

## Assessment Criteria for Socratic Seminars

### Conduct

**Excellent:** Demonstrates respect for learning process, has patience with different opinions and complexity, shows initiative by asking others for clarification, brings others into the conversation, moves conversation forward, speaks to all participants, avoids talking too much.

**Good:** Generally shows composure but may display impatience with contradictory or confusing ideas, comments but does not necessarily encourage others to participate, may tend to address only the teacher or get into debates.

**Fair:** Participates and expresses a belief that his ideas are important in understanding the text, may make insightful comments but is either too forceful or too shy and does not contribute to the progress of conversation, tends to debate not discuss.

**Poor:** Displays little respect for the learning process, argumentative, takes advantage of minor distractions, uses inappropriate language, speaks to individuals rather than ideas, arrives unprepared without notes, a pencil, and perhaps even the text.

### Speaking/Reasoning

**Excellent:** Understands question before answering, cites evidence from text, expresses thoughts in complete sentences, logical and insightful, moves conversation forward, makes connections between ideas, resolves apparent contradictory ideas, considers others' viewpoints not only his/her own, avoids bad logic.

**Good:** Responds to questions voluntarily, comments show an appreciation for the text but not an appreciation for the subtler points within it, comments logical but not connected to other speakers, ideas interesting enough that others respond to them.

**Fair:** Responds to questions but may have to be called upon, has read the text but not put much effort into preparing questions and ideas for the seminar, comments take details into account but may not flow logically in conversation.

**Poor:** Extremely reluctant to participate even when called upon, comments illogical and meaningless, may mumble or express incomplete ideas, little or no account taken of previous comments or important ideas in the text.

## Assessment Criteria for Socratic Seminars, continued

### Listening

**Excellent:** Pays attention to details, writes down questions, responses take into account all participants, demonstrates that s/he has kept up, points out bad logic, overcomes distractions.

**Good:** Generally pays attention and responds thoughtfully to ideas and questions of other participants and the teacher, absorption in own ideas may distract the participant from the ideas of others.

**Fair:** Appears to find some ideas unimportant while responding to others, may have to have questions repeated while not having confusing comments restated, takes few notes during the seminar.

**Poor:** Appears uninvolved in the seminar, comments display complete misinterpretation of questions or comments of other participants.

### Reading

**Excellent:** Thoroughly familiar with text, has notations and questions in the margins, key words, phrases, and ideas are underlined, possible contradictions identified, pronounces words correctly.

**Good:** Has read the text and comes with some ideas from it but these may not be written out in advance, good understanding of the vocabulary but may mispronounce some new or foreign words.

**Fair:** Appears to have read or skimmed the text but has not marked the text or made meaningful notes or questions, shows difficulty with vocabulary, mispronounces important words, key concepts misunderstood, little evidence of serious reflection prior to the seminar.

**Poor:** Student is unprepared for the seminar, important words, phrases, ideas in the text are unfamiliar, no notes or questions marked in the text, no attempt made to get help with difficult material.

*(Source: A variety of versions of these assessment criteria can be found on the web)*