CE 401 FALL 2019 Group Discussion Procedures

OVERVIEW

Each week, there will be discussion questions based on the readings and videos. These discussion questions will provide one basis for in class discussions the following Friday. The number of questions for the week, and the number of questions that each discussion group must address during the week vary. These discussions are worth up to 15 points for the week, i.e. for the 14 class sessions (Sessions 2 through 15), a total of 210 points for the semester.

This is an important activity for class preparation and is mandatory, even if absent from class.

GROUP FORMATION

Depending upon the total enrollment of the section, there will be three to six (3-6) fixed groups consisting of three to five students for discussion question activities for the duration of the semester, beginning with week 2. I will notify the class of the group configuration in the first class session.

Since it will be better if you form your own discussion groups, you will have until Monday, September 2 at 5:00 PM to form a discussion group that will stand for the remainder of the semester. To create your own discussion group, send an email to ce-401@windstream.net with the subject (Discussion Group Formation) by Monday, September 2, 2019 at 5 PM. Your email must identify all prospective group members and have each prospective group member's email address in either the "From" or "Cc" boxes of the email so I can communicate with the entire group using the "Reply All" option. I will acknowledge your email with a reply to all members, and I will notify you of your group's designation, e.g. Group A, B, C, D, E, or F.

Based on current enrollment levels and subject to change, both sections will have six groups of 3 or 4 students each. If you want one of the 4 person groups, you must be first to request it until all available groups of that size are taken. If you request a maximum sized group after these groups have been fully subscribed, I will respond to your email with that information and you must reform your group request to satisfy remaining group sizes available at that time. I will randomly assign any student who does not request a specific group prior to Monday, September 2, 2019 at 5 PM, to a group for the remainder of the semester. I will notify all students by 6 PM on Monday, September 2, 2019 by CANVAS Announcement of the group assignments for the remainder of the semester.

INTERIM GROUPS FOR FIRST CLASS MEETING

For the first class meeting, I have randomly assigned each student to a group for the sole purpose of initiating the weekly group discussion process for our first class session in Week 1, and I have randomly selected one group member to function as this group's "Leader" for Week 01 activities. I will notify all students with a CANVAS Announcement of the Week 1 interim group assignments and leader assignments by August 26, 2019.

Each group will have a specific table or seating location during class so the groups can sit together during class, even for Week 1. For Week 1, there are six (6) discussion questions, and I have assigned each Week 01 Group to address three (3) of those questions.

THE WEEKLY PROCESS

1. Each student should determine the group's assigned discussion questions for the upcoming week.
   - CANVAS will release the activities for the upcoming week at 12:01 AM on Saturday.
   - I will post a matrix showing the group assignments on the CE-401 webpage at: http://richardcheeks.com/professor/New%20Front%20Page%20Format/CE-401_Front_Page.htm and the matrix will look like the example shown below:

			Last Update	21-Mar-19		5:59 PM	
Section 2		**Week 10**	**Discussion Question Activity Report**				
Question	**Group**	**Leader**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	A	Dunlop	Dunlop	Garrison	Monhollen	Mullins	Weddington
1	C	Day	Cameron	Day	Sodergren	Starzman	Tai
1	E	Al Amri	Al Amri	Moore, P	Singer	Walters	Zaidan
2	A	Garrison	Dunlop	Garrison	Monhollen	Mullins	Weddington
2	C	Starzman	Cameron	Day	Sodergren	Starzman	Tai
2	F	Hinkel	Campbell	Hinkel	Lampe	Murrin	
3	A	Monhollen	Dunlop	Garrison	Monhollen	Mullins	Weddington
3	D	Dailey	Cecconi	Dailey	Fitch	Moore, W	
3	F	Campbell	Campbell	Hinkel	Lampe	Murrin	
4	B	Burke	Al Farsi	Burke	Sorenson	Uecker	Varga
4	C	Carmeron	Cameron	Day	Sodergren	Starzman	Tai
4	E	Zaidan	Al Amri	Moore, P	Singer	Walters	Zaidan
5	B	Sorenson	Al Farsi	Burke	Sorenson	Uecker	Varga
5	D	Cecconi	Cecconi	Dailey	Fitch	Moore, W	
5	E	Singer	Al Amri	Moore, P	Singer	Walters	Zaidan
6	B	Uecker	Al Farsi	Burke	Sorenson	Uecker	Varga
6	D	Fitch	Cecconi	Dailey	Fitch	Moore, W	
6	F	Murrin	Campbell	Hinkel	Lampe	Murrin	

Font Legend				
non-bold	No post made, time for posting remains	non-bold	Late Post before consensus, 20% loss	
Bold	**Post made within Time**	**Bold**	**Post is made after consensus, 60% loss**	
Non-Bold Leader-No Consensus Posted, -5 Points		*Ital. non-bold*	*No Post Made, 100% loss*	

Please note: The top section provides the Section Number, Week Number, and a date and time stamp indicating the last update moment; the left frame shows the question number, the Group identification, and the Group Member who is the "Leader" for that question and group. The right frame shows the group members; and the bottom summarizes the meaning and significance of the color and font characteristics.

In the right frame, the font indicates member participation on the question as follows:

Black-non bold: The starting condition before any activity.

Black-Bold: Member has posted on the question prior to the initial posting deadline for the week, midnight Tuesday

Red:　　　　　　Member posted after midnight Tuesday and before the Group Leader posts the group's consensus

Red-Bold:　　　　Member posted after the Group Leader posted the group's consensus

Red-Italics:　　　Member did not post on the topic by Midnight Thursday.

In the left frame, the font indicates leader participation on the question as follows:

Black-non bold:　The leader has not posted a group consensus.

Black-Bold:　　The Leader has posted a Group Consensus.

- I will post the starting matrix for the upcoming week's questions by Friday of the prior week.
- I will update the matrix for the current discussion activities throughout the week, and the date and time stamps document the most recent update.
- I will remove the matrix for a completed week after the Friday class sessions.
- The information on this matrix provides the basis for the week's discussion question activities point totals.

2. Each student should complete the assigned readings and view the assigned videos for the week **PRIOR** to responding to the discussion questions.
   - If you identify which discussion questions you must address before you read and watch, you can read and watch the material with a better focus, and
   - It is essential that you respond to the questions **ONLY** after you have read and viewed the assigned materials.
   - It is also essential that you read and view the assigned materials from a broader perspective than only the assigned discussion questions because the quizzes and in class discussions will expand beyond your specific discussion questions.
3. Each student should post an initial response to each assigned question ONLY in a group discussion thread created specifically for the Group's private conversation.
   - **DO NOT POST ANY REPLIES ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE DISCUSSION TOPIC AS I WILL DELETE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!**
   - **IF YOU CANNOT ACCESS YOUR GROUP'S DISCUSSION THREAD, CONTACT ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THE CANVAS ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED.**
4. Each student should write an initial response to the question in cogent sentences and paragraphs. After a student has posted an initial response in the Group's Thread, CANVAS will allow that student to view the responses already submitted by other group

members and participate in the conversation within the thread that follows the initial postings.

- Each student should make the initial post into this group discussion thread (not the front page) no later than midnight Tuesday. This will provide 2 full days for the leader to engage the group in the consensus building process.
    1. In addition, each group member should revisit the thread to understand the range of responses provided by the entire group membership, and
    2. If a group member wants to modify an initial response, the group member should do so in a new post that explains the change and why it occurs.
- The Group Leader is responsible for leading the group to a consensus.
    1. Consensus =Agreement. The questions usually will elicit a range of views, and the discussion that occurs between members' initial posting and the leader's consensus posting should reveal how the group reached agreement.
    2. The leader should initiate the consensus building process either after all group members have posted an initial response to the question, or after midnight Tuesday, whichever occurs first.
    3. The consensus building process of necessity requires a discussion among and between the group members, with the leader's function to maintain focus and bring the group to a unified answer for the question.
        - While you could engage in these group discussions and consensus building outside the CANVAS environment, you must engage in a transparent process within CANVAS that includes responsive posts within the group discussion thread, so all members of the group are not only engaged in the process but are also completely aware of the group's ideas and the development of the consensus.
        - The leader could post a summary of the scope of initial agreement and disagreement among the group members based on the group members' initial postings on the question. This summary could be a road map for consensus building. However, each leader should adopt his/her own process to bring the group to a consensus.
        - Discussion and debate should continue until the leader brings the group to a consensus on the question or time for discussion expires late on Thursday, at which time the leader may find it necessary to post a majority-minority report as noted in 5 below.
    4. When the leader has led the group to consensus, the leader should post the consensus into the group discussion thread to conclude the activity of that group for that question.
    5. A Consensus is **<u>NEITHER</u>** a summary of the expressed points of view **<u>NOR</u>** the leader's point of view. If the leader cannot bring the group to a consensus, the leader should post a detailed explanation why consensus is not possible, together with a majority and minority report.

- For an even numbered group size (4 members), the majority-minority view should not be an even 2-2 split and should reflect a 3-1 split. For odd numbered group sizes (3 or 5 members), the majority-minority view may be either a 2-1, 3-2, or 4-1 split.
- If the leader cannot bring the group to a consensus position by 9 PM Thursday evening, the leader should then post the majority and minority report to the question within CANVAS, indicating the number of group members holding the majority and minority views.
- I will not accept a minority-majority report prior to 9 PM or without sufficient evidence of the group's stalled discussion contained in the group thread. **A leader should not use the majority-minority report as an easy exit strategy when the leader did not work diligently to develop a consensus.**

- In class on Friday, the leader shall serve as the primary, but not exclusive, spokesperson for the group on that question. If a leader will not be present in class on Friday, the leader should do two things:
  1. The leader should delegate leader reporting responsibilities to another member of the group for that Friday's class session; and
  2. The leader should notify me of the anticipated absence and the name of the substitute in-class leader.

5. Weekly participation in these group discussion activities is worth a maximum of 15 points.
   - Each discussion question participation is worth at least 5 points, except:
     1. Two weeks will have only one question worth 15 points, and
     2. One week will have one question worth 10 points and another question worth 5 points.
   - Posting on the front page of a discussion question will **NOT** earn the points, and
   - Posting responses for unassigned questions will **NOT** earn any points.

6. Deductions from these maximum points will occur under the following circumstances:
   - If a student has not posted in the discussion group thread by midnight on Tuesday, that student's participation will be "red-flagged" as late, losing at least 20% (1 of 5, 2 of 10, or 3 of 15) of the available points for that question.
   - If a student makes an initial post in the group's discussion thread after the Leader posts the consensus for that group, that student's participation will be "Bold Red-Flagged," losing 60% (3 of 5, 6 of 10, or 9 of 15) of the available points for that question.
   - If a student does not post into the group's discussion thread by midnight Thursday, that student will lose all points for that question.
   - In summary:
     1. 100% (5, 10, or 15 points) for timely initial participation
     2. 80% (4, 8, or 12 points) for late participation of initial posting

      3. 40% (2, 4, or 6 points) for very late participation of initial posting AFTER the leader posts the group's consensus, and

      4. 0% (0 points) for no participation.

- If the leader does not post a consensus on the topic by Midnight Thursday, the leader loses five (5) points, despite the number of points the leader earned for the questions for the week in question.
- No point deductions will occur based on the content of a student's initial response **<u>UNLESS</u>** the student's initial posting is non-responsive to the question and indicates a failure to read the assigned materials prior to posting the response based solely on my subjective opinion.
  1. If I conclude that a student's initial post is non-responsive, I will notify that student with a CANVAS IM of the point deduction and the reason for the deduction.
  2. I will give the student time to amend the initial posting to potentially earn some of the deducted points by posting a "reply" post to that student's initial posting.

7. As I read posts during the week, I may post comments and questions into a thread.
- These posts do not require a specific response from any student engaged in that discussion unless I ask a specific question and ask for a reply.
- My posts may provide a different perspective or context for the issue under consideration.
- When my posts occur within the Group's discussion thread, I am directing the post to the members of that specific group.
- When these posts occur on the front page of the discussion question, I am directing the post to all groups assigned that specific question.
- If I need to issue more information on any matter during the week to all students, I will use the Announcement process within CANVAS.