**Discussion Forum Planning Template I - Setting Purpose and Expectations**

Which **COURSE/UNIT** is the discussion forum related to?

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| What is the **purpose** of the discussion forum?What are you wanting students to get out of this forum?*(A purpose statement gives value to students)* | Who are your **students**? (e.g. Undergraduate/ postgraduate, mature age, working professional, international, fully online, blended)How will this affect my discussion forum? | What are the **Learning Outcomes** for the topic related to the discussion forum?  | **How** will the discussion forum meet the Learning Outcomes? | With which formative or summative **assessment**/s does the discussion forum align? (And how?) | Where will the discussion forum fit into the **academic calendar** and **why**? Consider the curriculum structure, what other assessments are due, etc. | **Student expectations:**What kind of contribution is expected?(including netiquette and communication guidelines) | **Teacher expectations:**What kind of role will you (the teacher) take in the discussion forum?  |
| *The purpose of this forum is …**By the end of this forum I would like students to be able to… because it will help them to ...* | *My student cohort is largely comprised of:**This will affect my discussion forum...* |  *It specifically relates to the following learning outcome(s):*  | *The discussion forum will meet the learning outcome(s) by ...* | *This discussion forum aligns with the following assessment task(s) …. by ...* | *The discussion forum will start at [date/week] and close at [date/week] and… because ….**Does it clash with other assessment due dates (in your unit or other core units?)* | *Your participation in the discussion forum should be as follows...* | *I will participate in the forum as…**E.g. I will facilitate the discussion, although I will not address every single post, rather I will share a related idea, intervene when the discussion goes off-track, or tie comments...* |
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**Discussion Forum Planning Template II - Motivating and Facilitating**

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| How will you build a sense of **communit**y? E.g. icebreaker activity that is not related to the course content.(Have students already engaged with each other? Consider whether students are on or off campus) | What are the **motivators** for students to participate? E.g. tied to assessment.Will you have a guiding **rubric**?(e.g. Extrinsic : alignment to assessment /Intrinsic: lifelong learning skills) | How will you **engage** your students / get them hooked into the discussion forum?What **strategies** will you use to run the forum so that participants understand purpose and relevance?(Strategy)Have you considered providing sample posts? | To encourage, motivate and focus your students, what **guiding/prompting questions** might you consider to meet the LOs?Eg.Target reflection, interpretation, analysis, or problem solving; questions that encourage peer engagement and/or questions that connect prior learning with new content. (refer to **Blooms** if needed) | What **tools or resources** do your students need to participate in the discussion forum (articles / videos)(required resources) |
| *Examples can be - getting to know each other, introduce yourself, what is your favourite movie?, if I were a millionaire I would…, In 10 years I plan to be…, If I could have a superpower what would it be and why?* | *E.g. this discussion forum is part of the assessment task A, and will assist you in developing your final major assignment…**Or… professionally, it will assist you in understanding….* | *E.g. Scenario based, peer engagement, group work, roles (initiator, facilitator, summariser, evaluator) or role play…**Consider example posts to clarify expectations.* | *E.g: Examine / analyse / reflect on the reading paying particular attention to* …. | *E.g. You will need to watch the video on… and also read...* |
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**Discussion Forum Planning Template III - Maintaining and Evaluating**

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| How will you manage **your workload?**When will you schedule feedback?Timing & frequency of discussion forumsManage the volume of posts?Are you keeping posts/templates? | How will you give **feedback**?Are you giving targeted responses (pre-populated to save time)?Group/class feedback?Feedforward previous iterations?Video/audio feedback? | What if you get **irrelevant**, **off-topic** or **inappropriate** posts ?E.g. you get a lot of questions regarding an assignment. Consider a separate or general forum for these posts? Deal with issues of professionalism privately? Point to guidelines? | What will you do if the discussion **participation and quality** drops off?Do you know when to intervene? | How will you deal with **lurkers** and/or **dominant** students?E.g. contact the student privately? Make a general announcement, point to guidelines/rules? | What are you **evaluating**?How do they demonstrate their understanding, engagement, critical thinking skills, etc., to meet the learning outcome? | How will you **close the learning loop**?Has the discussion forum been an effective learning tool for your students?Will you ask them? | **Next time**What considerations will you need to take into account for the next time you run this forum?Make a note of your observations for improvement for next time. |
| *Rather than replying to every post, I will provide a summary of feedback on [date]…**Please keep your posts relevant and concise* | *You will receive feedback in the following ways….* | *Please keep your posts on-topic and relevant. Off-topic or inappropriate posts will be …..* | *If participation drops off I will…**If the quality of posts drops off I will…* | *I will deal with lurkers by…**I will deal with dominant students by…*  | *E.g. I will use a discussion rubric based on quality of contribution, depth, understanding, referencing etc.* | *E.g. I will use a simple evaluation survey of star rating of the discussion forum* | *I think I can improve this forum next time by….* *I noted that ……*  |
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