

Creating and Grading Discussion Forums in Blackboard 7.1

IMPORTANT: Discussion board content does not copy over from Blackboard 6 to Blackboard 7. Therefore, the discussion board area of your Fall 2007 courses on Blackboard 7 will be completely empty, even if you requested to have content copied from a prior semester's course.

Thus, you will need to set up all new forums in your courses on Blackboard 7. You can manually copy/paste from Blackboard 6--but remember, Blackboard 6 goes away on August 9, 2007.

Creating Discussion Forums in Blackboard 7

1. Go into the Discussion Board area and click on  Forum

2. Type in a title and description for your forum.

Most instructors set up a new forum each week, with the title showing the Week #, and the description providing the discussion question.

3. Choose whether you want the forum to be "available" (i.e. visible) to students.

Available Yes No ← **New feature!**

WARNING! If you select NO, the forum will be visible to you (the instructor) but NOT to students. The only way to know if the forum is visible to your students is to return here (i.e. click MODIFY beside the forum) and check the "available" setting. Be sure to change it to YES when you are ready for students to see and begin posting in the forum.

4. Choose your "Forum Settings". We recommend the ones selected below:

Avoid! → Allow anonymous posts

Allow author to remove own posts

All posts

Only posts with no replies

Allow author to modify own published posts

Recommended → Allow file attachments

Allow members to create new threads

Allow members to subscribe to threads

Allow members to rate posts

Avoid! → Force moderation of posts

Grade No grading in forum

New feature we like! → Grade forum: Points possible:

Grade threads

See page 2 for details.

5. Scroll down and click SUBMIT.

Grading Discussion Forum Participation in Blackboard 7

Blackboard 7's Discussion Board contains a nice new feature that makes it easier to record grades for student participation. Here's how it works:

Step 1 - Enable Grade Forum option

When creating a new forum, you will see an option to **Grade Forum** (and an option to Grade Threads). Most instructors will use **Grade Forum**, which lets you to assign each student an overall grade for each forum. When you select **Grade Forum**, you must also enter total points possible.



Grade No grading in forum **Grade forum** Points possible: 100 Grade threads

Step 2 - Look in your Gradebook

After choosing the **Grade Forum** option and clicking submit, a column is created in the gradebook for that forum. Notice that the category is listed as "Forum Grade". This category tells you that this gradebook item interfaces with the grading tools found in the Discussion Board area.



Week 1
Forum Grade
Pts Possible 100
Weight 0%
-
-
-

IMPORTANT: You may already have columns for discussion forums in your gradebook that were copied from previous semester courses. If so, you should delete those old columns (Control Panel > Gradebook > Manage Items). Be sure that you do NOT delete the columns that are marked "Forum Grade".

Step 3 - Record grades for student participation

Follow these steps when you are ready to record grades for each student's participation:

1. Go into the Discussion Board, and then go into the forum you want to grade.
2. In the instructor's tool bar, click on the **Grade Forum** button:



You will see a list of students, along with the total number of posts each student has made in the forum:



Last Name	First Name	Username	Posts	Grade	
Bingham	Lea	binghaml	0	-	Grade
Bridges	Vernon	bridgesv	0	-	Grade
Burtch	Amy	burtcha	3	100	Grade

3. Click the **Grade** button beside a particular student to see and read all postings made by that student.
4. After reading the student's postings, type in a grade for the student at the top of the screen and click SUBMIT. The grade is now recorded in the gradebook!
5. Scroll down and click OK to return to the student list and to grade the next student.