**Discussion Basics**
- Provide clear/complete instructions – write enough
- Give students deadline to post and a later deadline to reply
- Include netiquette guidelines
- Create smaller discussion groups – have students lead discussions (4-5)
- 1-2 discussions per week
- Require student judgment, opinion, evaluation
- Always sell your topic, why should your students care?
- Participate don’t dominate
- Enable the feature where students must post first before seeing any other posts

**Introductions, Share Ideas and Insights**
- Frequently Asked Questions - Use this forum to ask.
- Tips for Succeeding in this Class - from previous class
- Where Do You Go Online? Where do you like to go online? What is the strangest place you have “attended” online?

**Creating and Setting Up Discussions**
- Write enough
- Make your expectations clear
- Add video or links
- What is it worth?
- Make topics interesting – don’t create topics with specific text answers
- Ask good questions
- Be creative
- Give student’s choices

**Strategies for Discussions**
- Connect Students through Icebreakers
- Evaluation topics – such as evaluating a case study
- Comparisons
- Predictions
- Substantiating students perspective
- Reflect based upon research or text
- User generated topics
- Response to video topics
- Creative Problem Solving topic
- Try poetry
- Off the Wall topics
- Debates
- Activities
- Inject some fun [www.faceinhole.com](http://www.faceinhole.com)

**Grading (Evaluating) Discussions**
- Be present, adhere to rubric and rate quickly
- Add rubrics
- How to get students to post early, post often, respond to classmates, provide quality posts
- Instructor comments – canned and student specific

For more information [http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/academic_technology/itss/fits/](http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/academic_technology/itss/fits/)
Resources for Facilitating Effective Online Discussions

- Conducting Effective Online Discussions
- Effectively Facilitating Online Discussions
- Online Discussions – Cornell University, Center for Teaching Excellence
- 10 Reasons Students Don’t Participate in Online Discussions and How to Remedy Each – Debbie Morrison, Online Learning Insights
- Why Demand Originality from Students in Online Discussion Forums – Faculty Focus, Dec. 2013
- Discussion Board Assignments: Alternatives to the Question-and-Answer Format – Faculty Focus, March 2014
- 10 Tools to Engage Students in Academic Discussion Forums...Digital Citizenship Series

Netiquette Resources

- Netiquette: Ground Rules for Online Discussions –
- 15 Rules of Netiquette for Online Discussion Boards – Infographic obtained from Turo College

Rubric Resources

- Using Rubrics to Measure and Enhance Student Performance – Dr. Sharon Karkehaabadi, Northern Virginia Community College
- Blackboard Rubrics
- Discussion Forum Example Rubrics - Penn State