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## Avoiding Death by Discussion Board: Asynchronous Online Chats in Aviation History

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# Avoiding Death by Discussion Board: Asynchronous Online Chats in Aviation History

Dr. Austin T. Walden

# Who are you and why should we listen?

- **PhD in Educational Psychology**
  - MPA in Public Administration / Political Science
  - BA in History
- Taught more than 10 online courses in Psychology and Political Science
  - **Kansas State University**
  - **University of Oklahoma**
  - Texas Tech University
  - Oklahoma State University
  - Tulsa Community College
- Student of over 30 hours of online courses
  - Oklahoma State University
  - Texas State University
  - Sul Ross University
- **I have skin in the game.**

# Brainstorm – In a Group

- Let's list some of the positives from an educator perspective of Discussion Boards:
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5

# Brainstorm – In a Group

- Let's list some of the negatives from an educator perspective of Discussion Boards:
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5

# Brainstorm – In a Group

- Let's list some of the positives from a STUDENT perspective of Discussion Boards:
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5

# Brainstorm – In a Group

- Let's list some of the negatives from a STUDENT perspective of Discussion Boards:
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5

# Dr. Walden's Opinions on Discussion Boards

- When Online Distance Education first evolved, discussion boards were quickly adopted from the massive Bulletin Board systems of the early 2000s.
- The idea was to replicate a community of learners like early website had their own communities
  - Book Review Forums
  - Knitting Forums
  - Academic Forums / Political Science / Psychology / Music



# Original Bulletin Board Communities

VINTAGE

Deadwood TV Movie in 2019 - The Upside of this Bizzarro Reality

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last

LAW

Brooklyn 99 S5 - Noone & Everyone is the Amazing Human/Genius this year

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last

SCI-FI

Star Trek: He puts the beige in Bajor

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last

DISCUSSION

It's Morphin' Time! The Super Sentai & Power Rangers Megathread

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last

VINTAGE

The Wire: The Rewatch... and all the pieces matter.

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last



Star Trek Discovery: Freaky Friday with Phasers

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last



Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. S5 - "How are we still getting renewed?" x2

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last

Comedy

It's Always Sunny Current Season: This Show Has Been All Downhill Since Last Season

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... Last

# A "Thread"

- <https://forums.somethingawful.com/showthread.php?threadid=3458502>

# Hallmarks of Academic Discussion Boards

## ○ "THE POST"

- Typically: Reply to the prompt provided by the instructor

- Sometimes: Come up with your own question and seek to answer it

# Hallmarks of Academic Discussion Boards

## ○ "THE REPLY"

- Typically: Reply to another student – Any student pick a student!
- Sometimes: Make sure your post specifically agrees or disagrees

# Hallmarks of Academic Discussion Boards

- "THE REPLY of the Reply?"
  - Typically: Reply to a reply of another student
  - Sometimes: Make sure your post specifically agrees or disagrees

# The Realities of Discussion Boards

- Unfortunately, these forced classroom discussion boards don't do the thing we want them to do.

- Real “impromptu” discussion boards center on the idea that there is a topic compelling enough for people to come back to the topic.
  - Perhaps the latest version of Star Trek: Picard
- These discussion boards that continue to exist have users that have stayed on the boards for years. Building reputation and expertise.
- That’s hard to do in a 16 week class. (or 8).

# Why? It's hard to build relationships with someone over 16 weeks in an online class.

1. If it's a 16 week class, and a student posts once a week. How many times are they actually engaging with or remembering the content that has been generated?
2. Do you think the students remember the names of others in the class?
3. Do you think the students can remember some of the "finer points" of a post someone else made in a discussion board?
4. Do you think the students can even remember their OWN posts from 3 weeks ago?
5. Do you think the student with the original POST is reading the responses?



# Riddle me this:

- Are discussion boards supposed to simulate the real-time discussions you would have in a classroom?
- OR
- Are discussion boards meant to be formal places where serious scholarly work is evaluated?

# What is Chat?

- Chat is a **synchronous messaging system** with messages appearing at the bottom of a window.
- The **length** of each individual message is **relatively small**, possibly as small as an utterance or thought unit, and generally not more than two complete sentences.

# What is Chat?

- The style of conversation is **generally informal**, possibly due to the conversational nature. Messages are not stored, and leave the screen as more messages appear.
- The organization of messages is **based on time of submission**, thus messages appear in a purely chronological order.
- Turn-taking is possible, for a message appears as complete and new, allowing a conversational participant to have clues to when one turn is finished.

- *“The difference between a CHAT discussion and a forum discussion is one of both spontaneity and of collision.*
- *Ideas inside a discussion forum can be lengthy (sometimes are actually required to be), and usually echo a prompt, sticking precisely to the prescribed parameters for a post. “In fact, the representation of CHAT as a line of RESPONSES, one on top of each other, is a misrepresentation. A chat, once written, becomes a node for a web of conversation.”*

<b>Features</b>	<b>Face-to-face</b>	<b>Chat</b>	<b>Electronic Bulletin Boards</b>
<b>Copresence</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Visibility</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Audibility</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Instantaneity</b>	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Evanescence</b>	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Recordlessness</b>	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Simultaneity</b>	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Extemporaneity</b>	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Self-determination</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Self-expression</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

Okay get the point – How do we do this in our classrooms?

○ THANKS FOR ASKING.

# 1. Doodle Poll

- To have a chat, you must first understand that you are going to be setting times for the students to log in. Not everybody can come in at the same time. What to do?
- Use a doodle poll to offer a long list of times that the instructor **WOULD BE WILLING** to host a chat.

What are the options?

Month Week Text

Oct 28 – Nov 3, 2018

	Oct 28 SUN	Oct 29 MON	Oct 30 TUE	Oct 31 WED	Nov 1 THU	Nov 2 FRI	Nov 3 SAT
All-day							
2:00 PM		Busy	✓		Busy		
3:00 PM		✓	Busy	✓		Busy	
4:00 PM		✓	✓				
5:00 PM		Busy		Busy	Busy		

# 1. Doodle Poll

- Of the range of options, instructor picks TWO times that are the most convenient to all students.
- What about the students who can't make it?
  - Often, they can! Also, you give them an alternate assignment of a 2 page paper.




# Setting Up the Chat

- Course Management**
- Control Panel
- Files
- Course Tools**
- Achievements
- Announcements
- Attendance
- Basic LTI tools
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
- Blogs
- Bookshelf

Spring 2020

Course Details Sections **Navigation** Apps Feature Options

Home

Announcements  Drag and drop items to reorder them in the course navigation.

Syllabus

Grades

People

Pages

Quizzes


Modules


K-State Attendance


Top Hat

Teval


Copy Grades to KSIS

Assignments 

Discussions 

Files 

Home	
Announcements	⋮
Syllabus	⋮
Grades	⋮
People	⋮
Pages	⋮
Quizzes	⋮
Modules	⋮
K-State Attendance	⋮
Top Hat	⋮
Teval	⋮
Copy Grades to KSIS	⋮
Chat	⋮



# Course Chat

1 person online ▾



**Austin Walden** 11/12/19 7:55 PM

INSTRUCTOR

7:55 PM Now the US and the USSR had a different in design philosophy

What type of animals did the USA put into space?



11/12/19 7:56 PM

I don't want to spoil anything but the Russian testings.....



11/12/19 7:56 PM

Monkey



11/12/19 7:56 PM

Agreed, the Laika story was sad



11/12/19 7:56 PM

Primates and human like animals.



**Austin Walden** 11/12/19 7:56 PM

INSTRUCTOR

Yup - the USA wanted beings just like "us"

# Course Chat

1 person online ▾



**Austin Walden** 11/12/19 7:41 PM

INSTRUCTOR

And - what was so important about Sputnik to the rural people like those in oklahoma and kansas and etc -?



11/12/19 7:41 PM

lol friends



11/12/19 7:42 PM

it meant that now being this far inland was not a comforting thought because military force could be projected wo



11/12/19 7:42 PM

It was something they could look up and see if the orbit was right.



11/12/19 7:42 PM

The Russians could reach them



11/12/19 7:42 PM

they thought it was a UFO

I was grateful for the online chats and felt as though class participation was enhanced through interacting with each other directly. I greatly dislike online classes with discussion posts, so was hesitant to sign up for this course. However, I was immediately relieved to hear that Dr. Walden found an alternative way to participate. Thank you for creating a fun learning environment and offering a fresh perspective on aviation history.

I was truly skeptical of doing online chats at first, but I realized that the chats were an easy way for me to connect with the material, instead of being stressed out about trying to sound like an expert on a discussion board.

I have **gotten to know my classmates** from this semester far better than I have for any other online class. It turns out that makes it easier for us to have a dialogue on the topics in aviation history!

The course helped in understanding aviation history, I **found the chats to be very helpful.**