**Discussion Board Guidelines**

## Grading for Discussions

Topic discussion posts will be graded during the week following the date that the discussions are due. Usually 20 total points are possible for each discussion topic. In determining your grade, the following components are considered (see the *Grading Rubric for Discussions* in the section that follows for a complete breakdown):

### Length of post (quantity) \*The requirements may vary

* You are required to post one original message for each topic (i.e. “replies” to other students do not count in this regard).
* In addition to your one, original post, you will often be required to reply to classmates’ posts.
* Original posts should consist of at least 700 characters or more (not including spaces; roughly 150 words).
* Replies to other students should consist of at least 350 characters or more (not including spaces; roughly 75 words).

### Quality of posts

* Each of your posts (original posts & replies) must demonstrate your understanding of the topic.
* Connections between lecture content, textbook content, and discussion should be exhibited.
* Relate new information with material previously covered in the class as well as with personal experience.
* Discuss at a critical level – don’t just recite facts from your reading, discussion, or lecture.
* Critical discussion includes your opinion of items mentioned, but also includes the reasons you hold that opinion, and why it may be inconsistent or consistent with what you’ve learned. Justify your reasoning with facts. How does what you’re presenting affect present and future situations?
* Posts that are replicates of other student’s posts will result in a lower grade.

### Timeliness

* Review due dates closely. Depending on the assignment, you original post and your response post will be due in different time increments. I will take into consideration other assignments we are working on and the complexity of the required post when creating this due dates.
* Discussion messages for a topic that are posted after the specified due date will not be graded.
* Consistently posting at the very end of the week will hurt your grade.

**Rubric for Discussions:** **The following rubric will be used to evaluate discussion boards. Points possible for discussion posts range in accordance with the scope and complexity of the assignment.**

| *Needs Improvement* | *Minimally Acceptable* | *Meets Expectations* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **(1 point)**   * Superficial posts * No valid connections made between content. * No analysis or insight. * *Critical* presentation of opinion not present. | **(3 points)**   * Some connections made, although all might not be valid. * Analysis of content is evident, although possibly not complete. * *Critical* presentation of opinion is not complete. | **(4 points)**   * Valid connections made. * Posts are complete with analysis and insight. * Opinions are presented at a *critical* level |
| **(1 point)**   * Originality of posts is not evident (ideas are not your own). * Posts consist of little more than “I agree with you …” statements. * Plagiarism may be evident. * Sources not cited. | **(3 points)**   * Originality of posts might be questionable, but valid. * Some new ideas. * Plagiarism not evident. * Sources are cited. | **(4 points)**   * Original ideas are presented. * Plagiarism not evident. * Sources are cited. |
| **(1 point)**   * Original posts are added at the last minute, leaving no time for classmates to respond. | **(3 points)**   * Original posts are present, but may have been posted during the last half of the discussion period. * Participation is infrequent during the discussion period. | **(4 points)**   * Original posts are added during the first half of the discussion period. * Participation is evident throughout the entire discussion period. |
| **(1 point)**   * Length of all required posts do not meet requirements. * One or more required postings are missing. | **(3 points)**   * Length of all required posts meets the requirements but includes considerable “fluff” or “filler.” * All required postings are made. | **(4 points)**   * Length of all required posts meet requirements. * All required postings are made. |
| **(1 point)**   * Many spelling or grammar errors * Content is difficult to understand. * Inappropriate language used. | **(3 points)**   * Few spelling or grammar mistakes * Content is generally easy to understand. | **(4 points)**   * No spelling or grammar mistakes. * Content easy to understand. |

***Total Possible Points: 20***

Instructor Role

As the instructor, I will serve as a “guide” in terms of the Discussion Board. While I will not respond to every post, I will read what is posted, and reply when necessary. Expect instructor posts in the following situations:

* To assist each of you when it comes to making connections between discussion, lectures, and textbook material.
* To fill in important things that may have been missed.
* To re-direct discussion when it gets “out of hand”.
* To point out key points or to identify important posts.

## Discussion Board Etiquette

*How* you post a message to a topic is just as important as what you post. If your behavior does not follow the course etiquette standards stated below, the grade you receive for a posting may suffer.

* The instructor reserves the right to remove any discussion messages that display inappropriate content.
* Rudeness or slamming will not be tolerated.
* Show respect for your fellow students, even if you disagree with something that was stated.
* Clearly state what you believe, even if it means that you’re disagreeing with someone. Never, however, respond in anger – take care to discuss ideas, not the person.

~Created with information from http://www.csus.edu/sacct/faculty/index.stm