PLANIT TEACHERS

Teaching Script: Academic Discussion Skills

Course: Academic Communication Skills
Level: University (Age 19)
Duration: 90 minutes
Learning Objectives:

- Master advanced discussion techniques and protocols
- Develop critical listening and response strategies
- Apply academic discourse conventions effectively
- Evaluate and improve discussion participation quality

✓ Digital presentation slides
✓ Discussion Analysis Framework handouts
✓ Video clips of academic discussions
✓ Timer cards
✓ Active Listening worksheets
✓ Group role cards
✓ Evaluation rubrics
✓ Recording equipment (optional)

Pre-Session Preparation

Room Setup Requirements:

- Arrange furniture in discussion circles (4-5 students per group)
- Create clear pathways for movement between groups
- Set up technology station with backup equipment
- Post discussion protocols and HEAR method posters
- Prepare handout stations for efficient distribution

HEAR Method Overview:

- **H**elp - Support others' ideas constructively
- **E**ngage - Active participation and body language

- **A**nticipate - Predict discussion flow and prepare responses
- **R**espond - Thoughtful, evidence-based contributions

Opening Sequence (0-15 minutes)

0-5 minutes

"Welcome to today's session on Academic Discussion Skills. In university seminars and professional settings, your ability to engage in meaningful academic discourse will be crucial to your success."

[Display opening slide while delivering welcome] [Distribute Discussion Analysis Framework face-down]

"Before we look at today's materials, I'd like you to observe something carefully..."

[Play first 2 minutes of TED Talk clip] [Observe student reactions and note engagement levels]

5-10 minutes

"Let's analyze what we just observed. Turn your Analysis Framework over and let's break down the speaker's techniques together."

Discussion Analysis Focus Points:

- Speaker's use of evidence
- Transition techniques
- Body language and vocal modulation
- Audience engagement strategies

Active Listening Development (15-30 minutes)

CLEAR Listening Method:

- **C**oncentrate fully on the speaker
- **L**ook for non-verbal cues
- **E**ngage with appropriate responses
- **A**nalyze the message critically
- **R**eflect before responding

"Effective academic discussion begins with masterful listening. Let's practice using the CLEAR method with some challenging scenarios."

[Distribute Active Listening worksheets] [Demonstrate CLEAR method with volunteer student]

Differentiation Strategies:

- Provide written prompts for ELL students
- Allow recording options for review
- Offer alternative response formats
- Create mixed-ability practice pairs

20-25 minutes

"Now we'll analyze a complex academic debate. Pay special attention to how speakers build upon or challenge previous points."

[Play selected debate clip] [Monitor note-taking techniques]

Common Listening Errors to Address:

- Focusing on delivery instead of content
- Missing underlying arguments
- Failing to track discussion threads
- Preparing responses instead of listening

Structured Practice Session (30-45 minutes)

"We're now moving into the practice phase. You'll be assigned specific roles to ensure everyone gets experience with different discussion responsibilities."

Discussion Roles:

- Facilitator - Guides discussion flow
- Synthesizer - Connects and summarizes points
- Challenger - Poses critical questions
- Evidence Manager - Ensures claims are supported
- Process Observer - Monitors group dynamics

Advanced Discussion Techniques:

- Socratic questioning patterns
- Devil's advocate positioning
- Meta-discussion analysis
- Conflict resolution strategies

Group Discussion Implementation (45-60 minutes)

45-50 minutes

"Now that we've established our roles, let's implement our first structured academic discussion using the controversial topic provided."

Discussion Protocol:

1. Opening statements (2 minutes each)
2. Clarifying questions round (5 minutes)
3. Evidence presentation (8 minutes)
4. Counter-arguments (8 minutes)
5. Synthesis and conclusion (5 minutes)

Sample Discussion Topic:

"Should artificial intelligence be given equal rights to humans in academic institutions?"

- Recent research papers on AI consciousness
- Legal precedents in technology rights
- Ethical framework documents
- Current institutional policies

Advanced Discussion Techniques

Socratic Questioning

- Clarification probes
- Assumption challenges
- Evidence requests
- Perspective analysis
- Implication exploration

Meta-Discussion Skills

- Process commentary
- Discussion mapping
- Progress monitoring
- Quality assessment

Assessment and Feedback (60-75 minutes)

Discussion Quality Indicators

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Evidence Use	Consistently cites relevant sources	Usually supports claims with evidence	Occasionally uses evidence	Rarely supports claims
Listening Skills	Actively builds on others' ideas	Responds thoughtfully to others	Basic acknowledgment of others	Minimal engagement

Structured Feedback Process

1. Self-assessment using rubric
2. Peer feedback using specific examples
3. Instructor observation notes
4. Group reflection discussion

Advanced Applications (75-85 minutes)

Academic Conference Simulation

Students practice presenting and defending research positions in a conference-style format.

1. Position statement preparation
2. Q&A session management
3. Professional networking practice
4. Follow-up discussion facilitation

Virtual Discussion Leadership

Techniques for managing online academic discussions effectively.

- Video conference protocols
- Digital tool integration
- Remote engagement strategies
- Technical troubleshooting

Closing Activities and Extension (85-90 minutes)

Final Reflection Questions

- How has your understanding of academic discussion evolved?
- Which discussion technique proved most challenging?
- What strategies will you implement immediately?
- How will these skills transfer to other contexts?

Further Development Opportunities

Debate Club Leadership

Apply skills in competitive setting

Peer Tutoring

Coach others in discussion techniques

Research Symposium

Organize academic discussion events

Follow-up Tasks

- Record and analyze a 10-minute academic discussion
- Complete self-assessment using provided rubric
- Prepare discussion leader portfolio
- Schedule peer practice sessions

Resource Appendix

Online Learning Materials

- Discussion analysis software
- Virtual practice rooms
- Recorded example database
- Assessment tracking tools

Supplementary Reading

- Academic Discussion Frameworks
- Case Study Collection
- Rubric Development Guide
- Facilitation Handbook

Assessment and Closure (45-60 minutes)

"As we conclude today's session, let's reflect on our learning and evaluate our progress."

Success Indicators:

- Consistent application of HEAR method
- Effective use of academic vocabulary
- Clear evidence-based argumentation
- Respectful challenging of ideas

Final Reflection Questions:

- How has your discussion technique evolved?
- Which CLEAR listening strategy was most challenging?
- What role felt most natural to you?
- How will you apply these skills in other contexts?

Extended Learning:

- Record a 5-minute academic discussion response
- Complete self-evaluation using provided rubric
- Prepare three discussion points for next session
- Review recorded session highlights

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