

BLOG PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES:

Blog participation counts for a large portion of your final grade. Please ask questions throughout the semester (rather than on the last day of class!), and keep track of the number of posts you have submitted.

There are two types of postings that count toward your final grade, **Journal Postings** and **Comments**. You are required to post **FOUR** journal postings and **EIGHT** comments throughout the semester, half before the mid-point in the semester and half after (see the syllabus for exact dates). My hope is that you will post more frequently than this--additional postings and comments will help to improve your participation grade and, if your participation is substantial enough, count toward extra credit.

Journal Postings are substantive responses to the readings due for a particular week and our class discussions. They should be a minimum of 400 words. A good post would typically contain at least four solid paragraphs.

- Post should be uploaded within a week of the readings or topic covered in class. You should arrive to class each week having looked over the comments posted by the students in your group.
- This blog is YOUR space to freely respond to the readings, clips, and ideas presented in class. Don't feel as though you need to write "for the professor"—think, instead, as if you are a professional blogger writing for your peers. Engage your classmates in a thoughtful discussion about the ideas, images, sounds, and connections that interest you. This will still require effort to do well (and we can talk about strategies for writing successful blogs in class). But your approach can (and should) be more informal than in a research paper.
- Although these posts are informal, they should still present your ideas clearly. Excessive grammatical and spelling errors will undermine your ability to communicate. Keep your posts focused and organized. Please do not write your journals (or papers! or emails to your professor! or school/work related documents!) as if you are writing a text message.
- Think about your audience. To make this blog work, it should be a genuine conversation. Rather than regurgitating the points made in the readings or lectures (boring!), ask questions, provide commentary, or tell us about different ideas this work generated for you. An ideal way to make this material interesting and relevant is to make links between course material and your own fields of interest or experiences. Feel free to incorporate multimedia links and clips.
- I don't expect you to understand every assignment that we read, or to enjoy every topic that we discuss; it's especially helpful for me to know if something in an article is confusing. I'm also interested in your thoughts about the strengths and weaknesses of any material we cover. Please approach course material, however, with an open mind, and submit your critical, thoughtful, and constructive insights. Comments such as "this reading was boring" don't reflect a huge amount of effort. Feel free to be critical, but be precise, detailed, and link your observations to issues that are broader than individual taste.

Comments are responses to the posts of other students. Our class will be divided into smaller discussion groups with links provided on our main course blog. You will receive credit for any comments you make, even if outside your assigned group.

Comments may be brief and informal, but they must be respectful and polite (although it is certainly fine to disagree with postings and to engage in critical debates). For these comments to count toward your participation grade, they should be a minimum of 3 sentences and thoughtfully engage with the ideas in the original post ("Yes I agree" or "this post is bogus" would not count as thoughtful comments).