Create and Modify a Forum

Blackboard’s Discussion Board is asynchronous (all participants do not have to be online at the same time). It is meant to be visited by users from time to time to view new postings. It is also a good method for students to share comments and work with other students in a course when they cannot meet face-to-face. For example, a Word file can be attached to a discussion message and may be opened and viewed by anyone participating in the discussion.

Discussion Board Features:

Just as various folders can be created in the Blackboard content areas, instructors can create various forums in the discussion board. Each forum is a conversation focusing on a topic or question. Each topic message within a forum is called a thread. The first message is the main posting with all replies or comments about that message connected to that message. Instructors must create the forum (students cannot create one); however students may create new threads within a forum provided the instructor selects this option.

Creating a New Forum:

1. Click the Discussion Board link located in the Course Menu or in the Course Tools area of the Control Panel to access the course discussion board area.

2. Click the Create Forum button at the top of the page.
3. Enter a **Name** and a **Description** for the forum which is usually the discussion question or topic students will be discussing and any other instructions to explain what is expected as part of the discussion.

4. Under **2. Forum Availability**, select **Yes** to make the forum available to students. Select **No** if you do not want students to access the forum at this time.

5. To have the forum available for a specific period of time, check the **Display After** box and/or **Display Until** box and enter the desired starting and ending dates/times. Alternatively, you may select dates and times by clicking the small calendar and clock icons that appear.

6. Under **Forum Settings**, select from the following options:
6.1. **Allow Anonymous Posts** - With the default (unselected) setting, all user postings are identified by username. However, in certain cases, anonymous postings may be useful if the subject matter is so sensitive that students would feel more candid if their names were not shown. **NOTE:** If anonymous posts are allowed, it's important to ensure that inappropriate language is not used. Anonymous posts cannot be graded.

6.2. **Allow Authors to Delete Own Posts** - When selected, users may remove their own posts, including all posts or only posts without replies.

6.3. **Allow Author to Modify Own Published Posts** - When selected, users may modify their posts and correct typos/spelling errors.

6.4. **Allow Post Tagging** - When selected, the user can tag their post

6.5. **Allow Users to Reply with Quote** - When selected, the user is able to reply to the post with a quote.

6.6. **Allow File Attachments** - When selected, users may attach files.
6.7. **Allow members to create new threads** When selected, users may create new threads (instructors must still create the initial forum). **NOTE:** It is highly recommended that you select this option otherwise students will only be able to reply to threads that you’ve created.

6.8. **Subscribe** – Options include Allow No Subscriptions, Allow Thread Subscriptions, or Allow Forum Subscriptions. When selected, users will receive email notification whenever the thread or forum is updated.

6.9. **Allow Members to Rate Posts** - Used for peer review. When selected, users may rate other user’s posts on a scale of 1 to 5.

6.10. **Force moderation of posts**- When selected, it requires that all posts be reviewed by another individual (usually the instructor, but it can be another person designated as a moderator) before the item is posted and viewable by the remainder of the class.

6.11. **Grade** - Choices include: No Grading, Grading of Forum or Grading of Threads. When a grading option is chosen, a grade icon will automatically appear within the forum area and a corresponding grade column with appear in the Grade Center. **NOTE:** When “Grade Threads” is selected, users will not be able to create any new threads; users will only be able to reply to an existing thread.

7. When you have finished selecting options, click the **Submit** button to create the forum. This forum will be created and inline confirmation will be provided on the page.

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**Modifying an Existing Forum:**

1. Click the **Discussion Board** link located in the **Course Menu** or in the **Course Tools** area of the **Control Panel** to access the course discussion board area.
2. Click the double-down arrow (Action Link) next to the forum and select Edit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forum Sample One</td>
<td>This is a sample forum created to test the discussion board function.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Make the necessary changes to the Name, Description and/or Forum Settings.

3. Click Submit at the bottom or top of the page. Inline confirmation information will display at the top of the page.