

Instructions for Seminar Presentations

Arts One, Hendricks, 2016-2017

Presentations count as part of your attendance and participation mark for Arts One.

When will you do a presentation?

You'll sign up for the dates on which to do presentations—I'll pass around a sign up sheet. Each person will do one presentation in Term 1 and two in Term 2.

What must be in your presentation

Your presentation must have two things:

- (1) At least one discussion question for the group to talk about (it would be good to have a second one at the ready, in case the first doesn't lead to much discussion!)
 - Be ready also to give your own thoughts on the question, though don't give them right away; let others give their views first.
- (2) An explanation or a set of arguments tying this question to the text, film or other work for the week—ground your question in something that comes directly from the work, giving page numbers to refer to parts of the text (if applicable)

The elements of the presentation don't have to be given in this order (i.e., you can leave the question(s) for last). Think of question(s) for discussion that can't simply be answered by reference to facts, that others would have to go do research to answer; rather, pick something that they can discuss and come up with some ideas on (even if not resolve), given that they've read the texts and attended lecture and seminar.

You could focus your presentation on any number of things; the following are examples you might choose from (or come up with your own ideas)

- (a). *Pick a passage in the text that you think is important, and yet that poses some problem, raises a question, or is otherwise helpful to look at more closely.* You might pick a passage to discuss because it is unclear, or because it seems to be in tension with another claim made in the text (if it's an argumentative text). Or, you could point to a particular passage in a text because it is especially rich with significance for the themes raised in the text, or because it is open to several interpretations that might give different ideas of what the text is saying. After giving your view of the passage and its importance, raise one or more questions for the group to discuss—possibly including the same question you're grappling with in this passage, or different ones.
- (b). *Discuss something that puzzles you about the text or lecture, that you have tried to work through but are still struggling with (not necessarily a particular passage, but perhaps an idea or an assumption or an approach).* It's okay if you haven't solved the problem; it can be interesting to raise the problem and see what others think. This should be something that is somehow important to focus on, given the themes of the text and/or lecture, not just something that's puzzling but fairly insignificant. As noted above, the puzzle/problem should not just be something that could be answered through an investigation of facts.

- (c). *Take a complex or abstract concept from the text and/or lecture for the week and come up with an example or an illustration of some kind that could help us understand the concept better.* It should be something that is likely to be puzzling to many people, not something relatively simple. You could relate the concept to something in modern history or culture, even references to movies or books so long as you also explain the gist of the movie or book so that those who haven't seen/read it can understand. Then raise one or more questions for the group to discuss that relate to your illustration.
- (d). *Make one or more connections between some aspect of a text and/or the lecture for the week to previous things we've read/talked about in the course.* Point out links that we may not have thought about and that haven't yet been discussed. Include a discussion of why these links are important, how considering them may help us look at one or both of the texts in a new way. Then raise one or more questions related to what you've said for the rest of the group to discuss.
- (e). *Relate the text or something said in lecture to the theme of the course, "Seeing and Knowing."* The lectures will not always bring out this theme, and I don't always emphasize it in seminar, either. Thus you have a lot of latitude to come up with ideas here. Again, be sure to also raise one or more questions for the group to discuss.

How long should your presentation be? Between 3 and 5 minutes is about right.

What will be considered in marking the presentation

The presentations will be marked as (+) adequate, (-) not entirely adequate, (0) not completed

- The clarity of the issue you are bringing up, the question(s) you raise, and the links you've drawn to the text for the week (can I follow what your point is in raising the question(s) and how what you're saying fits with the text?)
- The significance of what you bring up (is it something important in relation to the themes/issues in the text/lecture, or is it something very small and relatively insignificant?)
- The degree to which the questions you raise could lead to discussion (Not whether or not they actually do—that depends in part on the group, not only you! But some questions are not very good for discussion, such as those that can be answered in only a few words, or that are answered in other parts of the texts, or that were answered in lecture or a previous seminar, or that are factual questions that we can't answer in seminar without further research.)