**CLASS PARTICIPATION**

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Alcuin 371 @ SJU

As a CSB/SJU student, you will have an active role in what you and others learn in class…and outside of class. *Participation* is the name of the game.

**In-class participation**

Active participation in class—paying attention and engaging in discussion—helps you convey that you are prepared for class, develop social connections with classmates, improves your learning, and often contributes to your final grade.

**Minimum**: Show up for class. (If you’re not there, you won’t be able to participate.)

**Good**: Be ready to venture an answer to a question if you’re asked. (Being up to date with reading and homework is good preparation.) If helpful, you can frame your response with:

* I’m not sure I fully understand but I think….
* Is it correct that…?

**Better**: Volunteer an answer to a question that comes up in class. Use this as practice for sharing your understanding of the concepts you’ve been studying. You can prepare by writing summary notes about key points in the reading or homework.

**Best**: Be the person who asks the question! While preparing for class, make notes about what you grasp, what is confusing, etc., and speak up early in class. Helpful leading phrases could include

* I think I understand Concept A but it seems very similar to Concept B. How do I keep them straight?
* The author says “…” but I disagree. Did anyone else have a similar reaction?
* (Another student) and I were just talking about this and they had a good insight….

**Group work**

Benefits of group work: You will be able to build social connections while doing course work. You will accomplish a much bigger project than if you worked alone. Group meetings will help you commit to time to work on the project.

Any challenges of group work can often be minimized by good group communication.

* Start early. As soon as the group is assigned—before class ends if possible—have your first meeting. Take five minutes to introduce yourselves, share contact information, and commit to a time & place for a planning meeting. (Having this conversation in person will save everyone hours of time!)
* Share your strengths. Are you good at analyzing data? Editing? Organizing meetings? Speak up! Note that you will also need to contribute in ways that may not be natural strengths. That’s OK, just keep a balance when you can.
* Keep your commitments. When the meeting time is decided, put it on your schedule/calendar immediately. You may also find helpful to reserve time immediately after a group meeting to do the work in preparation for the next meeting. (A missed meeting requires more time spent rescheduling and can put the whole project behind schedule.)
* Be flexible. It can be a challenge to arrange a time & place for a group to meet so you may need to rearrange some optional activities to make this work.

**Discussion posts**

Online discussion posts afford an out-of-class opportunity for you to engage with classmates and demonstrate the effort you are putting into class preparation. Follow these tips to get the most of the opportunity.

* Review the discussion prompt before doing the assigned reading for class. As you read, make some notes that relate to the prompt.
* Post to the discussion early so you can be the first to make your particular statement. This, of course, means you’ll need to do the reading early.
* If another has posted what you were planning, that is OK; your job will be to continue the conversation. Offer a new angle or additional support for the statement.
* Be sure to proofread your post. You may want to write in Microsoft Word so you can edit easily then copy & paste to Canvas.
* Check the discussion thread regularly to see what your peers are contributing. Remember that it is a *discussion* post; keep the conversation going.