

# We Need to Talk:

## Tips for Participating in Class Discussions

### Before class



#### Prepare to contribute:

- Do the readings!
- Write down any questions you have as well as what you find interesting.
- Make notes about the author's point.
- Consider making notes about how the reading applies to this course, other courses and your experiences.
- It's hard to read an article on your phone—try printing it out or saving it to your laptop so you can easily refer to it during class.

### During class



#### Be aware of the different ways you can participate:

- Have your readings and the notes you made before class in front of you for easy reference.
- Ask questions—check out the conversation starters side bar for ideas.
- Disagree with others in a respectful way.
- Relax. Try not to worry about what others think. Lots of people are nervous about participating. It's a great chance to learn and grow.
- Speaking up in class isn't the only way to show that you can be part of the conversation; making eye contact, nodding in agreement, and actively listening keep you connected.

### After class



#### Reflect on your experience:

- Be proud of yourself for speaking up, and think about how you might change things up next time.
- Meet with your professor or TA if you're having difficulties or want feedback.
- Look for outside resources to get tips on public speaking.

## Conversation Starters

- “I really liked \_\_\_\_\_ about the reading.”
- “The part that resonated most with me was \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “It’s interesting that you interpreted that point as \_\_\_\_\_. I actually interpreted it as \_\_\_\_\_. What do others think?”
- “This idea made me think of \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I agree with that point because \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I also thought \_\_\_\_\_ (regarding a classmate’s idea) because \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I am not very clear on \_\_\_\_\_. Did anyone else understand it better than I did?”
- “I felt the general idea of the article was \_\_\_\_\_. To me, that makes me think about \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I don’t necessarily feel like the results support the author’s conclusion because \_\_\_\_\_.”