

HST 290 Expectations for Seminar Discussion (5)

A seminar is quite different from a lecture class. Students have much greater responsibilities for discussion than for any other type of instruction. This means students should read the material carefully, prepare questions and comments before class, and engage in debate over interpretations, sources, methods, and historiography. Learning the skills necessary for informed debate is an important part of a humanities education.

It is impossible to receive a satisfactory grade for discussion by simply listening. It is also impossible to receive a satisfactory grade if one chooses to engage in unprofessional behaviors. These are behaviors that interfere with discussion and include:

- Arriving late

- Using cell phones or other personal electronic devices during class

- Talking while another student or the instructor “has the floor”

- Leaving and returning to the classroom during discussion

- Speaking disrespectfully to others

Conducting oneself professionally also means taking care of bathroom needs BEFORE class so as not to disrupt the seminar by leaving and returning.

Students will be assessed on their contributions to seminar discussion at the end of the semester. The instructor will assign grades according to the following criteria:

- Extent to which the student consistently raised the intellectual level of discussion by insights, questions, and comments on the course material

- Frequency of participation

- Professional conduct

- Level of preparation for discussion