Discussion Facilitation
Psych 207 (Depaoli), Fall 2018

Assignment Basics:

"Teach it once, learn it twice"

Each student will be expected to (co)facilitate a class discussion session on an assigned topic. An entire class session will be devoted to the topic and this session can be used in a variety of ways (some ideas presented below).

The topic areas to choose from are constrained to predetermined topics. There will be 2 people per topic, or one group of 3 in the case of an uneven number of students. Topics are listed in the syllabus and on the accompanying handout.

Each student must pair (or triple) up and select a topic to tackle. You must let me know who you are working with and your topic choice by the end of the first lecture.

In some cases, I will also present on that topic a bit (consult syllabus for specific details). Note that my presentation of the topic will be "light" and general so that the bulk of the interesting stuff is left for you. I may also present some syntax/output, depending on the topic area. If you are worried about having too much overlap with what I present, come and talk to me ahead of time so that we can sort it all out. In many cases, the topic area is covered entirely by the presenting group; although I may add details during or after their presentation to ensure complete coverage of the topic area.

Student Requirements:

When it is NOT your session to facilitate, you must submit at least 3 detailed questions or talking points to me and the presenter(s) by 5:00pm the night before the scheduled discussion via email. Within these questions and/or talking points, you should tie in reading(s) and topics relevant to the planned topic for the week. The idea here is to get you involved in the topic(s) before the discussion day and help provide the presenter(s) for the week with additional questions and talking points to cover in class. Trust me, the presenter(s) will appreciate thoughtful submissions (and your grade depends on it...see below)!

THOUGHTS FOR THE PRESENTER(S):

The main task for the presenter(s) is to facilitate a thought-provoking, informative discussion and/or tutorial of relevant material. To meet these expectations, the presenter(s) may find it useful to do some of the following (although do not limit your imagination to this list, and do not view this as a list of requirements):

- Supply additional readings to the class; note that the professor will provide readings for each topic but these may not be sufficient depending on the goals of the presenter(s).

- Present an overview of the specific problem(s)/technique(s). This can be verbal or visual (e.g., lecture-type slides or drawings on the board).

- Supply the class with talking points to facilitate discussion surrounding topics such as: main purpose of topic/technique, issues surrounding application, potential problems/pitfalls, relevance to SEM or other modeling frameworks, possible studies or future inquiries, critique of readings (positive or negative).

- The presenter(s) can also choose to include computational demonstrations for relevant techniques in M*plus* or other software. Note that demos must offer something different than what I will present in class so come see me ahead of time to discuss. I can also provide minor help with code if you need to bounce ideas off of me; however, I will not spend a bunch of energy helping you troubleshoot error messages for your demo. You will be largely responsible for ensuring this component of your presentation works well.

THE ALL-IMPORTANT GRADE:

All requirements for this assignment are equivalent to 15% of your final course grade.

An important note to keep in mind is that I do NOT have any specific format requirements for how the day is structured as long as you touch on the points relevant to grading (note that although you are "paired up", grading is on an individual basis). You will be graded on the five following points (equal weighting for all points):

- Time management. It should be clear to me and the class that you have a structure planned for the session that is fitting for the time allotted.

- Ability to facilitate discussion about assigned topic.

- Depth and accuracy of portraying topic; this may include discussion of equations, application, future work, problems, etc.

- Tying in other written pieces, scholars, or techniques relevant to your topic(s); note that this does not *require* you to assign other readings, but it does indicate that you need to at least discuss other relevant readings that you encounter during your research on your topic.

- In addition to grading requirements for your discussion day, you will be graded on the questions/talking points that you submit for the other discussion days throughout the semester (i.e., those that your classmates are leading).

Most importantly: HAVE FUN!!!