



Class Expectations



Practical steps and tips to help you
prepare, contribute, and feel confident
in every class.



Why Participation Matters

In college, participation shows professors you're engaged and serious about learning. It can boost your grade, deepen your understanding, and help you build connections with classmates and professors.

Ask yourself:

- Do I come to class prepared with notes and readings?
- Do I make an effort to contribute regularly?
- Am I listening closely to classmates and professors?
- Do I show respect for different perspectives?

Treat participation like networking—you're not just learning material, you're showing what you bring to the table.





What Professors Look For

Participation is often part of your grade—and professors notice effort.

Ask yourself:

- Am I ready to answer questions or share insights from readings?
- Do I contribute without taking over the discussion?
- Do I stay focused instead of drifting to my phone or laptop?
- Am I helping create space for others to join in?

Speak once, listen twice. That ratio keeps the conversation balanced.





Ways to Engage in Class

Participation looks different in a seminar than in a large lecture—but it all counts.

Try this:

- In small classes, contribute to discussions and respond to peers.
- In big lectures, join polls, group work, or ask a question after class.
- Build on what others say instead of repeating it.
- Keep your comments short and on-topic.

Start small—share one thought in a small group before speaking up in front of the whole class.





What to Avoid

**Not all participation helps—
some habits work against you.**

Avoid:

- Speaking without doing the reading.
- Interrupting or dominating the discussion.
- Staying completely silent all semester.
- Making off-topic or dismissive comments.
- Treating participation like a box to check.

Quality beats quantity—one thoughtful comment is worth more than five filler ones.





Making It Easier to Contribute

**Participation is a skill—
you'll get better with practice.**

Try this:

- Set a goal: speak once per class.
- Write your question or comment before raising your hand.
- Use phrases like “To build on what [name] said...”
- Visit office hours to practice talking through ideas.
- Remember: these skills carry into internships and jobs.

*Think of class participation as rehearsal—
you're practicing how to share ideas in a
room full of smart people.*





The Bottom Line

**Participation = preparation + respect + practice.
Professors notice effort, and your contributions
strengthen the whole class.**

Avoid:

- Am I engaged, prepared, and respectful?
- Do I add value when I contribute?
- Am I helping the class move forward?

*Every move shapes the conversation.
Don't sit it out—add yours.*



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