

## DID I MISS ANYTHING?

(A question frequently asked by students after missing a class.)

Nothing. When we realized you weren't here we sat with our hands folded on our desks in silence, for the full two hours.

Everything. I gave an exam worth 40 percent of the grade for this term and assigned some reading due today on which I'm about to hand out a quiz worth 50 per cent.

Nothing. None of the content of this course has value or meaning  
Take as many days off as you like:  
any activities we undertake as a class  
I assure you will not matter either to you or me  
and are without purpose.

Everything. A few minutes after we began last time a shaft of light suddenly descended and an angel or other heavenly being appeared and revealed to us what each woman or man must do to attain divine wisdom in this life and the hereafter.

This is the last time the class will meet before we disperse to bring the good news to all people on earth.

Nothing. When you are not present how could something significant occur?

Everything. Contained in this classroom is a microcosm of human experience assembled for you to query and examine and ponder. This is not the only place such an opportunity has been gathered.

But it was one place

And you weren't here.

Poem written by Tom Wayman, a Canadian poet, and published in:  
Wayman, T. (1993). Did I miss anything? Selected poems 1973-1993.  
Vancouver, BC: Harbour Publishing.