

Online discussion participation

Overview:

Participating in an online discussion forum (a blog) is a useful way for people on the Internet to share ideas, engage with communities of people with common interests, and do so from the comfort of their own home—it's the cliché interconnected global world in action!

Computer literacy and fluency in online forums are important skills to have, and participating in these online discussions is an easy way to ensure that you're thinking about music more often than just during our once-weekly class meetings. Therefore, online participation is a significant portion of this class (30% of your overall grade, counting both instructor-led and student-led online discussions). At the same time, it's also a task in which you can easily earn full points. Think of this portion of the course as an opportunity to engage in a lively conversation, learn from each other, extend or expand our in-class work, and practice your writing skills in an informal setting (with your peers and graded for participation). You'll also be asked to reflect on your experience with these online discussions, your student blog post, and the other student-led blog discussions in the Course Response Essay (due December 12 in section J2 and December 6 in section C3A).

Due dates:

There are ten (10) online discussions led by the professor. You'll be participating in these class discussions with not only students from your section of Mu 101, but also students from another section of Mu 101. Every online discussion begins on a Tuesday at 12:01am and is open for comments until the following Monday at 11:59pm. You may participate at any point during the comment period, but students in past semesters who've had the most meaningful experience have participated at several points throughout the week

Music and the brain	August 29-September 4
How is music learned?	September 5-11
Music and religion	September 12-18
Music and war	September 19-25
Music and disability	September 26-October 2
Music and gender	October 3-9
Ludwig van Beethoven	October 10-17
[No discussion – Course Intro Essay online project]	October 17-23
Musicking	October 24-30
The economics of music making	October 31-November 6
Music, cultural identity, and authenticity	November 7-13

After these ten (10) online discussions have ended, the course will switch to student-led blog posts, meaning discussions curated by you! We'll discuss the details of this online component later in the term, but your experience with the instructor-led discussions will familiarize you with the process, the forum, and general expectations.

Creating a WordPress account:

Following the first class meeting, you'll receive an invitation to become a "follower" of the class website (www.drjonesmusic.me) from WordPress. Accept this invitation and create a WordPress account (if you don't have one already). Remember your email/username and password for logging in.

Send me your username so that I know who you are online (music.drjones@gmail.com)—do not hit "reply" to the invitation email (it's a do-not-reply email and I won't receive it)!

In the past, some students have found it helpful to download the WordPress app to their smartphones or tablets so they can participate in the blog without being at a computer.

How to comment on online discussions:

Instructor-led online discussions are located at www.drjonesmusic.me. Make sure you're signed into WordPress using the username and password you created, and make sure you've emailed me your username (music.drjones@gmail.com)—I cannot give you credit if you have not told me who you are online!

Read the blog post and any comments that have been made on it so far. You can leave a comment by typing in the comment box at the bottom of the page marked "Leave a Reply." You can "reply" to other students' comments by clicking "reply" next to their comment or using @ + username to specifically respond to another student, just as you would on other social media platforms.

Grading:

You must comment on each online discussion at least three separate times while the discussion is available—the goal is to keep the conversation going, to keep it lively, and to enjoy the (surprising) contributions your colleagues make to the discussion. You must add at least one of each kind of required comment in order to earn full participation credit:

1. Respond to the blog post. Comment on it, respond to its questions, take issue with a claim that it makes, or add your thoughts to the conversation. If you're reminded of another article/book/blog you've read or another piece of music you've heard, you can also include a link to it, but the link by itself won't count as a comment without, well, any contextual *commentary* from you.
2. Ask a question. This may be a question in response to the blog post itself or a colleague's comment.
3. Respond directly to a classmate's comment or question.

It is possible to earn extra credit for your blog post participation grade (i.e., a grade higher than 100 for a given blog post) by contributing significantly to the conversation in terms of insightfulness, by adding additional links or information, or by being particularly engaging

conversationalist. Quantity is not the same as quality. You'll know you've earned extra credit if I "like" your comment.

Late comments (i.e., after the comment period has ended on Monday at 11:59pm) will not be accepted. If you post comments during the comment period but do not email me your username, your comments will not be graded.

I will drop the two (2) lowest grades for this portion of the course. If you participate fully in all ten (10) online discussions, you will earn an extra 10 points on your average for this portion of the course.

Below is the rubric I'll be using to grade your comments, and each component is weighted equally. You'll receive a graded rubric and comments from me soon after most online discussions have ended. Use these comments to guide your progress in developing your skills of close reading, effective discussion-making, and clarifying your ideas—these lay the groundwork of good writing skills!

Grading notes:

- Each component is worth 33% of the week's online grade. For example, if you post a comment and a response but not a question, your grade for the week will be 66.
- You must post at least 3 separate comments. If you only post one large comment that responds to another classmate and poses a question, your grade for the week will be 33.
- The total possible grade each week is 115.

	Extra credit	Yes	No
Comment You contribute to the online discussion by commenting on the blog post, responding to its questions, taking issue with a claim that it makes, or adding your thoughts to the conversation. A strong comment includes a link to another article/book/blog (with contextual commentary from you) that adds new depth to the conversation.			
Question You ask a question of the person who posted the blog or of another student			
Respond You respond directly to another student's comment or question and add to the conversation by commenting on their comment, responding to their question, taking issue with a claim they make, or adding your new ideas. A strong response includes a link to another article/book/blog (with contextual commentary from you) that adds new depth to the conversation.			