

# Blackboard *Discussion Board* Quick Guide

## What is a Discussion Board?

A **Discussion Board** is an asynchronous communication tool that allows students to collaborate with others through posting or answering questions. Students respond to a discussion board forum topic by creating a thread, or replying to an existing thread. Faculty can create a **course discussion board** forum where all students can participate and contribute to the discussion, or a **group discussion board** where only members of a particular group can access it. Faculty can determine whether or not to enable grading for each discussion board forum. Discussion boards can only be viewed from Blackboard and are not publically accessible. A **discussion board** can also be referred to as a forum, message board, or bulletin board.

## Creating a Discussion Board Forum

1. From the *course menu*, click **Discussions**
2. Click **Create Forum**
3. On the **Create Forum** page, provide a forum name and description
4. Set **Forum Availability** to 'Yes'
5. Establish **Forum Settings**

- Viewing Threads/Replies - **Standard View** allows to see all posts,

or you can restrict the forum so students must post before they can read their classmates' posts

- Grade - Enable grading to make it easier to assess student posts. Rubrics can be associated with graded forums

- Subscribe - Determine whether subscriptions are enabled for the threads or forums

- Create and Edit - determine whether to allow students to post anonymously, delete their posts, edit their posts, create new threads, attach files, etc.

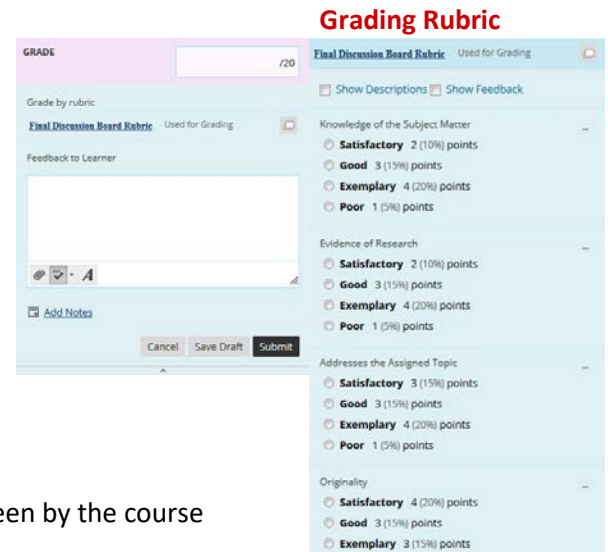
- Additional Options - You can also enable post tagging and rating

- Standard View
- Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum.
- No Grading in Forum
- Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible:
- Grade Threads
- Do not allow subscriptions
- Allow members to subscribe to threads
- Allow members to subscribe to forum
- Allow Anonymous Posts
- Allow Author to Delete Own Posts
  - All posts
  - Only posts with no replies
- Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts
- Allow Members to Create New Threads
- Allow File Attachments
- Allow Users to Reply with Quote
- Force Moderation of Posts

6. Click **'Submit'**

## Grading a Discussion Board Forum

1. Click **Discussion Board** in the course menu
2. Click on the Discussion Board forum to grade
3. Click on **Grade Discussion Forum**
4. Determine the student you would like to grade, and click on the **Grade** button
5. After reading the student's original post and comments on the page, click in the **Grade** box.
6. If a rubric has been used, click the **Rubric Title**
7. Grade according to level of accomplishment for each category. The total score will be automatically tabulated. Click **Save Rubric**
8. If appropriate, enter comments to the student under **Feedback**
9. If appropriate, enter notes under **Grading Notes** (notes can only be seen by the course instructor)
10. Click the **Submit** button
11. To grade the next contributor, either click on the forward/backward button at the top of the grading panel, or select the name of another contributor. Otherwise, click the **OK** button



## Choosing from Blackboard's Communication Tools

	Discussion Board	Blog	Wiki	Journal
Pedagogical Intent	Promote a threaded conversation, enrolled users (students) reply to forum topic/question, post comments on others' postings, discussion can continue	Share information, current thoughts and reflections. Students can post one comment at a time to a blog post (in course blogs, all students can contribute to the conversation)	Create a collaborative document. Students are expected to contribute and/or revise content	Post personal reflections on course topics/experiences. Only individual students can post entries, and only faculty can comment
Organization / Display	Threads and replies / Public within a Blackboard course	Posted entries are in reverse chronological order / Public within a Blackboard course	Single document, wiki page, can add new wiki pages, can link to other wiki pages / Public within a Blackboard course	Posted entries are in reverse chronological order / Private within a Blackboard course
Grading (optional for all)	Initial posts and all replies within a forum	Post(s) only - original thoughts, but not comments	Contributions over time to wiki pages: words modified and pages saved	Post(s) only
Accessed from the course menu or any content area	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can be utilized within Groups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes