Create Discussion Forums

- Discussion is an online discussion board. This is where the instructor creates spaces for students to submit work that can be viewed by classmates as well as the instructor, which may or may not be graded. This can include file attachments (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, image/audio/video files, etc.).

For example, an English professor might have students post early drafts of their essays here and ask classmates to offer peer response based on a specific set of provided peer response questions. Or a science professor might create a forum with an application question and ask students to each post a different answer for how the scientific concept or technique learned can be applied in the real world.

Instructors could create a Frequently Asked Questions forum, where students can post questions about the class, chapter/unit, or specific assignment, and you—or other students—can respond.

As the instructor, you create as many different discussion forums as you’d like. Then, within each forum, instructors and students both can create discussion threads as well as reply to one another’s threads (students typically create a thread to post their comments or submit their assignments).

1. Click the Discussion link in your course menu, then click Create Forum.

2. Type a name for the forum as well as a description if needed (descriptions should be brief).

3. Set date and time restrictions if desired.
4. In the forum settings area, you can use standard view or require that each student post to the forum before they’re allowed to view others’ postings (this helps avoid students merely summarizing others’ ideas rather than post their own, original ideas).

Set the forum to be graded or ungraded, and add a due date and rubric if desired.

![Forum Settings](image)

5. Click Submit.

HELPFUL HINTS

- To reply to a thread, hover your cursor at the bottom of any thread and you’ll see a menu appear. Click Reply, then type your subject and message as described above, then click Submit.

- On the main discussion page, the screen shows you how many posts total, how many you haven’t yet read (how many are new), and how many replies to you have been posted. This helps you avoid having to click into each and every forum to check for new threads and replies.

- It can get tedious to click into each student thread (posting of their comments, assignments, essay drafts, etc.) to read them one at a time. After student work is submitted, you can collect all of the postings into a single screen, which makes it easier to read or to print all at once. To do this:
  
  - Click into the forum you wish to view.
  
  - At the top left of the forum, just to the left of the small red flag, click the check box to select all threads at once.
  
  - Click the Collect button.