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)


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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8571</td>
<td>.77033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8571</td>
<td>.77033</td>
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   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 assignmen 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?”
o “I would recommend it for future students because it gets you to read the book and focus on the main points.”

o “The pace is too fast and doesn’t give me time to digest the reading and formulate a thoughtful reaction.”

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