

Beyond the Discussion Workshop

Different Discussion Strategies

Answer & Question Tag: The instructor begins by offering a question. Then in either a free-for-all or assigned order, the next person must substantively answer the question but then post his/her own question to which the next person will have to answer and then ask a question.

Apply That to This: Students must complete the learning resources and then take what they have learned and apply it to something within the discussion (e.g. a video, a scenario, an image).

Galley Walk: Students create a visual or video that delves into a topic. Students then respond with comments and critiques.

The Guest Moderator: Where a faculty member brings in an outside person to facilitate and engage with students around a subject. Students or the instructor can post questions to the guest who can then begin sharing and having students directly respond or ask additional questions.

The Questions: Students must initially post deep questions about the content (and why they chose to ask that question/s). Then students must answer at least one or more other students as well as reply to students who answered their question(s).

Reflect & Respond: A standard discussion where students are asked to reflect on a question or the learning materials and share their thoughts as well as reply to others with similar or different views.

The Role Play: Create a scenario where every student must respond as the same generic character (e.g. a nurse, a historian, a fashion designer) within a situation and must post in style and content as that person might.

The Roles Playing: Create a scenario where each student has a different role that they must enact as part of a given scenario (e.g. one student is a nurse, another is a doctor, another is a patient, etc).

Small to Large: Students discuss in small groups their thoughts about a subject and then collectively defend their opinions/beliefs when a larger group is created.

Student Facilitator: Student develops the prompt for a given week and helps to run the conversation by pushing students with additional questions.

Instructor Strategies with Discussions

- Identify what they need to do and why it is relevant to their learning.
- Articulate the behavioral expectations.
- Explain the instructor's discussion engagement and strategy.
- Be active around the due dates for post submissions.
- Make discussions a significant portion of the grade.
- Clear evaluative tools (e.g. rubric).
- Low-stakes opportunity (e.g. Intro discussions).
- Maximize Intro discussions; make them opportunities for students to start taking about the course.
- In introductory discussions, ask students what they plan to give up as being part of the course.
- Ask students to state what they know & don't know.
- Provide prompt feedback (before next discussion hits mid-point).
- Weekly wrap up of highlights.

Alternatives to Traditional Online Discussions

- VoiceThreads
- Annotated Discussion
 - Google Drive
 - Hypothesis
- Ongoing Chat
 - Slack
 - Group G-Chat
- Twitter Chats
 - Hashtag-oriented
 - List-oriented
- Peer Phone/Video Calls
- Blogging
- Jamboards

Resources

- Mastering online Discussion Board Facilitation
<https://www.edutopia.org/pdfs/stw/edutopia-onlinelearning-mastering-online-discussion-board-facilitation.pdf>
- Designing Online Discussions: Key Questions
<https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/sheridan-center/teaching-learning/course-design/learning-technology/designing-online-discussions-key-questions>
- Effective Ways to Structure Discussion
<https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/effective-ways-stru>

- [cture-discussion/](#)
- The Big List of Class Discussion Strategies
<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/>