

Participation Self-Assessment

College is a time of self-discovery that leads to the development of one's own voice. The expectation in my classes is that students develop their voices by creating oral arguments that are sustained with evidence (e.g., from the book, other classes or experiential evidence). This level of involvement requires guidance, trust and an open conversation throughout the semester. I enter into this conversation with each of my students through a 2-step process. First, they assess their own participation 3 weeks into the semester (see form below). I use these reflections of participation and craft each student an e-mail with information about how to increase the quality of their participation. Through this digital learning conversation I am able to talk to students about a variety of issues such as anxiety, self-confidence, argument formation and evidence gathering. Here are some examples:

Anxious Student

E-mail to student

Thank you for reflecting on your participation in my Forensic Psychology class. Also, thank you for telling me about your anxiety. I can definitely understand where you are coming from. When I was in college I was really afraid of speaking out too. I would get all red, and it was hard to breath. I don't know what happened but somewhere along the way I had to make speeches in classes and that helped. Anyway, I know how hard it is for you and I see that you are engaged. Can we try for participating once every three classes? Would you feel comfortable with that? It can be a comment or question...it doesn't matter. Let me know what you think.

Dr. Carlucci

Student response

Hi Dr. Carlucci,

Thank you so much for understanding its actually extremely comforting to know someone else had the same issues and turned out to seem so comfortable with public speaking, i would have never assumed you were afraid of speaking too and also turned red/have trouble breathing like myself. Hopefully I'll get better as time goes on but I can definitely try to participate once every three classes- i feel much better sitting next to my friend Kara who is very comfortable speaking in class so hopefully being near her will help me as well. I'll try my best in the next half of this semester, I think it will be much easier in this class because its a topic I have a lot of opinions on and a lot of interest in (I would like forensic psychology to be my future career). But participating once every three classes seems like a realistic goal- I'll try my best! Thanks so much, see you in class monday!

Self-Confidence

E-mail to student

Thank you so much for reflecting on your participation in Psychology of Women. I think your assessment is spot on. You bring wonderful ideas to the classroom but I can feel you are hesitant. This is something that I would love for us to work on. If you are willing to work on this would you be willing to participate once per week (eventually once per class)? I would really like for you to work on tone. I want you to be more confident in the way you phrase/say your opinions. I know challenging others is difficult, but it's definitely a skill that comes in handy because we often disagree with those around us. One of the best things to develop in these situations is the ability to say things without being disrespectful and feeling ok with "agreeing to disagree".

So, are you willing to work on that a bit this semester?

Best,

Dr. Carlucci

Student response

Hi Dr. Carlucci,

Thank you for your e-mail. I truly appreciate your feedback. I feel as though I am very hesitant in certain situations and then overzealous in others. Finding a balance has been tricky, but I do try my best to at least participate once per class. I feel that I am now beginning to feel a bit more at ease with speaking in our class now that we've come to the middle of the semester. Many of the topics are so interesting and sometimes personal that I am unsure of which thoughts to share. I am certainly willing to work on my tone and participation. I can honestly say that I have regretted many times about not sharing more of my thoughts with the class. I hope to improve with gaining confidence in sharing my opinions with not only our class but also within everyday situations. Thank you again for sharing your thoughts with me.

See you in class.

E-mail to student

I wanted to thank you for your thoughtful reflection regarding your class participation. I agree with your assessment. I think you've spoken a few times during class but I would love it if you could increase your participation to once a week for now. Does that seem feasible? Let me know if there is anything I can do to help with this. Perhaps giving the class a little more time to process information, or asking questions in different ways, or perhaps through small group discussions. I am happy to work with you to help you become more comfortable talking in class.

Have a great weekend,

Dr. Carlucci

Student response: Needs more processing time in class

Thank you for your input and consideration. I will work to increase my participation to once a week from now on. I would appreciate more time to process information when we are presented with material that may be a little more complex or shocking at first. I am thoroughly enjoying your class this semester.

Thank you and see you in class later!

4.75–5 (A): I am sensitive to other members of my class and their desires to participate as well (i.e., I do not dominate conversations). I shut my phone off before class and put it away. I am open-minded and ready to learn. I contribute my opinion at least once a week. I readily respond to questions asked in class and I have asked questions of my own. **When I contribute, I add to the discussion by bringing information from the assigned readings or other classes to provide a multi-disciplinary approach. At times, I also play devil’s advocate to advance critical discussion.**

4.5-4.7 (A- to A): I am sensitive to other members of my class and their desires to participate as well. I shut my phone off before class. I am open-minded and ready to learn in class. I voluntarily respond to question in class and I have asked one or two questions. **I contribute my opinion at least once per class. Sometimes when I contribute I bring information from the book but most of my participation is opinion-based.**

4.25-4.45 (B to B+): I participate in in-class activities and discussions and I am engaged. Sometimes I dominate discussion. I shut my phone off before class. I have voluntarily responded to questions in class but I generally do not ask questions even if I think of them. I am somewhat open-minded to people’s opinions. **I contribute my opinion every two weeks or so. My participation is all opinion-based.**

4.0-4.2 (B- to B): I participate in in-class activities but not class discussions. I stay on task and pay attention most of the time, though I am occasionally distracted I am open-minded and ready to learn in class. Sometimes I forget to put away my phone during class, but I do not use it during class. **I attend class but generally do not respond to question class unless I am called upon and I do not ask questions. I have contributed my opinion once during the semester so far. I am not very open-minded to people’s opinions.**

3.75-3.95 (C to C+): I sometimes participate in in-class activities. I stay on task and pay attention but I allow myself to be distracted. I want to learn but take a largely passive approach to class participation. I have used parts of class time to do other activities (e.g., studying for other exams, filling out agenda). **I have never spoken during class. I attend class but have not contributed by responding to or asking my own questions.**

3.5-3.7 (C- to C): I resist participating in in-class activities though I go along with it. I generally pay attention but I allow myself to be distracted. **I have used my phone in class. I have never spoken during class. I attend class but have not contributed by responding to or asking my own questions.**

0 – 3.45 (F to D+): I pay little to no attention in class. I do not participate in any class activities or demonstrations. I do not ask any questions or participate in group discussions. **The questions I do ask are disruptive and not relevant to discussion. I regularly use portable devices (e.g., texting). I have never spoken during class.**

My score: _____ /5 points.

In the space provided below I would like you to provide a narrative of your justification for your score by providing your strengths and weaknesses. If you believe your participation is good, name one or two things you could do to show mastery. If you believe your participation needs improvement, tell me some of the hurdles you face during class discussions. In this space please feel free to make suggestions for adjustments that I can make as the instructor.

Thank you for reflecting on your participation in my class. I will be in touch with you regarding your participation in my class via e-mail in the coming weeks.

This form was adapted from Dr. DiDonato (Psychology)