## Discussions Sample Criteria and Rubric

The goal of the Discussion Forums is to create a “community of practice” (Wenger) throughout the course. By engaging dialogically with your instructor, the texts, and other students, a virtual community can be established that will provide support, idea generation, and feedback. Students will be expected to post and respond to the posts of others in a professional and informed manner that integrates the material from the course.

**Responses to Posts and Participation in Online Forums**

You will be required to read and respond thoughtfully to the posts of your classmates. In addition, you will be expected to participate throughout the course by responding thoughtfully to questions in online forums. These responses will be worth 10% of your course grade.

Your mark for this component of the course will be based on:

* The quality of your postings, your communication skills, your critical thinking and self‐reflection, your overall participation, and your adherence to acceptable online protocol.

Keep in mind:

* Rather than trying to write a perfect answer, focus on exploring ideas and stimulating discussion.
* You are expected to think about the questions and formulate your ideas before posting them. With this in mind, a good strategy is to first compose your ideas and then save them as a draft; when you are satisfied with your writing, make your post. Share information within your comfort zone, but do not disclose anything you feel is confidential about yourself or others.
* The following Discussion Question Post rubric outlines specific criteria that you can use to assess your postings. *Hint:* Refer to the rubric after as you complete your response and prior to posting to the online forum.

**Rubric: Online Discussion postings**

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| **Criteria** |  **A-/A/A+: 8.5–10**  |  **B-/B/B+: 7–8.5**  | **F: 0–7** |
| **Quality of posting** | Sound evidence that a student has done the course readings and has a thorough knowledge of discussion topic | Evidence that a student has done most of the course readings and has some knowledge of the discussion topic | Minor evidence that a student has done most of the course readings and understands the discussion topic |
| **Communication skills** | Postings are clear, concise, and easy to understand | Postings are usually—but not always—clear, concise, and easy to understand | Postings are too short/long and/or unclear and hard to understand |
| **Adherence to online protocol** | All online protocols followed | A few online protocols not adhered to | Several online protocols not adhered to; e.g., use of disrespectful language |
| **Critical thinking and self- reflection** | Exceptionally well‐ supported, thoughtful, and insightful comments made on others’ postings | Some evidence of critical thought and self‐reflection on others’ postings | Minor evidence of critical thought and self‐reflection on others’ postings |
| **Participation** | Regularly participates in and facilitates interaction among members of the online community | Interacts now and then with other members of the online community | Rarely interacts or responds to other members of the online community |