Discussion Leader Assignment (5% of final grade)

Questions Due: 10 AM on the day of your discussion

You are responsible for conducting a 5-minute class discussion based upon a supplementary or online reading. On or before the day that you are scheduled, you should send me 2 proposed questions via email (jkskaf@ship.edu). I will respond with suggested revisions and incorporate your discussion into the class session.

One question should be factual, asking students to **summarize main point(s)** of the reading. The other should be open-ended, asking students to **share their opinions** about the reading. Here is an example based upon the on-line reading "Culinary Archaeology: Millet noodles in Late Neolithic China":

**Factual question:** Based on this study, what methods do archaeologists use to identify ancient plant foods?

**Open-ended question:** Do you believe that these methods are trustworthy? Why or why not?

Your grade will be based on the effectiveness of your questions and presentation:

- “A” grades will be awarded for well thought out questions that encourage students to summarize major point(s) of a reading and share their opinions.
- “B” grade will be given for clear, well-organized questions that lead students to summarize the reading.
- If your questions are unclear, incoherent, irrelevant or not submitted on time, you will receive a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F,” depending on the extent of the problems.

Some hints on developing good questions (adapted from Dr. Vera Reber):

- **Prepare:** Thoroughly read all assigned material. Review past readings and class notes that may be relevant.
- **Organize** your ideas by noting relevant information and historical controversies discussed in the article.
- **Develop** a factual question that stimulates students to remember main points of the reading. Keep in mind that this is not enough for a good discussion.
- **Devise** an open-ended question that provokes students to think critically about a reading’s main point(s) or argument(s). Good discussions often involve debates and differences of opinion.
- **Be creative:** A stimulating question can be related to a quotation, picture, chart, map, controversial statement, information previously covered in class, or anything else of your choosing.