

Contribution to the Learning Community (Individual)

While your instructor will discuss key ideas and raise important issues, parts of this course will be guided by dialogue, discussion and inquiry. Think about this course as a guided conversation that begins on the first day we meet and ends on the last scheduled day of class. In order for this learning experience to be beneficial and worthwhile to everyone, it is imperative that you read the assigned material, contribute to the discussions, and participate in all class activities. Conversations and ideas develop best when everyone has read the assigned material, reflected on their relevance and meaning, and/or contributed to the class discussions. Participation should be **thoughtful, meaningful, timely, and relevant**. Participation should also provide active support to the learning community, by attempting to motivate contributions, acknowledging alternative viewpoints, and supporting others.

In responding to your colleagues, you should feel free to suggest that they explore appropriate websites or resources to expand the discussion to a deeper level. However, please do ensure to provide explanations on why such resources are relevant and interesting to the rest of the class and provide an accurate reference to the resource. For example, the response “In the document that I am attaching, Joe Scholar gives examples of cases where technology brings people closer together and argues that empathy matters more than technology” is a much better response than “Please see the attached document for a different perspective.”

In responding to others, strive to work towards a culture that is collaborative, respectful, encouraging, and supportive. You should be receptive to change and use conflict resolution techniques when required. Posts that show evidence of ongoing negative behavior, that impede the flow of discussion, and seem unaware of or uninterested in responding to others without being prompted degrade the learning experience and do not advance opportunities for everyone to learn from each other.

Also, please consider how your contribution will advance and extend the discussion. For example, in your response, you can

- draw from the assigned readings, concepts and perspectives introduced in the course, and outside readings
- pose constructive questions,
- reflect back to your own experiences,
- connect to a course reading/assignment,
- ask for clarification,
- build connections between your thoughts and other students’ perspectives, and/or
- offer alternative perspectives

When responding to your classmates, you are expected to respect others’ values, perspectives and experiences. Use good netiquette and care.

The following rubric can help guide your participation in the activities. The rubric will be used by your instructor to assess your contribution to the learning community.

Contribution to the Learning Community Rubric

	Excellent Contribution (A+ to A-)	Good Contribution (B+ to B -)	Poor Contribution (F)
Critical Thinking	Consistently provides posts that are analytical and that demonstrate the author’s insights, observations, and reflections; includes relevant examples; offers substantive questions and suggests ideas to enhance further discussion; includes citations to external materials of high academic quality; provides ideas, alternatives or actions not previously identified.	Provides some posts that are insightful and reflective but usually offers only a surface level analysis that lacks insights, observations and reflections; provides some follow-up questions that are cursory and unsubstantive and do not help move the conversation forward; rarely includes citations to external materials of high academic quality.	Provides post(s) that lack analysis, insights, observations and reflections; does not provide follow-up questions for the group to consider.
Response and Synthesis	Consistently provides responses to colleagues that include a thoughtful treatment of the original post; provides responses that demonstrate the student’s ability to synthesize information and share this synthesis in a way that deepens the class’s collective understanding and move the discussion towards a thoughtful conclusion; provides posts that demonstrate application of learning and are based in the course readings, conceptual materials presented, outside reading and experiences.	Occasionally will synthesize others’ posts and current information and share this in a way that contributes to the class’s understanding; provides some contributions that lack connections to the responses from others and do not represent intentional, synthesized thought or advance the discussion in a substantive way.	Provides responses that offer minimal analysis, lack depth, and do not advance the discussion.

	Excellent Contribution (A+ to A-)	Good Contribution (B+ to B -)	Poor Contribution (F)
Communication	Provides timely individual postings that are well-written and succinct (2-3 paragraphs on average), on topic, and written in a style appropriate for the particular kind of activity or exercise; uses appropriate grammar; spells correctly; and shows consistent evidence of appropriate proof-reading.; provides excellent constructive feedback and seeks feedback from others; comments and questions are excellent, on topic, original and contribute to moving the discussion forward.	Provides posts that contain some spelling, grammar and punctuation errors; lack brevity; or distract from the comments or questions made by others; provides some good feedback and sometimes seeks feedback from others; comments and questions are usually relevant and sometimes contribute to moving the discussion forward.	Provides contributions that contain numerous grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors; shows evidence of a style of writing that consistently fails to facilitate communication. Rarely provides relevant input or feedback in a timely or constructive manner.
Professional Knowledge	Consistently provides excellent responses in posts that demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding, integrates course materials, are analytical and makes linkages to professional practice; solve problems using principles and educational theories; includes citations to external materials of high academic quality.	Provides responses in posts that demonstrate some breadth and depth of understanding, integrates course materials, are analytical and makes some linkages; identifies principles and educational theories for problem solving; includes some citations to external materials of high academic quality.	Provides minimal, if any, demonstration of application of learning, contribution of facts, theories and principles in discussions.