

The original Forum Guidelines and Scoring instructions are still in effect.

I want all students to be able to succeed in the online forums. What follows are the best ways to earn full credit.

- Forums are homework and require participation outside of class hours and class days. In forums, you are asked to have intelligent, online historical discussions with your classmates. Since this type of discussion takes time/days, your ongoing participation throughout the week is essential.
- Students who don't make their first post by class time on Tuesday have missed 3 days of the 7 day long forum period and their score will be penalized. (This statistic is so very easy for the instructor to see when scoring posts. The forums show the exact day and time that you post or reply.)
- It is foolish to aim for a bare minimum of two to three contributions a week. Often, the students who try this end up making them on a single day. (Recall that you must participate throughout the week.) Since there is no maximum limit of times you can participate in a forum, think of your additional posts or replies as "extra credit", the way you can ensure that you earn 100% on the forums.
- It is foolish to aim for perfection in a forum discussion. This is not a term paper. I'd rather make 4 or 5 posts or replies throughout the week that earn scores of 2 (and when added together earn full credit), rather than bank everything on a massive post. I do not score on length. As a matter of fact, the longer posts sometimes backfire in two areas.
 1. Other group members may choose not to reply. It is difficult to carry on a discussion with a mini term paper. You could lose the chance for discussion, a back and forth that could earn you more points.
 2. I've seen cases where students write so much that they end up including a factual error or unsupported claim or two. I cannot award these posts and "excellent" score of 3 when this happens.
- If you don't clearly illustrate that you have intelligently interacted with the provided materials, you can leave your group members (and the instructor) guessing as to if you have even read or listened to the materials at all. Trying to "bluff" in an online post is MUCH more difficult than it is to do in person. Don't bluff.
- Simply including long quotes with little or no analysis, explanation, or clarification on your part, as to why this fact supports or contradicts your position, may indicate that you've read the materials, but don't understand them well. Simply including a quote does not always result in an "excellent" (score of 3) post.

- Cramming all of your posts or replies at the very end of the week just doesn't work. Other group members don't have time to reply to your posts, your posts seem as if they were just copied from those students who posted earlier in the week, and I won't be giving you high scores, if any, for doing this. Again, forums are not book reports or term papers that you just need to submit just before the deadline.