

Participation Rubric

Here is a rubric that I will use when grading your participation. Note: if you prefer not to participate in large class discussion, you should make sure to do so in other ways, e.g. by coming to my office hours to discuss topics from class, or by participating in the discussion board:

- Being reflective (one third)
 - You think carefully about why you hold the positions you do, and try to articulate the reasons behind them, and not simply that you hold them.
 - When people give you arguments against your view, you try to understand their arguments and identify where you think they go awry, as opposed to merely offering new arguments in favor of your view.
 - You try to see what positions are supported by the best arguments, as opposed to having a position you are already committed to and accepting whatever arguments line up with that position.
- Being a good classmate (one third)
 - You treat your classmate's views with respect, even when you disagree with them or when they haven't thought about an issue as carefully as you have.
 - When your peers make comments, you try to interact with what they say, as opposed to always raising your own points while ignoring those of your peers.
 - When asked to give feedback to your peers on assignments, you read through their work very carefully and try to offer detailed comments that will help them improve their work.
- Being determined (one third).

- You are willing to examine a position, even one that is surprising or unpopular, in order to see what it has going for it.
- You know that material in this class is sometimes going to be hard, and you are willing to try to think through difficult and complicated questions, knowing that it might be frustrating and you might not get the answer right away.
- If you're examining a position, and hear an argument against the position, you don't always immediately abandon the position because you don't want to have to keep thinking about it. Rather you first try to see if there's anything that might be said in response.