

## **Preparation and participation**

As a seminar course, this class relies heavily on discussions. In the first class of the semester, we will discuss what participation can look like and create community guidelines for discussion. Once this is agreed upon by all participants, I will add this to our syllabus. We will remind ourselves of these guidelines throughout the semester. While we all aim to support and participate in constructive ways, there may be times when we (me included) make mistakes. In such situations, we will call back to our community guidelines.

To ensure that everyone is accountable for thoroughly engaging with the readings and presentations, your active participation during class will contribute to your final grade. There are different ways of participating and engaging constructively in classroom discussions. Generally speaking, effective participation and engagement could include:

- Asking insightful or clarifying questions;
- Connecting the reading to other readings you've done either for this course or for any other purposes;
- Drawing parallels and/or contrasts between findings from different readings;
- Offering thoughtful critiques of the research methodology and/or interpretation and providing suggestions for how it might be improved;
- Bringing in outside sources that contribute to the findings, or the way they are interpreted and applied;
- Actively listening to classmates and responding to their ideas.

Participation is an essential component of this course and of your grade, and you are expected to attend and actively engage in each class period. Unexcused absences will count against your participation grade (please see Excused Absence on pg 11 for more details).

In a lot of discussions, you will find that there are no clear right or wrong answers - just different ways of making arguments for/against a finding. However, they may be some of you who find it difficult to participate regularly in class discussions. You can find a rubric for how I will assess participation and engagement in Appendix A. If you are concerned about your ability to contribute to class discussions or if your style of participation doesn't match the above expectations or the rubric, please see me during drop-in hours by Week 2 (i.e. by Sept 14, 2023).

## **Ungraded Self-Reflection**

Since it can be worrying to not receive any feedback or grades on participation until the end of the semester, you will complete a quick self-reflection on your participation in Week 6 of the semester (Oct 12; see Appendix A for the participation rubric). I will read your reflection, and provide my feedback on whether you meet the participation criteria and if there's anything you can do to better engage in the class discussions. If you improve your participation in response to this feedback, I will weigh that more strongly toward your final participation grade.