

BIOL535 Guidelines for participation

All BIOL535 students are required to attend all class sessions and participate in discussions during every session. Participation is worth 15% of your final mark. The primary goal of participation in BIOL535 is to encourage students to critically evaluate the evidence presented in class and generate an interesting and productive discussion. As a result of engaging in discussions, students will hone their ability to think critically and consider how the scientific method can best be applied to answering questions in urban ecology and evolution. Students should also strive to communicate their ideas clearly and succinctly, and base their statements on logic and evidence.

If you are sick or unable to attend the class for university-approved reasons, students must complete a request via the [Academic Consideration Portal](#) **before class begins**. Students should not email the professor to explain absences – the Academic Consideration Portal will ask for your course information and instructor contact info, and generate an email to me.

To earn an A+ in the participation component of BIOL535, students will attend all classes, come to class with the reading(s) completed, and make meaningful contributions to discussion, as described below.

For each class session, students will earn a participation mark between 0 and 3:

0 = unexcused absence and/or participation indicated that the student had not completed required readings prior to class

0.5 = present, but did not participate in discussion in any meaningful way

1 = participated, providing minor contributions to the discussion that showed some thought and preparation

2 = participated, providing an average level of contributions to the discussion that showed thorough preparation and some degree of critical thinking about the material

3 = participated, providing meaningful contributions to the discussion that showed thorough preparation and sound, critical thinking about the material

Note that participating in Zoom classes can include typing comments and questions into the chat, but that those contributions might not as easily demonstrate the highest level of preparation and critical thinking that is expected to achieve level 3.

Participation marks will be deducted if students ask questions that are already clearly answered in posted course material (e.g., syllabus, assignment guidelines). Such questions indicate that the student is not fulfilling course expectations by reading all posted material.