

The Black Box of Student Evaluation: Course Participation

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Editors' Note: Course participation is definitely at the “subjective” end of the subjective-to-objective scale of possible assessment methods. It may be surprising, therefore, that so subjective a measure is almost universally a part of negotiation teachers’ assessment methods. Ebner and Efron conclude, however, that just because a method is widely used does not mean it is used effectively. Indeed they find, in surveying colleagues, a startling vagueness at the heart of current use. Picking apart their own prior practice, they discover that they themselves have used course participation in grading in ways that do not survive close examination. From these discoveries they proceed to analyze problems that seem inherent in the method, some of which appear daunting. They modestly conclude that to define “best practices” would be premature. As a step toward greater intellectual rigor and future development, however, Ebner and Efron propose five questions which any teacher interested in rethinking the use of course participation might profitably ask.

Introduction

This chapter originated as a reaction to an overdose of objectivity. After exploring what might arguably be the most straightforward and *objective* method of evaluation (see Ebner and Efron, *Pop Quiz*, in this volume), we cast about to determine which method might be considered the most *subjective*.

“Subjective,” however, is not easy to pin down in the context of evaluation. On the surface, it would seem that a subjective evaluation method is one in which the teacher enjoys and employs wide

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discretion regarding *which* elements are of value in a student's performance, and *how much* value to accord those elements.¹

Subjectivity of an assessment method, however, is not merely a question of its nature, but also of how it is employed. For example, assigning students to write a reflective paper can be done in many ways. A teacher providing students with a detailed rubric of what is required and the points to be awarded for each element allows for limited discretion and a reduced subjective element; a teacher instructing students to write however they like about whatever they like, so long as they are introspective and stay within assigned page limits, is opening the door wide for teacher discretion to play a significant role. (For more on writing reflective papers and journals, see McAdoo, *Reflective Journal Assignments*, in this volume.)

A high measure of teacher discretion does not fully capture the subjectivity that characterizes some of the grading methods applied by teachers in negotiation courses. Another characteristic – at least of the most subjective measures – might be an element of *vagueness* on the teacher's part (to say nothing of the student's part) as to what, precisely, is being evaluated, and as to how the grade is calculated. On the far end of the scale, one might envision an assignment which the student performs, at the end of which the teacher assigns a grade based on his or her gut feeling – a gut feeling based on professional knowledge, and (perhaps) a great deal of teaching experience and expertise, but an intuitive decision nonetheless. Along the road to such an assessment approach, one can picture lower degrees of discretion and vagueness.

In this paper we will focus on the assessment method which seems to allow for the greatest degree of discretion, and which seems, in practice, prone to a great deal of vagueness: apportioning part of the grade to an overall teacher's impression of the student's course experience, or as we will call it in this paper – “course participation.”

Course participation is similar in process, if not in precision, to an aircraft's black box: it is a record (whether through mental recording or through careful note-taking) of the student's efforts vis-à-vis the class, which the teacher revisits when the course is over in order to recapitulate those efforts and assess their value.

As we shall see, there is a great deal of variation in teachers' application of this method, and as a result these “efforts” might include preparation, reading, initiative, teamwork, contribution to discussions, motivation, behavior, helpfulness, presence in class and many, many other possibilities.

Our aim in this chapter is to cast a light into this black box of negotiation assessment, and reflect upon what we find there.

So Common, So Vague

Many names have been given to an overall professorial impression of students' work in the course, or that work conducted inside the classroom specifically. For example, Moberly (1984, in Williams and Geis 2000) gave twenty-five to thirty-five percent of the final grade for "professor's evaluation" and Matthews (1953, in Williams and Geis 2000) apportioned forty-six percent to undetailed "subjective measures" which likely indicates some sort of general assessment on his part. Other names we have encountered include "course performance," "teacher's assessment," "teacher's impression," and more.

No matter what name teachers give to the course participation assessment tool, one thing is clear: many teachers use it. In Williams and Geis' survey of negotiation courses, eight out of eighteen teachers who related their grading methods apportioned points to "class participation," "class performance," or similar elements.

Impressed by these findings, we decided to widen our sample, by surveying databanks containing negotiation course syllabi post-dating Williams and Geis' survey, and including courses given in non-legal frameworks. We surveyed two data banks, one maintained by the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section of the Association of American Law Schools² and another by Harvard's Program on Negotiation Clearinghouse.³ These databanks, together, included seventeen courses syllabi providing details regarding student assessment.

Expecting to find greater variation regarding use of this grading method, we discovered that, on the contrary, *all* of these seventeen courses included evaluation of "course performance" under one name or another. Teachers granted this method a variety of significance in the final grade, ranging from ten to fifty percent.

These findings—in their broad form—were upheld by the outcome of a survey we conducted soon after the third conference of the Rethinking Negotiation Teaching project in Beijing, 2011. Seeking to update the previous two surveys and present a portrayal of the current state of the art, we asked negotiation teachers to answer a brief questionnaire (see Appendix A), in which they detailed whether they included grading course participation in their student evaluation system, and answered several follow-on questions aiming to explore use of this method.

Based on the twelve teachers who responded to our survey,⁴ this method continues to be widely employed: eleven out of the twelve noted that some of their grade was based on course participation.

All of the respondents to our survey included attendance as an element of the participation grade, and checked students' presence during or after each class. Two of the respondents used a direct penalty of grade reduction for missing a class.

All but two of the respondents included “preparation for class” as an element of the course participation grade; however, the methods for assessing this probably vary widely. Recording also varies, with some teachers recording impressions or points during or after each class, and others assessing this at the end of the semester.

Other elements sometimes included in course participation grades include one-on-one conversations with students, reflective mini-papers and more. Clearly, teachers left room for their own general assessment of students. Even after this survey, our sense is that we would find it difficult to say that we understand with any precision what teachers look at while determining this part of the grade (with the exception of attendance).

This does not surprise us. This vagueness seems to be, in practice, a characteristic of the course participation grade. In fact, we suggest that this vagueness exists on both sides of the evaluation: not only are students unclear about how this element of the grade is evaluated, teachers also approach this task without a clear, well-laid-out program for assigning grades. We will detail each side of this issue.

One thing that stands out very clearly from the syllabi available to us, from our own experience and from discussions with colleagues, is that most teachers do not explain to students just what, exactly, this part of the grade will cover. Students do not know precisely what behaviors or performance teachers are evaluating, nor do they know how or when the evaluation will be conducted. To share personal examples, here are the details provided to Executive MBA students in Ebner’s 2010 Negotiation Skills for Executives syllabus:

This is a “hands-on” course; most of the learning is experienced in the classroom and cannot be attained through reading. Therefore, *full attendance in class is required*, useful and productive participation is expected and both will contribute considerably to the final grade.

Even this undetailed description seems expansive, compared to Efron’s instructions to International Law students in her 2010 course on Alternative Dispute Resolution:⁵ “Attendance and informed and productive participation – 20 points.”

While teachers differ regarding the range of detail they provide students, most of them fall in between these two skimpy specifications. Reviewing the full-text versions of the syllabi included in the two databases described above, we note that only in four syllabi did we encounter what might be considered detailed requirements regarding this element of the grade.⁶

As we suggested earlier, this vague portrayal of participation standards might be a reflection of *teachers'* vagueness on how they apply this method, in practice. This vagueness might be unintentional, due to teachers' lack of reflection or programmatic approach. It might also be intentional, due to teachers adopting an "I'll know good course participation when I see it" approach, or due to teachers wanting to leave themselves some unrestrained discretion in order to achieve what they see as good evaluation outcomes, as we will discuss below.

Few of the teachers we spoke with or surveyed displayed a highly systematic approach to deciding this part of the grade. Interestingly enough, this does nothing to shake their belief in its importance, or in its precision. We will next try to itemize the elements teachers look at under this heading, and describe some systematic and intuitive approaches teachers take in practice.

What is "Course Participation," Anyway?

A narrow approach to grading this element might assess the quantity and quality of a student's participation in the classroom discussion, including enriching by integrating previously learned concepts and the assigned reading material.

A wider approach might take into consideration a student's participation in simulations, which might include preparation, demonstration of motivation, application of skills and participation in debrief.

Ranging further, a teacher might take into account different types of student behavior in the classroom (sharing of personal stories and examples, attendance, focus, motivation, leadership, initiative, suggestions) and outside of it (such as initiating one-on-one conversations with the teacher, reading extra material, being active in the course's online discussion area).

A teacher might use this grading area to award points for intangible, or at least unmeasured, elements of value, such as a student's personal development.⁷

At its widest application, grading "course participation" might take into account anything and everything a student does in relation to the course, in or out of class, even elements which have been specifically covered by other assessment tools such as papers or quizzes.

As we have noted, some teachers provide explanations of their system for deciding this grade. Others limit their discretion somewhat – although not significantly – by noting certain elements the teacher will consider (several teachers noted class attendance, others noted "participation in class discussions"). Since most teachers do not provide guidance regarding what they will consider, this grading method cannot be properly explored without a can-

did, if somewhat anecdotal, exploration of how it is used in practice, and what teachers' considerations are behind the screen.

In Practice: All Over the Map

Here are ten examples of how teachers conduct their grading of course participation, based on our own experiences teaching and observing teachers, on conversations with colleagues, and on the survey information we have noted above. These range from fully developed and carefully measured systems for assessing the value of a student's course participation, to elements that teachers *sometimes* give weight to as they conduct their assessment.

- 1) Combining attendance and participation: Some teachers divide this grade between classroom attendance and other, varied, "participation" elements. The grading on attendance relies on more objective standards than other elements of course participation – provided, of course, that proper attendance records were kept (and that the grade is not based on a teacher's *recollection* of presence). This is a simple mechanism for ensuring that students show up to class, counterbalancing an institution's possibly lax attendance rules or culture. It allows for continuity in teaching and in other in-class processes (including familiarity with teacher's style and classroom work environment, participating in simulations and structured learning). There is, of course, some connection between attendance and participation. In addition to missing lessons in a physical sense, students did not participate in those, either.
- 2) Monitoring participation in class discussion: Some teachers note that they keep careful records regarding participation in class – comments on reading material, initiating topics, sharing experiences, etc. One teacher makes a note of "star" students after every class, similarly noting students who seemed present in body alone. Many teachers rely on their recollections, or general impressions, at the end of the course.
- 3) Awarding "free" points by default: Some teachers note that they generally give all students all, or most, of the points for course participation by default – unless the student has significantly "unearned" them through sporadic attendance or focus, disruptive behavior in class, etc.
- 4) Preventing "intuitive injustices": Some teachers have shared that they use course participation points to prevent situations in which students whom they consider to be excellent performers might receive significantly lower grades than students whom they consider mediocre or poor pupils.

Consider, for example, a case where an “excellent” student gets a bad mark on a quiz or a paper, explaining that s/he was ill. If this causes the student’s total grade to plummet to equal or less than students that the teacher considers “average,” the teacher might feel a sense of injustice, and seek to compensate through the course participation grade.

- 5) Penalizing disruptive students: Course participation points allow some teachers to express their displeasure with students’ attitudes or behavior, such as disappearing in the middle of simulations, exiting class to converse with friends in the hall or to answer the phone, or texting during class.
- 6) Bump-up/bump-down: Some teachers shared that they use course participation points as their way to allow their own judgment to influence the grades of students who are on the cusp between two grades. Thus, a B- can become a B, a B a B+, or an A- a B+, at a teacher’s discretion.
- 7) One-on-one meetings: Some teachers form their impressions of students in one-on-one interviews. These are sometimes independent elements of the course grade (for more on using one-on-one interviews with students for determining portions of their grade, see Fuller, *Interviews as an Assessment Tool*, in this volume) and sometimes contribute to the grade given for course participation. For example one of the teachers responding to our survey on quizzes (Ebner and Efron, *Pop Quiz*, in this volume) noted that s/he gave students individual oral quizzes, and that this quiz grade was the factor in determining twenty percent of the points that teacher awards under the assessment heading of “course participation.”
- 8) Presentations by students: Some teachers include under course participation something which (like quizzes) might really be considered a separate assignment: Having students present individual work to the whole class. This might be a case study, a report on an interview, a summary of the week’s reading material or another type of assignment. Another variation is to offer this as an “extra-credit” opportunity, awarding students for their “extra” course participation.⁸
- 9) Some teachers calculate students’ actual achievements in negotiation simulations as part of their course participation. Some of these include, in their assessment of this element, students’ improvement from a baseline.
- 10) Some teachers note that they assess what might be called a student’s *zeal for learning*. This general evaluation of student motivation becomes a factor in forming a subjective teacher impression regarding course participation.

Why Do Teachers Use This Method?

In conversations, teachers have shared a number of reasons for using the course participation assessment method. Some of these (which we are not in any way discounting) are intuitive (e.g., “I felt it was very helpful when I myself studied negotiation”), others are institutional (e.g., “All negotiation courses at my institution use it”) and still others are pedagogical, including:

- *Walking the talk*: In our classrooms, we stress the need for process, engagement, involvement, introspection and sharing with class. We embody those practices, and exhort students to do the same. We want to reward students who comply.
- *Motivation*: Students are motivated by the points awarded in different ways. Some show up to class, as opposed to other classes which they regularly skip. Others make sure to read the material and be prepared, in case they are put on the spot somehow. Some students see this as an easy opportunity to earn a very good grade in a class. Finally, our “walking the talk,” putting our points where our mouths are, makes some students understand that this really is the best way to learn – leading them to identify wholeheartedly with class expectations, activities and dynamics.
- *“Academization”*: Teachers who focus the course participation points on active participation in discussions often raise the connection to reading material. In this sense, these points verify the academization of what might seem, from the outside, to be a skills-training course.

One unapologetically candid reason some teachers share for giving course participation points is that they consider these points a “real” assessment of whether or not a student “gets it.” Experienced negotiation teachers might find it quite easy to determine whether a student has “gotten it” or not. Allotting points to that judgment allows teachers to reward students for this important, albeit amorphous, achievement.

Problems With Evaluating Course Participation

Subjectivity

As we have noted, course participation (beyond strictly measurable elements such as class attendance) is a highly subjective measure. It is based on a teacher’s impression of a student’s work, formed even as the teacher is (at least in part) concentrating on other things (forming their own response, considering what to do next in class, focusing on other students) – or, really, their *recollection* of

this impression, after class or after the course. This, compounded by unclear evaluation standards, runs the risk of imprecision.

Recording Issues

In our survey, ten out of twelve teachers responded that they recorded students' performance after every class. This is certainly important in forming a valid assessment of students' work. However, we must note that these findings surprised us. In practice, we have known teachers to form general impressions as they go along, and not to record any assessment at all until grading time. By this time – often, several weeks after the course is finished, when teachers have graded final assignments and are about to tally up the final grade – teachers may not remember students' performance as precisely as they would hope. Indeed, at this point our recollection even of *students' names and their respective faces* might be a bit hazy, leading to confusion or to faulty grading.

Large Groups

Forming individual impressions of students, ensuring equal opportunity for students to participate and affect those opinions, and recalling them after-the-fact is particularly challenging in large classes. It may be that this grading practice originated in small courses or in frameworks emphasizing small-group learning – and was implemented, by rote, in larger classes where it might be wholly unsuitable.

Open to Manipulation

Teachers with a vague system for awarding points for course participation might find themselves manipulated by students who seek to affect the teacher's impression of them without actually putting in the work that a skeptical observer might consider necessary. For example, a student might mention (in class or in an out-of-class conversation) that he always reads all of the class reading material; another might say that she is constantly applying the course material in her out-of-class experiences. Both of these students might affect, subconsciously or consciously, the teacher's impressions of their dedication, effort or level of introspection. There are many other things students might say – whether genuinely, or with manipulative intent – which negotiation teachers would like to hear, but which might not be fully substantiated in reality; these might then have impact on the teacher's impressions of students.

Quantity Rather Than Quality

While teachers might certainly stress that quality of participation is key, quantity, in the sense of a student's active level of participation,

is bound to have some effect. While quantity might speak for engagement, a trait which might be worth points in a teacher's system, it should not speak for level of understanding, student progress, level of insight, etc. In the heat of a class or over the course of a semester, it might be easy for a teacher's impression to confuse one for the other.

Prone to Attack

Students can (and increasingly, we feel, do) contest a teacher's opinion on any evaluation method. However, whereas with most other methods a student might make their case and the teacher might apply their negotiation expertise or hierarchal standing to say "No, that's wrong," course participation is one method regarding which students sense they can speak with expertise. Sharing our own experience, we have encountered students explaining to us the value of their participation, comparing it to other students, and reprimanding us for not seeing or understanding what was going on in the classroom. Students tend to describe their participation in absolutes ("I always read the material," "I always participated in class discussions," "I didn't miss a single class"), to say nothing of superlatives – and are always confident that their contributions and performance in this area are stellar. Beyond that, stressing the importance of student participation, and awarding points for it, may lead students to believe they can contest the entire course grade based on this issue ("How could I get a B- for the course? I always participated so well in class!") – as if, to reframe the timeless words of American football coach Vince Lombardi, "course participation isn't everything; it's the *only* thing."

Students' Perceptions and Reactions

We have already noted several ways in which imprecision might occur, as well as a high potential for students to *perceive* imprecision (or downright teacher antagonism or meanness). Receiving a low grade on course participation might be particularly painful, and particularly confusing, for the earnest student who genuinely felt s/he had made a special effort in class. A low grade for this element is likely to be received, at least in part, as criticism of the student's 'public' self, as opposed to the student's 'private' communication with the teacher (through quizzes, papers, journals, exams, etc). It might seem to be critique of a student's personality, social skills and conversational styles – issues which might insult students or just seem to be unwarranted or unmandated in the context of academic assessment. Warranted or not, students receiving a low grade on course participation are likely to be disappointed in the best case, and feel under personal attack in the worst. All this runs the risk of confusing students,

affecting teacher-student communication, and causing a disconnect between students' learning and their perception of their results.

All of the above points to the value of applying the "black box" metaphor to course participation evaluation. A black box provides precise recording of a given chain of events (such as radio contact between an airplane and a control tower, or intra-crew communication aboard that same airplane), in its entirety and with unquestionable accuracy. It is designed to survive impact, the elements and the passage of time. Once accessed, the actions and reactions of all parties involved can be evaluated and assessed, criticized or commended, by experts.

Teachers assessing course participation impliedly rely on the course including such a black box – a clear recording of some sort of each student's performance, which is accessible to the teacher at grading time and, perhaps, similarly accessible to the student (at least in the form of a teacher being able to explain to a student the reasoning behind his or her grade, requiring some basic level of fidelity between their recollections of what happened in class). Does such a black box exist? Or, do we only pretend, or believe (or pretend to believe), that there is a "real" method of recording, when none really exists? This issue poses teachers a challenge of self-reflection – as we will discuss below.

Where Does This Leave Us?

We do not intend to provide suggestions for best practices for using (or, for refraining from using) this method. Indeed, as this chapter demonstrates, we are currently rethinking these ourselves. However, we suggest that teachers considering use of these methods pose themselves the following questions, questions which we find ourselves constantly returning to in our own rethinking process:

1) Aims

What are my aims in using this as an evaluation method? What elements of student behavior/focus/attention am I trying to encourage? What am I trying to reward, or to sanction?

2) Teacher Clarity

Am I clear on what behaviors/performances I am measuring? Am I sure that it is possible to assess these, and award points based on my evaluation? Do I have a clear picture of how to distinguish between different levels of performance, and how many points to award for each level?

3) Subjectivity

How subjective is the measure, in the way I envision using it? Is this fair to students? Does using the method resolve other types of un

fairness? Is fairness all that important, or might there be competing goals (such as student encouragement, motivation, reward)?

4) *Student Clarity*

Should I clarify the method and the way I intend to use it to students – in the syllabus, in class or in both? Might there be pedagogical/evaluative benefits related to vagueness? How do I pre-empt student pushback/appeals/disappointment?

5) *Precision*

After using the method a number of times, do I still feel as if I am measuring with a good degree of precision those elements of student performance that I set out to assess?

Questions are a good place to start, particularly when dealing with a black box that has never been opened – information that has constantly been gathered but has never been accessed before. Many teachers, including ourselves, have used this method for many years, and we hope that we use it in a valid way, which identifies and rewards students for merit earned that is hard to acknowledge or tap through other assessment methods. After answering these questions – perhaps several times, as we better understand our own intuitions and how we apply them – teachers will be able to make more informed, intentional decisions regarding class participation grading.

Notes

¹ This discretion is activated post-performance, in the sense that the teacher employs it *after* the student has performed the task (as opposed to saying that a teacher has discretion in deciding the nature of, or the instructions for, the task which he or she assigns students).

² See http://www.law.missouri.edu/aalsadr/DR_syllabi.htm (last accessed March 5, 2012).

³ This compilation of syllabi, described at <http://www.pon.harvard.edu/news/clearinghouse-launches-syllabus-collection/> (last accessed March 14, 2012), was available on the PON website at http://www.pon.org/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=333, until the end of 2011. Due to site renovation, the collection is presently inaccessible, but the Clearinghouse administrators anticipate it will be available again sometime in the future.

⁴ We should note that eight of the respondents teach in North America, and the other four teach around the globe. There were no notable correlations between geographical location and use of quizzes; the spread for all responses was proportional.

⁵ We bring this here for the sake of personal example, despite the fact that only half of this course focuses on negotiation, with the rest devoted to other ADR topics. In administering the survey discussed in this chapter, our cover letter asked teachers to respond only, “If you teach *negotiation* courses (i.e.,

courses that are fully or primarily negotiation-focused), in *academic settings*.”

⁶ Of course, teachers might, and sometimes do, explain to students in detail precisely what they are looking for in a face-to-face session in class. For example, Professor Ken Fox at Hamline University School of Law provides the following guidance on participation (worth twenty percent of the course grade) in his negotiation course syllabus:

Each student contributes to class discussions in his or her own way. So you will know how I gauge participation, I will assess each student's willingness to seriously engage the topics under consideration, as well as the quality and thoughtfulness of your contributions and insights. In other words, it is primarily the quality (and not necessarily the quantity) of your contributions to discussions and exercises that matter to me. Effective and thoughtful comments demonstrate your recognition of the key concepts we are studying and add your unique (but relevant) perspective to discussions, for the enrichment of all. For simulations, I expect you will make a good faith effort to play your assigned role as realistically as possible. In addition, as part of some exercises, I will be asking you to share feedback with your fellow students. When giving feedback, I ask that you follow these guidelines:

- Include a balance of positive and constructively negative feedback (“criticism” is not constructively negative).
- Be honest while remaining respectful. Honesty promotes real growth and learning. Respect allows your comments to be heard and understood in meaningful ways.
- Be specific. Give concrete examples to illustrate your positive feedback and constructive suggestions.
- Relate your feedback to the concepts we are studying in class (Fox 2011).

Professor Bobbi McAdoo, also at Hamline University School of Law, reserves the right to adjust grades up or down a step based on participation and offers the following specific guidance regarding how she will exercise that discretion:

I care about the quantity and quality of your contributions in class. A quality comment usually possesses one or more of the following attributes:

- offers a relevant insight
- builds helpfully on other comments
- contributes to moving the discussion and analysis forward
- demonstrates recognition of concepts we are studying and integrates these concepts with reflective thinking

I appreciate it when you bring to class newspaper articles and/or video clips and/or your review of a movie or television scene illustrating some aspect of negotiation we are studying. For the simulations, you are expected to make a good faith effort to play assigned roles as realistically as possible. Feedback to colleagues will be required and will be most helpful if:

- it is honest and respectful
- it is specific (i.e., identifies the specific language or behavior that triggered your observations)
- it relates to the concepts we are studying
- it is constructive (i.e., includes a suggestion of other language or behavior that might have worked better for you in role)

Finally, a tool to measure your “reputation index” with your classmates in this class (developed for use in business school negotiation courses) will be handed out at the end of the semester, and your score on this will be factored into the participation/contribution percentage of your final grade (McAdoo 2011).

Our own experience – as teachers and as observers of other teachers – is that such detailed guidance on participation is extremely rare. What is more surprising is that students rarely ask for details.

⁷ Several chapters in this volume have noted the possibility of overlap between specific grading methods and the more general grading heading of student participation. See this discussed below in the text, regarding quizzes; also see Welsh, *Making Reputation Salient*, in this volume regarding interplay between the Reputation Index grade and the course participation score; and Nelken, *Evaluating Email Negotiation*, in this volume regarding the insights that assessing an email negotiation transcript might afford the teacher for the purposes of assessing course participation.

⁸ We have encountered various uses of this approach, in which teachers create a scoring chart going beyond 100 percent by adding on “extra credit” for course participation or for specific assignments.

References

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 McAdoo, B. 2011. Negotiation course syllabus (copy on file with authors).
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Appendix A

Survey: “Class participation” as an element in evaluation of student performance in negotiation courses

- 1) In your negotiation courses, do you base part of your students’ grades on “course participation” or “class participation?”

a) Always	c) Sometimes
b) Usually	d) Never

- 2) If so – what **percent** of the student’s **overall** grade does this element account for? _____

- 3) What do you call this section of the grade? (e.g., “course participation”, “class participation”, or anything else) _____

4) By “course/class participation” (or however you frame it) do you intend/include/consider/take into account, in your grading, **any of the below** (check all that apply)? If so, how often do you take notes, or otherwise make a record, for your own end-of-course grading reference? Check the answer that **usually** applies:

Potential Element	Taken into Account?	If so, when do you record/note/grade?
Physical presence in class	Yes/No	<input type="checkbox"/> During or after every class <input type="checkbox"/> After certain classes, regarding that particular class <input type="checkbox"/> Every few classes, regarding the past few classes <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of the semester, following the last class <input type="checkbox"/> As I am putting together the rest of the grades (i.e., after collating other elements the evaluation you use, and before tallying up final grades. This might be a few weeks after the semester ends.
Preparation for class discussions (as evidenced by quality of participation)	Yes/No	<input type="checkbox"/> During or after every class <input type="checkbox"/> After certain classes, regarding that particular class <input type="checkbox"/> Every few classes, regarding the past few classes <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of the semester, following the last class <input type="checkbox"/> As I am putting together the rest of the grades
Level of activity in class discussions (as evidenced by quantity or frequency of participation)	Yes/No	<input type="checkbox"/> During or after every class <input type="checkbox"/> After certain classes, regarding that particular class <input type="checkbox"/> Every few classes, regarding the past few classes <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of the semester, following the last class. <input type="checkbox"/> As I am putting together the rest of the grades
One-on-one or extra-curricular discussions a student initiates	Yes/No	<input type="checkbox"/> During or after every class <input type="checkbox"/> After certain classes, regarding that particular class <input type="checkbox"/> Every few classes, regarding the past few classes <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of the semester, following the last class. <input type="checkbox"/> As I am putting together the rest of the grades
Other: _____ _____ _____	Yes/No	<input type="checkbox"/> During or after every class <input type="checkbox"/> After certain classes, regarding that particular class <input type="checkbox"/> Every few classes, regarding the past few classes <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of the semester, following the last class. <input type="checkbox"/> As I am putting together the rest of the grades

