Seminar Discussion Rubric

Using this wiki, I want you all to create a rubric for our seminar and add some ideas beneath it about how to create a good learning environment. A rubric is a grading template that lists the criteria for various levels of achievement. So you'll have grading rubrics for all of the papers you'll do this semester. What I'd like you to contribute to is a list of criteria that you will use to assess the quality of our group discussions. This is a grade that you will be giving to the group after every class with a * next to the date. So after you click "Edit" at the top, please list the characteristics of a class discussion that you think fit the following grades. So you might think about what kind of interactions we need to have for each grade, how many people need to speak for each grade, etc. There are also a couple more questions for you below the grading criteria. (When finished, click "Save" at the bottom.) Don't feel that you need to keep adding points so that we generate a really long list of points for each grade. A better strategy might be to edit what others have said before you, just as you would edit a word-processed document. Nothing is ever lost on a wiki--we can always go back to previous versions.

A

- Class members actively and respectfully listen to one another.
- Almost every class member contributes significantly to the discussion.
- The professor provides helpful information and insight, joins in the dialogue, and helps to smoothly transition to new topics.
- It is clear that everyone in the class has done the readings and understands them well enough to discuss them.
- Class members pose questions and ask for clarifications when they do not understand.
- Class members express opposing views to encourage new ways of thinking about a topic.
- The conversation remains focused, and transitions smoothly from one topic to the next.
- Everyone comes prepared with alternate ideas on issues as well as thoughtful questions.
- The readings due for the class were quoted to back up people's opinion.

B

- The discussion flows relatively smoothly, though class members get off-topic at some points.
- The professor must prod the students to advance/continue the discussion.
- The class has clearly done the readings but might not have made an extra effort to understand them on more than a superficial level.
- A small number of individuals may monopolize the discussion, and thus a couple of individuals are unable to participate.
- For the most part, class members use active listening, but some repetition of points occurs.
- Most members of class participate; however, it is apparent that the discussion is guided by a few individuals.
- Individuals have done the reading, but are not prepared to discuss the entire class time.
C

- The discussion goes off-topic at many points.
- The professor brings up various points and no one ever adds to them, asks questions, or carries on the discussion.
- Class members do not seem to listen to what others say or talk over one another many times during the class.
- It's obvious that many of the students have not completed the day's reading.
- Only half of the class participates in discussion.
- The discussion is fairly repetitious and class members do not build upon others' remarks.
- Heated debates occur and are not dealt with maturely.

D

- The class demonstrates no understanding of the readings/has not attempted to understand them.
- Class discussions are patchy or awkward (to put it plainly, getting the class to talk is like pulling teeth).
- Class members fail to listen to one another's remarks or to develop a sustained and unified discussion.
- Side conversations are prevalent.
- It would be difficult to look back on the discussion and remember key points brought up.

F

- Many members of the class are sleeping or do not listen.
- Nobody did the readings and nobody contributes.
- Members of the class are disrespectful of others.
- The Professor is the only one talking.

In addition, please add some thoughts to the following:

The way(s) we can all best support each other in the seminar to feel welcome and empowered to contribute our ideas is/are ...

- Encouraging classmates to talk with friendly faces and a "you can do it!" nod.
- Actively listening to everyone, except those behind you as that can get awkward with trying to look at them; maybe just listening to those behind and focusing on what their are saying. (did that make sense?)
- In the daily assessments, trying to give shout-outs to people you feel contributed a lot or