



# How to Plan and Conduct a Teach-in

This toolkit is intended as a guide to help you plan every aspect of your teach-in and includes everything you need to make it a success. The purpose of a teach-in is to **educate** the attendees on a particular issue and to **motivate** them to join your campaign.

Emphasize the overreaching human rights issue and the opportunity to demonstrate democracy in action. A successful teach-in will get the message across and illustrate that we all have a chance to do something about it.

## 1. Teach-In Goals and Message

*Plan your teach-in accordingly* so students will leave the event energized and informed, having learned the main message and purpose.

## 2. Ideas for Teach-Ins

In planning your teach-in, be sure to:

- Pull together campus groups that can help plan and organize the teach-in, including student activists, faculty supporters, and other appropriate organizations.
- Have plenty of good materials on hand that students can take with them to learn more i.e. reading lists, a resource guide, or anything in particular. Be creative!
- Make sure students learn about the specific political acts, laws, and policies currently involved with the given situation.
- Make sure the students who attend know specifically what they can do *next* to continue their support. Ask all teach-in participants to sign pledge cards committing them to enlist in the effort.

## 3. When to Hold Your Teach-In

*A teach-in can be held* any time! Possible hooks—dates with national or local significance that might be a focus for a teach-in—are also good dates to hold teach-ins. Again, be creative.

## 4. Checklist for Planning Teach-Ins

*The following checklist* will help you plan a teach-in.

- Identify and pull together a core planning team Also pull in a broader organizing coalition (civil and human rights groups on the campus, etc.) if possible. Solidify message and turnout with the broader coalition and tie these campaigns to your teach-in.
- Develop a turnout plan with a time line and accountability.
- Secure time and place for teach in.
- Develop a campus media and publicity plan for the teach-in by writing articles and opinion editorials for campus publications to generate interest. Use social networking websites and every resource at your disposal.



## 5. Teach-In Agenda and Content

*Every teach-in* will be different. Be creative in designing yours! But every teach-in shares the same goals and needs to include several key elements. This is a rough guide to the agenda and content while highlighting important common outcomes.

As people arrive for the teach-in, make sure to give them a student pledge and disseminate all relevant information.

- The event's moderator should be someone familiar with the teach-in's goals and subject matter.
- Be sure to relate the specific topic of the teach-in to the larger picture of human rights.
- Pick faculty speakers who know the subject. For example, if there's a law school on your campus, there may be a law professor who knows about environmental rights. Or perhaps there is a professor who can speak about the economic and social costs, to the environment and society, of bauxite mining.
- Speakers should explain what students can do to make a difference in the struggle for the cause.
- An excellent presentation is always a terrific resource for a teach-in, but an enthusiastic presenter will make the teach-in stick!
- It is also a good idea to provide sources where they can get more information on the issue such as websites, alternative news sources, books, and newsletters.
- Close the teach-in by reminding people to **fill out a pledge form**, and be sure to collect all sign-in sheets for follow-up.

## 6. Get feedback and follow-up!

Following up is an important way to make sure that participants stay involved. Hosting an event or action within two weeks of the teach-in is great way to tap into the energy generated from the teach-in.