

Discussion Participation Portfolio

Four times during the semester (twice during the first half and twice during the second half of the semester) I would like you to write (**in your native tongue**) about the extent to which you think each of these purposes were addressed through class discussions and activities. You are welcome to choose as many or as few items for reflection as you consider necessary. Be specific and give as many examples of your own discussion behaviors as you can. You are expected to write approximately 250 words for each portfolio entry. When writing, please refer to the topics suggested below and try to address the questions related to them.

Note that the Course Portfolio is not anonymous. I will collect these entries twice - at midterm and at the end of the semester.

Also note that the purpose of the portfolio is to understand what/how you are learning. I want you to be sincere and your answers to be as authentic as possible. Hence, I will not grade your entries. Instead, you will receive full credit for completing them or 0 if you do not complete them.

1. *Becoming aware of diversity*: Were a variety of perspectives explored in the discussion this week? What views from outside the mainstream did you or others try to bring into the group? What questions, issues, or perspectives did you think the group was trying to avoid during the discussion, and how did you or others try to bring these to the attention of the group members? Did the students who spoke in discussion include at least some representatives from subgroups demarcated by gender, race, class, occupation, ideology, and so on?
2. *Appreciating ambiguity and complexity*: was the discussion open-ended, and did the participants show respect for the complexity of the issue discussed? What were some of the questions raised for you this week as a result of your participating in class? Did the teacher guide the discussion toward a predetermined end point, or did the discussion conclude more ambiguously, stimulating further inquiry and reflection?
3. *Seeing connections*: How did the discussion this week connect to your life? What ideas surfaced that had implications for how you'll think and act in the future? What relevance, if any, did the discussion this week have to your own experience?
4. *Practicing democratic habits*: Were there frequent opportunities this week for many students to voice concerns and formulate ideas? Were there frequent opportunities to affirm and question one another? Were there opportunities to reach small group of consensus through collaborative, deliberate processes? Was dissent also encouraged and honored?
5. *Learning collaboratively*: Were there opportunities this week for you to work closely with others? If so, did this work increase your understanding of collaboration or enhance your sensitivity to it? Did your peers display collaborative work habits?
6. *Broadening understanding and empathy*: To what extent did the discussion this week broaden your understanding of an issue or idea? Were you better about to understand and articulate the perspectives of others? In what way did the discussion lead you to a deeper understanding of an idea or issue?