Cultivating Discussions Online

Collaborative learning communities are created by participants actively engaging with one another in acquiring knowledge. When online discussions are rooted in course learning goals and structured for continuous intellectual engagement, they provide opportunities for students to elaborate on their existing knowledge and deepen their understanding of the course material. The cultivation of these productive discussions through careful and thoughtful design of questions and responses is critical to the learning process.

Designing a Learner-Centered Online Community:

Further Reading:

- Sheridan Center Teaching Tips
  [http://brown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/teaching/teaching_tips.html](http://brown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/teaching/teaching_tips.html)
  - Tips on Facilitating Effective Group Discussions
  - Question Stems to Provoke Critical Thinking

- Improving the Use of Discussion Boards from WPI’s Academic Technology Center,

- Online Writing from Vanderbilt University’s Center for Teaching,
  [http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/online-education/blogs/](http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/online-education/blogs/)

- Engaging Students in Discussion Online by the Center for Instructional Development and Research at the University of Washington (Teaching & Learning Bulletin, Vol 6(2), 2002).

- Course Guide Books from The Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning,
  [http://www.cirtl.net/course_guidebooks](http://www.cirtl.net/course_guidebooks)
  - Creating a Collaborative Learning Environment
  - Effective Teaching with Technology