

2021

## Discussion Board Facilitation

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# Discussion Board Facilitation

Presented by Emily Faulconer  
Discipline Chair: Physical & Life Sciences

# Agenda

- Purpose
- Setting Clear Expectations
- Ideas for Instructor Engagement & Facilitation



# Discussion boards build class community

Online: primary mode for recording class participation

Blended: popular choice for contact hours



# Setting expectations allows students to take responsibility for their learning

## Discussion Board Engagement Guidelines

- Participation
- Analysis and Interpretation
- Scholarly Dialogue

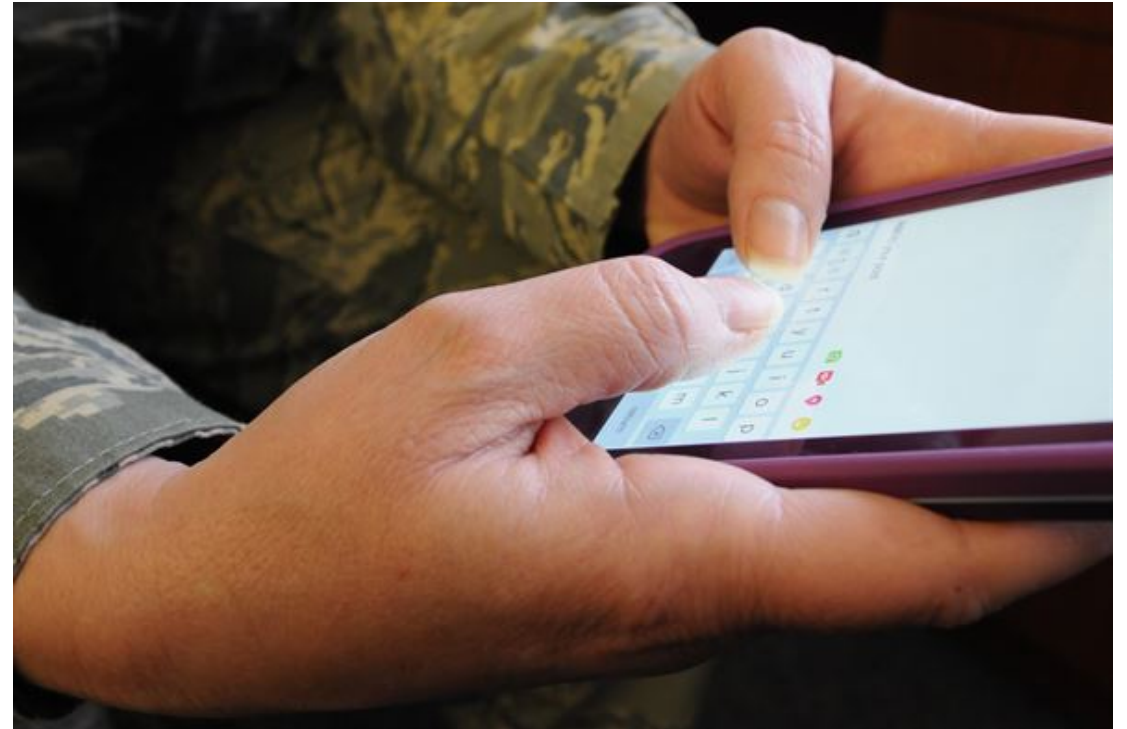
Clear due dates

Detailed rubrics

Gradebook feedback and feedforward

Explain your role and be visible

Model your expectations



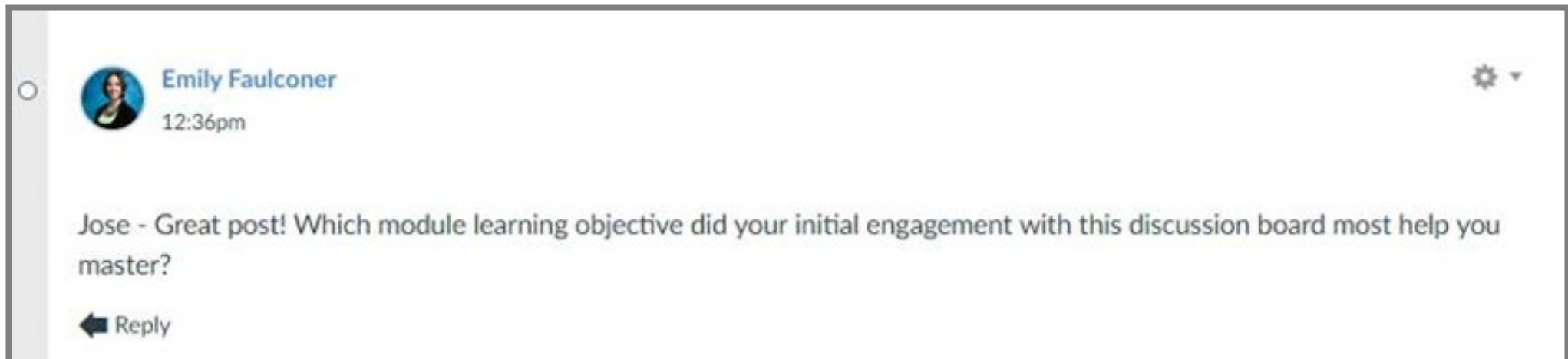
# Idea 1: Encourage metacognition by asking reflective questions

Most useful resource for understanding

A new vocabulary word

More confident with ... because ...

Assess progress towards learning objectives



A screenshot of a discussion board post. The post is from Emily Faulconer, posted at 12:36pm. The text of the post is: "Jose - Great post! Which module learning objective did your initial engagement with this discussion board most help you master?". Below the text is a "Reply" button with a left-pointing arrow icon.

Emily Faulconer  
12:36pm

Jose - Great post! Which module learning objective did your initial engagement with this discussion board most help you master?

Reply

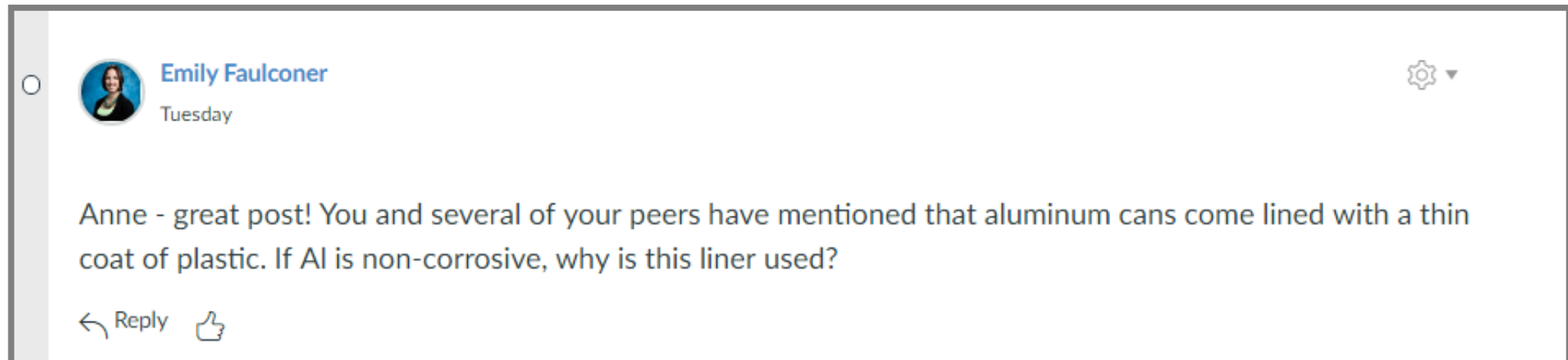
# Idea 2: Probe students' knowledge

Solicit brainstorm

Request summary of ideas presented

KWL

Challenge conclusions or interpretations



A screenshot of a social media comment. On the left, there is a small circular icon. To its right is a circular profile picture of a woman with dark hair, followed by the name "Emily Faulconer" in blue text and "Tuesday" in grey text below it. In the top right corner of the comment box is a gear icon with a downward arrow. The main text of the comment reads: "Anne - great post! You and several of your peers have mentioned that aluminum cans come lined with a thin coat of plastic. If Al is non-corrosive, why is this liner used?". At the bottom left of the comment box, there is a left-pointing arrow icon followed by the word "Reply" and a thumbs-up icon.

# Idea 3: Elicit evaluation and synthesis of information

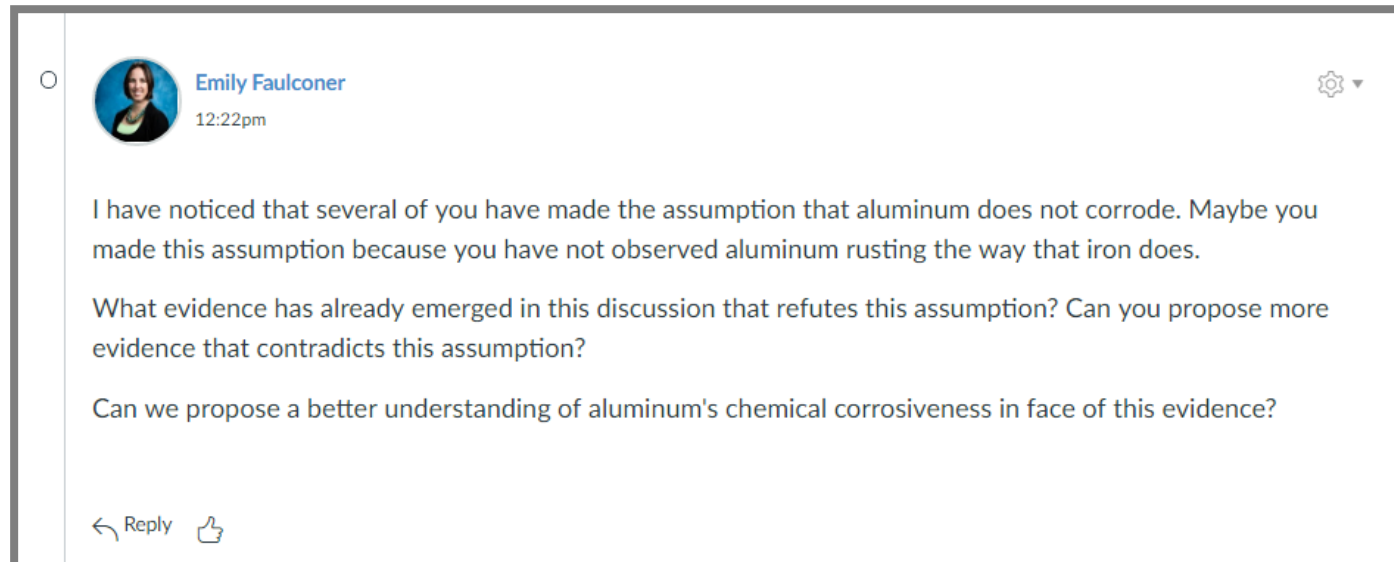
Ask for a comparison of themes or ideas

Hypothesize a relationship between ideas, actions, events

Call for a conclusion or action

Call for consensus


Explore assumptions



A screenshot of a social media post by Emily Faulconer, dated 12:22pm. The post contains three paragraphs of text questioning an assumption about aluminum corrosion. The first paragraph states: "I have noticed that several of you have made the assumption that aluminum does not corrode. Maybe you made this assumption because you have not observed aluminum rusting the way that iron does." The second paragraph asks: "What evidence has already emerged in this discussion that refutes this assumption? Can you propose more evidence that contradicts this assumption?" The third paragraph asks: "Can we propose a better understanding of aluminum's chemical corrosiveness in face of this evidence?" At the bottom left of the post, there is a "Reply" button with a left-pointing arrow and a thumbs-up icon.



# Idea 4: Extend the Discussion


 Emily Faulconer  
Yesterday

One important aspect about chemicals like DDT is that they are known endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). As I mentioned in last week's discussion board, EDCs can have immediate impacts on the exposed organisms, but the effects of exposure can persist through several generations. In some cases, the offspring of the exposed organism suffers the greatest impacts of the exposure.

Fact: DDT is a known EDC

Fact: The government sprayed DDT from trucks

Fact: Humans were exposed ... and due to poorly understood risks, some received very high doses



<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/pesticide-use-thyroid-disease/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2842196/>

Edited by Emily Faulconer on Feb 14 at 8:41am

Probe for additional questions that could be asked?

Pose a hypothetical change in the facts or issues

Draw in external sources

Current Events

# Idea 5: Elicit bridging of information

 Emily Faulconer  
Yesterday

The evocative historic images resonate with modern images like Mad Max:



👍 Reply

To other course content  
To content in other courses  
To professional life  
To personal life

# Idea 6: Have fun!



**Emily Faulconer**

Feb 8, 2017

I thought this might be a fun exercise ... any volunteers to write a haiku about colony collapse disorder?

**Here's mine:**

If bees disappear  
our food crops will go with them  
save pollinators

Not a great one ... but hey, I tried :)

← Reply

Bee there for me, bee  
Without bee there is no me  
I'll bee there for you

My sting you should avoid  
My absence you should as well  
Either could mean death

Do you hear me bee?  
I said we're fine without thee.  
But we'll really never be.

# Wrap Up

- Discussion boards build your class community
- Your engagement serves as a model for students
- Your facilitation can support deeper learning

