**Poli 276H Collaborative Annotations**

Perusall helps you **learn better** by collaboratively annotating the readings and communicating with your classmates. In a face-to-face class, we use discussion to help understand and engage with the readings. This collaborative annotation system provides another way to do that.

**Annotations:**

**I**nclude your name at the beginning or end of your annotation. Otherwise, Perusall just lists your initials, and people won’t know who is saying what.

There is no set number of annotations that you must do, just like there is no set number of comments you would make or listen to in a class discussion. If you do too few, you are not participating enough. If you do too many, you are cluttering up the airspace for everyone. So – just like in a face-to-face class – you need to use your judgment. Here is what I will be looking for:

* Are you doing a **mix** of different kinds of annotations, both simpler and more complex? (See below for an explanation of different kinds of annotations.)
* Are your annotations spread throughout the entire reading?
* Do you start the reading early enough that you can return to it multiple times, to engage with your classmates’ annotations? It’s fine to break the reading into chunks instead of trying to do it all at once.
* Do you answer questions from others?
* Do your annotations elicit responses from classmates?
* Do you include your name in your annotation, and do you use classmates’ name when you are responding to them?

**Kinds of annotations:**

*Here are some ideas. Don’t worry if you don’t think your comments fit into any of these categories. Note that these start simpler and develop into higher order thinking. Be sure to both make your own annotations AND respond to classmates’ annotations.*

-- A personal reaction. These play a legitimate role in establishing a sense of community interaction. *(Example: “this really resonates with me because…” or “I thought this was funny because…”)*

-- A request for clarification on parts you don’t understand. *(Example: “does the author mean X or Y here?”*)

-- Relevant information you want to share, or something you’re curious about. *(Example: "in Poli 270, we learned that…” Or “does anyone know . . .”)*

-- A clarification question. (*Example: “I don’t understand this part – is the author saying xyz?”)*

-- An explanation/summary of a section of the article, in your own words. *(Example: “so overall Socrates is saying …”)* Use good paraphrasing techniques – if you use an author’s phrases, be sure to put quotation marks around them.

-- An explanation of why one section of the argument is significant for the author’s overall purpose *(Example: “Socrates’ reasoning here is connected to his concern for … because…”)*

-- An application of a section of an argument to a concrete example. *(Example: “if we applied this argument to this example, the result or implication would be…”)*

-- An explanation of how something links to previous readings or discussions. *(Example: “this seems connected to Aristotle’s idea of virtue because…” OR “remember when we were talking about Singer and. . .”)*

-- Your own evaluation of the argument and your reasons for that evaluation. *(Example: “I would argue that…” Or “this is an odd claim because…”)*

-- A thoughtful substantive question. *(Example: “but how can Mill argue this, given what he said in chapter 3 about social pressure?” or “Would X have the following effect on Y, or would it play out differently because of Z?”)*

-- A substantive response to classmate comments and questions. Any of the above can also work as responses (*like you would if we were discussing in class).*