





Using WSJ in Online Discussions

Introduction

The unrivaled coverage of The Wall Street Journal is available anytime, anywhere on WSJ.com and WSJ mobile and tablet apps. See how Linda Christiansen, professor of business at Indiana University Southeast, uses the Journal to keep class discussions moving in the digital world.

How to use WSJ's digital resources in class

Professor Christiansen evaluates WSJ articles based on the following criteria:

-  Articles are generally divided into two categories: current events and case studies
-  If an interesting article does not apply to the topic currently being covered in class, it will be saved and assigned at a later date or in later semesters
-  Articles that relate specifically to the interests of the student population (sports, consumer technology, social media, etc.) are taken into special consideration
-  Facts must be explained in enough detail so students do not have to research beyond that particular article

Interesting ways to incorporate WSJ into online and hybrid courses



Depending on the topic and the content of the article, articles can be used in a variety of ways, including in-depth class discussions, case studies for individual or group homework assignments and test questions.

Graduate students are allowed to post articles they find relevant to class on discussion boards and comment on articles of their choosing. Undergraduates are also allowed to choose, but when student participation is low, Professor Christiansen will have to post an article herself to start a threaded discussion. An article must have been published since the date of the last threaded discussion to ensure that it not being used more than once.

For a graduate class group project, students choose a WSJ article to use as the basis for an ethical analysis case study. Each group member does an individual analysis before critiquing each other's work and doing an ethical analysis as a group. Each group posts their case study online for other students to read and give feedback. Most of this is done through threaded discussions.

Face-to-face and hybrid classes begin with a discussion of articles students are assigned to read before class. Students will often have the articles cut out from the paper or printed, along with notes for the discussion.

Students are sometimes assigned to write a short paper asking them to detail situations where they applied what they learned in the Journal in the workplace.

How to incorporate articles in online threaded discussions



Threaded discussions are a good tool to use when there is minimal time for class discussions (hybrid classes) or no face-to-face discussions (online classes). They are the best way to engage, assess and grade students.

Some students post articles and begin the thread and discussion with analysis. Others comment with their opinions. Students are required to start a certain number of threads and comment on a certain number of other threads. Each comment must be substantial in moving the discussion forward in order to be counted as participation. All comments must apply some of the course material to the situation. They are allowed to include outside research to support their arguments.

How to assess students

Students' posts to threaded discussions must move the conversation forward, be on topic and apply to the course material.

Posts are graded on a three-point scale: Fail, Pass or Excellent. Students must meet a minimum number of posts graded as "Pass" for a semester to earn credit for a class. They can earn higher grades or extra credit with posts graded as "Excellent."

Students must be graded on both the quality and quantity of their posts. If students are graded simply on the number of posts they make, they will just go through the motions and post words without any thought or application to the course.

Grades are tracked on a student roster and marked "F," "P" or "E" (Fail, Pass or Excellent) for each post next to a student's name. The marks are tabulated at the end of the semester for a grade.