



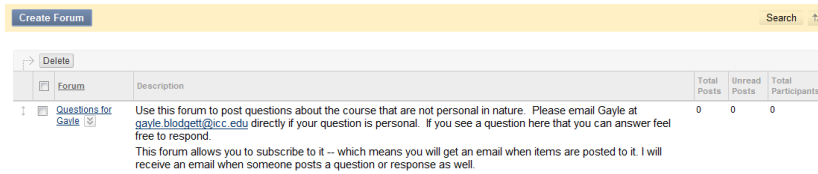
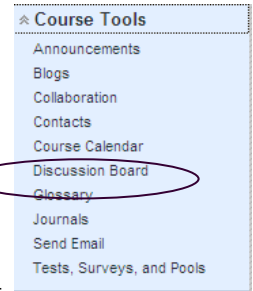
# Student Engagement - Discussion Boards

August 2010

## Discussion Boards

Discussion boards may be placed in any content area of a course site. Both the course discussion boards and the group discussion boards are listed in the **Discussion Board** area accessed through the **Control Panel**. Discussion boards contain forums which are made up of individual discussion threads that can be organized around a particular subject.

Click on the **Discussion Board** link under **Course Tools** in the **Control Panel**.

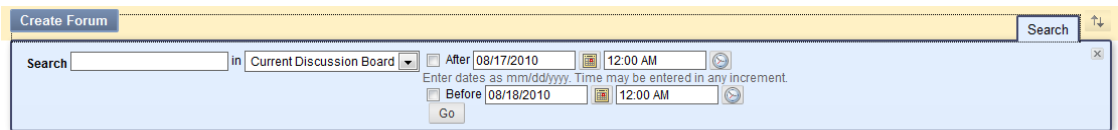


A screen will display listing the available discussion boards. At least one (the main course board) will be displayed. Within that discussion board will be listed all the forums in the course – the ones created in content areas and the

ones created from the discussion board tool link. If you are creating groups with discussion boards enabled these groups discussion boards will be listed as well.

## Searching for Students

You can use the search feature on the main screen to look for specific students, topics or keywords. Enter the text to search for in the box provided. Select the dates and times in the other fields and click **Go**.

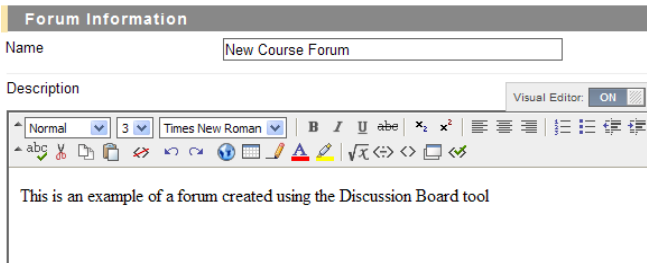
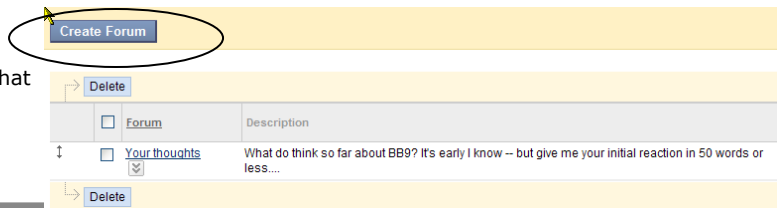


## Creating a Forum

Click on the **Create Forum** button.

Enter a **Name** for the Forum. The Name becomes the link that users click to access the forum to read and post threads.

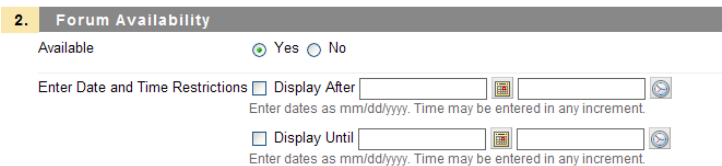
Enter a **Description** of the Forum in the text box. The description can contain formatted text, links, images, and



attachments. Use the Description to provide information about the Forum and any instructions for posting.

## Forum Availability

Select **No** to hide a Forum from users. This will make the Forum unavailable—this can be changed at any time. Select **Yes** to make the forum available. Use the date and time restrictions to have the



forum available for a specific window of time. Note -- the forum must be available for the date/time restrictions to work properly.

### Questions?

Contact the Teaching & Learning Center

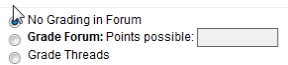
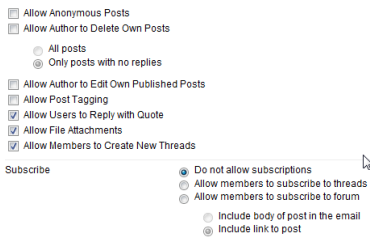
[tlc@icc.edu](mailto:tlc@icc.edu)

(309)694-8908

## Forum Settings

Forums have many different settings that affect how users interact. Options for forum settings are:

- **Allow Anonymous Posts:** Users can post to the Forum without revealing their Username.
- **Allow Author to Delete Own Posts:** Users can delete all their own posts or just posts without replies. Deleted posts cannot be recovered.
- **Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts:** No record of the original post is kept.
- **Allow Post Tagging:** Tagging is a way to add metadata to posts to make them easier to retrieve in searches. To tag items in a Forum, first select them and then click **Collect**. For faster Discussion Board page loading, do not allow Post Tagging.
- **Allow Users to Reply with Quote:** This setting is enabled by default. When users click **Quote**, the message they are replying to is included in the post.
- **Allow File Attachments:** This setting is enabled by default. Attaching large files will slow down the Discussion Board
- **Allow Members to Create New Threads:** This setting is enabled by default -- this must be on for students to be able to post their comments.
- **Subscribe:** Subscriptions to Threads and Forums are sent to users by email. Once a subscription option is selected users can select:
  - **Include body of Post in the Email:** The entire post is sent in the body of the email message.
  - **Include Link to Post:** A link to the post is sent in the body of the email message.
- **Allow Members to Rate Posts:** *This feature is not enabled in our version of Blackboard currently.* This is used for peer/self evaluations.
- **Force Moderation of Posts:** *This feature is not available in our version of Blackboard.* This requires all messages to be reviewed by a Moderator before they can be published to the Forum.
- **Grading options:** This allows you to set a point value and grade directly from the discussion board. It also adds a column to the grade book. Grade forums allows students to post to the forum topic you create while grade threads requires that you post the initial thread and the students are allowed to reply.



Click **Submit**.

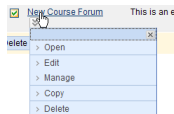
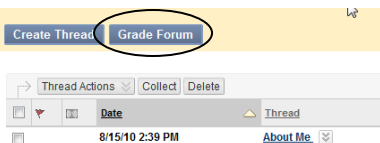
## Managing Forums

Once forums are created, clicking on the double-down arrows next to the forum name will allow you to open, edit, manage, copy or delete the forum.

### Open

Opens the forum and allows searching, collecting and deleting of threads. Threads can be displayed in a List or Tree view (based on the option selected in the upper right corner of the screen).

If a forum is set up as a graded forum the Grade Forum link will be displayed.



**Create Thread:** Use to create a new thread.

**Delete:** Delete selected posts from the forum. Deleted posts cannot be restored. Change the status to unavailable or hidden to prevent users from seeing posts without actually deleting the threads.

**Collect:** Gather selected posts onto one page where they can be sorted, filtered, or printed.

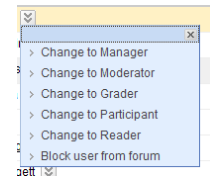
### Edit

Allows use to edit the original forum settings such as name, date restrictions and grading options.

### Manage

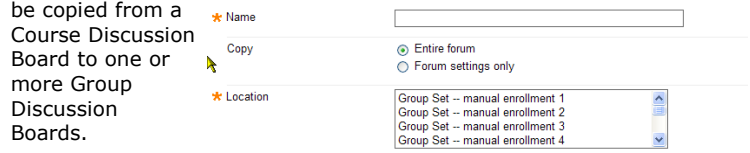
Edit a student's role in the forum by selecting a new role from the drop-down list provided. Options include:

- **Manager**— can edit, change, delete all threads.
- **Moderator**—grants participant privileges as well as the ability to edit, delete or lock posts
- **Grader**—grants participant privileges as well as grading privileges
- **Participant**—grants read and write privileges
- **Reader**—grants rights to read the contents of a form — view only — cannot add or respond to posts
- **Blocked**—blocks the user from the forum



### Copy

Forums can be copied entirely including all the posts, or with settings only. Forums can be copied from a Course Discussion Board to one or more Group Discussion Boards.



Specify a name for the copy and a Discussion Board where the copy should be placed. Also select whether the entire forum or only its settings should be copied to the selected location. If copying the entire forum, all content except for uploaded file attachments will be copied to the new location.

### Delete

Deleting a forum will delete all of the threads that have been created under it. You will be prompted to continue before the information is removed from the site. Deleted forums can not be recovered.

## Grading Forums

Click on the Grade Forum and a list of students and the number of posts for the forum will be displayed. If the forum has already been graded the points awarded will be displayed.

Last Name	First Name	Username	Posts	Grade	Grade
Student	Sally	test1	1	6.00	Grade
Student	Tim	test6	0	-	Grade

Click on the **Grade Forum** link for one of the ungraded forums. The information and each of the posts the student has in the forum will be displayed.

Click on **Edit Grade** to modify the grade for the student. You can enter the grade and any comments in the area provided and the grades and comments will be available to the student. They will also be visible for you in the **Grade Center**.

Other students with posts that are ungraded will display at the bottom of the list. You can move from student to student using the arrows in the Contributors area.

