

Students must understand the importance of discussion boards and why it is relevant to them, but this can be difficult as student engagement with online classes can be difficult for faculty (Arnaud & Sun, 2021). Discussion boards can be easily ignored or if not ignored can easily produce some plastic or even some copy-paste-like responses such as some of the common phrases found by Arnaud and Sun(2021) such as “I agree with you” and “I completely understand”, to name a few. But this could also be indicative of shy students complying but with the fact that it is online these types of students have more time to think of what they want to share. Students are more likely to engage with other students that they know of or at least are acquainted with, even if it's just online. Students think that discussions are beneficial and professors would usually implement discussions in place of their lecture or to supplement their lecture (Pollock et al., 2011). However these discussions are carried out either through a discussion board or through dialogue, discussions in general can provide more benefits than one would expect. Harman & Koohang(2005) stated that discussion boards are an important part of e-learning and that it must be further investigated or scrutinized as the more people understand the significance of discussion boards the more they are able to leverage its potential.

Discussion boards are usually used to open up discussions or even encourage dialogue. Instructors or teachers should also not limit discussion boards for just dialogue but should also encourage their students to apply deeper and more critical thinking or analysis and problem solving for more fruitful discussions and even provide more insights or context to their classmates. Students who took blended learning or hybrid learning had positive outlooks towards their course (Alghamdi, 2013). Having online and face-to-face instruction would allow for flexibility and at the same time better interactions with students or colleagues. Discussion boards could also be a great avenue for ideas to be stored especially with the asynchronous nature of discussion boards, these ideas and their discussions are naturally archived; assuming they are not hard deleted. The language in Discussion Boards may also depend on the culture especially within an academic institution but probably for more public and less institutionalized boards, it may vary in degree of formality.

References:

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