

# Sample Online Discussion Guidelines and Rubric

## Discussion Guidelines

In a completely online course the discussion board takes the place of in class discussion. In order for there to be meaningful and engaging dialogue it is important students know what is expected of them both from a quantity and quality standpoint. An example of guidelines might be:

- Respond with one original post by Wednesday, one reply by Friday, and a second reply by Sunday.
- Remember this is the minimum number of times you are required to post.
- Your reply should move the conversation forward. "I agree" is not an acceptable reply.

## Discussion Rubric

You should develop and share a discussion rubric to help students understand what you expect. Review this example of Discussion Board Rubric:

Participation Criteria	Excellent	Acceptable to Good	Unacceptable
Quantity of Posts	Student responded to the original assignment and exceeded the required minimum number of responses to other students' work.	Student responded to the original assignment and made the required minimum number of responses to other students' work.	Student did not respond to the original assignment, and/or did not make the minimum number of responses to others' posts.
Quality of Content	<u>Primary post(s)</u> -- Student gave careful thought to the assignment. Student demonstrated and applied in-depth, accurate knowledge of the material. <u>Response posts</u> – Student demonstrated understanding of other students' posts and made relevant, useful comments. Student offered ideas, perspectives, questions or resources that promoted a deeper understanding of the topic. Student substantiated comments by explaining the reasoning or evidence behind them. Student sometimes cited sources.	<u>Primary post(s)</u> – Student gave some thought to the assignment. Student demonstrated and applied accurate knowledge of the material. <u>Response posts</u> – Student demonstrated understanding of other students' posts and made relevant, generally useful comments. Student sometimes substantiated comments by explaining the reasoning or evidence behind them. Student occasionally cited sources.	<u>Primary post(s)</u> – Student skimmed the surface of the assignment. Student demonstrated limited or inaccurate understanding of, or ability to apply, the material. <u>Response posts</u> – Student made limited contributions to the substance of the discussion. Student <b>limited</b> posts to simply agreeing with others, offering unsubstantiated personal opinions, and/or social chatter.

	Student posed thoughtful questions that moved the conversation forward.		
<b>Rules of Netiquette Followed</b>	Student observed proper netiquette. Student expressed viewpoints, disagreements, alternative views or questions in a courteous, respectful way. Student played a leadership role in discussions and actively extended help to others.	Student observed proper netiquette. Student expressed viewpoints, disagreements, alternative views or questions in a courteous, respectful way.	Student did not observe proper netiquette. Student posts were offensive or disrespectful of student colleagues and/or their viewpoints.
<b>Quality of Form, Organization and Grammar</b>	Posts were clear, concise, well organized, well developed and grammatically correct.	Posts were reasonably clear and coherent and generally grammatically correct.	Posts were not focused and/or were poorly written.