

Guidelines for Conducting Effective Online Discussion

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Agenda

- Background
- Educational goals
- Overall structure of discussions
- Student participation
- Teacher participation
- Nontraditional uses

Background

- Fifteen years as a paid moderator on the Byte Information Exchange (BIX) system**
- Started using WebCT in 1996**

Educational Goals

- Creation of learning community**
 - Elements of reflective learning**
 - Peer learning**
- Specific learning objectives related to course**

Overall Structure of Discussions

-Not too restrictive -- lump rather than divide

-Special topics in all discussion classes

- Long messages

- Of-topic topic (aka Nonsense)

- Visible locked 'holding tank'

- Invisible 'holding tank'

Overall Structure of Discussions (continued)

-Teams

General Discussions - Team 1	8 Messages
Official communication - Team 1	5 Messages
General Discussions - Team 2	27 Messages
Official communication - Team 2	16 Messages

-Didactic/Topical

-Seminar

[Introductions -- 08/21-09/03](#) 

[A -- 08/27-09/10 -- Blurring Personal and Professional](#) 

[B -- 09/03-11/26 -- Online resources to watch.](#)

[C -- 09/10-09/24 -- IT at the Movies](#) 

[D -- 09/17-10/01 -- Social Bookmarking](#)

[E -- 09/24-10/15 -- IT in Healthcare](#)

[F -- 10/08-10/29 -- Technology Winners and Losers](#) 

[G -- 10/15-11/05 -- Antipatterns](#) 

[H -- 11/05-11/26 System Performance...and Antipatterns](#) 

Things related to in-class discussions

<input type="checkbox"/> Week 1	28 Messages
<input type="checkbox"/> Week 2	0 Messages

Online Assignments

Discussions about material that is online only

<input type="checkbox"/> Module B -- Thinking about Thinking	346 Messages
<input type="checkbox"/> Module C -- Reading-Thinking-Studying-Doing	314 Messages

Student Participation

Nonthreatening start

- Initial test messages topic
- Introductions topic

Participation guidelines to allow for individual styles

- An example -- minimum for each discussion topic
 - One original posting of <n> words
 - One comment on someone else's posting
 - Respond to any substantive comment on any of your postings

All Topics	941 Messages
All My Posts	251 Messages

[-] Nonacademic experience	5
Re:Nonacademic experience	
Re:Nonacademic experience	
Re:Nonacademic experience	
Re:Nonacademic experience	
[-] Assignment description	9
Re:Assignment description	
Re:Assignment description	
Re:Assignment description	
Re:Assignment description	
Re:Assignment description	
Re:Assignment description	
Re:Assignment description	

[-] Active Learning	9
Re:Active Learning	
Re:Active Learning	
Re:Active Learning	
Re:Active Learning	
Re:Active Learning	
Re:Active Learning	
Re:Active Learning	
[-] My Nonacademic experience	12
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	
Re:My Nonacademic experience	

Teacher Participation

- Be there! Don't let a day go by without reading
- Participate
 - Guide, comment, respond
 - Don't overdo it, but make your presence known
- Correct unsatisfactory participation out of view
 - For underparticipation, set more specific posting goals
 - The holding tank for inappropriate postings

Teacher Participation (continued)

-Keeping things moving

- Never shut down a hot topic**
- Overlap times topics are open for posting**
- State dates for expected participation**
- Don't be afraid to stir things up**

-Grading

- Separate content evaluation from bean counting**
- Use message headers for bean counting**
- Qualitative assessment of "value" of participation**

Nontraditional Uses

-Guest participants

- They like the attention**

- They can be available at a low level for weeks**

-Single-student threaded discussion with instructor

- Used in project and research classes to mimic**

 - British "tutorial" interaction**

- Provides detailed record of work progress**

-For handling homework submission in classes

 - using formative assessment**

- [-] [Chapter 5, Problem 4](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 5, Problem 4](#)
- [-] [Resubmission:Chapter 6, Question 2](#)
- [-] [Re:Resubmission:Chapter 6, Question 2](#)
- [-] [Re:Resubmission:Chapter 6, Question 2](#)
- [-] [Chapter 6, Question 3](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 6, Question 3](#)
- [-] [ReSubmission:Chapter 6, Question 3](#)
- [Chapter 6, Question 8](#)
- [Chapter 6, Question 14](#)
- [Chapter 6, Question 20](#)
- [Chapter 5, Problem 1](#)
- [Chapter 5, Problem 2](#)
- [-] [Chapter 7 Question 9](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 7 Question 9](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 7 Question 9](#)
- [-] [Chapter 7 Question 12](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 7 Question 12](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 7 Question 12](#)
- [-] [Chapter 7 Question 14](#)
- [-] [Re:Chapter 7 Question 14](#)
- [Chapter 7 Problem 3](#)

Q9. What is short-circuit evaluation?

A9. Where the result is determined without evaluating all the operands and/or operators. Not detected for arithmetic. However, is useful for relational or conditional statements.

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Of course short circuit evaluation happens in arithmetic expressions. Think of an example of it and post it in a reply.

--bob
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An example would be in a boolean statement where if $((i >= 0) \&\& (j < 5))$ If i is less than zero, then condition is False...then we don't even bother looking at b . So nothing is evaluated for that part of the statement. This is short circuit evaluation. do half the job.

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You have the concept right, but you seem to think that it has to involve Boolean operations at some point. What happens in this statement $x := (a - b) * (c + d)$ in the case where $a = b$? Does L-R versus R-L evaluation make a difference?

--bob
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looks like that it does, if certain conditions like your example a short circuit evaluation will provide a side effect. Maybe that certain part needs to be evaluated but it will not be which can cause serious errors.

Questions or Comments?