

TEACHING ELEMENTS DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

VERSION 1.0 | 6/30/14

Description:

The instructor creates a forum in which he/she posts sets of questions that address real or simulated problems, challenges, or issues often found within the discipline and/or related industry.

Purpose:

This activity will encourage students to:

- Apply discipline or industry-specific concepts, resources, and processes in developing solutions.
- Analyze real or simulated problems, challenges, or issues often found within the discipline and/or related industry.
- Assess needs or diagnose issues, and investigate solutions to address them.
- Defend their approach to a problem with supporting evidence or data.

Activity Steps:

1. The instructor sets of a discussion forum in which they post one or more problem scenarios or cases related to the discipline or related industry.
2. Students are divided up into small teams of 3 to 4 individuals and asked to analyze these cases with their respective team members.

3. Each team is given a set of questions that direct them to a) assess the needs or diagnose the issues that are involved in the case; b) suggest a plan of action to address these needs or issues; and c) provide evidence or data that supports their approach.
4. As solutions are posted, each team is asked to then further comment and/or pose questions to the other teams about their assessments and approach.

Tips for This Activity:

- Consider using a few different variations of a case so that teams do not all get the same exact scenario to analyze.
- Set up the 'case analysis' forum with several, restricted group "topic" areas as a place where each team can work on their respective case questions.
- Use a common "final case analysis" topic to which each group posts their final analysis as a separate thread for the entire class to review and comment on. Have each team use a group name as part of their subject heading.
- Use this as an actual graded, group activity. Consider ways you or the students might be able to build onto, link, or apply these case analyses to other components of the course such as additional concepts being taught or other required learning activities such as papers, exams, or projects.