

Participation Grading

Philosophy As I've stressed in class and on the syllabus, I consider active, informed participation in discussion to be essential to good education – and an important requirement of the course. That's why participation counts 20 percent of your final grade.

Good participation involves a consistent commitment to enhancing the quality of your section's discussion – insightfully addressing your TA's questions, thoughtful and respectfully responding to the comments of your classmates, and asking your own provocative questions. Good participation involves more than a large word count; it's the value of these words that matters. (As you recognize, long papers aren't necessarily better than shorter papers.) And, of course, good participation involves more than dutiful attendance.

Necessarily, your participation grade reflects a subjective judgment based on imprecise criteria. The TA's for the course make every effort to be discerning and fair in making these assessments. To place this effort in perspective, recognize that judgments about your written work in this course and other courses are also subjective – and that throughout your career people will make consequential assessments of your contributions to discussions.

Here's how your participation will be graded:

		<u>Performance</u>	<u>Number of Excused Absences Allowed</u>
A	(96/100)	consistently insightful	1
A-	(92)	insightful, less consistently so	2
B+	(88)	some good insights, almost always some contribution	2
B	(85)	solid insights, almost always some contribution	2
B-	(82)	usually some reasonable contributions or a few insights mixed with irregular contribution	2/3
C+	(78)	mostly silent, limited contribution	1
C+	(78)	very good contributions (B+ or better)	3/4
C	(75)	mostly silent, limited contributions	2
C	(75)	good contributions (B/B- level)	3/4
C-	(72)	mostly silent, limited contributions	3

D	(65)	some reasonable participation	4
F	(50)	mostly silent	4
F	(0)	MIA	5

Based on past years, I anticipate that about 15-30% of participation grades will be A/A- and that the average grade will be in the B-/B range. I'm open to having the TA's convince me that you're an unusually talented group!