**Collegiate Discussion Rules:**

**Tips and Tricks to make any teacher think you’re a scholar (because you are!)**

1. **Demonstrate that you’re listening.**

Face the speaker; maintain eye contact; nod or smile in agreement. Say something in response when appropriate – words as simple as “I see” or “yes” can do.

1. **When in doubt, ask.** If a particular point is not clear to you, politely invite the speaker to further clarify or expand upon his or her point.
2. **Take turns.** Refrain from interrupting or dominating the discussion. Instead, ask questions that allow the speaker to elaborate upon or clarify a point.
3. **Keep your responses focused on the original topic**. Don’t cause confusion by making too many points at once or following too long of a rabbit trail.\*
4. **As always, speak with courtesy and respect.** Though there’s room for thoughtful academic debate on a given topic, avoid sparking or getting embroiled in argumentative confrontations that only serve to anger or insult others.
5. **Give reasons to support your opinion.** You might think Subject X is “stupid” or that Subject Y is a “great idea” but if you can’t express why with facts or rational logic you may have a hard time functioning in the working world where everyday decisions need to be backed by evidence. Practice your persuasive skills now! (an avoid the expletives)
6. **Always assume you are addressing a group with mixed perspectives.** Before you start to speak remember that you might be addressing someone who disagrees with your opinion.

\*although the rabbit trail can be fun to go down when there is enough time