UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES

L&I SCI 691 INFOPRENEURSHIP

SYLLABUS

Fall 2013 (September 3 – December 12)

Instructor: Shana Ponelis
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Office hours: TBA

Location: NWQB 3420
Phone: 414-229-2514

Meeting Times & Location: D2L

UWM help on D2L:
E-mail: help@uwm.edu
Phone: 414-229-4040
URL: https://pantherfile.uwm.edu/groups/sa/ltc/public/D2L%20student%20help%20files/

Catalog description
Introduces entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions, examines alternative career options, and provides an opportunity to apply entrepreneurial methods and processes. 3 credits.

Prerequisites
L&I SCI 110 and 210 (undergraduate). L&I SCI 501 (graduate). Although it is not required it is strongly recommended that you complete L&I SCI 622 (Information Marketing) prior to enrolling in this course.

General description
Within a digital economy information entrepreneurs or ‘infopreneurs’ are supporting economic development through provision of information products and/or services. In this course we will examine two types of infopreneur: (a) the intrapreneur who works within an information-based organization, and (b) the entrepreneur who works outside of the traditional library setting. This course is
designed to provide students with the requisite skills and knowledge to identify a potential business idea centered on information and/or knowledge, and develop a business plan to secure funding. In addition, it serves to foster an entrepreneurial culture in the workforce.

Please note that legal, tax and accounting considerations are of critical importance when considering an independent business. This course does not cover these due to the complex nature thereof. Please be sure to consult a qualified professional for advice applicable to your particular situation.

Course objectives
The objectives of this course are:
• To introduce a variety of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions;
• To create entrepreneurial self-awareness among future information professionals;
• To stimulate intrapreneurial thinking among future information professionals;
• To explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options;
• To provide the opportunity to develop and apply a sufficient understanding of entrepreneurial methods and processes within a library and other information-based organizations;
• To develop the skills and knowledge required to identify opportunities and, through creativity and innovation, to understand and develop business plans to turn these opportunities into reality whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an independent information-based business; and
• To develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, technological, legal, regulatory, environmental and social issues including diversity on entrepreneurship.

MLIS core competencies
This course addresses the following core competencies identified by the ALA in whole or in part:
• ALA 1J: Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).
• ALA 1I: The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.
• ALA 8A: The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.
Method
Overview lectures, independent reading, case studies, discussion, practical assignments, student presentations, guest speakers (depending on availability).

Undergraduates have fewer requirements than graduates enrolled in the MLIS program, as outlined below. Students with special test and note-taking needs should contact the instructor as early as possible for accommodations. See policies below.

Texts

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Required texts</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Recommended texts</th>
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<th>Texts for further reading</th>
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Additional readings are also assigned from a variety of sources, which will be available on D2L, through the electronic reserve or online databases at the Golda Meir Library. URLs for web-based articles are accurate at the starting date of the course; I have no control over sites’ internal information architecture – if the link doesn’t work please do a search on the website using the article title. The recommended reading will not necessarily be available on the electronic reserve. You are also encouraged to avail yourself of other relevant resources in the library collection.
# Course schedule (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment(s) due on Sunday following week start date by 11:59 p.m. CDT/CST on D2L (except where indicated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Sept 3     | Course overview and introduction | • *Discussion: Introduction  
• **Journal entry |
| 2    | Sept 9     | Entrepreneurial librarianship | • *Discussion: Entrepreneurship and libraries + librarians  
• **Journal entry |
| 3    | Sept 16    | The entrepreneurial mindset in information services | • *Discussion: Entrepreneurship and libraries + librarians (cont.)  
• **Journal entry |
| 4    | Sept 23    | The non-traditional path | • *Discussion: Fostering intrapreneurship in libraries  
• Individual assignment: Entrepreneurial self-assessment  
• **Journal entry |
| 5    | Sept 30    | The non-traditional path (continued) | • *Discussion: Fostering intrapreneurship in libraries (cont.)  
• **Journal entry |
| 6    | Oct 7      | The independent path | • *Discussion: Key lessons to be learned from entrepreneurs  
• **Journal entry |
| 7    | Oct 14     | The independent path (continued) | • Individual assignment: Alternative paths in the information industry  
• *Discussion: Key lessons to be learned from entrepreneurs (cont.)  
• **Journal entry |
| 8    | Oct 21     | Work on assignment | • Individual assignment: Informational interview  
• **Journal entry |
| 9    | Oct 28     | Identifying opportunities / developing the business concept | • *Discussion: Most admired innovations  
• **Journal entry |
| 10   | Nov 4      | Work on assignment | • Individual assignment: Opportunity identification  
• **Journal entry |
| 11   | Nov 11     | The business plan | • *Discussion: Role of formal business plans  
• **Journal entry |
| 12   | Nov 18     | The business plan (continued) | • *Discussion: Evaluating opportunities and business plans (part 1)  
• **Journal entry |
| 13   | Nov 25     | Thanksgiving **NO CLASS** | |
| 14   | Dec 2      | Work on business plan assignment | • *Discussion: Evaluating opportunities and business plans (part 2)  
• **Journal entry |
| 15   | Dec 9      | Work on business plan assignment | • Group assignment: Evaluation of a business plan (U)  
• Group assignment: Business plan document + presentation (G)  
• **Journal entry |
| 16   | Dec 16     | Presentation and discussion of business plan assignments | • Individual assignment: Reflection |

* Discussion questions are provided in the respective D2L discussion forums  
** Journal entries are not graded but should be submitted every week and used in the graded final reflection assignment
Topics

Entrepreneurial librarianship

Learning objectives
- To introduce a variety of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions

Required reading:

The entrepreneurial mindset in information services

Learning objectives
- To create entrepreneurial self-awareness among future information professionals

Required reading:
- Mathews, Brian. 2012. Think Like A Startup: a white paper to inspire library entrepreneurialism [online]. Available:
• Toftoy, C.N. 2002. The Key to a Librarian's Success: Developing Entrepreneurial Traits, Information Outlook, 6(6):42-47.

Recommended reading:

Intrapreneurship: the non-traditional path

Learning objectives
• To explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options
• To stimulate intrapreneurial thinking among future information professionals

Required reading:
Entrepreneurship: the independent path

Learning objectives
• To explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options
• To develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, social (including diversity issues), technological and legal, regulatory, and environmental factors on business

Required reading:


Case studies – read at least four in addition to the watching the interview on D2L with Uma Gupta, CEO of PlanetGPA:


Recommended reading:
• Entrepreneur Press. Start Your Own Information Marketing Business (Entrepreneur’s Startup). (ISBN: 978-1599181745)

Identifying opportunities / Developing the business concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To stimulate intrapreneurial thinking among future information professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop the skills and knowledge required to identify opportunities and, through creativity and innovation, turn these opportunities into reality whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an information-based business.</td>
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</table>

Required reading:
Learning objectives

- To develop the skills and knowledge required to identify opportunities and, through creativity and innovation, turn these opportunities into reality whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an information-based business.
- To develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, social (including diversity issues), technological and legal, regulatory, and environmental factors on business.

The business plan

Recommended reading:


**Recommended reading:**

**Assignments**

**Discussion assignments**
There will be several minor discussion assignments in this course. The assignments and dates will be announced on D2L.

Instructions: Post your initial post before 11:59 p.m. on the Friday following the Start Date and post at least 1 substantive response to one of your fellow student’s initial posts before 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday following the Start Date. I will post the grades as well as my comments and feedback during the following week. Late posts will not be graded. Please do not attach documents but enter your text directly into the discussion dialog box.

- **Initial post:** Except for the Introduction post you need to provide your answer together with your motivation in your first post. If you refer to any sources please include references.
- **Response post:** You need to substantively address one or more statements in another student’s post. Single sentence “Me too” posts are not acceptable.
• **Assessment criteria:** The rubric for assessment of discussion posts is provided as an appendix to the syllabus.

In cases where a discussion runs over more than one week then we simply repeat the process, another initial post in week two by Friday an a response post by Sunday. The nature of some topics is such that you will have an opinion and as you read more readings and your fellow students’ posts you may change your mind or have other additional ideas to share.

**Written assignments**

Written assignments are due on the dates specified in the Course Schedule. Grades may be reduced for late papers. Written assignments are to be typed, preferably word-processed. Papers are to be double-spaced using a 12-point kerned font such as Times New Roman with 1 to 1.25 inch margins. You may not resubmit work that has already been used in fulfillment of the requirement of this or any other course.

Please rely on a commonly used style manual for your submissions (e.g. Harvard, Chicago, APA, MLA) that are available in the Library or UWM Bookstore or may be purchased through online book vendors. If you are uncertain about how to cite electronic sources, consult one of the many electronic guides to citing electronic sources available on the net. Minimal reference content includes: author (if known), date (if given), title, URL, and date accessed.

Suggested lengths are given for the four assigned papers although quality is much more important than quantity. Grades will be reduced for papers that include irrelevant content to “fill up space” to meet the length specifications for a paper. Carefully honed, mellifluous prose is as important as substantive content and is also evaluated so keep the following in mind when writing your assignments:

- In written communication you need to select your words more carefully and make your meaning absolutely clear. Avoid repetition, colloquial language and jargon, sexist language, contractions and awkward syntactical constructions.
- Develop paragraphs fully and include transitions between paragraphs. Transitions are essential to maintain continuity in your writing.
- Where appropriate use a limited number of succinct headings and subheadings to structure your paper.
- Underline or italicize when required.
- Avoid footnotes.
- Follow the style manual of your chosen reference and citation style carefully. Try to avoid excessive and repeated lengthy quotes. When quoting be sure that the quote is relevant to your point and introduce your quotes in a suitable manner, for example, X (2011) states, “...”, According to X (2011), “libraries ...”, X agrees when she writes “...”, etc.)

It is expected that undergraduate students enrolling for this course have had experience writing papers. If you need help with your papers, please consult the **UWM Writing Center** for assistance.
**Journal entries**

Journal entries aren’t graded and won’t be read except to verify that it is on topic. However, you do need to submit them on a consistent basis since you will use these journal entries to write your end-of-course reflection. You need to submit at least half of the journal entries spread evenly across the course to be able to earn credit for your reflection. You needn’t worry about grammar or spelling in your journal entries, only in the final reflection assignment.

What should you write in your journal? Your journal entries should not simply be a work log of tasks, events, times and dates. Rather you should record your thoughts about the reading, questions that it sparked, concerns, insights, doubts, fears, and critical questions about issues, people, and, most importantly, yourself. Honesty is an important ingredient to successful journals.

**Nature:** Individual  
**Length/Format:** No prescribed length or format. You can write as much or as little as you want. You can draw diagrams, sketches or concept maps in PowerPoint, Visio or any other application. You can write or draw by hand and scan it in. You can record your thoughts and upload it as an audio file. It is really up to you because it is your journal so you should use the format that works for you.

**Assignment: Entrepreneurial self-assessment**

Self-awareness, understanding one’s own strengths and weaknesses, is vital when choosing to embark on an intrapreneurial or entrepreneurial path. You should capitalize on your strengths and address your weaknesses, either through development or consulting or hiring others to cover those. Although self-assessment or personality tests are not absolute predictors they do serve as useful indicators of potential strengths and weaknesses. For this assignment you are required to complete two, preferably more, of the following self-assessment questionnaires:

- **Women’s Enterprise Centre:**
Having completed the assessment(s), write a candid evaluation of your strengths and areas for development with respect to entrepreneurial activity. Include action steps that you can realistically take with respect to develop weaknesses into strengths. Please note that you do not need to include your completed questionnaire(s) but you can include them as appendices if you want to.

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 2 and 4 pages (double spaced) text excluding diagrams and appendices

Assignment: Alternative paths in the information industry
In her book, Rethinking Information Work (2006), Dority argues that librarians and other information professionals need to rethink their career paths. This statement is based on her assumption that that our profession (librarianship) will be driven by new circumstances. Libraries are closing down but also ‘new information-based roles’ are opening new opportunities for librarians. She argues that these opportunities in the information economy are nearly endless for librarians.

In your paper address the following two questions:

• What are these ‘new information-based roles’ for librarians in the information economy?
• How can librarians prepare themselves (competences, skills, attitudes etc.) to take advantage of these new ‘alternative information career paths’?

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 6 and 8 pages (double spaced) text excluding diagrams

Assignment: Informational interview
Based on the readings and assignments to date compile at least five questions you have about being an intrapreneur or entrepreneur. It can be about aspects that you are simply curious about or specific things that would like to know more from an intra-/entrepreneur. Using your personal contacts, Web sites, articles, or
other sources, find an entrepreneur/intrapreneur that you know, admire or who is engaged in an industry you are interested in entering who is willing to be interviewed. Conduct an informational interview with this intra-/entrepreneur in person, via the telephone, via Skype or, if no other options is possible, via e-mail and ask him/her your five (or more) questions about being an intrapreneur/entrepreneur. Conducting a synchronous interview is preferable because you can easily ask follow up questions as the interview progresses.

While conducting the interview make notes. If you have access to a voice recorder that can help relieve the need to make notes but make sure that you ask for permission to record the person. Even if your interviewee agrees to being recorded make some notes in case of equipment failure.

Once you’ve completed the interview write a report that explains who you spoke to and why, what you asked them and their responses. You write in the first person and can choose whether you want to write an as-it-happened account or structure it in another way that makes more sense to you, maybe based on topics covered.

Don’t forget to thank the person afterwards for their time and willingness to share their knowledge and experience with you!

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 4 and 6 pages (double spaced) text

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**More information about informational interviews**


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**Assignment: Opportunity identification**

Based on the case studies and discussion of readings, identify at least one and at most five specific opportunities either inside an existing information-based organization if you are employed in one (or hope to be employed in one) or for a new independent venture that YOU can potentially pursue. Describe each
opportunity briefly but in some detail and indicate your initial feeling as to its viability/feasibility (you do not need to consider this in-depth at this stage).

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 3 and 5 pages (double spaced) text excluding diagrams

Assignment: Evaluation of a business plan (UNDERGRADUATES ONLY)
You will be provided with a business plan to critically evaluate in terms of:

• the completeness of contents: are all the necessary components of a business plan present and in adequate detail?
• viability: is the need in the market adequate? Is the proposed offering to address this need compelling? Does the strategy for capturing the market make sense? Is the person/team sufficiently experienced to realize this? Are the financial projections realistic?

Nature: Group
Length of paper: Max. 10 pages (double spaced) text excluding diagrams

Assignment: Business plan and presentation (GRADUATES ONLY)
Develop a business plan to either exploit one of the opportunities identified earlier (it can be an opportunity inside an information-based organization or for a new independent information business.) You can use the templates provided on the CD in Harriman or the business plan template of the SBA at http://web.sba.gov/busplanteemplate/BizPlanStart.cfm.

Your group will be expected to present your business plan as if to management (in the case of an internal opportunity) or to a prospective investor (in the case of an independent information business). All members will be expected to be able to answer questions from the audience.

Nature: Group
Length of paper: Max. 25 pages (double spaced)
Length of presentation: Suitable for a 20 min. presentation (rule of thumb is 2 min. per slide (excluding title and agenda slides))
**Individual assignment: Reflection**

Using your journal entries, write a paper in which you discuss what you learned in the course about entrepreneurship for information-based businesses and intrapreneurship in libraries and information centers. What you learned about yourself as an intra-/entrepreneur, ideas you’ve had and opportunities you’ve identified.

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 3 and 5 pages (double spaced)

### Evaluation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal entries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion assignments</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial self-assessment</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative paths in the information industry</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informational interview</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity identification / business concept</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate a business plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business plan</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of business plan</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</table>

### Grading Scale

- **96-100** A  74-76 **C**
- **91-95** A-  70-73 **C-**
- **87-90** B+  67-69 **D+**
- **84-86** B   64-66 **D**
- **80-83** B-  60-63 **D-**
- **77-79** C+  Below 60 **F**
UWM and SOIS Academic Policies

The following links contain university policies affecting all SOIS students. Many of the links below may be accessed through a PDF-document maintained by the Secretary of the University: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf. For graduate students, there are additional guidelines from the Graduate School (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/StudentInfo/), including those found in the Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/Publications/Handbook/.

Students with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of a course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Students with disabilities are responsible to communicate directly with the instructor to ensure special accommodation in a timely manner. There is comprehensive coverage of issues related to disabilities at the Student Accessibility Center (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/MainOffice.html), important components of which are expressed here: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf.

Religious observances. Students’ sincerely held religious beliefs must be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements, according to the following policy: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm. Please notify your instructor within the first three weeks of the Fall or Spring Term (first week of shorter-term or Summer courses) of any specific days or dates on which you request relief from an examination or academic requirement for religious observances.

Students called to active military duty. UWM has several policies that accommodate students who must temporarily lay aside their educational pursuits when called to active duty in the military (see http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm), including provisions for refunds, readmission, grading, and other situations.

Incompletes. A notation of “incomplete” may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantial cause beyond the student’s control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or some limited amount of other term work. An incomplete is not given unless the student proves to the instructor that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S31.pdf).
**Discriminatory conduct** (such as sexual harassment). UWM and SOIS are committed to building and maintaining a campus environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person, fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect, and encourages the members of its community to strive to reach their full potential. The UWM policy statement ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf)) summarizes and defines situations that constitute discriminatory conduct. If you have questions, please contact an appropriate SOIS administrator.

**Academic misconduct.** Cheating on exams and plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, ranging from a failing grade for a course or assignment to expulsion from the University. See the following document ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html)) or contact the SOIS Investigating Officer (currently the Associate Dean) for more information.

**Complaints.** Students may direct complaints to the SOIS Dean or Associate Dean. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy.

**Grade appeal procedures.** A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow SOIS appeals procedures or, in the case of a graduate student, those of the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S28.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S28.htm)).

**Examinations, Finals.** The Secretary of the University is authorized to prepare the final examination schedule. The time of the final examination for an individual or a class may be changed only with the prior approval of the dean or director of the respective college/school. The change will involve a postponement to a later date. For individuals with exam conflicts, a separate week at the very end of the exam week will be reserved to take one of the conflicting exams ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad+admin_policies/S22.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad+admin_policies/S22.htm)).
## APPENDIX: RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points awarded (/10)</th>
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| Excellent            | • The participant integrated evidence from the reading, lecture, or past experience in supporting their argument.  
• The participant consistently posted insightful comments and questions that prompted on-topic discussion.  
• The participant consistently helped clarify or synthesize other class members' ideas when posting a response.  
• If disagreeing with another class members' ideas, the participant stated his or her disagreement or objections clearly, yet politely.                                                                                                                                  | 9-10                |
| Average              | • The participant was notably lacking in one or two of the items listed for A-level participation.  
• The participant usually, but not always, expressed herself or himself clearly.                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 8                   |
| Superficial participation | • The learner may participate in discussion, but comments may be infrequent, untimely, or indicate a lack of preparation prior to responding.  
• Participation does not indicate familiarity with the concepts or readings, and comments are not always relevant to the topic being discussed.  
• The comments may not be of appropriate length.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 7                   |
| Non-helpful participation | • The participant’s comments are unrelated to the discussion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 6                   |
| Non-participation    | • The participant consistently failed or refused to participate at all, even when specifically prompted or questioned, even if the participant's participation otherwise conforms to a higher level on the rubric.  
• The participant is disrespectful of others views, attempts to dominate the discussion, demonstrates inappropriate communication such as flaming, or is inattentive to the discussion at hand generating side discussions which tend to disrupt others focus of attention  
• The student does not participate.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 0-4                 |