

Using Moodle Forums to Promote Asynchronous Communication — Establishing a Blended Learning Environment —

David R. Bogdan

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1. INTRODUCTION

The following is a report and analysis of the author's (hereafter, DRB) effort to introduce Moodle forums into a course as a means to encourage out-of-class participation in the form of discussion among the students and between the students and the instructor.

a. The Class

In Bogdan (2010) DRB discusses the integration of Moodle activities into a number of his courses in the 2009 academic year as an attempt to produce a "blended" learning environment. One of the courses discussed was called *Eibei Jijou*, "Current Affairs in the English-speaking World". As a next step, in a move away from a simple transmission and delivery context, DRB decided to make use of forum activities to encourage more student participation and interaction in this course. The course was held in the Fall Semester of the 2010 academic year.

First of all, it should be noted that the course name is a bit misleading. Rather than "current affairs" in the English-speaking world, the course focuses attention on comparing the cultures of Japanese and English-speakers. Also, perhaps unfortunately, the instructor's own background led to North American culture acting as the main representative of the English-speaking world. In any case, for the 2012 academic year, the name will to be changed to *Eibei HikakuBunka Ron*, which translates to something along the lines of "Comparing Japanese and English-speaking Cultures", to more accurately reflect the actual content of the

course.

The textbook used was Nishida and Gudykunst's (1982) *American communication patterns*, which presents cultural comparisons very well, but, as can be seen by the date, is quite dated. (It does, however, make a fine way to compare the Japan of around 20 years ago—approximately when nearly everyone in the class was born—and the one that the students know today.) A different, more recent, text has been chosen for the next iteration of the class.

A major portion of the course revolves around the textbook; each week students typically take a quiz, discuss content, and complete language activities based on a two-chapter set. Normally, this part of the course occupies 9 to 11 weeks of the 15-week semester. (It should be noted, that as a typical Japanese university course, the class meets once a week for the 15 weeks.) For this particular term, 18 (nine couplets) were covered during nine class meetings. The remainder of the class meetings had previously been devoted to introducing the course and laying down guidelines, student presentations, testing, reports, etc.

In this iteration of the course, however, Moodle forums were introduced to provide an environment in which the students (and the instructor) could discuss the content of the text prior to each quiz. Each week, the students were to participate in two forums, one for each chapter to be tested during the following class period. The one exception was for the week of 11/17, in which the discussion of the two chapters was combined into one forum due to the similarity and

connectedness of the content.

The instructor opened up each forum with situations and questions, either specific or about the chapter in general, which the students could respond to. The students were supposed to make at least one post up until the day before the quiz and "encouraged" to post early and to answer and comment on each other's posts as much as possible. They had, therefore, six days in which to participate in the two-forum sets.

While the course is open to all students in the Faculty of Education, primarily second-term sophomores majoring in Education for International Understanding (EIU) or English Teachers' Education take it, along with a smattering of students from other majors in the Faculty. For the term discussed in this report, 31 students initially registered for the course, and 30 completed it.

b. Philosophical Considerations Related to Forum Use

According to the documentation on the official Moodle webpages (MoodleDocs1, MoodleDocs2), the Moodle philosophy places emphasis on an environment where all participants act as potential teachers as well as learners; in other words, it encourages a collaborative environment guided by a "social constructionist pedagogy". In a broad sense, constructivism implies that people are actively constructing new knowledge as they interact with their environment, and, in a more narrow sense, social constructivism extends constructivism into social contexts, with groups constructing knowledge for one another in a highly collaborative manner.

A typical Moodle course allows collaborative activities such as chats, wikis, and forums. Chats require everyone to be logged in at the same time to be able to communicate with each other. With respect to the inherent synchronicity, they differ from an in-class discussion only in the fact that the participants do not have to be in the same room. A video chat using

something like Skype accomplishes a similar function, though through a different medium.

Wikis and forums, on the other hand, being asynchronous communication activities, allow both physical and temporal displacement. Participants can contribute when and where they want, within a certain timeframe, of course.

Wikis provide a venue for collaborative projects which members can expand upon and edit. By nature they must be asynchronous; only one person at a time can edit a wiki, and, if someone is editing, the other people must wait until that person has relinquished control.

Forums are also primarily asynchronous, but they allow more latitude with respect to editing in comparison to wikis; multiple students can post simultaneously. The next section discusses forums and the different types more thoroughly.

c. Forum Use in the Course

The *Casper College Webpage on Forum Use* provides a easy-to-understand description of the types of forum activities Moodle provides for, and we give a brief rundown here:

A Moodle forum, an asynchronous communication activity, may be used for setting up group activity exchanges or a focused class discussion to discuss various topics.

In addition to the news forum, which is a one-sided venue in which the instructor normally makes announcements for the class as a whole, there are four types of forums.

The standard forum for general use is mainly intended for large discussions that the instructor leads or social forums that students themselves can lead. This type does not limit either the number of threads or the number of responses in each thread. It can get quite long, involving different threads and discussions. The moderator/facilitator is often responsible for making overall remarks on or questions about

particular topics to keep the discussion(s) focussed.

The second forum type, a single simple discussion forum, is a short, time-limited discussion which keeps the students focussed on a single topic.

As a happy medium between a large, somewhat free-for-all discussion and a shorter, focussed one, an instructor can go with the third type of forum, the descriptively named "Each person posts one discussion" type. The student sticks to one topic on their own, but can also participate in the other threads.

The final type, the so-called Question and Answer (Q & A) format, forces a bit of equality among the posters. Students can not see what others have posted until they have made one post of their own, thus encouraging some originality. After the initial post, they are free to view and respond to other posts.

For this class, DRB continued using the news forum to make general announcements and, in addition, added two more types: the standard format for the weekly discussions about the text, and the Q&A format for discussions about the two movies seen in class. Due to time limitations, this paper leaves analysis of the Q&A type for a future date and concentrates solely on the weekly discussion forum.

2. INSTRUCTOR'S OBSERVATIONS AND IMPRESSIONS

a. General Participation

As noted above, the students participated in 17 forums over a nine-week period. Appendix 1 presents all the postings, with indenting to illustrate the level of interplay, and we will refer to it from time to time.

Table 1 condenses things a bit, showing the titles and dates of the 19 forums are listed in chronological order, along with the numbers of postings for each forum by the students as a group and by the instructor. Remember that the forum ending on 11-17 actually combined two chapters in one forum, while the others occurred in weekly pairs.

Table 1: Participation per Forum

Discussion Topic	Student Replies	DRB Replies	Total Replies
10-27 Gift-giving	27	7	34
10-27 Greetings	24	10	34
11-10 Guests and Hosts	29	3	32
11-10 Eating and Drinking	27	5	32
11-17 Names and what to call people (Combined)	38	7	45
11-24 Japanese Smiles	25	7	32
11-24 Silence	26	5	31
12-1 Content or human relationships.	19	0	19
12-1 American Smiles	19	0	19
12-8 Drinking Places	30	13	43
12-8 Afterwork activities?	30	9	39
12-15 Internationalism	23	4	27
12-15 Ladies First?	24	3	27
1-12 Guests	22	3	25
1-12 Wedding Ceremonies	21	2	23
1-26 Time	27	4	31
1-26 Involuntary Touching	28	0	28
Totals	186	82	521

At this point, we can make some very general, non-statistical, observations from the numbers in the table. Notice that, although the ratios vary from forum to forum, the instructor made 82, or approximately one-sixth, of the total 521 postings. And, of the three forums where the instructor made no postings, two of them, both ending on 12/1, had the lowest number of total postings.

In general, leaving the students to discuss the original questions on their own seemed to elicit less participation than when the instructor actively participated as facilitator/moderator. The participation for the 1/26 forum on Involuntary Touching was not bad, considering that only the students took part. However, the slightly elevated participation levels for the final two forums (on 1/26) may have resulted more from DRB having warned the students that week that participation in the forums constituted a significant portion of the total grade, and that some of students' participation to date had not been up-to-snuff. Not the

most altruistic of motives, but one that works. Note that chapter content may have also played some role here.

b. Individual Student Participation

Table 2 below shows the number of postings each participant, including the instructor made, sorted according to the number of postings. The S## numbers are used to keep the identity of the students hidden; they are based on when a particular student made their first post rather than the order in the roll-book.

Table 2: Individual Postings

DRB	82	S24	18	S19	13
S23	28	S25	18	S27	13
S02	23	S14	17	S05	12
S06	20	S17	17	S10	12
S13	19	S20	17	S15	12
S16	19	S01	16	S21	11
S08	18	S03	16	S28	10
S09	18	S11	16	S22	8
S12	18	S07	15	S26	2
S18	18	S04	13	S29	2

As can be seen in the table, the instructor made the most postings by far and away. There was a lot of discrepancy in frequency of postings among the students (a concern found in the student comments in Appendix 2; see Comment #2). The average was about 15 total postings, which leaves much to be desired, considering that there were 17 forums in all. Also, one student neglected to post even once. However, certain students did post much more frequently with others, and, as discussed below, interacted with both the instructor and their fellow students.

c. Interaction

Table 3 is based on the data given in Appendix 1 and attempts to show at what level in a "conversation" the students as whole and the instructor posted.

The appendix itself lists all the postings made in chronological order for the 17 forums. The times and dates of the posts are given, and the indenting gives a guide to who is responding to whom. The more the indentation, the more removed the post is from the original post, providing a very basic indication of the amount of actual interaction as opposed to pro forma response.

Table 3: Layers of Interaction

	Student	Instructor
Level 1	321	11
Level 2	67	51
Level 3	34	10
Level 4	7	9
Level 5	6	1
Level 6	2	0
Level 7	1	0
Level 8	1	0
Totals	439	82

For example, if we look at 156-163:

- 156. **DRB** 11/15-17:33
- 157. S23 11/16-21:21
- 158. S18 11/16-22:28
- 159. S23 11/16-23:03
- 160. S12 11/16-22:59
- 161. S28 11/17-00:20
- 162. S15 11/17-00:51
- 163. S11 11/17-02:40

from Appendix 1, we can see different levels of indentation for the postings. In 156, the instructor has made a follow-up (but not in response to anyone else's, just his own or in general) posting partway through the forum. Students S23, S12, S28, S15, and S11 all respond to DRB's post in 157 and 160-165. In addition, S18 and S23 interact with each other in posts 157-159, with S18 responding to S23's response to DRB's post, and S23 reacting, in turn, to S18's question/comment.

It gets complicated, but that's the way conversation often works.

Let's look at another example of nested posting (i.e., interaction):

191. S25 11/22-16:14
 192. S05 11/23-11:00
 193. S12 11/23-23:52
 194. S15 11/24-12:28

As you can see, four different students are involved in this interplay, while the instructor plays no part at all.

Appendix 1 contains a lot of data, but, as an instructor/moderator, what you want to see is a lot of nesting like this; the more complicated, the better. What you do not want to see is pro forma responses such as seen at the tail-end of the first two forums (21-34 and 51-68), where a bunch of students make last-minute (and sometimes even late) postings. Such a pattern, unfortunately, often occurs with some students, and such posts give no chance for anyone to respond to them. This concern was also alluded to by one of the students in the comments seen in Appendix 2 (see Comment #6).

3. STUDENT REACTIONS

a. Course Evaluation Ratings

The students were asked to fill out a Moodle questionnaire about the course during the last week of the term. The questionnaire consisted of 14 5-point Likert-scale rating questions, followed by several open-ended items asking for comments. Table 4 shows the results of the Likert ratings:

Table 4: Likert Ratings for the Course

1 I enjoyed the course.	4.6
2 I found the course to be useful.	4.4
3 The textbook was useful.	3.83
4 Using Moodle helped me in this class.	3.93
5 The Moodle forums in general were useful and helpful.	3.97
6 The movies were educational and helpful.	4.27
7 Discussing the movies on the Moodle forums was useful.	4.03
8 The two in-class discussions were helpful.	4.2
9 The weekly quizzes were helpful in learning the subject matter.	4.27
10 Correcting the quizzes in class was useful.	3.7
11 Doing the crosswords was useful.	3.93
12 Doing the crosswords was enjoyable.	4.53
13 Writing the final report was educational.	4.17
14 How would you rate the amount of work you put into the course?	3.43
Average	4.09

At ratings of 4.6 and 4.4 for Items 1 and 2, respectively, it would seem that the students found the course both enjoyable and useful. The textbook, as mentioned before, was well-written but quite outdated, and this is reflected in the low student ratings. The student ratings in 4 and 5, about Moodle and the general forums, respectively, were nothing spectacular. They were a bit below the average of 4.09, but fortunately not too much lower, and the course as a whole had been rated reasonably high.

The comments from the open-ended item about Moodle, seen in Appendix 2 and discussed in the section below, give better insight into how the students felt about the general forum activity. We will discuss them now.

b. Course Evaluation Comments

All 30 of the students responded to the open-ended item asking for comments about Moodle (even though one of the students never posted to the general forums). The comments also relate to the discussion

forums the students participated in in advance of the two movies they saw, but they mainly apply to discussion forums as a whole.

All of the comments are seen in Appendix 2, with DRB having loosely translated those that were given in Japanese. The ones that were made in English were left as is, as indicated by the *[sic]*.

The comments were generally positive, reflecting the relatively positive rating on the Likert questions. As a rule, the respondents indicated that they appreciated the chance to interact outside the classroom with other students and with the instructor. The last part of Comment #11, in which the student expressed their appreciation of the instructor's direct participation, was especially gratifying to DRB.

The comments made by the students included concerns such as having to deal with the hassle of logging on, difficulties in expressing oneself in English, and as mentioned earlier, a discrepancy in the participation among the students. Again, a major beef was with the lack of participation and/or the last-minute posting by some class members.

In the comments section, a fair number of the students made constructive suggestions. For example, in #27 and #28, the students suggest changing the period for the discussion, moving both the start time and final deadline forward and extending the time for discussion itself. In #11, the student proposes upping the the required number of posts from each student. These three proposals suggest that the students really want to interact with their peers.

The proposal in #24 of breaking up the students into discussion groups of about four participants each dovetails with advice given by educators (e.g., Correia and Baran: 2010). One concern, however, is that DRB had enough trouble keeping track of the general discussions, and breaking up the discussion into separate groups might spread him thin to the point of invisibility.

The student comment in #26 recommends more

follow-up discussion of the forum in class. DRB originally introduced the forums as a means to encourage interaction but also to prepare the students for the quizzes. The quizzes and other class-time activities leave little time for in-class follow-up discussions. This is unfortunate, and more thought must be given to a syllabus that allows this.

4. TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS AND WISH LIST

Following is a description of some of the pitfalls the instructor ran into in running the forums and in carrying out this analysis.

First of all, it would be nice if Moodle provided a way of anonymizing the participants, not just for the forums and analyses such as this, but for classes in general. It would be helpful if the instructor could create their own individualized participant list for a class, rather than having the user names and student numbers shown to everyone participating. Perhaps there is a way of doing this that DRB is unaware of or perhaps it is merely an artifact of how the university has set up the Moodle installation as a whole.

In addition, more export capability is needed. DRB had to manually insert the indentation for Appendix 1, a very tedious task, and one open to error. Combing the Internet yielded mention of some patches that looked promising, but which would have required administration privileges that are hard to come by at this university. Having a decent export-to-spreadsheet function built in would go along way in making analysis easier and more accurate. In general, DRB has found himself wanting more export capability, not just for forums, but for other activities, too.

Another function that was sorely missed was the ability to alter the format of the times the postings occurred. Being an American, the author prefers the US format for dates, but also, having the month and then the day made it easier to follow the threads, especially when the month changed partway during

the discussion. Also, having the time in a 24-hour format saved space in the appendix. The manual conversion of all the times and dates was, of course, time-consuming and susceptible to human error.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Based on the participation data, the instructor's observations, and the student comments, all in all, introducing the forums added to the course. Unfortunately, it also greatly added to the instructor's workload. With the organization as it is, the instructor acts as the sole moderator/facilitator, and this makes keeping up with the discussions nearly impossible.

Another factor was the course content itself, which involved comparing cultures. In addition to being the instructor and moderator/facilitator for the forums, DRB also had to act as the sole representative of North American (not to mention English-speaking) culture, a heavy burden to bear. The number of posts made by DRB compared to that of the students provides ample evidence for this. In the comments section (Appendix 2), one student notes how useful it would be to have other foreign faculty members or international students taking part in the forum. This would reduce the burden for the instructor, while no doubt providing a more accurate and well-balanced picture of English-speaking culture.

Joanna Dunlap (2007), for example, makes a number of suggestions for reducing the workload of an instructor in an on-line situation. Some of the proposals include: not allowing late work, providing learners with way to review each other's work, allowing learners to engage in a discussion for a short initial period without instructor input, having learners summarize discussions, and limiting the number of discussion questions. The author plans to look into the feasibility of instituting at least some of these suggestions.

The next iteration of this course will see discussion forums continued, but with changes based on proposals

such as these, those made by other instructors and educators, and suggestions made by the students such as those seen in the appendix.

It should be obvious by this point that this analysis is concerned itself with patterns and frequencies only. It does not deal with content in any way (except for the content of the comments). Content is, of course important, and future work will look at factors such as types of opening questions/topics used, length and content of the posts, etc.

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Appendix 1: Forum Postings**10-27 Greetings**

1. S01 10/20-16:42
2. **DRB** 10/22-18:00
3. S02 10/22-14:59
4. **DRB** 10/22-17:57
5. S03 10/24-11:08
6. S04 10/25-11:15
7. S05 10/25-13:21
8. S06 10/26-20:23
9. S07 10/25-13:42
10. **DRB** 10/25-14:47
11. **DRB** 10/25-14:48
12. S08 10/25-13:47
13. S09 10/25-14:05
14. **DRB** 10/25-14:46
15. S02 10/25-16:14
16. **DRB** 10/25-18:38
17. S10 10/25-23:49
18. S10 10/26-16:06
19. **DRB** 10/26-21:15
20. S10 10/26-23:12
21. S11 10/26-20:38
22. S12 10/26-21:15
23. S14 10/26-22:13
24. S15 10/26-22:38
25. S16 10/26-23:21
26. S17 10/26-23:38
27. S18 10/26-23:58
28. S19 10/27-00:41
29. S20 10/27-01:19
30. S21 10/27-08:04
31. S22 10/27-11:03
32. S23 10/27-11:41
33. S24 10/27-11:45
34. S25 10/27-14:43

10-27 Gift-giving

35. S01 10/20-17:06
36. **DRB** 10/20-18:01
37. S08 10/22-08:44
38. **DRB** 10/22-13:12
39. **DRB** 10/22-13:14
40. S02 10/22-14:41
41. **DRB** 10/22-15:36
42. **DRB** 10/22-15:34
43. S03 10/24-10:56
44. S05 10/25-13:53
45. **DRB** 10/25-14:43
46. S07 10/25-14:19
47. **DRB** 10/25-14:44
48. S09 10/25-14:23
49. **DRB** 10/25-14:41
50. **DRB** 10/25-18:55
51. S10 10/26-09:22
52. S10 10/26-15:39
53. S11 10/26-20:22
54. S06 10/26-20:34
55. S12 10/26-21:55
56. S14 10/26-22:46
57. S15 10/26-22:57
58. S17 10/26-23:54
59. S16 10/27-00:05
60. S18 10/27-01:04
61. S19 10/27-01:01
62. S20 10/27-01:30
63. S21 10/27-08:03
64. S22 10/27-11:18
65. S23 10/27-11:52
66. S24 10/27-13:42
67. **DRB** 10/28-10:02
68. S25 10/27-14:38

Appendix 1: Forum Postings

11-10 Eating and Drinking		11-10 Guests and Hosts	
69.	S02 10/28-13:13	101.	S01 10 29/-12:26
70.	S02 10/28-13:23	102.	S02 10/29-16:05
71.	DRB 10/28-14:37	103.	DRB 11/3-17:47
72.	DRB 10/28-14:50	104.	S02 11/5-13:16
73.	S01 29/10-12:20	105.	S23 11/8-15:39
74.	DRB 10/29-16:58	106.	S16 11/9-23:47
75.	S01 2/11-18:45	107.	S26 10/29-19:01
76.	DRB 3/11-17:42	108.	S03 11/6-11:22
77.	S26 10/29-18:46	109.	DRB 10/31-12:43
78.	S08 10/31-10:37	110.	S01 11/2-18:42
79.	DRB 10/31-12:46	111.	S09 11/1-01:01
80.	S09 11/1-12:42	112.	S18 11/2-16:26
81.	S18 11/2-12:05	113.	S27 11/2-16:52
82.	S27 11/2-16:40	114.	DRB 11/3-17:45
83.	S16 11/3-12:09	115.	S12 11/2-20:59
84.	S03 11/6-11:13	116.	S16 11/2-22:51
85.	S23 11/7-18:30	117.	S17 11/7-22:17
86.	S10 11/8-12:22	118.	S10 11/7-23:55
87.	S21 11/9-11:04	119.	S23 11/8-15:28
88.	S22 11/9-12:50	120.	S21 11/9-11:11
89.	S12 11/9-20:46	121.	S22 11/9-11:32
90.	S17 11/9-21:32	122.	S20 11/9-12:39
91.	S14 11/9-23:14	123.	S08 11/9-12:31
92.	S10 11/9-23:19	124.	S06 11/9-12:40
93.	S19 11/9-23:23	125.	S10 11/9-12:47
94.	S06 11/9-23:51	126.	S14 11/9-22:44
95.	S15 11/10-00:21	127.	S19 11/9-23:00
96.	S11 11/10-01:29	128.	S11 11/10-01:17
97.	S07 11/10-10:35	129.	S07 11/10-10:32
98.	S04 11/10-13:14	130.	S04 11/10-13:17
99.	S24 11/10-14:04	131.	S24 11/10-14:03
100.	S25 11/10-14:45	132.	S25 11/10-14:48

Appendix 1: Forum Postings

11-24 Japanese Smiles

- 209. S08 11/18-23:43
- 210. **DRB** 11/19-15:19
- 211. **DRB** 11/21-14:41
- 212. S18 11/24-07:43
- 213. S02 11/19-01:21
- 214. **DRB** 11/21-14:38
- 215. S02 11/21-20:16
- 216. **DRB** 11/21-21:35
- 217. S08 11/20-20:19
- 218. S10 11/21-20:34
- 219. **DRB** 11/21-21:33
- 220. S06 11/21-21:00
- 221. **DRB** 11/21-21:34
- 222. S09 11/22-13:14
- 223. S04 11/22-15:42
- 224. S01 22/11-15:42
- 225. S25 11/22-16:23
- 226. **DRB** 11/22-20:56
- 227. S03 11/23-10:55
- 228. S05 11/23-11:28
- 229. S07 11/23-22:52
- 230. S23 11/23-23:17
- 231. S21 11/23-23:31
- 232. S17 11/23-23:47
- 233. S11 11/23-23:58
- 234. S12 11/24-00:41
- 235. S19 11/24-00:43
- 236. S16 11/24-00:45
- 237. S15 11/24-01:36
- 238. S14 11/24-02:53
- 239. S27 11/24-13:04
- 240. S24 11/24-13:35

12-1 American Smiles

- 241. S02 11/25-15:17
- 242. S23 11/27-18:39
- 243. S03 11/28-20:13
- 244. S06 11/29-13:49
- 245. S04 11/29-15:41
- 246. S01 29/11-21:42
- 247. S25 1/12-03:17
- 248. S16 11/30-11:08
- 249. S17 11/30-11:19
- 250. S10 11/30-14:11
- 251. S08 11/30-14:50
- 252. S12 11/30-21:18
- 253. S21 11/30-21:45
- 254. S05 12/1-01:01
- 255. S06 12/1-01:23
- 256. S11 12/1-02:04
- 257. S18 12/1-06:41
- 258. S14 12/1-07:45
- 259. S24 12/1-14:27

12-1 Content or human relationships

- 260. S02 11/27-15:04
- 261. S23 11/27-18:52
- 262. S03 11/28-20:33
- 263. S06 11/29-13:27
- 264. S04 11/29-15:16
- 265. S01 29/11-21:34
- 266. S17 11/30-11:38
- 267. S10 11/30-14:29
- 268. S08 11/30-15:23
- 269. S21 11/30-22:12
- 270. S19 12/7-21:30
- 271. S12 11/30-22:28
- 272. S05 12/1-01:19
- 273. S25 12/1-03:25
- 274. S11 12/1-01:32
- 275. S16 12/1-05:12
- 276. S18 12/1-07:05
- 277. S14 12/1-08:02
- 278. S24 12/1-14:08

Appendix 1: Forum Postings**12-8 Afterwork activities**

279. S01 12/2-18:58
 280. **DRB** 12/5-16:14
 281. S23 12/4-15:47
 282. **DRB** 12/5-16:25
 283. S02 12/4-21:29
 284. S06 12/5-04:00
 285. S23 12/5-13:52
 286. S23 12/5-13:49
 287. **DRB** 12/5-16:13
 288. S23 12/6-00:26
 289. **DRB** 12/6-02:11
 290. **DRB** 12/5-16:03
 291. S10 12/5-17:16
 292. S03 12/6-11:07
 293. **DRB** 12/7-10:29
 294. S04 12/6-16:43
 295. **DRB** 12/6-17:18
 296. S27 12/7-15:33
 297. **DRB** 12/7-15:46
 298. S08 12/7-15:56
 299. **DRB** 12/7-16:21
 300. S21 12/7-21:21
 301. S19 12/7-22:14
 302. S12 12/7-22:15
 303. S17 12/7-22:57
 304. S05 12/7-23:27
 305. S25 12/8-12:10
 306. S05 12/8-12:44
 307. S11 12/7-23:44
 308. S14 12/8-00:47
 309. S09 12/8-01:01
 310. S10 12/8-02:38
 311. S28 12/8-02:43
 312. S28 12/8-02:44
 313. S20 12/8-03:20
 314. S16 12/8-06:40
 315. S07 12/8-07:24
 316. S18 12/8-11:26
 317. S24 12/8-14:09

12-8 Drinking Places

318. S01 12/2-19:03
 319. **DRB** 12/3-15:49
 320. S01 12/4-10:22
 321. **DRB** 12/4-14:55
 322. S23 12/5-14:25
 323. **DRB** 12/7-14:30
 324. S06 12/4-18:00
 325. **DRB** 12/5-16:08
 326. S02 12/4-21:02
 327. **DRB** 12/5-16:10
 328. S23 12/5-14:40
 329. **DRB** 12/5-16:06
 330. S10 12/5-17:37
 331. S03 12/6-10:52
 332. **DRB** 12/7-15:45
 333. S25 12/6-16:18
 334. **DRB** 12/7-10:28
 335. S04 12/6-16:25
 336. **DRB** 12/7-14:25
 337. S12 12/7-22:49
 338. **DRB** 12/7-22:55
 339. S23 12/8-02:09
 340. S02 12/7-06:28
 341. **DRB** 12/7-10:25
 342. S17 12/7-11:37
 343. **DRB** 12/7-14:29
 344. S22 12/7-13:13
 345. **DRB** 12/7-14:24
 346. S05 12/7-23:37
 347. S27 12/7-15:21
 348. S08 12/7-16:02
 349. S21 12/7-21:09
 350. S19 12/7-21:58
 351. S11 12/7-23:12
 352. S18 12/8-10:58
 353. S09 12/8-00:45
 354. S14 12/8-01:35
 355. S10 12/8-02:25
 356. S20 12/8-02:59
 357. S28 12/8-03:22
 358. S16 12/8-06:19
 359. S07 12/8-07:14
 360. S24 12/8-14:23

Appendix 1: Forum Postings

12-15 Ladies First?

- 361. S02 12/11-12:26
- 362. S03 12/13-13:25
- 363. S09 12/11-23:48
- 364. S23 12/12-10:54
- 365. **DRB** 12/13-17:26
- 366. S10 12/12-18:26
- 367. S06 12/13-02:26
- 368. S20 12/13-02:55
- 369. S01 13/12-15:57
- 370. **DRB** 12/13-17:25
- 371. S04 12/13-16:53
- 372. **DRB** 12/14-12:26
- 373. S25 12/15-02:09
- 374. S08 12/14-12:17
- 375. S10 12/14-14:17
- 376. S27 12/14-15:21
- 377. S12 12/14-20:45
- 378. S07 12/14-21:46
- 379. S11 12/14-22:17
- 380. S16 12/14-22:30
- 381. S17 12/14-23:18
- 382. S28 12/15-12:24
- 383. S15 12/15-02:05
- 384. S18 12/15-10:52
- 385. S29 12/15-13:49
- 386. S24 12/15-13:52
- 387. S14 12/15-22:10

12-15 Internationalism

- 388. S02 12/11-12:54
- 389. **DRB** 12/13-17:32
- 390. S09 12/12-12:07
- 391. S10 12/12-18:02
- 392. S20 12/13-03:40
- 393. **DRB** 12/13-17:37
- 394. S20 12/14-03:36
- 395. **DRB** 12/13-17:35
- 396. S03 12/13-13:32
- 397. **DRB** 12/13-17:33
- 398. S23 12/12-11:20
- 399. S06 12/13-02:51
- 400. S25 12/15-10:08
- 401. S18 12/15-11:21
- 402. S29 12/15-14:04
- 403. S08 12/14-12:24
- 404. S27 12/14-15:30
- 405. S12 12/14-20:04
- 406. S07 12/14-21:43
- 407. S11 12/14-22:29
- 408. S16 12/14-22:49
- 409. S17 12/14-23:27
- 410. S28 12/15-00:43
- 411. S10 12/15-01:49
- 412. S15 12/15-02:37
- 413. S24 12/15-14:06
- 414. S14 12/15-22:59

Appendix 1: Forum Postings

1-12 Wedding Ceremonies

- 415. S02 01/7-00:07
- 416. **DRB** 01/7-07:18
- 417. S28 01/7-19:36
- 418. **DRB** 01/7-20:14
- 419. S03 01/10-23:06
- 420. S14 01/10-18:08
- 421. S07 01/11-10:58
- 422. S08 01/11-11:31
- 423. S27 01/11-15:44
- 424. S04 01/11-21:39
- 425. S12 01/11-22:43
- 426. S09 01/11-23:24
- 427. S17 01/11-23:40
- 428. S11 01/11-23:52
- 429. S06 01/12-01:27
- 430. S20 01/12-01:27
- 431. S23 01/12-01:50
- 432. S10 01/12-01:51
- 433. S25 01/12-03:03
- 434. S16 01/12-09:48
- 435. S18 01/12-13:50
- 436. S24 01/12-13:52
- 437. S19 01/20-20:18

1-12 Guests

- 438. S02 01/7-12:39
- 439. **DRB** 01/7-07:20
- 440. S28 01/7-19:44
- 441. **DRB** 01/7-20:15
- 442. S02 01/9-22:35
- 443. S14 01/10-17:39
- 444. S03 01/10-22:34
- 445. **DRB** 01/11-06:18
- 446. S07 01/11-10:49
- 447. S08 01/11-11:27
- 448. S27 01/11-15:35
- 449. S12 01/11-21:10
- 450. S09 01/11-23:01
- 451. S17 01/11-23:33
- 452. S11 01/12-00:06
- 453. S25 01/12-00:20
- 454. S15 01/12-01:46
- 455. S18 01/12-09:47
- 456. S20 01/12-12:33
- 457. S06 01/12-01:23
- 458. S10 01/12-01:32
- 459. S23 01/12-02:25
- 460. S16 01/12-12:34
- 461. S24 01/12-14:03
- 462. S19 01/20-21:56

Appendix 1: Forum Postings

1-26 involuntary Touching

463. S15 01/22-22:26
 464. S23 01/24-12:07
 465. S09 01/23-14:52
 466. S23 01/24-12:04
 467. S09 01/25-23:42
 468. S06 01/23-15:33
 469. S12 01/25-21:36
 470. S10 01/23-18:44
 471. S23 01/24-12:01
 472. S10 01/25-23:23
 473. S25 01/24-12:42
 474. S02 01/24-09:36
 475. S04 01/24-13:39
 476. S14 01/24-14:21
 477. S03 01/25-10:28
 478. S18 01/25-16:43
 479. S17 01/24-15:52
 480. S07 01/24-17:35
 481. S19 01/24-22:31
 482. S05 01/25-11:34
 483. S22 01/25-22:12
 484. S24 01/25-10:40
 485. S08 01/25-12:54
 486. S20 01/25-23:50
 487. S28 01/26-12:54
 488. S11 01/26-01:12
 489. S16 01/26-09:44
 490. S27 01/26-13:05

1-26 Time

491. S09 01/23-15:00
 492. S06 01/23-15:50
 493. S10 01/23-18:17
 494. S23 01/24-12:35
 495. S05 01/25-13:07
 496. S19 01/23-23:34
 497. S03 01/25-10:15
 498. S25 01/24-12:16
 499. S23 01/24-12:41
 500. **DRB** 01/24-19:21
 501. S18 01/25-16:58
 502. S10 01/25-23:46
 503. S09 01/25-23:50
 504. S02 01/24-09:06
 505. **DRB** 01/24-19:18
 506. S04 01/24-12:58
 507. **DRB** 01/24-19:17
 508. S14 01/24-14:04
 509. S17 01/24-15:42
 510. **DRB** 01/24-19:19
 511. S24 01/25-10:27
 512. S12 01/25-21:59
 513. S07 01/24-17:16
 514. S22 01/25-13:10
 515. S08 01/25-13:07
 516. S20 01/26-12:03
 517. S15 01/26-02:18
 518. S28 01/26-01:16
 519. S11 01/26-01:37
 520. S16 01/26-10:01
 521. S27 01/26-13:13

Appendix 2: Student Comments

1. Forums are an activity which should be continued.
2. Forums were very useful, but there was quite a divide between those who took part and those who didn't.
3. If there were more representatives from American culture participating, more active discussion would be possible.
4. I'm not so good at English, so it would have been easier if I had been able to write in Japanese.
5. It was very useful being able to listen to everyone's opinions and very good being able to ask questions, but I also felt it was also a lot of work.
6. It was quite good being able to listen to the opinions of students not in my group, but only certain students participated regularly and many waited until the last minute to write.
7. it was useful for me, discussion is interesting for me. [sic]
8. The forums were a common ground for exchanging opinions and were very useful. Having others besides the teacher—e. g. international students other foreign faculty—would promote a more active exchange of opinions and better understanding.
9. I think being able to participate in the forums at home as homework was very good.
10. It was good being able to share opinions. They should be continued next year. You learn a lot being able to see other opinions and sharing opinions.
11. The forums were quite effective in that they let us see everyone's opinions, but I felt there might have been more active discussion had the students been required to post twice a week rather than just once. I enjoyed getting direct comments from the teacher.
12. I think they were good because we normally don't have the chance to read something carefully and then give our own opinions.
13. Forums were interesting, but to turn on PC was boring for me. [sic]
14. Nothing special to comment on.
15. Honestly, it's very hard for me to do forums every time. But it's good chance to think about the differences. [sic]
16. I can exchange a lot of ideas easily. That is great useful! I enjoy the class! Thank you [sic]
17. I learned a lot being able to hear various people's opinions.
18. The forums is so great, because I can see what the other persons talk with. [sic]
19. I think the forums are good, but I think it would be good to have an easier way to log in.
20. It's hard for me to post in the forums again and again because I have few time. [sic]
21. I would like to have more chances at discussion within Moodle.
22. Being able to share opinions outside of the classes increases the chances to learn.
23. Moodle allowed use to think more about the subjects, but it was also a bit of a pain to have to turn on the computer and post so often.
24. It was difficult to read everything with everyone posting, so it might be better to form separate discussion groups of four or so people in the forums.
25. The forums give more motivation to be able to figure out at glance which comments to pay more attention to and which to reply to.
26. It was impressive. It will be more interesting if we have a chance to talk about the comments that we have sent in a class, too. [sic]
27. In order to allow more chance to talk about the forum discussions in class, it might be better to extend the time limit for posting.
28. The submission deadline should be moved up a bit, because with it right before the next class meeting, people often wait to the last minute to post, which hard for the teacher to talk about what was discussed.
29. The forums are good chances to understand the difference between Japan and America. And, it was useful for me to find other people's opinions. [sic]
30. It was very useful. It was difficult to translate my opinion to English, but it was good to know other's opinion. [sic]