Discussions

The **Discussion Board** is a tool for sharing thoughts and ideas about class materials. The main Discussion Board page displays a list of available discussion forums that may appear anywhere in the course. In this tutorial you will find:

- Discussion Forum Features
- How to Access a Discussion Forum
- How to View a Discussion Forum
- How to Create and Reply to a Thread
- How to Manage Threads

The Discussion board features were recently updated. To learn more, view [Blackboard Learn Quick Hit: Discussions](#)

**Discussion Forum Features**

Discussion Forums are areas where a topic or a group of related topics are discussed and includes the following features:

A. **Breadcrumbs:** Use the breadcrumbs to navigate to a previous page. Do not use the browser navigation controls because page load errors may occur.

B. **Action Bar functions:** Use the Action Bar functions to perform various actions - *refer to C-J in image below:*

C. **Create Thread:** Allows you to add a new thread to a forum.

D. **Search:** Allows you to search for Discussion Forum content. The search field is collapsed by default to save screen space.

E. **Thread Actions:** Allows you to make a selection from the drop-down list, edit the status of the selected threads, and perform other actions, such as marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags let you mark threads for later attention.

F. **Collect:** Allows you to gather selected threads onto one page where posts can be sorted, filtered, or printed.

G. **Display:** Use this option to show all threads, published only, hidden only, or drafts only threads.

H. **Check box:** Select one or multiple threads' check boxes or select the check box in the header row to select all threads for an action, such as collecting.

I. **Thread title:** Click a thread title to read the posts. Forum titles containing unread posts appear in bold type.

J. **Edit Paging:** Click Edit Paging to determine the number of items to view per page. Type a number in the box and click Go. Click the X to close the edit paging pop-up box.

![Diagram of Discussion Board Features](image_url)
How to Access a Discussion Forum

Most often discussions are accessed either through a link on a content area within a lesson or from the Discussion Forum link in the Course Menu as shown in the image below.

How to View a Discussion Forum

When you access a forum in the Discussion Board, a list of threads appears. To access one of the forums, click on the hypertext title.

A Thread is a message posted to the forum. For each forum, the page displays the total number of posts, the number of unread posts, and the number of users who have participated in the forum. To access the threads, click its title to view the messages.

Forums containing unread posts appear in bold. The Total Posts column allows you to view the data on the number of posts. The Unread Posts column provides one-click access to the forum’s unread messages.

You can change the view of the forum by selecting List View or Tree View on the top right of the forum page.

- Use List View to present threads in a table format. This view contains a column titled Unread Posts in which any threads that contain unread posts will appear in bold.

- Use Tree View to show the thread starter messages and their replies.
NOTE: When moving through the different parts of the Discussion Board, use the internal navigation, such as the breadcrumbs, course menu, and other page links, to return to a previous page. If you use the browser navigation controls, page load errors may occur.

How to Create and Reply to a Thread

The instructor can set up forums to allow students to create new threads.

Forum settings control who can post and the types of actions you can take such as editing your own threads, rating discussion posts, and anonymous posting.

Follow the steps below to create a discussion forum thread:

1. Click the name of the forum in the Discussion Board or the forum link in the content area.

2. Click the Create Thread button.

3. On the Create Thread page:
   - Type your subject and discussion post in the boxes provided.
   - Attach files you want to include with your posting.
   - Select the Submit button to submit your posting or you can choose Save Draft to work on it again and submit it later.

To reply to a thread:

1. Click on the hypertext thread post title.

2. Click on the Reply button.
3. Type your reply and click the Submit button.

**NOTE:** Settings within the Forums and Threads can be set by the instructor to allow subscriptions. By subscribing to a forum or thread, you will receive email notification when new messages are posted. If this setting has been selected, you will see a green Subscribe button on the Forum or Thread Detail page.

**How to Manage Threads**

You can manage threads through the **Thread Actions** and the **Collect** options.

Select the check box next to a thread and select an action from the **Thread Actions** dropdown menu. You can select multiple threads or select the check box in the header to select all threads.

Click **Collect** to organize posts into a printable, sortable format for quick reading. A collection must be created to tag posts.