

Online Group Discussion Instruction Sheet

Purposes

There are two main purposes for our discussion groups: First, to serve as an opportunity for you to **clarify your understanding** of course readings and content; second, to give you a chance to **go beyond** comprehension and engage in deeper conversations about the course content with your peers.

Overview & Roles

Four weeks during the first half of the term, students will meet online via Google Meet for a 30-40 minute synchronous chat/discussion. These discussions will be recorded and shared with the instructor only. The recordings will be saved and shared via Google Drive and will not be posted publicly online (on youtube, etc.). All students have the right to opt out of being video recorded. If you prefer not to be recorded, you can join the Google Meet session via phone instead of video.

Each group member is expected to come prepared for the discussion by completing all the work for that week's topics (readings, quizzes, presentations), completing their Discussion Preparation Notes document, and having those notes in front of them for the discussion. During the discussion, group members should spend some time to check in with each other personally and talk about things outside of the classwork. This part does not need to be recorded. Be careful not to count this time toward your main classwork discussion - the activity is designed so that groups will likely need at least 30 minutes to fully discuss the topics in depth and achieve its purposes. After the discussion, the Leader will rename the discussion video with the group name and discussion number (e.g. "Team Tiger King Discussion 2") and share the video file with the instructor by Friday at 11:59pm. All students will submit their Discussion Preparation Notes documents via Google Classroom by Friday 11:59pm as well. Please see support videos on Google Classroom for help on how to record and share video in Google Meet and how to submit documents in Google Classroom.

Each group should designate the following two roles to two members in their group for the remainder of the course:

- 1) Discussion **Leader**: This person will schedule the Google Meet meetings, record the discussions, and share the recordings with the instructor.
- 2) Discussion **Facilitator**: This person will be in charge of keeping discussion going, ensure everyone is contributing, prompt all peers to think more deeply on topics, and ensure everybody's questions have been answered.

Preparation for Discussion

1. Review the quizzes, readings and presentations for that week's topics
2. Fill out your Discussion Preparation Notes Google Doc

3. Submit Discussion Preparation Notes on Google Classroom by 11:59pm on Friday

During discussion

1. Draw on your preparation notes, especially the “Talking Points” section
2. Actively, consistently participate throughout by *leading* the conversation (sharing your own ideas) and being an *active listener* (asking specific follow up questions, summarizing others’ ideas, demonstrating concern and showing you are listening)
3. Give “high quality” contributions that are helpful, clarifying and move the conversation forward by building on others’ ideas
4. Ensure that everybody has contributed

Evaluation Criteria

Please see the Online Group Discussion rubric for details, but, in general, your grade will be based on 5 criteria. Two criteria are about how you prepare for the discussion (thoroughness and specificity) and will be based on the “Discussion Preparation Notes” you submit via Google Classroom. Three criteria are about how well you participate in the discussion (level of engagement, quality of contributions and “shared responsibility”) and will be based on the recording of your group discussion. The score given on the “shared responsibility” criteria will be the same for all members. It will be the group’s responsibility to ensure that all participants’ “Talking Points” (found in their Discussion Preparation Notes) are discussed.

Notes on Teamwork in an Online Environment

You are responsible for contacting and meeting with your group. If a team member is not consistently working with the group, be sure to let me know so we can decide if alternate arrangements need to be made. Please make every effort to ensure that all students can be present for the entire length of the discussion. Students who leave early or are absent from the discussion will have their grade reduced (see Rubric).

Teamwork in a virtual environment can be difficult and challenging; however, this kind of work experience is increasingly beneficial in the teaching profession, especially when considering needs for flexibility with remote learning situations, professional development, and professional collaboration. This experience can be something that you could reference during job interviews to demonstrate your previous experience with this kind of online teamwork.