

Upper School Conver-Station Topics

Faculty Facilitator	Student Facilitator (if applicable)	<i>Conver-station</i> title and brief description	Room Number/Location
Glen Turf Cristina Pla-Guzmán	Rashad Heagle	<u>They Told Me Not To: Sexual orientation and youth today</u> : We live in a society that categorizes how boys and girls should play, who should be their friends, and how they should act. What happens if you are constantly told “not to”? How do you respond? How does the media portray gender identity? This session will explore the complex nature of sexual orientation--both from an introspective look, as well as from that of society.	Smurfit
Mari Conea	Eduardo Dana	<u>Islam and the West</u> : The world of Islam was at the forefront of human achievement, the foremost economic and military power in the world as well as leader in the arts and sciences of civilization; however with the Enlightenment and, ultimately, the Industrial Revolution the power balance shifted in the favor of the Europeans. What happened? What went wrong?	202
Beth Long	Ellie Cohen, Laura Ramirez, Cristina Palop and Maria Bordovskikh	<u>People First Language</u> : By putting the people before the disability you are honoring the individual and acknowledging them as a person rather than focusing on their disability. This workshop will focus on learning the language of people first and becoming aware of how your references to people impact their self-awareness and how others form opinions of them.	203
Marisol Sardina	Ava Hansen Danielle Geathers	<u>Discovering Self in the Age of Cookie, Scandal, and THOT</u> : Historically, the media’s superficial standard of beauty has negatively impacted the health and well-being of adolescent girls. Nowadays, we not only have to contend with the media, we also have a variety of reality shows, the urban drama, and a misogynistic hip hop culture redefining femininity. Despite the work of educators and advocates for women, girls (especially girls of color) receive provocative messages that	201

		severely hinder the development of the self that is essential preadolescence. What were seen as teen problems now occur in elementary school. How does negative messaging impact girls?	
Nina Lucchi		<u>Racism & Social Media:</u> Cyber racism is most commonly defined as racism which occurs in the cyber world. This includes racist websites, images, blogs, videos and online comments as well as racist comments, images or language in text messages, emails or on social networking sites used to intimidate and harass individuals on the basis of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. Although hate speech is offensive and hurtful, the First Amendment usually protects such expression. What can be done to protect ourselves and others, in spite of a lack of legislation?	Franco Center 204
Sam Brown Carolyn Dorn	Marcela Pineda Paul Clifford	<u>Welcome to America?:</u> Immigration and debates over how we restrict it are at the center of American politics today. What do the headlines and debates miss? What is DACA and what issues should be considered for this subgroup of immigrants? Considering varying perspectives will enable you to better discuss this issue, no matter your own view.	210
Tom Sverkounos Emilia Veve		<u>Learner Diversity - Confronting Learning Differences:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it laziness or a learning disability? How can we tell the difference? What are the “masks” that people with learning differences put on? • Do you want to know what it feels like to be faced with serious learning obstacles, and the stigma that goes with it? (let’s do an activity that might change your outlook) • Can someone with a learning difference or disability make it in this world? Can they be successful? See real-life examples. 	121
Marra Smith Ines Pearson		<u>Who Am I?:</u> In this safe space, we will focus on the 8 core cultural identifiers. This will increase a great deal of awareness into self and others; about your identity and others. We will do a silent activity based on identity, and you will	World Languages Center 110

Sorela Schultz		also have the opportunity to share your feelings. <i>Recommended for juniors and seniors.</i>	
Juliette Fulton Hiram Rosas Annette Fulton	Allexii Bassette Tatiana Barnes Lane Dillworth	<u>Confronting the -isms:</u> Racism, Sexism, Classism, Ableism, Anti-Semitism, Ageism and Heterosexism, Lookism, and Feminism. This workshop will explore how they are all involved in a negative prejudice whose purpose is to maintain control and power. To help students identify and confront their personal biases.	205
Kristina Martinez Daniela Pesce	Taylor Lynott Lauryn Russell	<u>Hands Up Don't Shoot: Police Brutality in America Today:</u> In this conversation we will explore policing practices and the history of systemic racism in American cities. We will also touch upon the experience of black youth, the motive behind the Black Lives Matter movement, and the display of African American patriotism.	204
Cristian Miguez Tania Vargas	Isadora F.	<u>Debunking Latino stereotypes:</u> Although Hispanics may be the largest minority group in the United States, there are many misconceptions or generalizations about them. Do they all speak Spanish? Do they all have a similar look? Are they all recent immigrants? This workshop will explore the many differences among Hispanics in the US.	World Languages Center 114
Gregg Lightfoot Cynthia Gómez Martín		<u>Trigger Warnings:</u> A roundtable aimed at seniors. College life and the independence it brings can be bewildering. Navigating new situations, people, cultures, and responsibilities in ways that are beneficial and respectful of yourself and others can be a challenge. This conversation will touch on topics related to social issues associated with encountering new diverse situations on campus and where you turn for help, fellowship, and affinity if you need it. Topics will include Greek life, administrative support, service clubs, student alliance groups, among others.	221
Kelly Pierce	Board of MHSA	<u>It's "All in Your Head":</u> "Get over it", "What are you so sad about?", "Why should I talk with a Therapist? I'm not crazy" Learning more about mental health can help to dispel stigmas, decrease stereotypes, promote	213

		early identification/treatment and raise awareness.	
Mark Runge	Taisa Strouse Abigail Cherenfant	<u>So It Goes--Veteran Suicide:</u> Veterans make up about nine percent of the US population, but they account for 18 percent of the suicides in America. And over the past decade the rate of suicide for female veterans has risen steeply. Why are veterans more prone to kill themselves than the civilian population--about 32 percent more prone?	211
Jessica Furth Michael Slotnick	Aaron Dorrance Ana Rusconi Amaris Rios	<u>Beyond 'He' and 'She':</u> In the English language, the word "he" is used to refer to males and "she" to refer to females. But some people identify as neither gender, or both, which is why non-binary pronouns such as 'They' are becoming more common. Our discussion will explain why and how non-binary pronouns are used.	102
Karen Davis Phil Cahill	Saavan Kamlani, Kyle G.	<u>Protest and the Press:</u> Is our press "the enemy of the people" as some in the current administration have claimed or is it the bedrock of our society? Is the media the appropriate venue for protest? What does a free press mean and why is it important in our society? This roundtable discussion will focus on these questions in an effort to discuss why protest and free press are two key rights that go hand in hand and must be preserved. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPG43X7SDB8	Franco Center 203 (Broadcast Studio)
Carroll Kelly	Danny Strouse	<u>"My" Country Day:</u> We will examine some of the recent concerns of discrimination at MCDS, focusing on how we can improve awareness and provide better support for students who do not feel supported in our community.	206
Nicole Paciorek Peter Konen		<u>Science and Democracy:</u> Our nation was founded on the conviction that an informed public, armed with evidence and reason, can make wise decisions that serve the common good. Science is a powerful tool used globally to solve problems, develop new technologies, and treat disease, but the scientific process has its limits, leaving it open to question. We will examine the many factors that influence one's belief in scientific findings	222

		and subsequent views on issues such as climate change, evolution, and childhood vaccines.	
Scott Brennan		<p><u>America Divided and Conquered: the Consequences of Identity Politics:</u> Abraham Lincoln famously said in a speech that warned against the dangers of slavery, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” The session will examine, using Lincoln’s words as a starting point to the discussion, division in America, especially the pressure individuals may feel to identify with a particular social and/or political viewpoint. We will explore the sources and avenues that support identity politics, especially the pressure to curate one’s identity on social media. We will also look at news media and music that both describe and reinforce identity politics and ask the essential questions: How might identity politics be a source of division in our nation? If so, what might the consequences be?</p>	212
Joanne Aronson	Elizabeth Stone	<p><u>Say “Yes!” to STEM:</u> Women’s persistence in STEM related fields continues to be a critical issue and national priority; however, the representation of women who enter and persist in STEM, particularly engineering and the physical sciences, is not comparable to the total number of women graduating with undergraduate and graduate degrees. So, this begs the question. . . What is it about the physical sciences and engineering that send a “no!” message to young women? Our conversation will focus on the factors that affect gender equity in the STEM fields. Why do teenage girls lose their interest in the physical sciences? How does the environment create barriers for women and affect their persistence in STEM? What can we do to give voice to young women and empower them to disregard stereotypes and persist?</p>	103
Barbara Byrne Mike Fallik Stephen Brennan	Alicia Kelly Lane Dillworth	<p><u>The White Experience and How that Relates to Racism in the U.S.A.:</u> We have all been raised to be “good people” and not racist. This session will dive deep into systemic and institutionalized racism in this country, define white identity, white privilege and the racist</p>	208

		binary that is an unconscious aspect of the white experience and ultimately maintains the obstacle to creating a nation of equals.	
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