

Creating Community in Online Discussions

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Agenda

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graph LR; Agenda[Agenda] --- A[Discussion Board Rationale]; Agenda --- B[Communicate Expectations]; Agenda --- C[Writing Effective Prompts]; Agenda --- D[Facilitation]; Agenda --- E[Grading];
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Discussion Board Rationale

Communicate Expectations

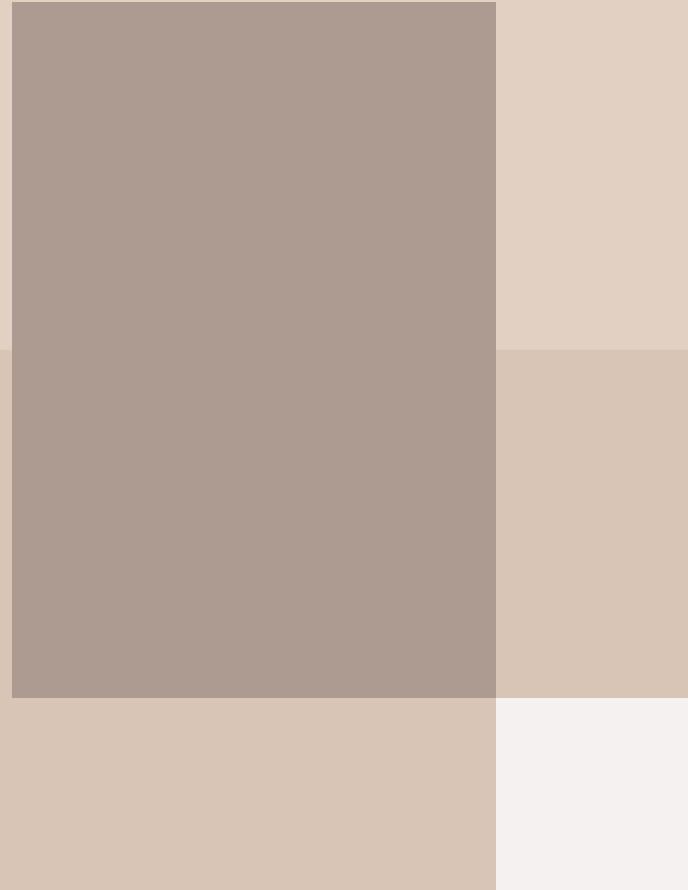
Writing Effective Prompts

Facilitation

Grading

Poll

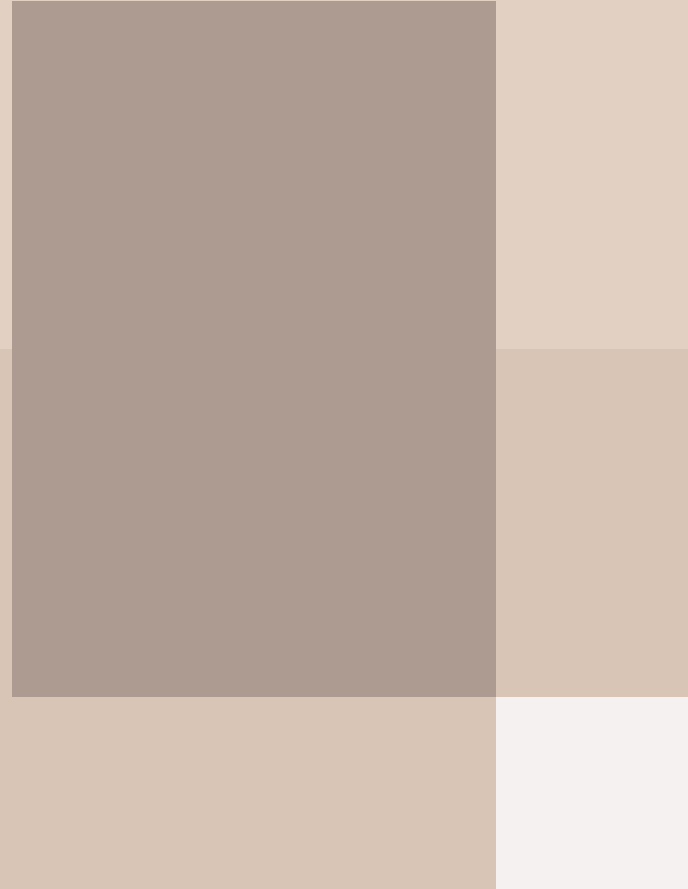
How are asynchronous
discussions different
from classroom/f2f
discussions?



Why use discussions?

- Purposeful discussions
- Improve & encourage critical thinking
- Engage in diverse perspectives with content beyond what is right and what is wrong
- Build communication skills
- Build student relationships

Expectations



Discussion Board Rules or Expectations

- Student assist with setting expectations
 - Identify the best and worst classes in which they have participated
 - Reflect on what made them so
 - Provide three things that students could do to help create a positive environment

Netiquette or Ground rules

- Critique ideas, not people
- Expect others to have different experiences and perspectives
- Expect mistakes. Seek to see them as a valuable part of the learning process.
- http://www.albion.com/netiquette/core_rules.html

What are your
expectations for
discussions boards to
students?

How do students learn
about expectations?



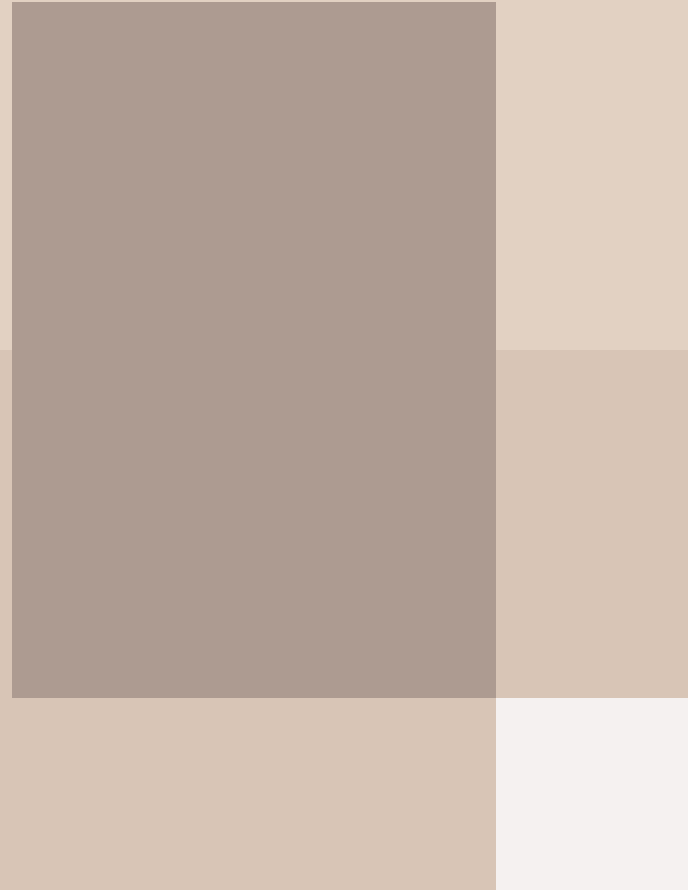
Expectations

- Frequency of participation (S)
- Quality of participation, responses (S)
- Self-assess and reflect (S)

- Instructor engage with students

- Scaffold questions (I)
- Provide exemplar posts (I)
- Model desired behaviors (I)
- 30 min every 4 to 6 days (I)

Effective Prompts





The Prompt

- Aligned
- Deep not surface
- Layered
- Responses
- Relevant

Types of Questions

Exploratory questions: probe facts and basic knowledge

Challenge questions: interrogate assumptions, conclusions or interpretations

Relational questions: ask for comparisons of themes, ideas, or issues

Diagnostic questions: probe motives or causes

Cause-and-effect questions: causal relationships between ideas or events

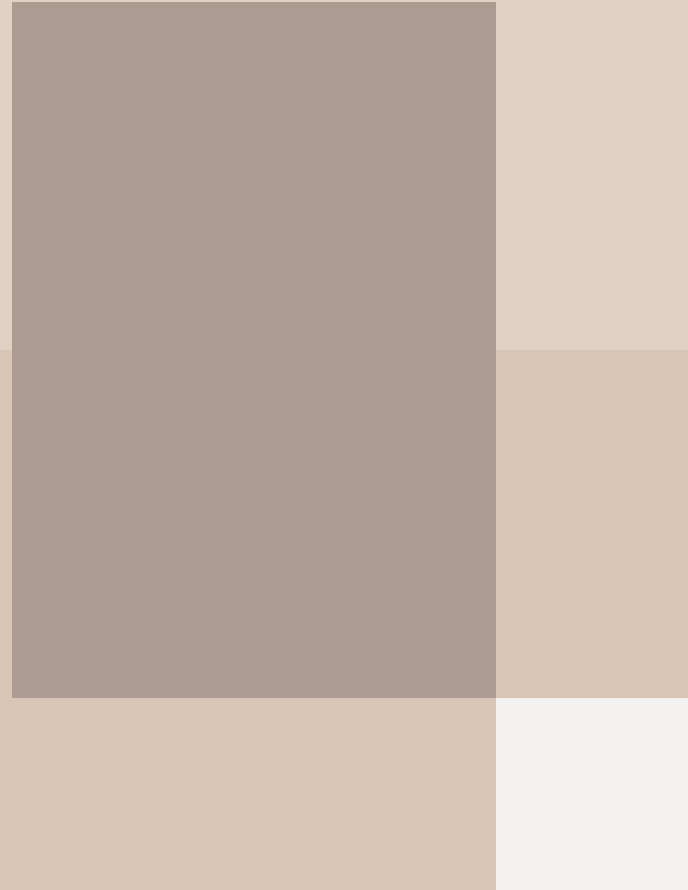
Extension questions: expand the discussion

Hypothetical questions: pose a change in the facts or issues

Priority questions: seek to identify the most important issue(s)

Summary questions: elicit synthesis

Facilitation



Facilitation

- Reply to students with question(s) in order to continue the conversation
- Ask questions
- Expect technical issues
- Create a safe environment so students can ask for clarification
- Make a systematic plan for grading

What facilitation strategies do you currently use with online discussion boards?



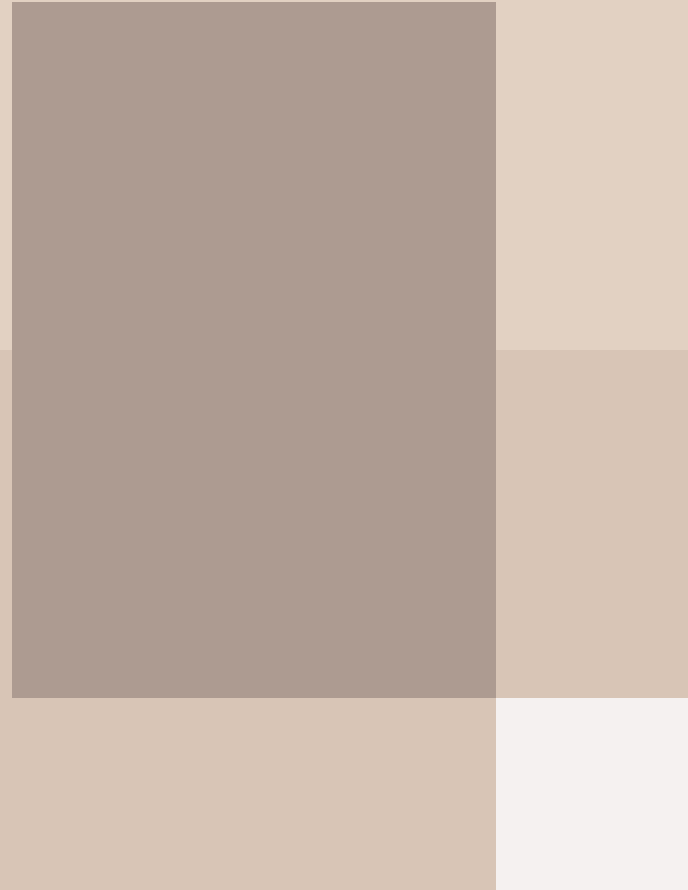
Strategies

- Small group discussions, case studies
- Jigsaw, expert groups
- Student moderated discussions
- Choice in questions

- <http://www.onlineteachingtips.org/discussionboards.html>

Grading

Rubrics, Criteria, Self Assessment



Potential grading criteria

- Research Based
- Critical Thinking
- Connections to Content
- Connections to Peers
- Quality of Post
- Reply Posting
- Netiquette, Professionalism
- Grammar
- Overall contribution to conversation

Assignment 9: Online Discussions (Individual)

There are 5 assignments specifically designated as Online Discussions. Each discussion is worth 10 points. These will be conducted using the Discussion Board feature in D2L. Read below for the specific requirements for online discussions.

Each discussion board requires you to post:

- An initial comment/answer to my question
- One response to one of your classmates' initial posts
- Respond to one classmate who responded to your initial post

An excellent discussion post includes:

- New ideas
- Engaging information, with or without references
- Correct grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Not a casual conversation, but an extension of our classroom discussion

I will post comments to some discussions and attempt to summarize some responses, as well. Feel free to continue the discussions on your own after your requirements have been fulfilled.

Assignment 9 - Online Discussion Board

Criteria	Level 3 - Great quality work	Level 2 - Fair quality work	Level 1 - Poor quality work
Quantity of Posts	<p>3 points</p> <p>An initial comment/answer to my question</p> <p>One response to one of your classmates' initial posts</p> <p>Respond to one classmate who responded to your initial post</p>	<p>1 point</p> <p>Not all postings are present</p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Not complete</p>
Quality of Posts	<p>7 points</p> <p>New ideas</p> <p>Engaging information, with or without references</p> <p>Correct grammar, punctuation and spelling</p> <p>Not a casual conversation, but an extension of our classroom discussion</p> <p>Proper netiquette</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>Quality of posts lack more than one area required for an excellent post</p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Not correct</p>
Overall Score	Level 3 5 or more	Level 2 3 or more	Level 1 0 or more

Points	Interpretation	Grading Criteria
4	Excellent (A)	The comment is accurate, original, relevant, teaches us something new, and is well written. Four point comments add substantial teaching presence to the course, and stimulate additional thought about the issue under discussion.
3	Above Average (B)	The comment lacks at least one of the above qualities, but is above average in quality. A three point comment makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.
2	Average (C)	The comment lacks two or three of the required qualities. Comments which are based upon personal opinion or personal experience often fall within this category.
1	Minimal (D)	The comment presents little or no new information. However, one point comments may provide important social presence and contribute to a collegial atmosphere.
0	Unacceptable	The comment adds no value to the discussion.
No penalty	Excellent Subject	The subject field is a complete sentence, and conveys the main point of the comment. The reader clearly understands the main point of the comment before reading it.
1 point penalty	Minimal Subject	The subject field provides key word(s) only. The reader knows the general area that the comment deals with.
2 point penalty	Subject field is unacceptable	The subject field provides little or no information about the comment.

Self-Report on Class Participation

The list below indicates a variety of ways in which you can contribute to the discussion. Please check where appropriate.

_____ I read the assignment carefully before discussion.

_____ I contributed to discussion at least twice.

_____ I avoided dominating the discussion.

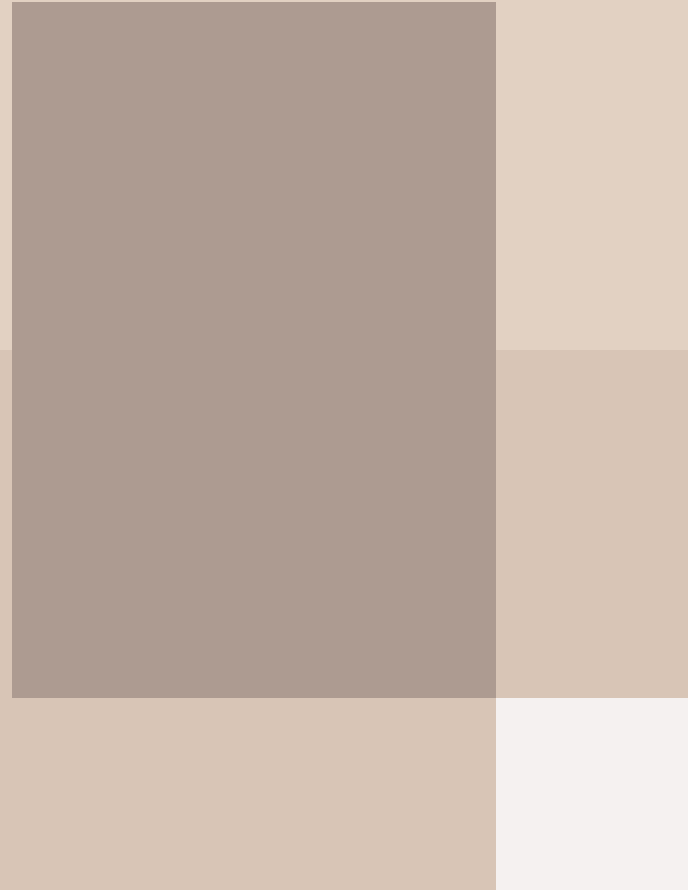
_____ I listened attentively throughout the class period.

_____ I built explicitly on what another person said.

_____ I pointed out links between other students' contributions.

_____ I helped another student back up, extend, or question his/her idea.

Wrap-Up



Considerations

Purpose

Prompt

Procedure

Points

- [10 Tips on How to Run an Asynchronous Discussion in the Online Classroom](#)
- Vanderbilt: [Discussions](#)
- Faculty Focus: [What research Tell us us about Online Discussion](#)

- Brookfield & Preskill. (1999). Discussion as a way of teaching: Tools and techniques for democratic classrooms. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Davis, B. G. (1993). *Tools for teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Darby, F. (2019). *Small teaching online: Applying learning science in online classes*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.