

Maximizing online engagement

Questioning and Timing techniques

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Assumptions

We are assuming the following

- Building the learning community is critical
- Course design (structure, layout, organization) is critical
- Collaboration and interaction with, between, and among learners is critical
- Asynchronous communication has benefits critical to learner success
- Writing good questions is critical

Our presentation draws from

- Our teaching
 - We teach courses on communication, media, and instructional design and technology
- Our pedagogy
 - We have used discussion boards as a compliment for face-to-face courses and in online courses
- Our Research
 - We have started to analyze our methods

In the next 60 minutes

You will learn techniques for using discussion boards that can be used with various learners.

You will also learn about how to assess discussion board conversation and how our students feel about participating in discussion boards.

Agenda

- Activity
- From classroom to discussion board
- Strategies and ideas for discussion boards
- Evaluation

Criteria to Evaluate Ideas

How do we evaluate an idea?

- Is there conflict?
- Is there a fear or joy that heightens the emotional experience?
- Does it have a suggested beginning - middle - end?
- Is there an interesting protagonist?
- Is the situation unique?
- Does it inform AND entertain?
- Is the idea or protagonist relatable?
- Does it fulfill your programming objective?

Helping Patients Face Death, She Fought To Live

HOME PAGE TODAY'S PAPER VIDEO MOST POPULAR

The New York Times

WORLD U.S. N.Y. / REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

MONTHS TO LIVE

Helping Patients Face Death, She Fought to Live



Todd Heisler/The New York Times

LAST MOMENTS Robert Pardi Jr. in the apartment he shared with his wife, who died in his arms. "I would have loved to say goodbye," he said.

By ANEMONA HARTOCOLLIS
Published: April 3, 2010

By the time she was 38, Dr. Desiree Pardi had become a leading practitioner in palliative care, one of the fastest-growing fields in medicine, counseling terminally ill patients on their choices.

Months to Live

A Switch in Roles

This series is examining the promises and challenges of extending, or ending, the lives of very ill patients.

She preached the gentle gospel of her profession, persuading patients to confront their illnesses and get their affairs in order and, above all, ensuring that their last weeks were not spent in unbearable pain. She was

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April 26, 2010

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April 26, 2010

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April 26, 2010

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Doctor of Health Care



Helping Patients Face Death, She Fought To Live

- Theme is how society treats death
- Successful, rising palliative care doctor is diagnosed with a critical illness
- Heroic figure becomes conflicted over her own philosophy
- She fought death with conviction, until the end

Helping Patients Face Death, She Fought To Live

Project Could Be:

- Feature Film
- Documentary Film
- Documentary Series

Let's Try It!

1. Importance of Being Ernie
About Ernie Anastos, colorful Fox News anchorman
2. Los Angeles Prepares for Clash over Marijuana
Police prepare to go after medical marijuana dealers who make a profit
3. High Jinks to Handcuffs
Conservative pranksters get big publicity...and end up in jail.
4. Judge, I'm Telling You
The stories you hear in Traffic Court
5. When a Papered Wall Acts Like A Website
Advertising on a Wall creates a rudimentary and popular "Craig's List"
6. Urge to Help that Became Life's Work
Woman who developed great knowledge of poor families by starting a newsletter tailored to helping them out of their plight
7. Yoga's New Wave
How Yoga has reinvented itself, in a very expensive way.

New York Times Articles

Activity: Directions

Team up

Choose a genre for your article

- Feature Film
- Documentary Film
- Documentary Television Series
- Narrative Television Series (Comedy or Drama)
- Reality Series
- Web or Interactive Application

We will share ideas after about 8 minutes

Why moved to discussion board

- No good ideas
- Students reluctant to respond
- Many “superficial one-liner” ideas
- Some students dominated the conversation
- Others barely participated or did not participate at all

What it looks like online

All Topics (106 Messages / **8 New**)

All My Posts (0 Messages)




Create a Film or Television Series Concept  (0 Messages)

Dear Students:

Your assignment beginning tonight is to read selected newspaper articles as posted under the "Create a Film or Series" folder and use them as inspiration in creating a concept for a feature or documentary film, or television series which includes the genres of comedy, drama, or reality. You have time in the next hour or so to think about what you want to create. It might be a "stand-alone" movie or it could be a pilot for a series but must tell a story about a character or gro...[more](#)



Default Topic  (4 Messages / **4 New**)



Creating a Comedy series  (102 Messages / **4 New**)

Using Discussion Board to Create a feature, or series pilot

Script Concepts

Class:

Your assignment is to create a concept, which you might use for your final project for this class. It might be a "stand-alone" feature or it could be a pilot for a series that may star student or local actors. The script may be shot on location or in the studio but must tell a story about a character or group of characters. The concept can be comedy or drama. Please let your imagination run wild! Th...[more](#)

What it looks like online

Part 1 of the assignment requires that each student read each of the five articles in the file and post a response FOR TWO OF THE ARTICLES your ideas for a short movie or series pilot which will

Part 2 of the assignment is that you must read all of the ideas that are posted by your classmates and reply to at least two of them with your constructive comments. Your replies will include your opinion on

Part 3 is to read each of the constructive comments and now provide

Part 4 is to respond to a reply to a suggestion made from a classmate on your original post. If no one has responded to your idea, add additional thought to your original idea. Perhaps by reading all of the contributions on the discussion board, you might get an idea that will help you to build upon your original thoughts. (Four sentence minimum required). This portion of the exercise must be completed no later than 11PM, Thursday night (March 24).

In all of your postings, make sure you are thoughtful and creative. You will need a minimum of four good sentences to meet the requirement for the response. Remember, these are minimum requirements and you should feel to give as much feedback or response as you are inclined.

You will be graded on timeliness, contribution to the "community" (per the DB rubric) and the creativity and viability of your idea. Please bring a printed copy of what you consider to be your best post to class for grading.

Example Student Exchange

MARIANA VERSION 2.0

I took what both Ashley and Matt said into consideration and changed around a couple of things. I changed the setting of the film from Argentina/NY to New York City. I also changed around the plot of the movie - instead of a jealous girlfriend being the cause of conflict, it is now race which makes it a bit more serious. Not sure if the change is a good thing or bad thing. ???

Mariana Acostas lives in a dead-end neighborhood in Queens, NY where she is labeled as the smartest teenager because she's the only one who hasn't ended up pregnant or in jail. She's enrolled in a bunch of extra courses in her high school and works as a waitress at her parents restaurant. Her dream is to get out of her poor neighborhood go to good school and a good college. Unfortunately, her parents can't afford to send her to a decent high school, much less anything beyond that.

She applies to a couple of private schools in Manhattan and is accepted to one on a full scholarship. She is ecstatic and can't wait to begin, she's finally going to be in a good learning environment.

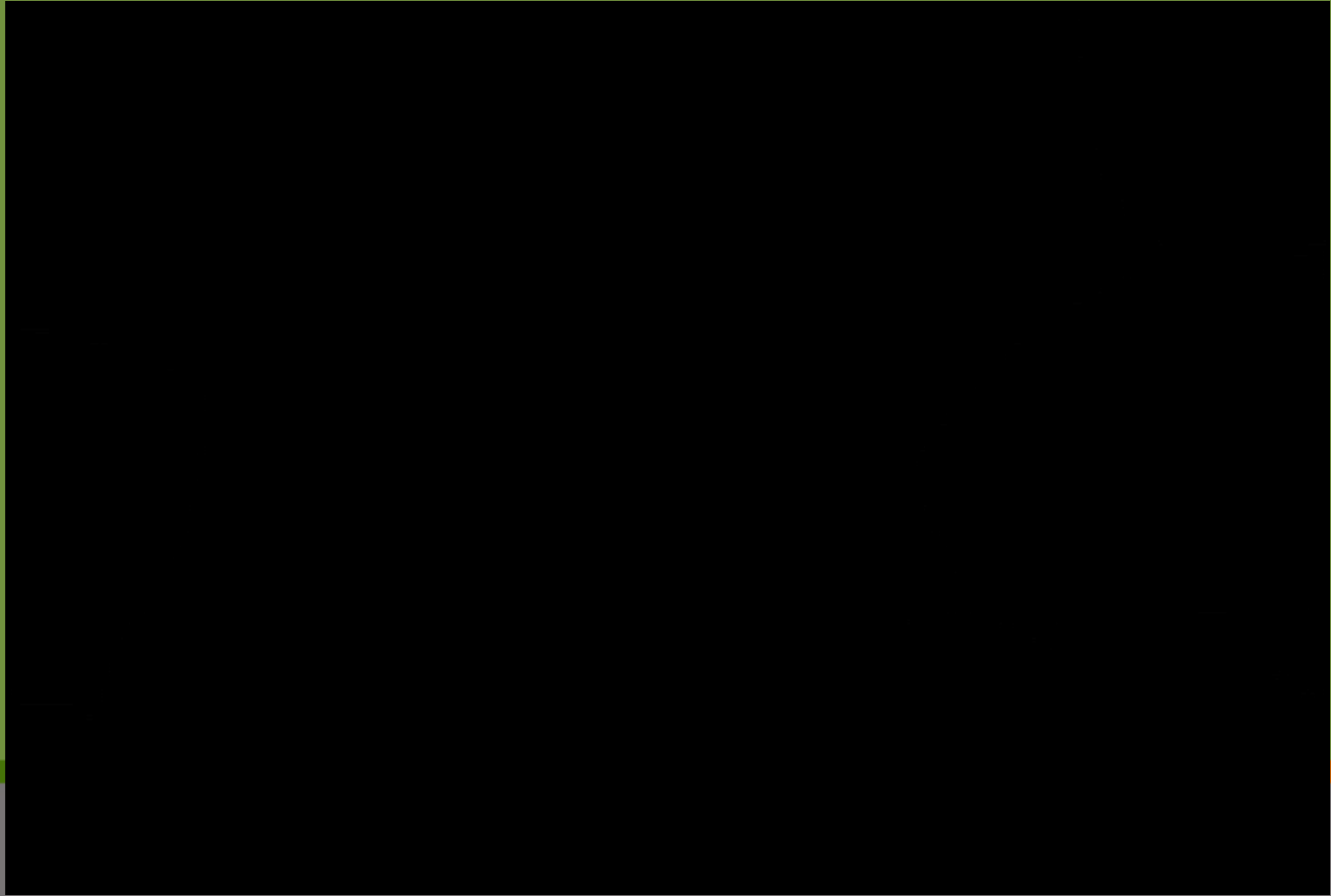
As her first day of classes goes by, Mariana is surrounded by uptight Yuppies who ignore her and only focus on their academic. She is overwhelmed with the amount of work she has to do. It isn't until she gets to history, her last class of the day when she starts to relax. She is assigned to sit next to Patrick, a relatively laid-back and sweet guy who actually talks to her. They are assigned to do a project together and over the course of the film, Patrick and Mariana begin to develop feelings for each other. They become closer as they work together on their project and she even helps him out with his Spanish class. They eventually kiss and one day, she goes over to work on their project at his house.

At Patrick's house, his mother isn't very hospitable to Mariana. She says very rude things to her and tells Patrick that he can do better than "somebody like her." Mariana's family tells her something along the same lines, that she needs to be with a "boy like her." The rest of the film entails Patrick and Mariana trying to get past their parents views on race and trying to create and sustain a relationship of their own.

Mariana



My Mom is on Facebook



Techniques for effective discussion boards

“I wasn’t sure about my idea but when John said it was ‘good’, I gained confidence and it really started to gel.”

- Directions, Timing, & Requirements
- Point – Counter Point
- Role assignment
- Evaluation

Directions, Timing, & Requirements

- Length of message – lines, paragraphs, words
- Degree of formality
- Resources to use or cite
- Title of post – user friendliness
- Within 24-48 hours
- How to respond to others
 - Length of response
 - Degree of formality
 - How many replies to how many peers
 - Within 48-72 hours

Point – Counter Point

- “Arguing both sides” is a tenet of critical thinking and can provide for quality learning when used in the discussion board tool - *Spuriatu, Quinn and Hartley (2007)*
- Interactions involving conflicting viewpoints promoted more discussion - *Jeong (2004)*
- Force the issue
- Split the class into teams
 - A-L answers one way, M-Z answers in the opposite
- Tell a person that had to answer differently why they are right or wrong, tell them why you agree or disagree

Sample Instruction and Questions

You have all read the articles on Anissa Ayala. For this discussion board, *half the class will be assigned the argument that this story should be produced as a documentary film and the other half will argue that it should be produced as a feature or television movie.*

As you articulate your thoughts, make sure that you demonstrate your understanding of story and character as we have discussed in class. Be thoughtful as you discuss “inciting incident”, “plot complications”, “climax” and “resolution” in your discussions.

Sample Instruction and Questions

You have seen the documentary film “Jesus Camp”. We are going to discuss the objectivity of this documentary. Please post responses to the statements below and then respond twice to your classmate’s posts, one on each side of the argument. As you discuss your position, use knowledge gained in this course including structure, character (who are the “stars” and how are they used?) and production technique including composition, editing, lighting, titles and sound.

Statement 1 : Jesus Camp is an objective documentary film exploring Evangelicalism in America.

Statement 2 : Jesus Camp is a subjective documentary film exploring concerns about Evangelicalism in America

Sample Instruction and Questions

Chef Rainer's class is:

IF your LAST name starts with A - L you must argue that it is Constructivist

IF your LAST name start with M - Z you must argue that it is Instructivist

Back up your choice with some evidence from the case or class notes.

Then A - L/Constructivist people respond/reply to two M-Z/Instructivist people telling them they are **WRONG** and why they are wrong!

Then M-Z/Instructivist people respond/reply to two A - L/Constructivist people telling them they are **WRONG** and why they are wrong!

Other topics used

- Is television harmful for children?
- Are American values shaped by the mass media?
- Do African American stereotypes still dominate entertainment television?
- Are American values shaped by mass media
- Should internet access be regulated?

Role assignment

- "Role Assignments" indicate higher levels of interconnected messages and deep processing – Heflich and Putney, 2001, Jeoung, 2004
- Angels and Devils
 - Angel – Positively comment
 - Devil's advocate - Constant Critic

Role Assignment

- A student discussion leader may demonstrate an increase in student reflection - *Heflich and Putney, 2001*
- Peer mentoring and scaffolding may lead to more complex levels of thinking – *Peterson-Lewinson, 2002*
- Questioner
 - Lead – ask the first questions
 - Follow up – ask probing or extension questions
 - NO commenting

Mirroring and summarization

Rich argumentation can be a core of quality discussions and ...a vehicle to solving issues – Veerman & Treasure Jones (1999)

Mirroring

- reflect the other person's views back to them
- i.e. “What I hear you saying is.....”
- Helps to ensure you're **not** imposing your own interpretations
- Tell students to mirror

Summarizer

- At the very end – graded assignment
- Periodically – shorter summaries to move the discussion

Evaluation of discussion boards

- Part of the course grade
- Detail expectations for quantity and quality

Rubric components

- Promptness and initiative
- Accuracy and formality
- Relevance
- Expression
- Contribution to the learning community

Edelstein and Edwards, 2008

Category	1	2	3	4
Promptness and Initiative	Does not respond to most postings; rarely participates freely	Responds to most postings several days after initial discussion; limited initiative	Responds to most postings within a 24 hour period; requires occasional prompting to post	Consistently responds to postings in less than 24 hours; demonstrates good self-initiative
Delivery of Post	Unitizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear "hasty"	Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts	Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts	Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings
Relevance of Post	Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic.
Expression within the post	Does not express opinions or ideas clearly, no connection to topic	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal express of opinions or ideas	Opinions and ideas are stated clearly with occasional lack of connection to topic.	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic
Contribution to the Learning Community	Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops; seems indifferent	Occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group	Frequently attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely	Aware of needs of community; frequently attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic.

Survey of Students

Course: Media and Society, 2007 N=21

Did you find that arguing for both sides of the question helped you to better understand the issue?

- Yes - 67%
- Possibly - 19%
- No - 14%

“I liked how you went about it...picked a controversial topic and assigned us a side to argue”

Survey of Students

Course: Ithaca College Studio, 2010 N=31

Ever used discussion board as a tool for creating ideas for media?

- Yes - 13%
- No - 84%

How do you compare our online discussion in which we “created concepts” with in-class discussion on the same task?

- More useful - 27%
- Somewhat Useful - 48%
- About the same - 25%

Survey of Students

How did you find input you received from class members for the discussion board exercise?

- Very Useful - 21%
- Useful - 51%
- Somewhat Useful – 27%

“I liked that you had time to think about your idea before posting it, that you could get feedback and improve it”

Where we go from here?

- More surveys of students
- Follow up focus groups of students
- Integrating enriching media into discussion boards
- What is most useful to students?
 - Time to think and reflect?
 - More comfortable because outside the classroom?
 - Fits in with the college lifestyle and schedule?

Discussion boards are GREAT

- Creating new things
 - Organization policy and practice
 - Marketing Initiatives
 - Programs for client outreach
 - Instructional methods and strategies
- Improved the learning environment with higher order thinking and discussion
- Students like them and find them beneficial

Thank You

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