

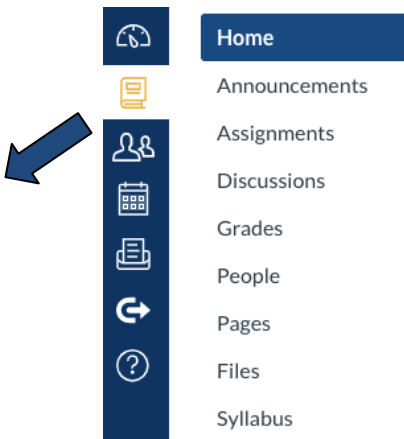
Microbiology Bio 120

Discussion Board Guidelines

Created by Jackie Shay, Doctoral Candidate

Read this document carefully prior to posting to the discussion board.

How to post



1. Head to your CatCourse dashboard and go to Bio 120
2. On the left side, click “Discussions”.
3. Select the discussion according to which course session you are in, check the syllabus if you are not sure which session you are in.
4. Click the “reply” button on the discussion to write your post.



Session 1 Discussion: Practicing Online

Jacqueline Shay

[All Sections](#)

Aug 26 at 6:33pm

Please read the attached posting guidelines and respond to the following prompt:

In what way do you feel like online discussions can benefit your learning? What obstacles do you feel you may face in online learning?



Search entries or author Unread [✓ Subscribed](#)

[← Reply](#)

5. Once you have finished writing your post, read what others have posted and reply to their questions or comments. You are always welcome to ask more questions!

6. Each week you will be required to write a post and reply to a post for a total of 5 points.

Grading

Forum contributions are scored on a 0-5 scale as follows:

0 = no, late or inadequate posting

2 = substantive posting

3-4 = substantive posting AND meaningful return comments to your classmates

5 = substantive posting with meaningful comments, including connections to the lecture

Guidelines

When typing an answer to a classmate or your instructor on the discussion, ask yourself:

Am I adding value to this discussion thread?

How many posts/ replies

The instructor will post the discussion on Thursdays. Posts will cover the content for two lectures (that Thursday's lecture and the following Tuesday lecture). You should response to **TWO** questions should be submitted **by the next lecture** (Tuesday) and reply to your **classmates by lecture the following week** (Thursday). For example, if discussions are posted Thursday at 3 pm, then you have until Tuesday by the start of class to post your answers and until the following Thursday lecture to reply to your peers. Try to spread out your answers between the week. Visit the discussion board regularly to check on other answers that cover

topics you did not answer. Don't leave your classmates hanging even if you have posted your two replies.

Style

Although you may have experience using this type of asynchronous communication through texting or Facebook, your posts should be composed of complete and grammatically accurate sentences (no abbreviations please). Avoid writing in all caps (all caps = yelling).

Length

Initial posts (answers to prompts) should be **150–200 words** (about 100 words per question). Try to only develop one idea per answer to facilitate the development of threads. Answers to your classmates posts may be shorter as long as they meet the requirements described in this document.

Frequency

Postings should be evenly distributed during the week, check back frequently!

Content

“I agree” is not enough: Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. “I agree” type of answers crowd the discussion board and make it harder for everybody to navigate the discussion.

If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say why you agree/disagree by supporting your statement with concepts from the readings or by bringing in a related example or experience. Make each post count! Again, ask yourself whether your post brings value to the discussion.

Quote your sources: Take advantage of the asynchronous nature of the discussion forum to look up any source you quote and make sure to cite these sources by mentioning the last name of the author, the publication and the year. No need to use a particular style.

Stick to the point: Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray).

Connect to prior knowledge: Bring in related prior knowledge (work experience, prior coursework, readings, etc.)

Respond rather than add-on: You will not get credit for any posts such as “I agree with x” or “Great job Y”. You're expected to provide real contributions. Build on others responses to create threads.

Innovate, don't replicate: You usually have the choice between several questions. If you're late contributing to the initial posts, try to answers questions than have not been addressed yet,

even if they wouldn't have been your first pick. The early bird...

Take it beyond the readings: Do quote the readings but don't stop there. Do your best to add value to the discussion. Ask questions you really want to find answers to, discuss what you found intriguing, confusing, share your top takeaways.

Tone & Etiquette

Although it is perfectly fine, even recommended, to challenge your classmates' posts and defend your opinions, you're expected to do so in respectful and polite manner.

Always use proper etiquette (proper language, typing, etc.)

Express your ideas clearly to avoid misunderstanding, give people the benefit of the doubt. Over 90% of human interactions are non-verbal. We convey meaning and intention via body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, etc. Here is an example of the importance of one's tone of voice from the TV show Friends (<https://youtu.be/OvEci5Bjgd4>)



Sample initial answer :

Question: Do you think that classroom learning should be the measuring stick by which we evaluate online language learning? What are the potential risks of using a comparative approach to measure online language learning?

Answer: I would agree [**states opinion clearly**] with Blake that the classroom is not necessarily a panacea of learning against which all other learning should be measured. We have much research that points to the nature of language learning which tells us that it is a slow process which is input dependent and individual in nature so the development rates cannot be predictable. [**Provides evidence to support opinion**] I would also posit that the vast differences in style and materials in both F2F and virtual classrooms would also make teasing out differences for comparison would be impossible.

- **Good length**
- **Addresses the question directly**
- **Free of typos and spelling error**
- **Easy to read**

Sample reply to a classmates post

Using the comparative approach is extremely risky because not all classrooms are created equal **[part of the post the student is reacting to, not always necessary but useful strategy]**.

That's very true. I suppose we all had bad F2F class experiences but it would not occur to us to dismiss face-to-face learning as a valid way to teach. Yet, I very often hear how online learning does not work because of a one-time negative experience.

I appreciate the emphasis you place on the teacher **[reacting to another aspect of the post]**, and this is one other misconception about online learning: that you don't need a qualified teacher, or that you don't need one at all. This is something that ACTFL is trying to rectify. This is an excerpt from [their latest position statement on the role of technology in language teaching](#) : "Therefore, ACTFL strongly advises school and university administrators to place the responsibility for language instruction in the hands of qualified language teachers rather than solely in technology programs." **[provides link to external source]**

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