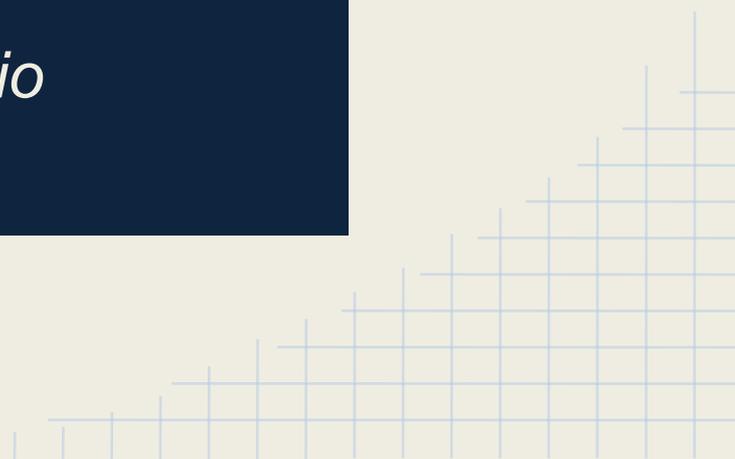




Participation in the Classroom

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Workshop participants will be able to....

- ... **elaborate** on the differences between class and course participation
- ... **evaluate** the benefits and drawbacks of different measures of student participation
- ... **utilize** an active learning self-assessment for evaluating course participation

Take Aways...

1. Compiled answers from group activities will be posted online
2. Rubric and assignment write up that we will discuss is already online
3. These slides will be posted online
4. If you include your name and e-mail address on your first activity sheet I will send you a note when all of these are available.
5. Send me an email (jwrig25@uwo.ca) if you want links to the references.

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The Plan:

1. Class Participation & Course Participation
Activity: What Participation Counts?
2. Assessing Course Participation
Activity: Assessment Strategies
3. Self-Assessment Strategy
Activity: Learn by Doing
(Self-Assessment of Workshop Participation)

Thinking Ahead... The Final Activity

Answer the following questions, then trade your answers with a neighbour and use the included rubric to evaluate their answers:

1. List up to 2 ways that you have participated in this workshop (*taken notes, asked questions, etc.*) and justify that participation (*show notes, specify the question, etc.*)
2. Explain how this participation helped you learn the workshop material, and identify one concept or idea that is new or occurred to you during this workshop.

Things to think about...

What *counts as participation* in my class/course?

How would I *assess* that mode of participation?

Class and Course Participation

Broadening the concept of participation...

Class participation involves being vocal and active in the classroom (participating in discussions, activities, attending class and asking questions).

Course participation involves engaging oneself and others with the material and concepts of the course inside and outside of the classroom.

Class and Course Participation

Broadening the concept of participation...

“Course participation may include readily speaking, thinking, reading, role taking, risk taking, and engaging oneself and others, and it may occur inside or outside the classroom confines”

(Peterson, 2001, 187)

Participation

Why do we care about participation?

What are some reasons you would have a participation grade (or evaluation)?

- Keeps Students Engaged
- Positive Impact on Learning Outcomes
- Enforces Good Learning Habits
- Fosters a Specific Classroom Environment
- Develop and Practice Discussion Skills
- Preparing Students for Success in Upper Year Seminars

ACTIVITY #1: Discussion Group

Identify (up to) three modes of participation, at least one of which can occur **in** class and one of which can occur **outside** of class.

Don't think or worry about assessment strategies, instead imagine an ideal universe in which there is already, for any mode of participation you can imagine, a reliable and robust assessment technique. If you can dream it, you can track it, mark it and credit students for success/failure on that dimension.

Course Participation

What are examples of student participation in a class?

- Asking Questions
- Done Assigned Readings
- Discussion Questions
- Answering “Clicker” Questions
- Participating in Discussion
- Engaging in Activities
- Being Attentive
- Taking Notes
- Coming Prepared
- Presenting Material
- Attending Class

Not all students are **comfortable** with these modes of participation. Less vocal students and students from different cultural backgrounds than the classroom norm, for instance, are **disadvantaged** by many of these (“traditional”) modes of participation (Czekanski, & Wolf 2013, Balas 2000).

Course Participation

*What about participation **outside** the classroom?*

- Reading Assigned Readings
- Supplementary Readings
- Writing Discussion Questions
- Taking Notes on Readings
- Organizing Discussion Groups
- Attending Discussion Groups
- Editing Peer Work
- Asking Peers to Edit your Work
- Attending Office Hours
- *Thinking* about the class material

There are valid modes of participation which take place *outside* of the classroom - this may be a motivation for implementing a “Flipped Classroom”. The more ways students can participate, the more likely students are to find a mode that suits their personality and comfort level.

Assessing Participation

Why have an assessment?

- 1) Assessment is important for motivating students to *actually* participate (sets expectations)
- 2) Assessment results can provide instructors with feedback on material intake and the development of philosophical skills (and learning objectives)
- 3) Assessment results can provide students with feedback on their performance (promote change in classroom habits, and reinforce good habits)

ACTIVITY #2: Assessment

Group Discussion (same groups as before):

Come up with a strategy for assessing, measuring and/or evaluating student performance with respect to at least two of the modes of participation you identified before (you can propose different techniques for different modes of participation). Aim to provide an assessment for one in class participation and one mode of participation that occurs outside the classroom.

Self Assessment

Why not get the students to do some of the work?

Self Assessment is when students are required to reflect on and evaluate their own learning and development within the context of the course. This involves *reflection* on their own performance, their own learning and how they feel they have changed in light of these things (Engelmann).

What aspects of philosophy am I good at? What do I struggle with?

How has this course changed my world view? My identity?

How are my interactions with science/policy/media/others shaped by my philosophical training?

Ideally, self-assessment is a core component of course design. It's most effective when **integral** to learning, **developmental**, accompanied by peer and expert **feedback**, and designed and delivered in **multiple modes** (Engelmann, 2013)

See *Self-Assessment at Alverno College (2000)* for reflections on self-assessment in practice.

Self Assessment

Continued...

Examples of Self-Assessment:

1. Written Reflection Assignments
2. One-on-one Discussion with Expert
3. Group Self-Assessment (peer review)
4. Portfolio Projects that bring together multiple of these under the context of the full course

These require *reflection, analysis and judgement*

Self-Assessment is a form of participation!

Assessing Participation

Self Assessment of Participation (adapted from Peterson 2001)

Assignment: Twice this term (once in the middle of the term, and once near the end) you will be required to submit a short response paper (2 page maximum) that answers:

- (1) In what ways have I participated in this course?
- (2) How has my participation contributed to (or detracted from) learning course material and developing philosophically relevant skills*?

Provide evidence and reasons to support your claims.

Assessing Participation

Self Assessment of Participation (adapted from Peterson 2001)

Notable Student Feedback:

“I have a difficult time justifying requirements that seem to be either “showboating” or irrelevant to the traditional objective associated with participation. In the end I have paid for this class and have to live with the results of whatever participation approach I have chosen... I am paying [you] to be impressive... **I actually thought about this class (the materials, myself, and other players) much more than I would prefer at times. The professor has been exceedingly annoying and made me aware of myself in the process.**” (Peterson, 193, emphasis added)

Assessing Participation

Steps to implementation...

- 1) Identify modes of participation appropriate for your **COURSE** (include some in your course design: active learning activities, discussion time, reflection assignments, readings scheduled in advance, supplementary readings, optional writing tutorial)
- 2) Develop a rubric for evaluating self-assessment of participation
- 3) Present the assignment early. Provide examples of participation, and what justification would look like.

ACTIVITY #3: Test Drive the Assessment

Answer the following questions, then trade your answers with a neighbour and use the included rubric to evaluate their answers:

1. List up to 2 ways that you have participated in this workshop (*taken notes, asked questions, etc.*) and justify that participation (*show notes, specify the question, etc.*)
2. Explain how this participation helped you learn the workshop material, and identify one concept or lesson that was useful or new to you from the workshop.

References

Peterson, Robert (2001) “Course Participation: An Active Learning Approach Employing Student Documentation”

Czekanski, Kathleen & Wolf, Zane (2013) “Encouraging and Evaluating Class Participation”

Balas, A (2000) “Using participation to assess students’ knowledge”

Alverno College Faculty (2000) Self-Assessment at Alverno College. Georgine Loacker (ed)

Wright, Jessey (2012) “Participation in the Classroom: Classification and Assessment Techniques”
<http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/tips/vol4/iss1/3/>

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