

Create a Discussion Forum

Overview

This tutorial will explain how to create a **Discussion Forum**. A Discussion Forum is an interactive tool that allows students and instructors to communicate with one another in a virtual environment around a specific topic via nested Discussion Threads, Posts, and Replies.

Quick Steps

Control Panel > Course Tools > Discussion Board > Create Forum > Set Options > Submit

Step 1

To create a Discussion Forum, you must first access the Discussion Board tool. The Discussion Board tool can be found in the *Course Management* navigation pane beneath the *Control Panel* section. Click on *Course Tools* [1], and then click on the “Discussion Board” option [2].



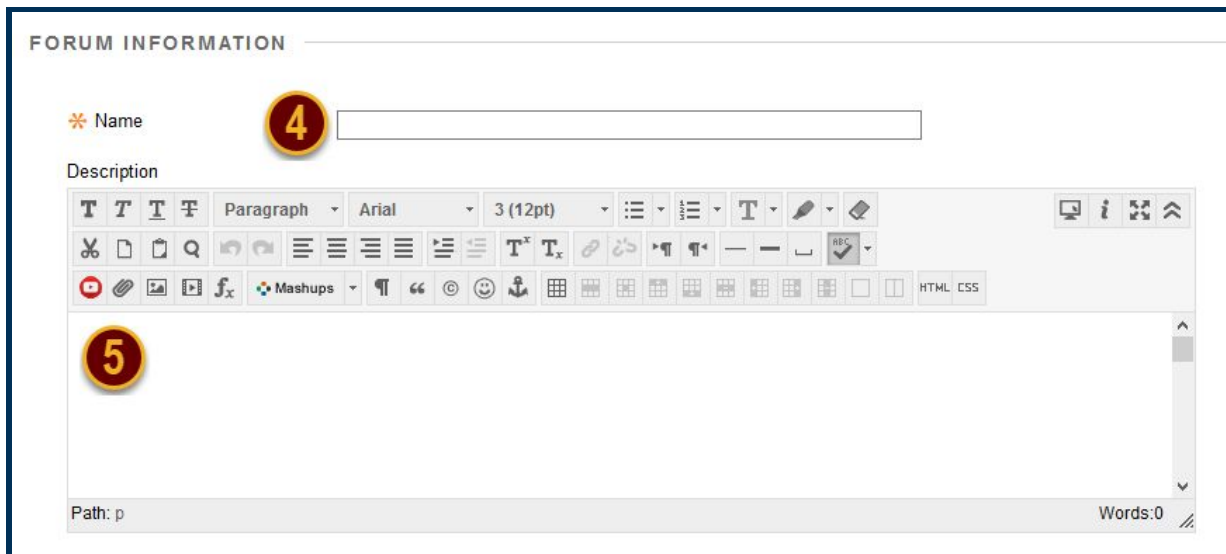
Step 2

From the Discussion Board page, click the *Create Forum* button [3] on the Action Bar.



Step 3

On the Create Forum page, in the Forum Information section, type the name for your Discussion Forum in the Name field [4]. You can also type instructions or a description in the Description editor [5].



The screenshot shows the "FORUM INFORMATION" section. It includes a "Name" field with a yellow callout circle containing the number "4" and a "Description" editor with a yellow callout circle containing the number "5". The description editor has a rich text toolbar with various formatting options. At the bottom, it shows "Path: p" and "Words:0".

Step 4

In the Forum Availability section, select "Yes" using the first radio button to make the Discussion Forum available to students.

FORUM AVAILABILITY

Available Yes No



You can create Discussion Forums ahead of time and set the availability to “No” until you are ready to deploy them.

Step 5

Also in the Forum Availability section, check the *Display After* and *Display Until* checkboxes to enable date and time restrictions. Display restrictions do not affect the Discussion Forum’s availability, only when it appears.

FORUM AVAILABILITY

Available Yes No

Enter Date and Time Restrictions Display After

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Step 6

Select Forum Settings based on your specific needs:

FORUM SETTINGS

If a Due Date is set, submissions are accepted after this date, but are marked late.

Viewing Threads/Replies

Standard View


Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum.
If participants are required to create threads in order to view other threads in the forum, they cannot delete or edit their own posts, and cannot post anonymously. Those options will be set for you automatically.

Grade



No Grading in Forum

Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible:

Grade Threads

Show participants in "needs grading" status  after every Posts

Due Date

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Associated Rubrics

Name	Type	Date Last Edited	Show Rubric to Students
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In the *Viewing Threads/Replies* row, select the “Standard View” radio button to allow users to see all previously created threads in the forum. You can also select “Participants must create a thread to view other threads in this forum” to require students to make an initial post before they can read their classmates' posts. This option promotes originality, creativity, and variety.

In the *Grading* row, select “Grade Discussion Forum” to enable grading for the discussion. Then, type a point value in the Points possible box to evaluate participants based on their performance throughout the entire forum. Alternatively, select “Grade Threads” to evaluate participants on their performance in each thread. If you choose to grade threads, you can decide on a thread-by-thread basis whether you want to grade future discussions.

Optionally, check the checkbox for “Show participants in ‘needs grading’ status.” You can then use the drop-down list to select the number of entries required for a student to qualify for a Needs Grading status in the Grade Center.

Example - If you choose three posts from the drop-down list and a user submits two posts, the In Progress icon appears in the Grade Center cell and the Discussion Board until the specified number of posts (3) is met. Once met, the Needs Grading icon will appear.



If you check the Grade Thread option and do NOT select the “Needs Grading” checkbox in this section, the Needs Grading icon will not appear in the Grade Center and posts will not appear on the Needs Grading page.

In the *Due Date* row, select a Due Date and Time. Graded posts made after a due date are marked LATE on the Grade Details page in the Grade Center and the Needs Grading page.

In the *Associate Rubrics* row, you can also [Associate a Rubric](#) with the Discussion Board.

Step 7

Subscribe	<input type="radio"/> Do not allow subscriptions <input type="radio"/> Allow members to subscribe to threads <input checked="" type="radio"/> Allow members to subscribe to forum <input type="radio"/> Include body of post in the email <input checked="" type="radio"/> Include link to post
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In the *Subscribe* row, select the “Do not allow subscriptions” radio button if you do not want to give students the option of receiving emails when new posts are made. You can select “Allow members to subscribe to threads” to allow students to receive an email alert only when a post is updated or a user posts a reply. Further, you can select “Allow members to subscribe to forum” to allow members the option of receiving emails when new posts are made to the forum. Select either “Include body of the post in the email” or “include link to post” to specify the content shown in those emails.

Step 8

Create and Edit	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow Anonymous Posts <input type="checkbox"/> Allow Author to Delete Own Posts <input type="checkbox"/> Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow Members to Create New Threads <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow File Attachments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow Users to Reply with Quote <input type="checkbox"/> Force Moderation of Posts
Additional Options	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow Post Tagging <input type="checkbox"/> Allow Members to Rate Posts

In the *Create and Edit* row, there are various options:

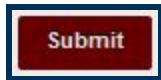
- ✓ **Allow Anonymous Posts** becomes unavailable if the forum is graded. For ungraded forums, you can allow anonymous posts to the forum.
- ✓ **Allow Author to Delete Own Posts** allows authors to delete their own posts if they choose. If you decide to allow author to delete posts, you also have the option to allow the user to delete all posts or only posts with no replies.
- ✓ **Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts** allows authors to edit their own published posts. This is helpful for allowing users to fix spelling or grammar issues after posting.
- ✓ **Allow Members to Create New Threads** allows forum members to create new threads in the forum, rather than only allowing the instructor to create discussion topics.
- ✓ **Allow File Attachments** allows files to be attached to messages within the forum.
- ✓ **Allow Users to Reply with Quote** allow users to include the text of the original message in any replies to that message.
- ✓ **Force Moderation of Posts** requires that you review all messages before they are published in the forum. *Caution: this can become tedious.*

The *Additional Options* row also offers these options:

- ✓ **Allow Post Tagging** allow tags (Text Labels) to be added to messages on the forum.
- ✓ **Allow Members to Rate Posts** allows forum members to rate individual posts.

Step 9

When you have finished completing the settings, click the *Submit* button.



Note

The Discussion Forum will appear in alphabetical order on the Discussion Board page. You can sort the Discussion Forums in a few ways by clicking on a column's title. Options include Forum (title), Description, Total Posts, Unread Posts, Replies to Me, and Total Participants.