

## PHI 208 Discussions: Frequently Asked Questions

Are the 4 posts supposed to be 4 original posts, or 1 original post and 3 peer response posts, or something else?

All posts count toward the requirement, and so the way you choose to engage in the discussions is very flexible. Just remember that **the intention of the discussions is to develop your ideas in discussion with your peers and instructor, and to help your classmates develop their ideas.**

Am I required to respond to a certain number of peers?

Generally no, there is no particular response requirement. However, most discussion prompts require you to interact with your peers in a certain way, and so you will want to be sure to take note of that.

Otherwise, whether you respond to peers, and how much you do so, is up to you. I strongly encourage it, but it's not required unless specified by the prompt. You will find that these questions are meant to be pursued in dialogue with others, and these dialogues are what really make these discussions (and indeed this class) interesting and enjoyable.

If I reply to someone else, does that count toward satisfying the requirements? What about if I reply to someone's comments on my own post?

Yes and yes. Any post or reply, **as long as it contributes meaningfully and substantially to the discussion**, counts toward the requirement.

What would not count is an insubstantial reply such as "Thanks for your comments on my post!" or "yes, I do believe that" or "that's a great way of expressing what I was trying to say", or a post that is too far off-topic.

Please note, again, that **posts must be meaningful and substantial to count towards fulfilling the requirement.**

If the prompt has several parts to it, should we try to answer all of the questions or cover all of the points in a single post and spend the rest of the time responding to peers? Or should we

answer different questions given in the prompt in different posts? For instance, do we answer the first part of the prompt in the first post, the second part in the second post, and so forth?

Again, it's up to you how you want to tackle it. Some students might want to write their complete response to the prompt in their initial post, and spend the rest of the time commenting on others' posts, revising or explaining their own view in response to others' posts, and so forth.

Other students might find that they want to take an initial stab at part of the question, and then develop their ideas as they read and think more, read what others have to say, and so on.

Some students prefer to address *all* of the discussion prompt in replies to peers, rather than in original posts.

All of this is acceptable, as long as you meaningfully address the questions in the prompt. Figure out what works for you!

**Is enough to have 4 separate posts, or do I have to post on 3 separate days as well?**

You have to post at least once on **3 separate days**. For example, if Brad posts twice on Thursday and twice on Monday, he has 4 separate posts, but he has only posted on 2 separate days, and so the requirement is not fulfilled. He will lose points.

**Do I have to post 3 days in a row, or can it be more spread out?**

It can be spread out; you do not have to post 3 days in a row. If you start posting on Thursday, you can post Saturday and Monday, Friday and Sunday, or whatever combination works for you.

**Does the 600-word requirement apply to each individual post, or to all the posts combined?**

The 600 word minimum refers to ***all the posts combined***, not each one.

For example, Brad might post a 200 word initial post on Wednesday, on Thursday he responds to Jane's post with about 50 words, on Friday he responds to Sally's post with about 150 words and Jack's comments on his post with about 100 words, continues his

dialogue with Jane with another 50 words, and then on Sunday he follows up on Dr. Thames' response to his initial post, and writes another 150 words.

So Brad has a combined total of about 700 words, and he has posted 6 times on 4 separate days. Thus, he has fulfilled (indeed, he has exceeded) those requirements. (Whether he fulfills the rest of the discussion requirements depends, of course, on what he wrote and how well he wrote it).

I hope this has answered any questions you may have had about the discussions, but if not, don't hesitate to keep asking! If you have a further question, feel free to reply to this announcement or email your instructor.