

Online Blogging in a Public Domain

Course name: Cultural Psychology (Psyc 458/558)

1. Structure of the course

2. The nature of the blogging assignment

- a. Why did I try to incorporate blogging into my course?
- b. What purpose did I think it would serve?
- c. Why public forum and not a private, closed one?
- d. How was student participation evaluated? (See Online Discussion Rubric the last page)

Sample of online discussion: <http://geographyofthought.blogspot.com/2006/11/costs-and-benefits-of-habits-of.html#links>

3. Questions that I had for the students at the end of this process.

- a. To what extent do you think the instructor should participate in online discussions with the students? (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 3 indicating that instructor should participate half as much as students do).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PART	14	3.00	5.00	3.8571	.77033
Valid N (listwise)	14				

- b. What are some thoughts on the assignment? (open-ended)
- c. Would you suggest continuing such an assignment for future students of this class? (open-ended)
- d. What would you change about this assignment? (open-ended)

Some common responses to the open-ended questions:

- Most common response.
 - Overall, it was a good assignment and should continue in the future, but the discussions should be brought into the classroom as well.
- Other responses
 - “It was better than expected but a lot of people got side-tracked and didn’t stick to responding to the discussion questions”
 - “The blogging gave a chance for the [quiet] students to participate.”
 - “Somewhat hard to participate frequently because others have already said what I wanted to say.”
 - “Posting a blog once a day is difficult, given how much thought must go into each response.”
 - “Future students should have to blog because I had to.”
 - “Don’t make it public, but then it would not be a blog now would it?”

- “I would recommend it for future students because it gets you to read the book and focus on the main points.”
- “The pace is too fast and doesn’t give me time to digest the reading and formulate a thoughtful reaction.”
- “I was confused as to what I was supposed to do.”

Recommendation for the future

- Continue blogging assignment but include an in-class discussion component as well.
- Instructor should post blogs at least half as often as the students do.
- Change the expectation of posting one blog a day to posting at least one blog per discussion topic.

Elicit other recommendations from CETL group

- Should I continue with the public forum or should I make it closed and private? (I am inclined to keep it public)
- Should I tailor the assignment to those who are slower at digesting the reading materials?
- How specifically should I bring the blogging discussion into the classroom? Should I just start by asking the same discussion questions that I did in the blog and summarize people’s responses to those questions?

Online Discussion Rubric				
	1	2	3	4
Promptness and Initiative	Does not respond to most postings; rarely participates freely	Responds to most postings several days after initial discussion; limited initiative	Responds to most postings within a 24 hour period; requires occasional prompting to post	Consistently responds to postings in less than 24 hours; demonstrates good self-initiative
Delivery of Post	Utilizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear "hasty"	Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts	Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts	Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings
Relevance of Post	Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic
Expression Within the Post	Does not express opinions or ideas clearly; no connection to topic	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas	Opinions and ideas are stated clearly with occasional lack of connection to topic	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic
Contribution to the Learning Community	Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops; seems indifferent	Occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group	Frequently attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely	Aware of needs of community; frequently attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic