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Spring 2016 VHC In-Service:

Discussions for Critical Thinking

Long a staple of the live classroom, discussions have also found a central place in online classes. While asynchronous and synchronous software allows a variety of interactions, the fundamental questions of organizing good discussions remain.

1) What do I want out of discussions—content mastery, skill development, or some combination?

2) How can students be encouraged to engage in critical thinking in responding to discussions?

On the next page is a selection of discussions being used by GBC faculty. As the faculty present their approaches, please consider how these discussions might parallel your answers to the questions above.

HIST-105: European Civilization to 1648 (Scott A. Gavorsky)

Discussion # 8: The Later Middle Ages

A key theme in the emergence of medieval societies in the High Middle Ages (1000-1300) and the Late Middle Ages (1300-1500) was the quest for stability, which structured a number of the conflicts of the period.

Discuss how medieval society sought to achieve a stable society, considering the following issues:

- 1) What elements contributed to the stability of medieval society?
- 2) What elements contributed to instability?
- 3) What issues did the medieval world find increasingly difficult to deal with?

For the discussion, you should draw on Lectures for Week # 11: The Medieval World and Lectures for Week # 12: The Later Medieval World and the associated readings.

Remember to follow the Discussion Requirements.

GRC 101: Principles of Design (Kathy Schwandt)

Discussion #2: Principles of Design

Assignment #1 was about principles of design, and you analyzed a book cover to identify some design principles.

Examine the following movie poster image. Choose one principle of design and explain how it seems to be applied in this image.

Your response may be written or you may record a video using the Record/Upload Media button in the toolbar above. (Refer to the Discussions Rubric in the Week 1 Module to see how your discussion posts are graded.)

Make your first post by 8:00 p.m. (PST), Sunday, September 8.

Respond by 1:00 p.m. (PST), Wednesday, September 11 to at least two other students' postings for this topic.



INT 339: Capes and Cultures (Joshua Webster)

Discussion: Batgirl Cover Controversy

This week's Discussion Assignment asks you to do a bit out of outside research on the dispute over the Batgirl variant cover.

Start by reading the article posted in the module and, from there, research the issue in greater detail and find at least three other articles, blogs or discussions of the cover and the larger issues it connects to. You should look for sources that are taking a stance on the cover, and try to look at articles covering each side of the issue. Once you have done your research, write a brief argumentative post that analyzes the different viewpoints and also provides your stance on the issue, making sure you justify your own stance with logical arguments and support from your research.

Your argument should be thesis-driven and you absolutely, 100% need to cite your sources in MLA style, so make sure you do so. The length of your post should be 300 to 500 words.

Additionally, you are required to respond to the posts of two fellow classmates, preferably ones who take a view that opposes your own.



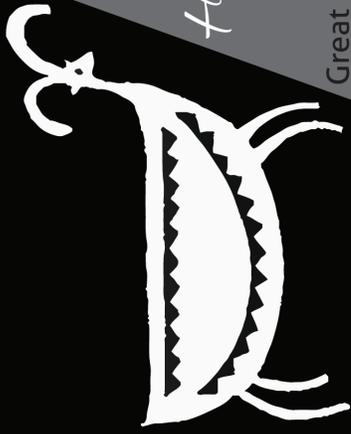
3) How can discussions be assessed for both content and/or skills development?

GENERAL NOTES:

Note: The VHC's *Core Humanities Skills* flyer is on the reverse of this sheet.

Thank you for attending this VHC In-Service. Please take a few minutes and fill out our event survey at:

<https://docs.google.com/a/gbcnv.edu/forms/d/1f3cfD2hNpzNUu6r4imno1ymEAYyTg3HanxNCJRYZHuw>



Virtual
Humanities
Center

Great Basin College

Humanities Core Skills/ Habits of Mind

At the heart of GBC's Virtual Humanities Center (VHC) is this list of core skills and habits of mind that the humanities encourage and promote. Every aspect of the VHC is centered on these skills. They are not only college learning skills, but life skills, and they are aligned with GBC's General Education Objectives.

General Education Objective: Critical [and Creative] Thinking

- ▶ the ability to use facts: working from evidence to a conclusion (induction)
- ▶ gathering enough facts to warrant the conclusion
- ▶ making valid inferences based on facts
- ▶ using accurate observation to form a hypothesis and then test it (the scientific method)
- ▶ the ability to use principles: working from principle(s) to a conclusion (deduction)
- ▶ avoiding prejudices, pressure from authority or peers
- ▶ avoiding flaws in thinking: personal attack, overgeneralization
- ▶ the ability to absorb, analyze and interpret complex artifacts or texts
- ▶ the ability to assess the reliability and validity of information, especially on the web
- ▶ the ability to synthesize information from diverse sources
- ▶ the ability to place data into a larger context
- ▶ the ability to make decisions based on evidence
- ▶ the ability to analyze and interpret abstract ideas
- ▶ the ability to recognize and compensate for ambiguity
- ▶ the ability to prioritize
- ▶ the ability to innovate
- ▶ the capacity for curiosity

General Education Objective: Communication Skills

- ▶ the capacity to write intelligently, lucidly, and fluently
- ▶ the capacity to speak intelligently, lucidly, and fluently
- ▶ the capacity to communicate through a variety of media: visual, performance, design & composition
- ▶ the ability to participate effectively in deliberative conversation
- ▶ the ability to analyze and interpret visual communication

General Education Objective: Technological Understanding

- ▶ the ability to utilize new technologies as they are developed
- ▶ the ability to understand the ethical implications of technological advances
- ▶ the ability to use technology to benefit humanistic inquiry, not to replace it
- ▶ the ability to capitalize on technology as a tool to enhance the experience of the humanities
- ▶ the ability to use technological tools to expand and extend our understanding of what it means to be human

General Education Objective: Personal/Cultural Awareness

- ▶ the ability to understand the historical and cultural foundations of ethical behavior, and develop and apply a personal code of ethics based on that understanding
- ▶ the maturity to take responsibility for one's thinking and actions
- ▶ the capacity to express an opinion that diverges from that of the majority [OR the ability to hold and defend a divergent point of view and to allow others the same right]
- ▶ the capacity to recognize the validity of alternate viewpoints or opinions
- ▶ the capacity to recognize multiple perspectives, from local to global
- ▶ the capacity to accept diversity of people and ideas
- ▶ the capacity for a critical understanding of fine arts expressions
- ▶ an awareness of the past and its application to the present
- ▶ the application of knowledge to real-world problems

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