Grading criteria for online discussion

From a [CTL Lunch & Share on April 7](#) with Angela Buchanan, CU writing instructor
*Angela has been teaching fully-online courses since 2005, and teaches a mix of face-to-face, hybrid, and fully online courses.*

Grading on discussion boards: does one grade for completion, or for content?

- In designed-to-be-online courses, Angela grades for both completion and content
- She makes a grading distinction between the basic requirements, and going above and beyond.
  - Going above and beyond can look like students adding an outside reading or reflection, initiating a new discussion, adding an extra element…
    - How this looks depends on the personality of the class – some classes are dynamic and engaging, others take more effort to prompt. Just like face to face!
  - Angela finds that discussions that really take off for students come from those “above and beyond” contributions, not the minimum requirements
  - Minimum effort is not the A!

Grading criteria for online discussion

"A" grades for this component of the course represent excellent contributions, meaning going beyond the minimum requirements and posting thoughtful responses and/or related, external links.

"B" grades represent good, thoughtful contributions, as well as meeting all of the minimum requirements for posting.

“C” grades represent meeting most of the minimum requirements for posting, with one or two missed or late posts, and/or with relatively brief and/or generic comments.

“D” and “F” grades represent a number of missed and/or late posts.

Grading criteria for peer review online

“A” range peer feedback involves thoughtful, detailed suggestions for revisions, including but not limited to suggestions for research and content development, suggestions for improving
rhetorical appeals, specific sentence-level suggestions, issues with the audience/intro/conclusion, etc. This level of feedback also involves doing all of the peer responses required, or more, and posting everything on time.

“B” range peer feedback involves some thoughtful commentary on a few of these issues, and moves beyond sentence-level suggestions. This level of feedback also involves doing all of the peer responses required, and posting according to deadline.

“C” range peer feedback provides general comments about content and/or sentence-level issues and posts all of the required responses according to deadline. If your comments are typically brief and generic, you will fall into this grade range.

“D” and “F” range peer responses involve missed or late deadlines for peer responses, and minimal, generic feedback. I provide overall class feedback after some of the early posts, and you are welcome to send me email for additional feedback at any point in the class.