Testimonials, Reflections, Thoughts, and Feelings from Past Participants of the Intergroup Dialogue Graduate Course for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars

“Participating in IDP was one of the most memorable experiences in my last two years at Cornell. As an international student who just started a new life in a different country, I often experienced difficulties to deal with cultural and social dynamics. Through IDP, I understood that this problem is not only my problem but also our problem. I could discuss and share the issues that I might have felt uncomfortable to share with others.”

- PhD student in Social Sciences

“...PhD life is usually so overwhelmed with research that many overlook their development in other important aspects. In sciences there is always right or wrong, but life is never binary.”

- PhD student in the Sciences

“My students are different from any other Cornell undergraduates I have met. Most deal with imposter syndrome while trying to navigate pre-med programs as a black or brown person, and the communication skills I learned in IDP help me to connect with my students as a Caucasian, high SES woman. Maintaining my awareness of different identities helps me to teach inclusively.”

- PhD student in the Sciences

“IDP affirmed something important for me – that a commitment to equity and inclusion involves crucial and difficult conversations with each other and honest self-reflection. This affirmation pushed me to be brave in my teaching, to broach discussions about misogyny, racism, and homophobia in my classroom, to bring attention to how discussions of class difference often get elided at this university, to examine how our well-being on this campus is shaped by the ways we are perceived by ourselves and others. Dialogue has become not just a tool I wield during contentious conversations. It has become part of my pedagogy, part of my research methodology. I only wish that more of my graduate student peers had the opportunity to engage deeply with the thinking and self-reflection that IDP fosters.”

- PhD student in Humanities
“I do research in a foreign country, and interacting with another culture is such an amazing and challenging experience. ...Following IDP, I felt much more comfortable talking to colleagues and people I met about their culture and how their experiences were both different and similar compared to mine. While I am by no means a sociologist, I felt like I came away from that time with a richer understanding of the people and place where I do my work than I had in previous trips.”

-PhD student in the Sciences

“After being a part of IDP, I believe that I am better equipped to handle difficult conversations regarding inclusiveness across differences. Despite the challenging political climate we face, both in the U.S. and worldwide, I felt uniquely prepared to address my students’ concerns that arose last fall. For example, after the U.S. presidential election, I set aside time in class to let my students know that I cared about how they were feeling and that I remained committed to making our classroom a place for grappling with hard questions while ultimately prioritizing concern for each other.”

-PhD student in the Sciences