

## INNER-OUTER CIRCLE SEMINAR

- 1. Purpose.** The purpose of this seminar is to understand new knowledge by thinking out loud and sharing your ideas openly with other students. Cooperation can lead to greater understanding. Back up your ideas with evidence from the assigned reading(s).
- 2. Questions.** Write and answer \_\_\_\_\_ questions based on the reading(s). Ask questions that require thought. Questions should reflect your curiosity, and your questions might not have right or wrong answers. Do not write questions on the “knowledge” level. Do not write questions that can be answered in just a few words.
- 3. Grading.** This graded seminar will be worth \_\_\_\_\_ points: one-third for your written questions and answers, one-third for your discussion in the inner circle, and one-third for your notes in the outer circle.

| <b>Earn positive points for:</b>           | <b>Avoid negative points for:</b>   |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| -Good thought questions (5)                | -Not paying attention (-2)          |
| -Each relevant comment (1)                 | -Distracting others (-2)            |
| -Evidence from the reading (2)             | -Interrupting (-2)                  |
| -Bringing others into the conversation (2) | -Irrelevant comments (-2)           |
| -Recognizing contradictions (2)            | -Monopolizing the conversation (-3) |
| -Asking clarifying questions (1)           | -Personal attacks (-3)              |

### KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL SEMINAR

1. Be prepared. Read the assigned reading carefully, probably more than once. Try your best to fully understand it.
2. Write thought-provoking questions. Remember to write both questions and answers. Your questions and answers will be checked at the beginning of class.
3. Keep an open mind during the discussion. Look for the strengths in other people’s ideas. Be prepared to change your point-of-view based on what you learn.
4. If several people wish to talk, raise your hand and wait quietly to be called upon. Do not raise your hand while another student is speaking.
5. Speak loudly enough for everyone in the room to hear you. Look at other students when talking. Bring the assigned reading to the discussion; you may wish to refer to it.
6. If you don’t understand something, ask clarifying questions.
7. If you don’t have something to say, it is OK to “pass” when asked to contribute.
8. When in the outer circle, pay close attention to the discussion, and take notes.