**AGR 201 Online Discussion Rubric**

**Overview**

This course relies heavily on each student’s ongoing participation in discussion. Discussion will be graded based upon quality, timeliness, responsiveness and moving the conversation forward, which is discussed in further detail in the scoring section of the rubric. There will be 1 discussion per week unless stated otherwise in the syllabus. Your initial post is due by Tuesday at 11:59 pm and your 2 reply discussion posts are due by Friday at 6:00 pm. If you miss the deadlines, posting will not count toward your grade. You are expected to participate throughout the week in the discussions*.* You are also expected to read your classmates’ posts and respond to them.

**Scoring**

Posted messages should be significant- which will move the conversation forward. There are a variety of **discussion principles.** You are required to include at least 3 of these principles in each of your posts for maximum points:

* Providing concrete examples, perhaps personal experiences
* Describing possible consequences or implications
* Challenging something that has been posted in the discussion
* Pulling relevant data from external sources-books, articles, etc.
* Relating post to assigned lecture/reading material
* Including current events/ topics in the news
* Linking to a historical context or event

For a given discussion, 8 points can be earned total. 4 points will be for the initial post and 4 points will be for your 2 reply discussion posts. Your grade will be based on the quality of the posts. You will receive a score out of 4 for your initial post. For your reply posts, each post will be graded on quality out of 4 and the mean of those scores will be your score for your reply posts. (If you post more than 3 times, the highest quality posts will be the ones graded). The two added together (initial and reply scores) will be your grade out of 8. You will have 12 discussions worth 8 points and 1 worth 4 points for a total of 100 points for discussions.

Note: In lieu of one reply post, you may choose to create a separate thread apart from the prompt that responds to something from the lecture or reading.

**Developed by Don Stepich; modified by Shalyse Iseminger**

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| Quality Criteria | Superior | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Responsiveness to discussion topic and ability to move discussion forward | Incorporated three or more discussion principles | Incorporated two discussion principles | Incorporated one discussion principle | Non-substantive postings and did little to move conversation forward | Non-substantive posting and did not move conservation forward |
| **Points** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **0** |

**Examples of Discussions**

Two- and three-point discussion scores for a particular post will be relatively common. Four point scores, however, will be more difficult because of the type and amount of messages required, thus deeper and more critical thought is required. Here are a few examples of discussion posts of differing qualities.

Prompt: *“International adoptions should be discouraged because of the great number of children who are in need of adoption domestically” –M. Mup (made up quote from made up person)* Respond to the quote by M. Mup. Do you agree or disagree?

Person A: “I agree with M. Mup’s sentiment that people should not participate in international adoptions. I would actually go further than Mup in saying that not only should international adoptions be discouraged, but there should be more encouragement of domestic adoptions specifically through foster care. According to the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, there are 101,666 children in the foster care system who are eligible for adoption but nearly 32% of them will have to wait over 3 years to be adopted (<http://ccainstitute.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=25&layout=blog&Itemid=43>). I can attest to this having grown up part of my life as a foster child. I had to live in 5 different homes before I finally found my parents (the people who adopted me). If people continue to adopt internationally, I believe the number of unadopted foster children will continue to increase. I can only imagine what would have happened if my parents had chosen to do an international adoption instead of going through the foster system. I probably most certainly would not be at Purdue.”

*Person A is a 4 point discussion because the respondent includes an external source to support their opinion. She then related a personal experience to the statistic they quoted, and incorporated possible implications or consequences to the alternative of their argument.*

Person B: “I disagree with Mup and Person A. I don’t believe that international adoptions and domestic adoptions have to be mutually exclusive. As we learned in lecture a few weeks ago, Mup’s quote is very dualistic. International adoptions are wrong and domestic adoptions are right. It does not have to be so black and white. I personally know a family who has done both. They have adopted children through foster care and a daughter from Indonesia. There are 153 million orphans in the world (<http://www.sos-usa.org/our-impact/childrens-statistics>), and their need for parents is just as valid as those in the US. I would argue that many children overseas are even in greater need of adoption as orphan care facilities in impoverished nations are much worse than the conditions most children in foster care face here. This is not to say that domestic orphans should just be pushed to the side, but rather, all adoption should be encouraged and incentivized for the sake of all needy children, not just the ones in our own country.”

*Person B is also a 4 point discussion. He challenged person A, included an example of a personal experience and an external source, and related his argument to material from the course.*

Person C: “I agree with Mup because there are many children who need to be adopted domestically and as Americans, we have a responsibility to fellow Americans before people from other parts of the world. I disagree with Person A about foster care though, because I had some family members who had foster children and it was a horrible experience for them.”

*Person C is an example of a person who would fall in the range of a 2-3 point discussion post. They would probably receive a 2.75 for this post. They use 2 of the discussion principles (challenge and personal experience), but they do not elaborate much which hinders the conversation rather than moving it forward. More elaboration about the experience to substantiate their challenge of person A (such as including why the experience was horrible- the children’s behavior, the system’s bureaucracy, or something else) or a counter to Person A’s argument (such as talking about domestic adoption through adoption agencies, or a weakness in Person A’s argument, would have given Person C a solid 3 point score. Just stating “I disagree” is not a substantial challenge to receive full credit for use of “challenging something” as a discussion principle.*

Person D: “I don’t necessarily agree or disagree with Mup. I don’t really have a strong opinion on adoption. I did read, however, that as a whole, international adoptions are declining due to stricter international laws and policies. According to the Huffington Post Canada, international adoptions have decreased by 70% in the U.S. Also, many children abroad that need to be adopted are generally older and have special needs. There are also many restrictions and lengthy wait times. (http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/05/07/international-adoption\_n\_7225150.html) So maybe Mup’s concern isn’t that warranted.”

*Person D is an example of a 2 point post because although they gave a brief summary of the news article, that is the only discussion principle included in their post. Also, they used the Canadian Huffington Post to talk about the US. In this case, it isn’t too bad because the statistic cited was about the US and the remaining points were pretty generalizable, but do be sure to check and make sure your sources are relevant not only to your topic, but also to your context.*

Person E: “Person B, where do you think the incentives should come from for people to adopt?”

*This is an example of a 1 point post. There are no discussion principles used, but it still does a little to move the discussion forward. Note that this is a valid question and would be fine to post to get an answer. The poster should just be mindful that if they do not want to receive a 1 for the quality of this post, they should be sure to post more than 4 times (only the highest quality posts get counted when there are more than 4)*

Person F: “I disagree with Mup.”

This is an example of a 0 point post. There are no discussion principles used and it does nothing to move the conversation forward.