**Discussions Policy Example**:

Discussions are the way we “participate” in class. So, it’s important that you post thoughtful messages that move the conversation forward in some way. “Yeah, I agree.” is not an acceptable posting and will not earn any points. Your participation in discussions can earn you up to ten points for each thread. After the due date for the discussion, you will be graded on your overall participation in that discussion thread. Late posts are welcome for their intellectual value but will not be considered in your grade.

Your posts should show that you have read the material in the text as well as your group and/or partner’s posts and have applied all of that to the question at hand. You should do more than merely spit back what the text says, you should engage with the material by analyzing and interpreting it. While I won’t be grading based on grammar or spelling, your posts should be grammatically clear enough not to present anyone with a problem in understanding your point. It’s not a formal writing forum but it’s not Facebook either.

**Discussion Participation (From Syllabus example)**

In order to help students synthesize the ideas presented in the various course materials, you are individually required to participate in a discussion from each week’s article readings. One discussion assignment per week, for the eleven weeks with assigned article readings (weeks 2 through 12), is required at minimum. Discussions boards are located within the weekly folders but may also be located within the Discussion Module located within Communications Tools.

Each weekly discussion platform includes a question from the instructor which is found on top of the discussion board. Each week, students must “Reply” directly to the question posted by the instructor and make comments on other student replies.

In determining your grade, the following components are considered:

1. You are required to post **one original Reply for each Discussion question** (i.e. “comments” to other students do not count in this regard).
2. In addition to your one, original reply, you must **make at least two Comments** on your classmates’ replies each week.
3. Original posts should consist of at least 75 words (about one paragraph) or more and reflect your understanding of the articles relative to the question in hand.
4. Comments on your classmates’ replies should consist of at least 50 words (a couple of sentences) and should elaborate on or evaluate their reply rather than just agreeing or disagreeing.

Discussion replies are due on Friday evening each week and all comments must be posted by Sunday evening of each week.

A maximum of 3 points is earned for each discussion (2 points for your initial Reply and 1 point for making at least two comments). This results in a total of 33 points for the 11 sessions with assigned readings. Discussions account for 10% of the course grade.