Discussion Boards - Options

What is a Discussion Board?

In Canvas, **Discussions** is a collaboration tool for conversations that occur outside of the classroom. Discussions provide a forum for interactive communication among students or groups of students. Students can post text, video, audio, and attach files to contribute to the discussion.

For online Discussions to be successful, faculty need to engage with the students. Whether by responding in the Discussion Board thread or by bringing up well thought out responses students made in that week's post, in class. Adding a grade weight to a Discussion Board is **not enough** to gain successful insight and mastery from students.

Option 1: Weekly Discussion Board Question

Each week a question will be posted by the Professor that students will answer and additionally respond to one or two of their classmates.

Student Expectation:

- Agreeing or disagreeing is not enough to earn the full grade.
- Students must cite sources, give examples, and explain thoroughly why they agree or disagree with another post.

Faculty Expectation:

- To grade based on the depth of student responses, not only by who answered and replied the required amount of times.

Option 2: Students Post an Article and a Question to the Discussion Board

This can be done on a weekly basis and cycles through students in groups or individually depending on class size. The student will post an article related to that week's topic and pose authentic questions to their classmates to answer.

For smaller classes, a useful strategy is to have students post two juxtaposing articles then ask open and insightful questions for classmates to answer and discuss.

Student Expectation:

- Absorb course content, perform independent research, and pose genuine and open questions.
- Make thorough and comprehensive comments in reply to the article(s) and question(s) posed.

Faculty Expectation:

- Provide genuine feedback on both the original article(s) and question(s) posed.
- Monitor and facilitate discussion by adding additional comments and feedback to students.

Option 3: Students Post Questions about the Course Content

This option emphasizes student centered learning and is well suited for the flipped classroom model. The idea is that students engage with course content outside of class and synthesize deeper, multifaceted questions that may not have been addressed in class. Other students can respond and answer these questions, creating a more shared learning experience.

Student Expectation:

- Engage with course content, synthesize and pose robust questions, and reply in thorough and relevant comments to each other.

Faculty Expectation:

- Moderate and facilitate discussion, either by adding in necessary comments or by countering student responses.
- Provide feedback on the originally submitted questions or the subsequent replies, especially if the guidance or correction is needed.

Grading Discussion Board

As with all online assignments, rubrics are useful in setting clear expectations for how students will be graded. To learn more about rubrics tailored to your Discussion Board needs, schedule a meeting with the [Curriculum Management & Assessment](#) team.

To learn more about creating Discussion Boards in Canvas, review [here](#).