How to Use Discussion Forums

The Discussion Forums are your chance to interact with thousands of like-minded individuals around the world who are also taking this course. It's a great way to meet people, ask for help, get study tips from others, and share your experiences about self-driving cars and a variety of other topics. This article will give you tips on how to use discussion forums effectively and help you to adhere to Coursera's Honor Code.

General Forum Guidelines

Upvoting Posts

When you enter the discussion forum, you will see an **Upvote** button under each post. We encourage you to upvote posts you find thoughtful, interesting, or helpful. This is the best way to ensure that quality posts will be seen by other learners in the course. Upvoting will also increase the likelihood that important questions get addressed and answered.

Report Abuse

Coursera's Code of Conduct prohibits:

- Bullying or threatening other users

- Posting spam or promotional content

- Posting mature content

- Posting assignment solutions (or other violations of the Honor Code)

Please report any posts that infringe upon copyright or are abusive, offensive, or that otherwise violate Coursera's Honor Code by using the Report this option found under the menu arrow to the right of each post.

Following

If you find a particular thread interesting, click the **Follow** button under the original post of that thread page. When you follow a post, you will receive an email notification anytime a new post is made.

Improving Your Posts

Course discussion forums are your chance to interact with others and ask for help. Getting their attention is one way to do well in this course. In any social interaction, certain rules of etiquette are expected and contribute to more enjoyable and productive

communication.

1. Stay on topic in existing forums and threads. Off-topic posts make it hard for other learners to find information they need. Post in the most appropriate forum for your topic, and do not post the same thing in multiple forums.

2. Use the filters at the top of the forum page (**Latest**, **Top**, and **Unanswered**) to find active, interesting content.

3. **Upvote** posts that are helpful and interesting.

4. Be civil. If you disagree, explain your position with respect and refrain from any and all personal attacks.

5. Make sure you're understood, even by non-native English speakers. Try to write full sentences, and avoid text-message abbreviations or slang. Be careful when you use humor and sarcasm as these messages are easy to misinterpret.

6. If asking a question, provide as much information as possible, what you've already considered, what you've already read, etc.

7. Cite appropriate references when using someone else's ideas, thoughts, or words.

8. Do not use a forum to promote your product, service, or business.

9. Conclude posts by inviting other learners to extend the discussion. For example, you could say "I would love to understand what others think."

10. Do not post personal information about other posters in the forum.

11. Report spammers.

For more details, refer to Coursera's Forum Code of Conduct.

Don't Share Full Code or Solutions on Forums

You can use the discussion forums to get technical help for your code. **You are not allowed to post your assignment code publicly on github or on the discussion forums.** This is an infraction to Coursera's Honor Code

However, sharing code samples, demonstrating techniques and learning the language/syntax are important forum activities. Consider the following scenarios when posting about technical questions on the forums:

Scenario 1: Code to delete

Learner Question/Comment: "Here is the code I have so far, but it fails the grader. Please help me fix it."

Why Delete?: This forum post should be deleted. The reason is that if there is a simple fix provided by a student, a quick copy and paste with a small edit will provide credit without individual effort.

Scenario 2: Code to delete

Learner Question/Comment: A student substitutes words for the math operators, but includes the variable names (or substitutes the equivalent greek letters (θ for 'theta', etc). This student also provides a sentence-by-sentence, line by line, description of exactly what their code implements. "The first line of my script has the equation "hypothesis equals theta times X", but I get the following error message...".

Why Delete?: This forum post should be deleted. "Spelling out" the code in English is the same as using the regular code.

Scenario 3: Code not to delete

Learner Question/Comment: "How do I subset a matrix to eliminate the intercept?"

Why Don't Delete? This post will probably would be okay, especially if the person posting makes an effort to not use familiar variable names, or to use a context which has nothing to do with the contexts in the assignments.

It is okay to show examples of code to demonstrate a technique, even if the technique itself is directly applicable to a programming problem at hand. As long as what is typed cannot be "cut and pasted" into the program at hand, it should be okay to share.

Example:

"*How do I set column 1 of a matrix to zero?"*

"Try this in your Octave work area:

>> A = magic(3)

>> A(:,1) = 0"

The above is always acceptable. Demonstrating techniques and learning the language/syntax are important forum activities and helps other people to learn.

✓ Complete