

Learning, Teaching & Innovative Technologies Center



Middle Tennessee State University

DISCUSSION BOARD RUBRICS

The following teaching tip was taken from “Pedagogy Advanced WebCT I: Managing Students and Communicat-ing,” by Brenda Kerr, Instructional Technology Specialist, MTSU.

When using a discussion board in your class(es), it is important to make students feel that the time invested in responses is not wasted. All students need to receive some feedback on postings either from peers, or the instructor. The proper etiquette, expectations, goals, and grading scale should be conveyed to the students. Develop a rubric to evaluate student use of the discussion board. The rubric should encourage class discussion and enhance the composition of the postings, but the rubric should not be hard for the instructor or students to use or understand.

Sample Discussion Board Rubrics

Sample # 1

The following points are what is looked for in your original postings to the Discussion Board and your replies to others postings (Total of 10 points for each Discussion Board assignment).

- Original Posting (7 points)
- Mention of at least two specific points from the article or reading. (1 point)
- Relation of new information to old information learned in the course to date. (1 point)
- Relation of information in article or reading to personal experience. (1 point)
- Discussion at a critical level, not just recitation of facts from the article. (3 points)
- Length of posting approximately 1 word processing page. (1 point)

Note: Discussion at a critical level means discussing things such as your opinion of the point mentioned, why you hold that opinion, what you see wrong with point mentioned, how you see the point consistent/incon-sistent with what you have learned so far, implications for the future, consistencies/inconsistencies within the article or reading itself, and so forth. In other words, critiquing an article means analyzing the good and/or bad aspects of the article and justifying your analysis. Do not just tell me what the article or reading states ... I already know this.

Reply to Others' Postings (3 points):

Discuss one point you like/agree with, and one point you dislike/disagree with, and why. (2 points)

Length should be about 1/2 page in length (approximately 100 words).

(Rubric information taken from http://www.albany.edu/faculty/rd1872/epsy440/db_rubric.html.)

Sample # 2 Grading Discussion Boards

Discussion postings that meet all criteria for a grade level will receive the highest points possible at that level. Postings that meet mixed levels of criteria will receive a score within the point range of the appropriate levels.

Participation in discussion activities can only be measured by the date on the discussion posting. For example, participating 3 times during the week is measured by postings on 3 different days; there may actually be 5-6 postings, but participation only occurred 3 times during the week.

A Discussion (90-100): Distinguished/Outstanding

Students earning an "A" for discussion activities have participated 3 or more times during the week and have posted outstanding information.

"A" discussion postings

- are made in time for others to read and respond
- deliver information that is full of thought, insight, and analysis
- make connections to previous or current content or to real-life situations
- contain rich and fully developed new ideas, connections, or applications

B Discussion (80-89): Proficient

Students earning a "B" for discussion activities have participated at least 2 times during the week and have posted proficient information.

"B" discussion postings

- are made in time for others to read and respond
- deliver information that shows that thought, insight, and analysis have taken place
- make connections to previous or current content or to real-life situations, but the connections are not really clear or are too obvious
- contain new ideas, connections, or applications, but they may lack depth and/or detail

C Discussion (70-79): Basic

Students earning a "C" for discussion activities have participated at least 1 time during the week and have posted basic information.

"C" discussion postings

- may not all be made in time for others to read and respond
- are generally competent, but the actual information they deliver seems thin and commonplace
- make limited, if any, connections, and those are often cast in the form of vague generalities
- contain few, if any, new ideas or applications; often are a rehashing or summary of other comments

D-F Discussion (10-69): Below Expectations

Students earning a "D-F" for discussion activities have participated at least 1 time during the week and have posted information that was below expectations.

"D-F" discussion postings

- may not all be made in time for others to read and respond
- are rudimentary and superficial; there is no evidence of insight or analysis
- contribute no new ideas, connections, or applications
- may be completely off topic

Taken from http://www.tulsa.cc.ok.us/dll/faculty/bb_tips/discussion_rubric2.doc.

Sample # 3 Grading Discussion Boards

Criteria	A (90-100) Outstanding	B (80-90) Proficient	C (70-79) Basic	D/F (0-69) Below Expectations
Critical Thinking	rich in content full of thought, insight, and analysis	substantial information thought, insight, and analysis has taken place	generally competent information is thin and commonplace	rudimentary and superficial no analysis or insight is displayed
Connections	Clear connections to previous or current to real-life situations	new ideas or connections lack depth and/or detail	limited, if any connections vague generalities	no connections are made off topic
Uniqueness	new ideas new connections made with depth and detail	new ideas of connections lack depth and/or detail	few, if any new ideas or connections rehash or summarize other postings	no new ideas "I agree with..." statement
Timeliness	All required postings Early in discussion Throughout the discussion	All required postings Some not in time for others to read and respond	All required postings Most at the last minute without allowing for response time	Some, or all, required postings missing
Stylistics	Few grammatical or stylistic errors	Several grammatical or stylistic errors	Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors Errors interfere with content	Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors Makes understanding impossible

Visit some of the resources below for more information and samples on rubrics.

Rubric Builder at http://landmark-project.com/classweb/tools/rubric_builder.php?

Family Education Network, Assessment, How to Weight Rubrics, at <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/page/4525.html>

Relearning by Design, Inc., Rubrics, at: http://www.relearning.org/resources/PDF/rubric_sampler.pdf.