Sample Online Discussions

First, read the sample Discussion question. Then, read the high-quality and low-quality Discussions in order to compare them. What are the characteristics that make each good or bad?

Sample Discussion Question:

You have taken an exciting step in pursuing your educational goals by choosing Walden University, one of the main universities within the Laureate International University Network. Laureate’s multinational, multicultural, student-centered approach to learning offers you a unique perspective of learning, especially online learning. In this Discussion, you will examine the Laureate International University network, its purpose, and the benefits of being a student within it.

With these thoughts in mind:

Post by Day 3 a brief paragraph summarizing the educational, communication, and career benefits of being a student within the Laureate International University Network.

Be sure to support your ideas by connecting them to the week’s Learning Resources or to something you have read, heard, seen, or experienced.

Read a selection of your colleagues’ postings.

Respond by Day 5 to at least one of your colleagues’ postings in one or more of the following ways:

• Ask a probing question.
• Share an insight from having read your colleagues’ postings.
• Offer and support an opinion.
• Validate an idea with your own experience.
• Make a suggestion.
• Expand on your colleagues’ postings.
High-Quality Discussion Posts

Student 1

As a student at the Laureate International Universities Network, one has the unique opportunity to work with students from not only across the country, but around the world. The Laureate International University Network is comprised of over 55 accredited campus-based and online universities that services more than 600,000 students from 27 countries across North America, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. When I was reading this week’s materials from the Laureate website, I was surprised to find out how large the network was. The opportunity to interact with students who live in different geographical regions is great because people from different cultures or communities will have new perspectives on topics. It is also a great way to gain a different cultural perspective during Discussions.

Laureate also offers a variety of Student Exchange programs. These programs can be short-term travel studies or dual-degree programs, which allow students to experience access to programs that are not typically available in their home country. I think this is a great idea because while studying for a degree, you would be able to take your studies to another country, resulting in a broader understanding of how your degree may function in other parts of the world.

Being a part of an educational institution that offers such a multicultural view will benefit every student by allowing them to see things from another’s perspective.

Student 2

It is comforting to know that Walden has been rated so highly in so many academic areas because many traditional schools that offer online programs rarely have the wide selection that Walden does. Online programs give students the opportunity to interact with students from other areas and backgrounds as well as the flexibility to attend class without the rigid timeframe of traditional classes. Asking about the quality of online instruction is a very relevant question that should be considered by all students seeking an education in this format. You need to be comfortable with the quality of your education. I do not know of any study that shows that one delivery system is superior to the other. It is, however, clear that for many types of courses, there is at least an equivalency.

First, a compilation of 10 years of studies on the two delivery systems comes to the conclusion that one system is not superior to the other. They note that differences in the learning style of the students exist but that students taking courses do equally well in both formats (Tallent-Runnells et al., 2006).

Secondly, I think the largest endorsement of the quality of online courses is that nearly every college and university in the country offers online courses. Many of these are graduate programs in which you can take the entire degree online. This is
a growing activity that many recognize as the wave of the future. All of these are accredited institutions. In Tennessee, you can get an entire undergraduate degree online offered by picking and choosing courses from the various state-supported schools (ROCC, 2011). When done well, online education opens the door for many people who otherwise would not have the opportunity to get an education. My third point is that I have taught many students in both forms and find that good students are good students. The truth is, in both on-the-ground classes and face-to-face classes, you learn because you put in the time to acquire the knowledge. The work you put in determines the level of learning that you achieve.

Online learning is at least the equivalent of on-the-ground learning, and in some cases it is superior. As always, what you get out of it is determined by what you put into it. This is true in either delivery system.


Student 3

The Laureate International Universities Network provides the opportunity for working adult students to not only continue their education by offering multi-year undergraduate, master’s, and doctorate degree programs but to communicate with other career-focused individuals across the globe. By offering online universities throughout various institutions across the globe, students can truly have a multicultural experience. I was actually surprised to see the many institutions from Latin America as well as those in Europe and Asia. What impressed me the most was discovering that Canter, one of the most highly recognized institutions in education, was also a part of the Laureate International University Network. The ability to communicate and network with other individuals who strive to achieve the same goals in both their professional and personal lives is quite an opportunity. Many of us at Walden are working adult students who work full-time positions and can benefit by sharing ideas and experiences in our courses at Walden or professional experiences with other students. The ability to network with fellow peers from other states and countries is not only a multicultural experience but an opportunity of communication that could not be achieved anywhere else.

One of the beauties of online education is that everyone participates. When a question is asked in a face-to-face classroom, one or a few people respond before moving forward. Others may respond in their heads, but there is little dialogue. In an online world, everyone responds in the Discussion Boards. This allows people to
learn from one another and to test out their thinking with fellow learners while being guided by an expert in the field.

High-Quality Response to Classmates

Student 1

I, too, was surprised to see that former President Bill Clinton was an honorary chancellor at Walden University. Having such influential people as part of the Walden family allows students incredible insight into the worlds of politics and business. Like you, Carol, I had not previously heard of Walden University. I was surprised to find out how broad their network really is. I think the advantage Walden has over traditional schools, probably much like your University of Maryland, lies in the fact that they are very experienced in online learning. Many traditional schools have very undeveloped and limited online degree programs, and oftentimes you may have to attend a few classes on campus. Walden gives students the opportunity to complete their education through all online courses, which makes it much easier for students. I think you are setting a great example for your children by going back to school. My mother went back for her degree in education while I was in high school. Her dedication and commitment to go back to school has always been inspiring to me. Good luck to you at Walden!

Student 2

You brought up a great deal of very interesting facts about Laureate International Universities. Laureate International Universities offers such an impressive and unique environment for learning and achieving higher academic excellence. I was struck by how widespread LIU is, as many universities proclaim “international status” but few deliver. The broad spectrum of available learning covering the globe is exciting and inspiring, as it allows many different people to obtain degrees that otherwise may not be possible. LIU focuses on teaching and training students that are focused on propelling societal change, leading to prosperity economically and academically. Browsing the website, my focus was largely on the health sciences, as I am a registered nurse with the goal of obtaining my doctorate. The ability to learn online fosters self-motivation, time management skills, and the opportunity to learn from others in a peer group. I am honored to be a part of such a prestigious group of students and instructors within the LIU family.

Student 3

Thank you for the great post; I learned a lot from your research. In addition to your valuable ideas and while reviewing the information regarding the Laureate International University Network, I was struck by how the diversity did not surprise me when I consider the online world. I think what is amazing is that with all the different languages involved, we are still able to communicate smoothly and to share knowledge. Sharing information with others can always lead to broader and deeper
understanding of not just the world around us, but also the world within ourselves. The more I learn about myself and about how and why I respond, and so forth, the more I can see the similarities in others and, if I let it, that awareness will draw me closer to them.

Some of the ideas that caught my eye were under "What We Believe." The statements listed—valuing people, obtaining viable careers, having positive societal impact, having accountability, and supporting student’s learning—lead me to believe that not only is this a diverse, global community but also one with strong ethics and beliefs. Those standards are desirable in all walks of life. As such, I am pleased to be affiliated with the Laureate International University Network via Walden University.

**Poor-Quality Discussion Posts**

**Student 1**

Being apart of laucrete has bettered my life because i now have a new job and i help support my family.Now thanks to laucrete I have enough courage to learn a new language.I am now hoping for a trip to a new country with my family

**Student 2**

As a returning college student, I understand the benefits of having a college degree. Education is the foundation to having a better life.

**Student 3**

Laureate International University Network offers a wide range of opportunities with 130 career focus programs. The network encourages learning without boundaries.

**Poor-Quality Responses to Classmates**

**Student 1**

I AGREE GOING BACK TO SCHOOL BENEFITS ME A BETTER AND MORE ROUNDED FOR ME AND MY FAMILY. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT GOING TO WALDEN WHICH IS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY WILL BROADEN THE PEOPLE AND CULTURES I WILL BE EXPOSED TO.

**Student 2**

I agree with most of what you said and am hoping to have a positive experience here at Walden also So, I wish you luck while here at Walden and in life
Student 3

Im an transfer student. I found out the school i was attending were not accredited school. So that mean i had to start over. I am glad i was only in my first year.