

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

At the beginning of the semester, students will self-select into small groups (4 - 6 persons) based on schedule availability.

These groups will meet six (6) times over the course of the semester, about every 2 - 3 weeks. As this is an online course, the instructor assumes that discussions will take place in a virtual setting, ([Google Hangouts](#), Skype, Zoom, etc), but students are welcome to meet in person as well. Discussions are expected to last around 45 minutes. Text chats are not acceptable.

These groups will function as a space to reflect upon the readings, connect them to overarching course concepts, and to clarify difficult passages. In addition to ensuring that students keep up with the readings and comprehension, the groups are designed to foster a sense of community despite the online setting and provide a peer group within which students will exchange feedback on the larger projects.

After each discussion, an assigned student will submit detailed notes about the discussion on behalf of their group. These notes are due on the designated **Sundays by 11:59pm EST in iCollege**. The instructor will respond by the following Monday with comments, questions for the group, or redirection, if necessary.

For each discussion, the groups will assign each person one of the following roles. These roles should rotate throughout the semester. Keep track of who takes on each role over the course of the semester.

### Group Discussion Roles:

**Facilitator:** The facilitator does just that: facilitates the conversation. They are responsible for setting up the chat on the chosen platform and sending out the appropriate invite / group links. They are responsible for starting off the conversation, making sure that all prompts and assigned readings are covered by the group, pick-up the conversation when it wanes, and keeping the conversation on topic. Facilitators are also responsible for keeping track of time and wrapping up the conversation with a quick summary at the end before everyone signs off.

**Note Taker:** Note-takers should take detailed notes of the conversation, including the date and time of the conversation (start and end), who was "present" and their role, and what readings and material was discussed. These notes do not need to be formal (bullet point okay) but they should capture the depth and breadth of the conversation. These notes should be typed up and submitted to iCollege on behalf of the group (PDF formatted) by **Sundays at 11:59pm EST** the week that groups meet.

**Other group members:** All group members should prepare for discussion the same way they would for an in-class discussion. Students are expected to have reviewed all of the readings and thoughtfully reflected upon prompts if they are provided.

## Reflection & Grading

Small group discussions account for twenty percent (30%) of students' overall grade. Grades will be determined by the following factors:

**Participation:** Students are required to attend all six of the group discussions. Absence results in zero points for that week.

**Discussion Content:** As demonstrated by the notes submitted to CvH, did the group consistently have thoughtful and thorough discussion of the readings? Were the notes submitted on-time?

**Reflection:** Twice a semester (mid-point and end), students will fill out a self- and group-reflections in which they reflect upon their own participation and the contribution from their group members. This will form the bulk of individual grades. At the midpoint, feedback from these reviews will be condensed, stripped of identifying language, and shared back with group members so that appropriate adjustments can be made.