Tips to Becoming More Active in Classroom Discussions

Do the homework: Come prepared
- prepare questions
- find a relevant, recent media story

Ask questions
1. Admit you don't know
   • And be curious!

2. Seek clarification
   • What do you mean?
   • Can you clarify a bit more?
   • In other words, you are saying....
   • Can you spin that out for me?

3. Be skeptical – and tactful
   • Ask for additional details, examples
   • Says who? Seek sources
   • Are you sure? How sure are you?

4. Express your opinion (and ambivalence is okay)
   • Use Hedging language
   • On one hand....
   • It seems/appears/looks like/feels like

5. Demonstrate how many problems remain complicated
   • Consider diverse perspectives
   • Look at stakeholders
   • Consider technology
   • Help move beyond the "obvious" into the subtle
6. **Share Evidence (It’s okay to disagree – even with the professor!)**
   - Bring new information (experience: personal, national) to the table
   - Do we know.....
   - Is it possible....
   - What if you are wrong?

7. **Become who you are**
   - don't forget what you bring to table
   - Culture counts
   - I wonder …. I wonder if …. I wonder how …. I wonder who
   - Help the USC class become a truly global classroom

**Some Media Suggestions:**

Radio:
- 89.3 FM
- 89.9 FM

Print Media:

Websites for Insights/Stories on American Culture:
- Storycorps.org ThisIbelieve.org
- TED.com ThisAmericanLife.org

Websites for news:
- HuffingtonPost.com
- DrudgeReport.com