

SW-2570-002 Introduction to Social Work Discussion Board Requirements

A. Original Composition of Discussions

1. Composition Requirements and Timeframe:

Students are required to compose their discussion board posts in accordance with the following criteria and formatting guidelines. Each discussion opens on Sunday at 6:00 AM and closes on Saturday at 11:59 PM.

Each **initial post MUST** be a minimum of **100 words** unless otherwise noted.

2. Formatting Requirements for Original Post:

- a) **Read and Respond:** Thoroughly read the discussion question, ensuring that your response addresses all elements.
- b) **Draft in Word:** Write your initial post in **Word**, adhering to APA 7th edition guidelines. Use Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spacing, and indent the first line of each paragraph. If you cite scholarly sources, ensure that in-text citations and the References section are correctly formatted.
- c) **Save Your Work:** Create a dedicated folder on your computer, OneDrive, or another storage platform to save all your initial discussion posts for the class.
- d) **Post to the Discussion Board:**
 - Click on "Start a New Thread."
 - Title your post with your last name followed by the discussion number (e.g., "Coble Discussion 1" or "Coble DB 1").
 - Copy your text from the Word document and paste it into the body of the post field.
 - Ensure the formatting remains consistent after pasting.
 - Click "Post."
- e) **Final Review:** Review your submission after posting to confirm the correct formatting.
- f) **Full Credit Criteria:** To receive full credit, your initial post must be thorough, demonstrate a clear understanding of the discussion topic, and be supported by insights gained from your textbook(s) and outside resources. *Total available points for the original post: 10. (See rubric.)*

B. Team Assignments and Discussion Board Panels

1. Team Formation and Roles:

Students will be randomly assigned to teams at the beginning of the semester. Once teams are formed, members select a team captain and a co-captain. The team captain is responsible for ensuring that all team assignments are completed on time and that all members participate actively in the tasks. Co-captains assume the leadership role even when the captain is absent.

2. Discussion Board Post Responsibilities:

Teams will be assigned an equal number of discussion board posts to organize and facilitate throughout the semester. For instance, if there are eight (8) discussion board posts and four (4) teams, each team will manage and facilitate two (2) discussion board panels during the term.

3. Discussion Board Panels:

Each week, a designated team will sit as a panel, facing their classmates, and address the elements of that week's discussion, ensuring that all prompts are thoroughly covered. The panel will also pull insights from their classmates' posts to emphasize the objectives of the discussion. Every team member must participate in the presentation and have a speaking role. The panel will have 15 minutes to present, followed by a 5-10-minute question-and-answer session with classmates or the instructor.

Teams are encouraged to employ creative approaches in their presentations, which may include slide decks, worksheets, role-playing, music, art, or other engaging formats. These presentations should connect the themes of the assignment to practical applications within the field.

4. Participation and Evaluation:

Students can earn up to 5 participation points each week, regardless of what their team is presenting. Presenters will be graded on their engagement and contribution, while audience members will receive points by completing a peer evaluation of the presenting team's panel (see attachment). For excused absences, students may complete an alternative assignment to earn their participation points for that week (see attached rubric for details).

Student Learning Objective (SLO) Analysis

1. Mastery of Written Communication in a Scholarly Format

- Objective:
Students will enhance their academic writing skills by composing discussion posts according to APA 7th edition guidelines, demonstrating proficiency in scholarly communication.
- Rationale:
By drafting and formatting their posts in Word and adhering to APA standards, students practice essential academic writing skills, which are vital for producing professional research and reports in social work. This SLO promotes attention to detail, proper citation, and the use of credible sources to support arguments.

2. Critical Engagement with Course Material and Peer Ideas

- Objective:
Students will critically engage with course readings and peer contributions by synthesizing key concepts in both their initial posts and their responses to classmates.
- Rationale:
The structure of the assignment requires students to read and respond thoughtfully to the discussion prompts and peer input, encouraging deeper engagement with the material. This objective fosters critical thinking and the ability to interpret and integrate diverse perspectives, a key competency in social work practice.

3. Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork Skills

- Objective:
Students will develop leadership and teamwork skills by organizing, facilitating, and participating in discussion board panels, ensuring active contributions from all team members.
- Rationale:
The assignment's team structure supports leadership development through role designation (captain, co-captain) and collaborative problem-solving. The shared responsibility for organizing and presenting encourages accountability and peer support, reinforcing professional skills necessary for collaborative work environments in social services.

4. Creative and Effective Public Presentation Skills

- **Objective:**
Students will deliver engaging and informative presentations using creative methods such as slide decks, role-playing, or multimedia, enhancing their public speaking and communication skills.
Rationale:
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The requirement to present in a dynamic and engaging manner encourages students to think creatively about how to communicate information effectively. This objective supports the development of strong communication skills, essential for advocating and educating diverse audiences in professional practice.

5. Consistent Participation and Reflective Engagement

- **Objective:**
Students will consistently participate in weekly discussions, either as presenters or audience members, and reflect on their peers' contributions through peer-evaluation forms to foster a collaborative learning environment.
- **Rationale:**
The assignment promotes continuous engagement with the course material by evaluating students' weekly participation. Audience members benefit from completing peer-evaluation forms, which encourage reflection on peer presentations, while alternative assignments ensure that all students, regardless of attendance, can contribute meaningfully to class discussions.

(Note: As part of an intentional effort to engage students in the decision-making process related to syllabus requirements and foster a sense of “buy-in” over their learning, students will vote on whether to follow the traditional discussion board format, which involves writing a post and responding to two classmates or to implement team-led discussion panels.)