

Discussions. Discussion and participation are critical components of this course. In summary, the functions of a discussion are:

1. Discussion acts as a catalyst: it forces us to confront alternative or contradictory ideas/arguments. Either we revise ideas to take counter arguments into account, or we augment our arguments to counter the objections that have been raised.
2. Discussion is a particular kind of social event that provides us with ways of enacting complementary roles, or participating in mutual guidance and support
3. Discussion constitutes ideas and opinions. We use discussion as a way to clarify in our own minds what we “think.”

Participation in threaded, online class discussions. All students in the class are expected to post their ideas, thoughts, and comments in an online discussion via email with all members of their assigned group. All students and instructors are permitted open access to these discussions, though instructors will not participate. The dialogue preceding the final answer(s) will be weighted equally with the answer(s) for the grade. Therefore, *active participation and thoughtful input of each student are as important as the outcome.*

In order for true conversation to develop, you must have something to talk about. The initial postings you make for each discussion board will be the springboard for a series of conversations. Your work should be complete, accurate, and conversation-friendly. There is a deadline for initial postings, so that you will all have ample time to discuss points raised therein. After the initial postings are made, you will be required to respond to the original postings of others. Pay careful attention to the due dates and requirements for each individual discussion assignment.

Assignment for 19 Sept 2008 through 23 Sept 2008. Read the articles posted on the course website: Burgess et al. 2007 Cell Metabolism 5, 313 and Hakimi et al. 2007 J Biol Chem 282, 32844. From the findings in these articles, from the course lecture material, and from any other scientific resource available to you, pose a hypothesis for the role of cytosolic phosphoenolpyruvate carboxykinase. Secondly, describe a key experiment that you could perform to test your hypothesis. You should communicate with your online group via email and include skim3@lsuhsc.edu in the address group; this will ensure that I can grade and read the flow and development of ideas that lead to the final answer from each group. Initial postings by each group member should be emailed before 11PM Sunday, Sept 21, 2008 and responses and final postings by 11PM on Monday, Sept 22, 2008. Students should be prepared to orally explain and discuss the group ideas in class on Tuesday, Sept 23, 2008.

Student group assignments.

Group A: Abdrabah, Bivona, Chhabra, Jiu, and Richard

Group B: Asatryan, Bradley, Doggett, Major, and Sanchez

Group C: Bai, Buckley, Gros, Ponnath, Schilling

Group D: Bhattacharjee, Nakhoul, Iyengar, and Rady

Rubric for grading class discussions of papers. You will be graded on the quantity and the quality of the responses you contribute. Note that the maximum score per discussion is 20 points and that scoring metrics are applicable to all students in the class, regardless of formal discussion assignment.

20 pts

- * content of conversation indicated a level of interaction with the material that suggests careful reading and serious consideration of the issues therein
- * digressions evolved within the conversation which illustrated an attempt to make connections with lecture topics
- * thoughtful responses encouraged further dialogue

18 pts

- * level of conversation suggested that material was thoroughly read, but perhaps not considered beyond the written word
- * digressions, albeit relevant, never found connections with lecture topics
- * thoughtful responses to peer work, although more participation was expected

16 pts

- * content of conversation indicated some evidence of a basic familiarity with the material, but only on a level approaching apathy
- * little attempt made to connect ideas found in material with lecture topics
- * flow of discussion was disjointed, indicating lack of involvement with material and a desire to “just get it over with”
- * no responses

14 pts

- * cursorily contributed to the conversation, but were off-base with contributions
- * very few individual thoughts were offered that helped further the depth of conversation – typically indicated that you did not read very carefully

12 pts

- * did little more than agree with what everyone else said
- * no individual thoughts were offered that helped further the depth of the conversation

10 pts

- * no participation
- * conduct was counter to group’s progress or behavior was rude and unbecoming

0 pts

- * no class attendance

Your responses to the original postings should take one of two forms:

- a. Argue: This should not be in a hostile sense. This response will reflect disagreement with the initial posting. In this response, you will need to provide a counter-argument connecting to specific points in the original post.
- b. Extend: This response will reflect agreement with the original post. In this response, you will need to provide an extension to the original post, elaborating upon specific points cited in the original post or introducing new ideas to further the initial argument.

Please keep in mind that your goal is to encourage discussion among your group members. You are not writing generic essays for the instructor's viewing only; the initial postings are considered to be formal assignments, but your tone may be informal. In addition, remember that this is an academic space and all conversations should be geared toward an academic investigation of ideas. Please exercise good manners; *you will be held accountable for all you 'say' in the discussion board.*

Rubric for grading threaded, online class discussions. The following overview should serve as a guideline for your grades for online discussion board. You will be graded on the quantity and the quality of the responses you contribute to the discussion board. Note that the maximum score per discussion board is 20 points, AND that a 3 point per day deduction is applied to all late initial and final postings.

20 pts

- * strong essay with well-supported points and adequate elaborations
- * thoughtful responses to peer work
- * postings encouraged further conversations with peers

19-18 pts

- * relatively strong essay that may require further support/elaboration
- * thoughtful responses to peer work, although more participation was expected
- * postings encouraged further conversations with peers

17 pts

- * strong essay with well-supported points and adequate elaborations
- * no responses to peer work

16-14 pts

- * essay requires more critical thought and analysis
- * essays contains inaccurate information
- * points within essay lacked support and/or elaboration
- * little or no participation with peers

13-12 pts

- * no initial posting
- * thought and lengthy responses to peer work (credit is given for participation)

0 pts

- * no participation