Discussion Board

The discussion board is a tool for sharing thoughts and ideas about class materials. Course members can replicate the robust discussions that take place in the traditional classroom. An advantage of using the discussion board is its flexibility. Participants do not need to be in the same location or time zone, and can take time to consider their responses carefully.

Adding a Forum

A Forum is simply a single discussion board centered on a specific topic. A thread is a collection of messages replying to a specific topic. It is organized into a hierarchical tree with expandable and collapsible branches.

1. Login to Blackboard
2. Select the Course you would like to create a forum.
3. Go to the Control Panel. Under the Course Tools section, select Discussion Board.
4. Select the link to your course discussion board.
5. Select Create Forum.
6. Enter a Name for the forum.
7. Add a description.
8. Select the Forum Availability.
9. Select the Forum Settings. These settings allow you to determine the way students can use the forum.
10. Select the Submit button.

Forum Options

Subscribing to a Thread

Users can subscribe to a discussion board forum or a specific thread within a forum. When a new post or reply is added to a forum or thread, the subscriber receives an email message.

Instructors can choose from the following subscription options for a forum: no subscriptions, subscriptions at the thread level, or subscriptions at the forum level. If subscription is enabled, then the Forum manager can choose to have subscription messages contain the message contents, or a link to the message.

To enable subscriptions:
1. Select the button next to the Forum that you would like to allow users to subscribe to.
2. Choose Edit.
3. In **Forum Settings**, choose to allow members to either subscribe to threads or subscribe to the forum.
4. Select Submit.

### Grade

1. Enter the **Discussion Board** area.
2. Locate the forum.
3. Select the button next to the **Forum** that you would like to grade.
4. Select **Edit** from the menu.
5. Under form settings locate **Grade**. Select **Grade Discussion Forum** radio button.
6. Select **Points possible**.
7. Select the option to **Show Participants in “needs grading” status** and select the amount of posts you would like to be created before needing to be graded.
8. Select Submit.

*Note: Check “Show Participants” in “needs grading” to make the yellow exclamation mark appear in your Grade Center when an assignment is ready to grade. You can make the setting to show needs grading after a certain number of posts. If you are using groups, then note that it will create a column for each group’s Discussion forum.*

### Grading Forums

To review and post grades for a student’s response follow these steps:

1. Enter the **Full Grade Center**.
2. Locate the column created for the forum. You will see 🌘 where grading is needed.

3. Select ☑ and select **View Grade Details**.

4. Locate the attempt you will be grading and select **Grade User Activity** (If the student has submitted multiple replies, they will be listed under attempts and you can grade each individual attempt).

5. The student posts and replies are displayed on the left hand side of the page.

6. On the right hand side, you will see a **Forum statistics**. Expanding the top will show statistics about to the post.

7. The grade section:
   A. Type a student’s points into the **Grade Value** text area.
   B. **Grade by rubric**: If a rubric is applied to the discussion, select the title to open the rubric within the grade section.
   C. **Feedback to learner**: use this area to type any feedback you wish to share with the student about their grade.
   D. **Add Notes**: Grading notes are private comments about the student’s grade that is only privy to you as the instructor and not the student
   E. **Text Editor**: (optional tool) this button displays full content editor.

8. Select **submit** once you have entered the information that you wish.

9. To quickly grade the next student, use the arrow next to student name above grade

### Grading with a Rubric

1. Select the Forum you would like to grade from the Discussion Board page.

2. Select the **Grade Discussion Forum** button.

3. Select the **Grade** button to the right of the first student you would like to grade.

4. On the right side select the grading rubric you have attached.

5. From here you can check the category where the student’s submissions fell in each of your categories.
*Note: The numbers are automatically added together to create your Raw Total, however, you can add or subtract from that total in the following box.

6. Type optional feedback.
7. Select Save.
8. Select submit to save the grade.

Creating a Thread

1. Select the forum where you would like to create a new thread.
2. Select Create Thread.
3. Enter a Subject and message for thread.
4. Select the Submit button.

*Note: You may select Save Draft to store a draft version of the post. Remember you must go back and submit the draft in order for others to view the post.

Viewing Threads

The Forum view lists discussion threads in the forum and includes several options for displaying and managing threads. The Forum is viewed in one of two contexts: Tree View or List View. This choice remains in effect until the user changes it and it can be changed at any time. These choices are available in the upper right hand corner.

- **Tree View** allows you to see a listing of all the postings associated with a particular thread.
- **List View** shows the thread titles. Select on the thread titles to see postings and replies associated with that thread

Collecting Messages

Collections gather posts into a printable, sortable format. Collections are a good way to organize posts for quick reading.

1. Select the forum you want to collect messages in.
2. Check the boxes to the left of the threads you would like to read.
3. Select .
4. The Collection page can be sorted by author’s first or last name, subject, date, or thread order.

**Replying to a Message**

1. Select the message to which you wish to reply.
2. The original message will be displayed and you will see a reply button. Select *Reply*.
3. Type your response in the Message box and attach files if desired.
4. Select *Submit*. 