints.

2) Q Sort. In this activity, students rank controversial statements as to whether they are more or less true and to justify their rankings. This requires them to think more deeply.

3) The “bomb shelter” exercise. In this exercise, students are asked to identify which people are allowed into a bomb shelter with limited capacity in the face of an impending nuclear attack. These include a doctor, a single parent, and a religious leader (among others). As the discussion ensues, the facilitator reveals that the doctor is a disabled woman, the single parent is a gay man, and the religious leader is an Imam. Students are asked to think about whether these are the mental images they had when considering these individuals and whether their perspectives have changed.

You may have more creative ideas! Feel free to drop by the Center for Teaching and Learning to brainstorm!

References


Guethner, A. (2016) The Ideal of the Common: The Importance of Perspective and Diversity in Students’ Intellectual Development, Tufts CELT. (Summary of L. Knefelkamp presentation.)


