

BI 7316 READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND PARTICIPATION INSTRUCTIONS

GRADING

Assessment for this type of assignment is as follows:

- (50%) Questions
- (50%) Discussion
- Lateness: -0–100% according to [this policy](#)

It is not feasible to assign a particular percentage value to the importance of each of the items discussed below under each of these components of the assignment. But the more carefully you observe this advice, the more your questions will become “above average” (and thus “A-” or “B-level”).

QUESTIONS

When crafting a question for discussion, you should particularly ensure that your question:

1. Poses an issue you would genuinely like help understanding better. Posing questions about whose answers you already feel quite certain will make this exercise less profitable.
2. Avoids monologuing. It may be appropriate for you to give some background or discussion to help set up your question. But once you have done any necessary stage-setting, you should come to the point of your question clearly and directly.
3. Shows that you have considered the reading diligently and thoughtfully. Questions in the form “I don’t understand x ” or “What does y mean?” are usually unhelpful unless they include some background that shows why you find yourself uncertain on a given point. This principle especially applies to readings that you may find difficult or challenging.
4. Cites a particular page(s) or section(s) in a particular reading. Vague questions or questions that do not come down to the “brass tacks” of what a particular reading says in a particular place are very difficult to answer helpfully and often unprofitable for the question’s asker.

PARTICIPATION

When participating in the discussion of your or your classmates’ questions, you should particularly ensure that you:

1. Avoid bloviating. You should give reasons for your assertions. But you should do so in a way that directly connects to the topic at hand. The need to discuss what has been read only more cursorily can tend to produce bloviation as a symptom. If such a situation arises, you should resist the urge to try to sidetrack the discussion into an area where you are more comfortable talking.

2. Show that you have considered read diligently and critically. You should be able to indicate where you have agreed or disagreed with a given author, as well as how a given reading has stimulated your own thinking on the topic of the question.
3. Participate creatively. Further discussion of the assigned readings is a time for us all to stimulate each other's reflection on the topic at hand. The goal is not necessarily to reinforce any position argued in any of the readings but to come to a better understanding of what good theological interpretation of Scripture entails.