Bret Leraul

Study Habits Brief 1

SP 2021

*NOTE: This is a handout I will use for my classes in Spring 2021. It isn’t tailored to this class but it gives you a sense of how much I value class participation based on what I am learning from this class.*

***Why should I participate in class?***

1) You will learn (intrinsic motivation)

* Remember that your learning depends on your participation in class.
* You cannot meaningfully participate if you have not prepared our course texts.
* Therefore, you must prepare the readings and speak about them in class if you want to learn.

2) You will be evaluated (extrinsic motivation)

* I evaluate demonstrated learning.
* You must not only learn but also demonstrate that you have learned.
* Participation in class conversations is the most important way you can demonstrate that you have learned. Why? Because it is something you (should) do *every* class.

3) The deal

* I will not force you to participate. I am not your boss. I will not compel you to behave in certain ways.
* I can only offer you opportunities to practice the behaviors, like participation, that drive learning.
* If you *choose* not take these opportunities you...
	1. will not learn effectively (intrinsic motivation)
	2. will not be evaluated positively (extrinsic motivation).\*

***What does participation look like?***

Full participation in class takes many forms, some demonstrated others less so:

* carefully preparing the text
* active listening
* taking notes
* contributing your ideas to class discussion
* asking pertinent questions
* responding to your peers’ comments and ideas in writing and speech
* engaging thoughtfully in group work

Participation is *not* necessarily about

* speaking as frequently as possible
* forming perfectly crafted ideas.

***Notes on Synchronous Zoom Participation***

The one area I have not reduced my expectations is class participation. **Why?**

Conversation is the very bedrock of the humanities. If we’re not in conversation, we’re not doing the work of the humanities. I am very sensitive to the stressors of COVID-19. I have taken measures in advance to reduce your work load (pages of reading, number and complexity of assignments).

You must prepare yourself for class as you would if you were to attend in person. **Why?**

By putting on a shirt and sitting upright in a well-illuminated workplace, you are creating the conditions in which you will be able to learn. You are also *demonstrating* that you are willing to learn.

You must turn your camera on. **Why?**

Active listening is a form of participation, but you must demonstrate to me that you are doing so. The only proof I have that you are listening is your demeanor and other visual cues. If your camera is off, you *cannot* *demonstrate* that you listening and learning.

(If you do not want to show the space where you are studying, please use a [Zoom background](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background). If your system does not meet the requirements for using virtual backgrounds, please speak to me).

\* Note: In some courses, participation evaluation will be wholly or partially collective.