

Standards for Healthy Political Dialogue

Union of Saints

Political dialogue should be conducted in an academic manner, with an emphasis on facts, evidence, clearly defined subjects, and the ability to consider opposing perspectives. Discussions should address political standards, logical fallacies, cognitive biases, and potential personal harms while encouraging critical thinking, respectful communication, and healthy debate.

Participants should be willing to examine both sides of an issue, evaluate evidence objectively, recognize their own biases, and distinguish facts from opinions, assumptions, and interpretations. Political disagreements should be addressed through reasoned arguments rather than personal attacks or attempts to intimidate, manipulate, or silence opposing viewpoints.

Each conversation should be allotted sufficient time for both speakers to express their perspectives without interruption. Both participants should have an equal opportunity to present their arguments, explain their reasoning, ask questions, and respond to opposing viewpoints.

The following standards should be upheld throughout political dialogue:

- **Political standards:** Clearly identify the political principles, policies, positions, or actions being discussed.
- **Logical fallacies:** Identify and address errors in reasoning without using them as personal attacks.
- **Cognitive biases:** Recognize potential biases, assumptions, and selective interpretations of evidence on all sides.
- **Facts and evidence:** Support factual claims with credible evidence and distinguish verifiable information from opinions and speculation.
- **Consideration of both sides:** Allow participants to examine opposing arguments fairly, ask questions, and challenge claims respectfully.
- **Respectful communication:** Maintain a healthy dialogue without interruptions, bullying, swearing directed at others, confrontation intended to provoke conflict, personal jabs, insults, or threats.
- **Personal harms and microaggressions:** Address conduct or statements that may demean, intimidate, stereotype, or personally harm participants without automatically treating disagreement or criticism as misconduct.
- **Persuasion and influence:** Avoid intimidation, coercion, manipulation, and negative persuasion tactics that prevent open and independent consideration of the issues.

- **Equal participation:** Provide both speakers with an allotted amount of time to express their positions without interruption or deliberate attempts to dominate the conversation.

The objective is to promote informed political discussion, intellectual honesty, critical thinking, and respectful disagreement. Participants do not have to agree with one another, but they should be willing to listen, evaluate evidence, challenge arguments constructively, and respect each participant's opportunity to speak. Political dialogue should remain focused on the issues, with no bullying, personal attacks, intimidation, or threats.