Asynchronous discussion enhances learning as you share your ideas, perspectives, and experiences with the class. You develop and refine your thoughts through the writing process, and broaden your understanding of the course content.

 Each week students are required to make a thoughtful, substantive and substantiated post, in response to each discussion question prompt with required (and sometimes optional) supporting articles or videos for you to view before responding.

You must contribute to the discussion board by also responding to at least one peer contribution per topic. The first week's post must be up before 11:59 p.m. on Thursday. You will be given discussion questions (prompts) and your answers must demonstrate an understanding of the lesson material. Always support your discussion board posts with references to the texts, other discussions, power-point lectures, study guides, and outside reading.

Follow this plan: Your first post must be on the board by Thursday (11:59) evening and you must respond to at least one of your classmates' discussion points before 11:59 on Sunday evening. Guideline: **250 -300 words** (unless otherwise stated)for a discussion question response and **50-100 words** for a response to a classmate's response. The discussion board closes at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. *Posts submitted after that will not receive credit*. Failure to post during the week is considered an absence from class. *You may post to more than one colleague for extra credit!

Expectations:
- Your initial post and reply posts should be thoughtful, substantive, and respectful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, and/or references. You are, however, encouraged to be brief — keep each post to 250-300 words. Keep in mind that your fellow learners will be reading and responding to you too.
- Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic. Your responses should be a thoughtful sharing of your own ideas, experiences, or suggestions. It is important that all of your postings demonstrate that you have reflected on the subject. Your posts need to demonstrate critical thinking skills and make a positive contribution to the class.
- It is strongly recommended that you read through all of the existing responses first, prior to replying to an individual response. You will find that in doing so you will be able provide greater breath in your own responses and avoid repeating ideas that have already been presented.
- Always respond to question poised to you by classmates or the instructor.
- You may disagree with your instructor or fellow students, but please do it respectfully.
- You may be passionate about your beliefs and practices, but please be considerate of differing views, and refrain from dispensing any 'advice'.
- When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate). If you are borrowing an idea from a text, article, web site, or other person, ALWAYS include your source in your posting, using APA guidelines.
- Effective communication is a critical component of the forum. Please read everything carefully and proof your replies before posting. A good practice is to construct your responses in Microsoft Word

then copy and paste into the forum (this also prevents the frustration of 'losing your post' should the page time-out, or other technical mishap occur).

- Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors. All discussion posts must be free of texting and digital slang/acronyms. For example, digital slang such as "BTW" (by the way), "IAWTP" (I agree with this post), or "AIUI" (as I understand it) is not acceptable. Please use full sentences, full words, capitalize the word I, etc.
- Discussion forums are a great way to pull online learning together, so you are encouraged to post and respond regularly. The greater the participation – the greater the educational reward.
- Please expect to read many posts each week and make quality contributions to the discussion.

Criteria	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
Number of Postings (10 points)	Participates not at all.	Participates 1 time throughout the week.	Participates 2 times throughout week.	Participates 3 or more times throughout the week.
Initial Assignment Postings for week (40 points)	Posts no assignment.	Posts adequate assignment with superficial thought and preparation; doesn't address all aspects of the task.	Posts well developed assignment that addresses all aspects of the task; lacks full development of concepts.	Posts well developed assignment that fully addresses and develops all aspects of the task.
Follow-Up Postings for week (30 points)	Posts no follow-up responses to others.	Posts shallow contribution to discussion (e.g., agrees or disagrees); does not enrich discussion.	Elaborates on an existing posting with further comment or observation.	Demonstrates analysis of others' posts; extends meaningful discussion by building on previous posts.
Content Contribution (10 points)	Posts information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.	Repeats but does not add substantive information to the discussion.	Posts factually correct information; partial development of concept or thought.	Posts factually correct, reflective and substantive contribution; advances discussion.
Clarity & Mechanics (10 points)	Posts long, unorganized or rude content that may contain multiple errors or may be inappropriate.	Communicates in friendly, courteous and helpful manner with some errors in clarity or mechanics.	Contributes valuable information to discussion with minor clarity or mechanics errors.	Contributes to discussion with clear, concise comments; well formatted; free of grammar/spelling errors.