# Constructive Controversy And Innovation

**Facilitators:** **David W. Johnson**, Co-Director of the Cooperative Learning Center and Emeritus Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Minnesota; **Karl A. Smith**, Cooperative Learning Professor of Engineering Education, Purdue University and Morse-Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor and Emeritus Professor of Civil Engineering, University of Minnesota.

**Workshop:** Monday, Tuesday October 1, 2, 0930 – 1700

Dealing with conflict during class sessions tends to be a challenge. Students are expected to disagree and argue with each other, but at the same time should respect and be courteous towards each other. Orchestrating and managing respectful disagreement is difficult and most graduate programs do not prepare future faculty for such situations.

This workshop focuses on the use of constructive controversy to enhance instruction and foster creative problem solving and innovation both in and outside of class sessions. In many ways this course is an advanced course on cooperative learning as it focuses on how to structure intellectual conflict among members of a cooperative learning group. In this workshop participants will learn to understand the nature of intellectual conflict and constructive controversy, how to structure constructive controversies, how to teach essential social skills for engaging in constructive controversy, and how to assess the impact of constructive controversy on desired instructional outcomes. The workshop is a hands-on and interactive workshop in which participants will engage in the controversy procedure, develop skills in intellectual disagreement, and learn how to utilize controversies in their own teaching.

**Participant Learning Goals:**

1. Understand the nature of intellectual conflict

2. Understand the constructive controversy procedure to structure and manage intellectual conflicts

3. Learn how constructive controversy enhances creative problem solving and innovation

4. Learn the procedure for structuring constructive controversies as part of academic lessons

5. Learn some of the essential skills in engaging in constructive controversy

6. Learn how to plan and implement academic lessons featuring constructive controversy

**Tentative Agenda:**

Session 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

2. Purposes

3. Schedule

4. Assignment to groups of four

Session 2: Nature of Controversy

1. Controversy Quiz

2. Definition of Controversy

3. Walk-Through of the Procedure

4. Discussion

Session 3: Why Use Constructive Controversy

1. Research Promise

2. Outcomes

3. Process

d. Conditions

e. Relationship with Creative Problem Solving and Innovation

f. Conclusions

Session 4: In-Depth Walk Through

1. Assignment

2. Preparing

3. Presenting (inquiry-based advocacy)

4. Refuting and Rebutting

5. Perspective-Taking

6. Synthesizing

7. Processing

8. Conclusions

Session 5: Constructive Controversy Lesson Planning

1. Select a Lesson

2. Plan It in Pairs

3. Guided Practice

4. Barriers and Solutions

Session 6: Conclusions and Closure