



HOW TO IMPROVE CLASS PARTICIPATION

Your participation in class benefits both you and your teacher. This is because participating in class makes you a better learner while at the same time helps your professor in making the class a more interesting and engaging space. Many professors even have points for class participation that contribute significantly towards your final course grade! So, how do you start participating more in class while also improving the quality of your participation? Here are a few pointers:

- Attend every class unless you have a genuine reason not to do so. Even if you are allowed to take a certain number of absences, try not to be needlessly absent. Just being present in every class helps you learn even if you do not spend a lot of time studying course material outside of the classroom.
- If you have a tendency to feel drowsy in certain lectures, chew on a piece of gum/candy or bring a bottle of water/juice/cup of coffee to keep you awake. You can also make a quick trip to the bathroom to splash some water on your face.
- Pay attention in class. When you are not taking notes, show that you're interested by either making eye contact with the professor or looking at the presentation on the board.
- Ask questions. If you have been paying attention in class and have studied the material you were required to study, be assured that your questions are not stupid. If you are having trouble understanding something, ask about it. Chances are other students are also having trouble understanding the same thing. If you do not entirely agree with a professor's thoughts or ideas, ask them about it. Most professors like students who challenge them, as long as they are respectful and open to learning.
- Respond appropriately. Answer questions that the professor asks in class, and bring up points that generate discussion. Do not be afraid to get answers wrong. Professors like to see you try even if you do not get all the answers right.
- If you get nervous speaking up in class, try to overcome your nervousness by taking a few deep breaths before you start speaking. You can also try thinking about how normal it is for you to hear other students speak, and think about how they view you with equal normalcy.
- If you are still unable to participate much during class for some reason, visit the professors in their office hours or ask your questions at the end of the lecture.
- Try to observe the professor's teaching style. Do they take a more fact-based approach or do they adopt a more abstract style in their lectures? Once you grasp their teaching style, you will be able to understand their thought process better, which will help you ask more relevant questions.

- Speak clearly and concisely. Avoid slang, unnecessary jokes, overly emotional statements or sarcastic comments. Try to be respectful to your professor and your peers, even if you disagree with their opinions. Try to provide reasons for why you think otherwise, instead of just stating that you do not agree.
- However, do not speak in class just for the sake of participating, or agree with everything your professors say just to impress them. Most professors can see right through attempts at flattery.

These are just some tips to improve class participation. However, the best class participation strategies can only be devised by you as you learn to read the instructor and the classroom, and respond accordingly, in the best ways possible. Remember, EHSAS is always here to help.

References

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/austincc-learningframeworks/chapter/chapter-10-active-listening-in-the-classroom/>