

Rubric for Seminar Assignment

Name:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Total
Essay: Personal Analysis, Reaction, or Evaluation	Little evidence demonstrating the student provided a thoughtful personal analysis, reaction, or evaluation of the ideas selected.	Some evidence demonstrating the student provided a thoughtful personal analysis, reaction, or evaluation of the ideas selected.	Satisfactory evidence demonstrating the student provided a thoughtful personal analysis, reaction, or evaluation of the ideas selected.	Strong evidence demonstrating the student provided a thoughtful personal analysis, reaction, or evaluation of the ideas selected.	/4
Postscript after each seminar discussion	Little evidence demonstrating that after each discussion student included further comments, reflections, or insights as a postscript to the essay as informed by the seminar.	Some evidence demonstrating that after each discussion student included further comments, reflections, or insights as a postscript to the essay as informed by the seminar.	Satisfactory evidence demonstrating that after each discussion student included further comments, reflections, or insights as a postscript to the essay as informed by the seminar.	Strong evidence demonstrating that after each discussion student included further comments, reflections, or insights as a postscript to the essay as informed by the seminar.	/4
Constructive seminar behaviours (based on the description provided below)	Little evidence suggests student demonstrated constructive seminar behaviours.	Some evidence suggests student demonstrated constructive seminar behaviours.	Satisfactory evidence suggests student demonstrated constructive seminar behaviours.	Strong evidence suggests student demonstrated constructive seminar behaviours.	/12

Grand Total:

Identifying Constructive Seminar Behaviours

When assessing seminar behaviours, one can ask how a person contributes to the seminar and to what degree they engage in the following three kinds of behaviors.

- A. *Introduce substantive points*: Points that result from thoughtful reading and thinking about the assigned material. A “substantive” point is one that becomes the focus for group exploration lasting several minutes.
 - Identify essential issues or questions the piece is discussing.

- Point to the author's central hypothesis, claims, and supporting arguments and evidence.
- Point to important passages that need to be understood.
- Explain the complexities faced in exploring this material.
- Describe passages or quotes that are personally meaningful or connected to some shared experience.

B. *Deepen the discussion*: Help the seminar process with individual contributions that lead the group to discover new insights and understanding of assigned readings.

- Provide additional supportive quotes; explain relevance; Ask clarifying questions.
- Share the thought process that was personally used to develop an idea.
- Paraphrase what the author means in a specific passage.
- Summarize the arguments being presented.
- Identify similarities and differences in positions being argued.
- Challenge an idea or present an alternate interpretation.
- Connect ideas from several participants or from other texts the group has read.
- Formulate insightful questions that spark group responses.
- Introduce personal experiences that illuminate the text for others.

C. *Facilitate group exploration*: Focus on the group's accomplishments rather than on each student's individual performance.

- Help to identify the goals and format for the group process.
- Keep the group on task.
- Focus the group back to the piece.
- Summarize what has been discussed with the group.
- Bring closure to one point and make a transition to a new one.
- Paraphrase someone's comments, identify what you don't understand, and/or formulate a specific question asking for clarification.
- Encourage non-participants by being alert to who wants to speak or who hasn't spoken and helping them get the floor.
- Indicate support by responding to a person's ideas or complimenting them.
- Show active listening using nonverbal cues like eye contact, nods, and smiles.
- Become aware when dominating the discussion and then modifying behaviour.
- Diffuse a tense moment with the use of humour.