Discussion Board Participation Guidelines

1. **Think Before You Write**
The biggest advantage of asynchronous discussions (any-time as opposed to real-time) is that you have time to gather facts, do research, do the required reading, and think about your postings before you submit them.

   - Your posts should be thoughtful, well written and should completely address the topic.
   - Your original post response to the question with evidence citation should be by the due dates listed in the Course Schedule. This will allow other students time to post a reply to your original.
   - Use proper course related terminology to provide feedback even if this means going back through the course content to review.
   - When necessary, attach an image, document, link or annotated file to further explain your comments. PDFs can be easily annotated including options for voice recording.
   - When something is not clear, ask for clarification.
   - Consider formulating your feedback based on the original post first, before reading other’s comments. This will help you organize your thoughts without allowing other opinions to taint yours.

2. **Use Proper English**
Your postings in the discussion boards should be written like mini-essays, and as such, should be written using proper sentence and paragraph structure, proper grammar, and correct spelling. It is a good idea to compose your posts in a word processing program first (most have spell check and grammar check), then copy and paste the information to the discussion board. This applies to your responses to other postings as well. An added benefit is that you never spend a long time composing a post just to have a technical problem and lose it all.

3. **Interact with Others**
Remember, this is a discussion; that implies two-way communication. You must provide feedback to the other students that have posted and respond to one another in the discussions. This feedback should not be trivial, i.e., “good post” or “I agree” or “great idea,” but should be specific and provide examples. When posting comments or responding to a specific person, use their name. When referring to others, use their name as well.

4. **Post Early and Often**
Discussions must begin early and maintain momentum during the allotted timeframe. DO NOT wait until the last day to post to the discussion boards. If you post your original response to the posed topic at the last minute, you are not giving other students the opportunity to respond.
5. **Be Nice**
Don’t write anything you wouldn’t say to someone’s face. Be courteous, respectful and professional. Do not use profanity. You can disagree with someone and still be diplomatic about it. Remember to differentiate between opinion and fact. Everyone is entitled to their opinion if they can support it. Remember that what you write lives on and can be forwarded to others. Be open to others’ views, you will learn from their experiences.

6. **Grading**
To summarize the above, discussion grades will be based on the quality, timeliness, and quantity of your posts, in that order.

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