Blackboard Discussions

The **Discussion Board** is a communication medium for posting and responding to messages. Discussion Boards allow users to post asynchronously - students are not required to interact at the same time.

Discussion Board conversations are managed in **Forums**, and grouped into **Threads** that contain **Posts** and replies.

- **Board**: one board is created for each course, and one for each Group in the course.
- **Forums** house and organize threads, like a container. The forum provides a prompt or instructions for the student replies, and controls the settings chosen by the instructor.
- **Threads** include the initial post and all replies. [View threads in a list or tree structure.](#)
- **Posts** are the individual comments and conversations of students and instructors.

Forum Settings

Forum settings govern how and when a student can post to a discussion thread, and [grade or rubric criteria](#). See also, [Setup Discussions](#).

Create a Forum

In this example, students are required to submit two posts about current events related to weekly readings, and to reply to two posts by other students. You could create a forum for each week of the course, or by the title of the weekly reading, or create one general forum for current events. In this example, the forum

1. In **Course Tools**, click on **Discussion Board** to see the course default discussion board (name is the Course ID). If you use Groups, each group will also have a discussion board. Click on the course default board.

2. Click on **Create Forum**, provide and name and description for the forum.
3. **Forum Availability**: you can make the forum available now, or enter a date/time for the forum to be visible to students.
   In this example, the forum will be available for the duration of the semester. This enables students to access the forum during the duration of the course.
4. **Viewing Threads/Replies:** In **Standard View**, students can see all threads in the forum. In **Participants must create a thread to view other threads in this forum**, students must respond to a thread before they can read their classmates' posts.

5. **Grade:** select **Grade Discussion Forum** and points possible to evaluate student performance in the forum as a whole. Select **Grade Threads** to evaluate student performance in each thread. In this example, students will be graded for their participation in the forum. If you enable grading for the forum, select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select the number of posts from the drop-down list. Applying this setting displays the needs grading icon in the Grade Center and places the posts in the queue on the Needs Grading page after users submit the specified number of posts.

6. **Due dates** are used to organize and assign gradable items in the Grade Center. Graded posts made after the due date are marked LATE in the Grade Center and on the Needs Grading page.

7. **Associated Rubrics,** see **Rubrics in Blackboard.**

8. **Alignments:** discussion posts can be aligned (linked) with learning objectives and course goals. Contact your department or school/college goals administrator for assistance.
9. **Subscribe**: allows students to receive email notifications when other students reply a thread or forum. Students will not automatically receive email notifications, but they can elect to receive them if this setting is set to Allow.

10. **Create and Edit**: these settings control what a student can do to their posts. **Allow Author to Delete Own Posts** and **Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts** gives greater control to students to delete and edit their posts. Students cannot edit or delete posts by other students. **Allow File Attachments** allows students to upload files from their computer to the body of the post. Allow Others to Reply with Quote retains the original post in quotations with the reply.

11. **Additional Options**: **Allow Post Tagging**: tags are text labels that act like bookmarks. You can tag posts to group similar messages together. For example, if the subject of "scientific notation" is discussed often, tag each of the posts on this topic. Students can read, filter and search messages using these tags, but they cannot create tags.

12. **Additional Options**: **Allow Members to Rate Posts**: You can use the discussion board for peer review. Students can assign a rating an initial post by another student, and include comments. Rating posts allows users to focus on informative and useful messages rated by others. If you enable rating, students and instructors can rate posts using a five star system. Ratings are visible to the entire class.
13. Submit and the new forum appears on the Discussion Board list.

14. You can edit the settings from the forum contextual menu.
Create two original threads about current events that are related to the weekly reading, *Encoding and Decoding* by Stuart Hall. Reply to two posts by other students. Be sure to check the rubric for post grade standards.