Discussion Boards

Discussion Boards can be used by instructor to lead asynchronous discussion about covered topics, receive or provide feedback, have students practice peer assessment, and promote discourse when face-to-face meeting are difficult, such as hybrid and online courses.

Setting up a Forum Access

1. Access the Discussion Boards and click **Create Forum** on the action bar. You can access Discussion Boards through:
   - Control Panel→Course Tools→Discussion Board
   - The **Discussions** link in your class
   - **Tools** link → **Discussion Board**
   Note: If you delete or hide the **Discussions** and **Tools** link students will not be able to access Discussion Boards unless you make a new link.

2. On the Create Forum page, type a name and optional instructions or a description. On the main discussion board page, the description follows the forum name.

3. In the Forum Availability section, click Yes.

4. You can create forums ahead of time and set the availability to No until the discussion is ready to start.

5. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Display restrictions do not affect the forum availability, only when it appears.

FORUM AVAILABILITY

Available   ⦿ Yes ○ No

Enter Date and Time   ☐ Display After [   ] 📅 [   ] 🕐
Restrictions   *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.

6. Adjust the Forum Setting and click Submit to create the forum. See below for information on forum settings.

7. Click Submit to create a forum.

Forum Settings

1. **Viewing Threads/Replies** – For most forums the Standard View which allows students to view everyone's posts as soon as they enter the forum is acceptable. However you can choose the "Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum" option if you want the students to only be able to read other students posts if they have made one themselves.

2. **Grade** – The forums can be graded one of two ways. The "Grade Discussion Forum" option is used to evaluate participants on performance throughout a forum. Most importantly students can make their own threads in the forum. The second option "Grade Threads" is used to evaluate participants on performance in each thread. "Grade Threads" option also removes the student's ability to make threads so the instructor must create a starter thread in the forum to which students need to reply. Optionally, select the check box for Show participants in needs grading status and select the number of posts required to show participants in needs grading status. Applying this setting will show the needs grading icon—the exclamation mark—in the Grade Center after each user makes the specified number of posts. Also, the posts are placed in the queue on the Needs Grading page. If you select a grading option and do NOT select the check box, the needs grading icon does not appear in the Grade Center and posts do not appear on the Needs Grading page. In the Grade Center, users' attempts will appear with the in progress icon when they post.

3. **Subscribe** – Will give students and Instructors and instructors the ability to follow forums or threads and be notified by email about edits, replies, or new posts.

4. **Create and Edit** – Controls what students are allowed to do inside forums. Please not that you need to have "Allow Members to Create New Threads" checked if you want students to create individual threads. If said option is unchecked you, the Instructor, will need to create the first thread an instruct the students to reply to it.

1. Contact us for immediate live support or to schedule a one-on-one consultation. We are available from 9:00 am until 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, in Room 321 of AU's Bender Library.

2. Attend a workshop offered by the E-Learning Support Services staff. For information about upcoming opportunities or to request a group training session, contact our office or visit our website: http://www.american.edu/library/technology/blackboard/.