

## Discussion Questions (for every chapter)

One assessment that my class enjoys the most based on mid-semester feedback are the weekly Discussion Questions. The purpose of the discussion questions is to generate worthy topics of discussion based on students' interests. Instead of having them summarize the chapter or complete some boring worksheet, I really want my students to critically think about the material. In this way, they provide the learning for each discussion, which is once a week and I lecture the other day. If they complain about the questions, the onus is on them to produce better questions. I always give feedback so they know what to improve on instead of asking questions that can be found in the textbook. At times, I will mix it up and use their questions to hold various partner, small group, and class activities. Within the discussion and activities, I want them to state their opinion(s), but also utilize the class material from the lectures or the textbook.

For every chapter, each student needs to post three substantive, open-ended discussion questions onto Canvas. One of the questions has to relate to a previous chapter(s). This part is key because it connects their learning as multi-dimensional. More importantly, I view this assessment as equitable since it fosters a chance for all students to have their question(s) used for discussion and that support mechanisms are in place to achieve equitable outcomes. Lastly, many students from what I have seen view it as a source of empowerment since once they see their question used for discussion, then they are more likely to produce similar or better questions. I believe it is a great tool to use for more "quiet" or "struggling" students since they feel like they are doing something right when their question(s) is used for discussion.

Here are some examples of substantive, open-ended discussion questions I am looking for:

1. Do the powers bestowed upon a nation-state over time give rise to its legitimacy by usurping its powers when involving human rights or civil rights?
2. The hallmarks of sovereignty and death relay the natural tendencies of human finitude, but to what extent do other forms of power give credence to a sense of being?
3. When military power surpasses the need for a nation-state to begin valuing moral values, how will a restless society be able to then assert its identity?

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Since these questions take some thought, I give my students three “freebies” out of 14 chapters, so by the end, I only need 11 sets of questions from them. I do not want them to rush it, but I expect their best when they submit it.