

Grading rubrics: WRLD 302 - Communicating Across Cultures

DISCUSSION FORUMS

Overview

Group discussions will allow you to "talk" about course material like you would face-to-face, and learn from each other. Each week there will be one assigned discussion forum. You will normally have several different topics to choose from. The forums are asynchronous, meaning that you can post messages at your convenience. However, you will need to write your message within a range of time that allows for interaction with the content being studied as well as with other students.

These discussions are an important part of the class for several reasons. This will be your opportunity to thoughtfully analyze and apply course material. It will be the primary way that you learn from each other, by commenting on each other's posts. (I, as the instructor, will only do minimal posting.)

How to Write Good Posts

Your "original posts" to the discussion forums should be substantive, in length something like 2 full paragraphs at a minimum. In these posts, you should offer an analysis, further the discussion around the question asked, draw on personal experience as well as on readings and text chapters. Your posts should be factually correct and use sound reasoning. They should advance the conversation in some way, not merely repeat what someone else has said. One sign of a successful post is the number and quality of responses it receives. Write with the purpose of engaging others with your ideas.

For most forums you are then required to do two "response posts" to your classmates. The response posts can be a small paragraph in length. These posts should go beyond short sentences where you basically say you agree or disagree. They should also be designed to further the point or debate the point your classmate is making in their original post, should draw on the readings/personal experiences and move the dialogue further. Stay constructive. While it's good to challenge ideas, remember the forum's primary goals are sharing and advancing the conversation about the topic. Not only read what others have written before you post, but try to weave the work of others into your own.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums (35 points total)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Poor
Initial Assignment Posting	Post well developed and fully addresses all aspects of the task. Comments reference concepts and terms used in the tutorials or relate to readings, videos, as appropriate. <i>8-10 points</i>	Post well developed and addresses all aspects of the task; lacks full development of concepts. Comments not sufficiently linked to concepts/terms from text. <i>4-6 points</i>	Post adequate to assignment but with superficial thought and preparation; doesn't address all aspects of the task <i>0-3 points</i>
Follow-Ups (if no follow-ups needed, points go to content)	Demonstrates analysis of others' posts; extends meaningful discussion by building on previous posts. <i>6-8 points</i>	Elaborates on an existing posting with further comment or observation. May not be sufficient number of follow-ups. <i>4-7 points</i>	Posts shallow contribution to discussion (e.g., agrees/ disagrees); does not enrich discussion. Not sufficient number. <i>0-3 points</i>
Content	Posts factually correct, reflective and substantive contribution; advances discussion. <i>8-11 points</i>	Posts information that is factually correct; lacks full development of concept or thought. <i>5-7 points</i>	Posts information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion; or repeats but does not add substantive information to the discussion. <i>0-4 points</i>
Clarity, Mechanics, On-time	Contributes to discussion with clear, concise comments formatted in an easy to read style that is free of grammatical or spelling errors. <i>4-6 points</i>	Contributes valuable information to discussion with minor clarity or mechanics errors. <i>2-3 points</i>	Posts are unorganized or inappropriate; may contain multiple errors. Completed after due date. <i>0-1 points</i>

REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

Each student in WRLD 302 will maintain an individual journal (within Blackboard). This provides a means of interacting with ideas and experiences you encounter this semester related to the course content. You should plan on writing at least three times a week. It's a good idea to get into the rhythm of writing in your journal on a regular basis, for example every other day (such as Tues, Thu, Sat). When writing a journal entry, you should apply concepts/terms you have learned. Your texts should serve as reflections on your experiences as they relate to intercultural communication and interactions. Journal entries are due at the end of the week, normally on Sunday, but **don't wait** till then!

The journals are private, unless you elect to share yours. The instructor has access to your journal and will read and evaluate your journal each week (see grading rubric below).

Possible topics to write about:

- Reflect and comment on course readings or videos (for example, argue for or against ideas provided)
- React to online discussions (what you found surprising, intriguing, uninteresting, etc.)
- Describe experiences you have with people from different backgrounds or cultures
- Discuss news items related to the course content (following world news developments is encouraged - see Bb)
- React to blog posts in Dr. G-J's Culture Blog (links in Bb and in tutorials)
- Describe intercultural elements of other experiences such as films, lectures, concerts, museum visits, restaurants

I will be expecting ½ to 1 page per entry. If you are a visually-oriented person and wish to use pictures, etc., please feel free to do so. You should save your work often if typing directly into Blackboard - if Bb is open too long it logs you out (without telling you) and then you get an error message and you've lost all of your work unless you've been saving it as you go along.

Grading Rubric for Reflective Journals (30 points total)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Poor
Content	Rich in content; reflections demonstrate good knowledge of course content and application of content; required # of entries <i>8-10 points</i>	Substantial information; reflections demonstrate some know-ledge of course content & application of content; may need meet required # of entries <i>6-7 points</i>	Rudimentary and superficial; reflections show little evidence of knowledge of course content or application of content; may need meet required # of entries <i>0-5 points</i>
Evidence of critical thinking	Insightful analysis, synthesis and evaluation, clear connections made to real-life situations or course content <i>6-8 points</i>	Some evidence of analysis, synthesis & evaluation; general connections are made, but are sometimes too obvious or not clear <i>4-5 points</i>	Little analysis, synthesis and evaluation; little or no connections with any course material or are off topic <i>0-3 points</i>
Quality of personal reflection	Entries are high quality, consisting of personal reflections that connect between real-life, learning, and reading <i>5-7 pts.</i>	Connects ideas and thoughts to personal life; Evidence of personal connection to learning, community <i>3-4 points</i>	Lack of connections to personal life, community <i>0-2 points</i>
Clarity, Mechanics, On-time	Reflections are clear & contain grammatically correct sentences with no spelling errors <i>3-5 points</i>	Reflections mostly clear and grammatically correct with at most one spelling error <i>1-2 points</i>	Reflections are unorganized or may contain multiple errors. Completed after due date. <i>0 points</i>

PAPER ASSIGNMENTS

Each student is required to submit 2 short papers (each 5 pages). The purpose of the papers is to provide an opportunity to investigate various contexts that constitute intercultural communication. In each paper, the student is to research a specific culture & discuss aspects of that culture directly related to a class topic. Outlined below are specifics for each paper. Suggested resources in Blackboard ("Country Resources" folder) should provide a starting point for research.

Dr. GJ's Tips for Writing a Good Paper

Look at the grading rubric below to get an idea of how your paper will be evaluated. Here are a few suggestions based on student papers in previous semesters:

1. Your paper should have a clear organization, with an introduction and a conclusion. They can be short but they should be there, with the introduction setting out what you plan to do in the paper and with the conclusion summing up what you have done. Paragraphs should be linked by logical transitions. Don't jump around from topic to topic.
2. It's fine to include personal information or opinions in your papers, but you should go beyond that. Keep in mind that this is a research paper in which you should use external sources. Be sure to cite external sources using either the APA or MLA styles.
3. Use standard, academic style English, not slang or incomplete sentences. Use spellchecker to make sure there are no spelling errors or typos. Check your grammar. The goal should be a style similar to a blog post or Wikipedia entry.
4. Present the information in your paper in as interesting a way as you can. Avoid clichés and platitudes. The best papers are those that present the information in a different, innovative way. If I learn something new from your paper, that's a big plus as well.

Grading Rubric for Papers (100 points)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Poor
Format, Layout and References	Follows all the requirements related to format, layout and reference style (APA or MLA). Good use of references. Appropriate length <i>14 to 15 points</i>	Follows most requirements on format, layout and reference style. Some requirements are not followed. <i>12 to 13 points</i>	Follows poorly the requirements related to format, layout, and style. Or completed after due date <i>0 to 11 points</i>
Organization, Sequencing & Length	Clearly and logically organized, easy to follow flow of text with very good use of transitions. Includes well-constructed introduction and conclusion. <i>18 to 20 points</i>	Some difficulties in following flow and logic of essay organization. Good transitions. Introduction and conclusion included but not well constructed. <i>15 to 17 points</i>	Poor flow and logic. Transitions awkward. Introduction and conclusion not included, not well defined, or poorly executed. <i>0 to 13 points</i>
Content and Information	The essay is objective and addresses with an in-depth analysis all the issues in the proposed topic. The provided information is necessary and sufficient to discuss these issues. Reference as appropriate to concepts from text or class <i>45 to 50 points</i>	The essay is objective and for the most part addresses with an in-depth analysis most of the issues referred in the proposed topic. The provided information is, for the most part, necessary and sufficient to discuss these issues. Little connection to course concepts <i>38 to 44 points</i>	The essay is not objective and addresses poorly the issues referred in the proposed topic. The provided information is not necessary or not sufficient to discuss these issues. No linking to concepts introduced in course <i>0 to 35 points</i>
Quality of Writing	The essay is well written from start to finish, without spelling, grammar or use of English errors. Language use enhances presentation of content. Word choice and writing style are appropriate to audience. <i>14 to 15 points</i>	The essay is well written for the most part, without spelling, grammar or use of English errors. Standard language use. Word choice and writing style mostly appropriate to audience. <i>12 to 13 points</i>	Essay not well written, contains spelling, and/or grammar errors and/or use of English errors. Language use interferes with ability to present ideas in a coherent way. Word choice & style not appropriate. <i>0 to 11 points</i>

PRESENTATIONS

Partner Presentation: Presenting a Culture

With a partner, develop a short presentation (max 15 minutes) to teach us about a specific culture and its communication patterns. You may choose from among cultures in these countries:

Algeria	Lebanon
Belgium	Mali
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Pakistan
Colombia	Saudi Arabia
Korea, DPR (North)	Venezuela

Your **presentation** should principally address the following:

- 1) Provide basic information about the country: location, geographical/economic/political situation
- 2) If you lived among the people of this culture, how would their communication be similar or different from your own? How would they accept or perceive you? If people from this culture came to your country, how would their communication be perceived here? How would it be similar? How different? How would they be accepted?
- 3) As part of your presentation, you should include information that responds to at least 3 of the following:
 - What behaviors are appropriate for the initial face-to-face meetings with individuals from this culture? Consider greeting rituals and norms for introductions.
 - What if any minority, indigenous, or migrant communities exist in this country? What relations exist with the dominant culture?
 - What are the verbal communication norms for this culture? (Languages spoken, typical communication styles, conversational topics preferred and/or avoided.)
 - What are some of the nonverbal communication norms for this culture? (Consider kinesics, proxemics, haptics, chronemics, and vocalics.)
 - What are the relational communication norms? (E.g., self-disclosure, conversational expectations, norms for managing conflict, and persuasive styles.)

Consider using visual aids, video clips, music, or skits for added interest. Have a clear introduction, discussion, and conclusion to your talk. Present it in a manner that demonstrates that you have rehearsed your talk and that you have prepared your work as a team.

Grading Rubric for Group Presentations (100 points total)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Poor
Present/video	Presentation well done; shows creativity, very good use of graphics. <i>12 to 15 points</i>	Presentation mostly well done, some problems with execution. <i>11 to 13 points</i>	Presentation poorly done. Lacks creativity, graphics <i>0 to 10 points</i>
Content	Required content supplied and accurate. Highly engaging presentation of information. <i>55 to 65 points</i>	Most but not all required content supplied and accurate. Good presentation of information. <i>45 to 54 points</i>	Content incomplete or inaccurate. Presentation lackluster. <i>0 to 44 points</i>
Clarity	Information clearly presented. All parts of presentation understandable. <i>17 to 20 points</i>	Information clear for the most part. <i>14 to 16 points</i>	Some lack of clarity in presentation of content <i>0 to 13 points</i>