### Strategies for Understanding the Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explain the problem (select one):</th>
<th>Make a request (select one):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t understand what you mean by _________ <em>(insert word or phrase)</em>...</td>
<td>...could you explain it to me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure whether I understand your question...</td>
<td>...could you repeat it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m afraid that I’m unclear about your question...</td>
<td>...could you rephrase it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m a bit confused...</td>
<td>...would you mind clarifying what you said?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure I completely understand...</td>
<td>...would you mind explaining it again?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other ideas for strategies/ Notes:**

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Option 2: Ask another student to rephrase the question for you

- Can someone help out by rephrasing the question for me?
- Is there anyone that understands what he/she is asking that could rephrase the question for me?
- Can someone that is clear about the question explain it to me?
- Is there anyone that can explain the question for me using an example?
- I do not understand what you mean by ________ (insert word or phrase), can someone help explain its meaning to me?

Option 3: Attempt to restate your understanding of the question

- I’m not sure if I understood you correctly but it sounds like you are asking _____________________ (restate question). Is that correct?
- I’m a little confused, are you asking me if _____________________ (restate question). Did I understand you correctly?
- If I understood you correctly you are asking if _____________________ (restate question). Is that right?
Navigating and Deflecting the Question

Chart 1. Navigate and deflect too broad or off-topic questions

- The question is too broad
- Explain that the question is good, then...
  - Ask student to come to office hours
  - Ask student to stay after class to discuss the question
  - Ask student to email question

Chart 2. Navigate and deflect irrelevant questions

- Is the question irrelevant?
- I would be happy to talk about that further, then...
  - Ask student to come to office hours
  - Ask student to stay after class to discuss the question
  - Ask student to email question

Chart 3. Navigate and deflect offensive questions

- The question is offensive
- Explain that the question is off topic and will not be discussed
What if you understand a student’s question but don’t know the answer?

- Not every question requires an immediate answer!
  - You just need to know how to handle your class and students.
  - There are many good ways of answering questions!
- What to say when you don’t know the answer...
  1. That’s a very good question! But, honestly, I don’t know the answer right now. Could you email that question to me? I need some time to think about it. I will get back to you soon.
  2. Does anyone know the answer? I want to hear what others think.
  3. I like your question, but I’ve never thought about that before. I will let you know.

Creating a Question-friendly Environment