

- ❖ Clearly define expectations for Discussion participation
 - How often students should post
 - When they need to post by
 - Length of posts: 200 word original post, two 50-word responses

- ❖ Posts should count towards participation- need to look at the quality not just quantity

- ❖ Address style of online responses
 - Do you want them to feel more conversational rather than a composed essay with references and footnotes
 - Do you want them to cite references
 - Tip: Are you using this to replace conversations in class (less formal) or to help them prepare for academic writing? (more formal)

- ❖ Clearly define what is an acceptable post
 - New ideas
 - Has substance, not just "I agree"
 - Responds to others with feedback and new thoughts
 - Citations if appropriate

- ❖ Design high level questions that promote constructivist thinking
 - Interesting, controversial, evaluative (which is better, x or Y, why?)
 - Thinking that constructs knowledge from personal experience and prior learning

- ❖ Avoid asking questions that are too vague
 - What do you think
 - Who wants to start us off
 - Are there any questions
 - Yes/No questions
 - Asking for a specific fact (When was the Civil War)
 - Avoid simply asking for an opinion- lower order thinking- ask why

- ❖ If the conversation starts to wane
 - Weave together different pieces of the conversation for them to consider
 - Encourage the students to do that, add a new thought for them to consider
 - Pose a follow up questions etc. Example responses: What reasons do you have for saying that? Can you please elaborate? How do you define x? What do you think might be the implications of your previous statement? Are there any alternatives to this approach?