Creating & Managing Discussion Forums

This tutorial will step you through creating and managing discussion forums in Blackboard. The tutorial is segmented by feature and where possible links are provided for web-based videos demonstrating features. All video links are highlighted in blue boxes at the end of segments. If you have access to the internet from your computer click on to video title to view the segment.

Accessing the Discussion Board

Forums can appear throughout a Course, in any area where an Instructor chooses. Each group may also have a private Discussion Board with Forums available only to those users that are a part of the group.

All Forums that are not a part of a group can be accessible from various points in the Course or by going to the Discussion Board links.

There are three ways to access the Discussion Board.

1. Through the Control Panel Menu
   a. In your course, click the chevron to the right of the Course Tools link located in the Course Management area on the lower left-hand side of the screen. The menu item will expand to display the tools available in the course.
   b. Click the Discussion Board link located in the Course Tools section on the left side of the screen.

2. Through the Course Menu if a Discussion link or button was established in the course menu click on the link.

3. Through Tools link in the Course Menu (this option may vary from course to course)
   a. Click on the Tools link in course menu.
   b. Next click on the Discussion Board link.

Video - Overview of Discussion Boards – Topics: exploring the main page, forum options, threads – Length: 5 mins. 17 secs.
Adding Forums

• Click on the **Course Tools** link in the **Control Panel** to display the tools submenu.
• Click on the **Discussion Board** link. The Discussion Board listing screen will be displayed.
• Next click on the Discussion Board where you would like to add the forum if more than one Discussion Board is defined.
• Then click on the [Create Forum]. The **Create Forum** page will be displayed.

1. Enter a title for the discussion forum in the **Name** text box. This title should reflect the topic of the discussion from a broad perspective.

2. Enter a description of the discussion in the **Description** text box. This could include any questions to be included in a post, or other instructions about the discussion.
3. By default Forum Availability is set to **Yes** (visible to students). If you would like to hide the forum from students click on the **No** radio button (keep in mind that you will have to manually change the setting to make the discussion visible).

4. If you would like the Discussion Forum to be automatically released on a prescribed date:
   - Click on the **“Display After”** check box then, click on either the date dropdown arrows of the calendar icon to set the release date.
   - If you would like the forum to be hidden on a specific date, click on the **“Display Until”** check box, then click on either the date dropdown arrows of the calendar icon to set the hide date.

The next series of settings will allow you to define user permissions, moderation rules, and if the forum will be graded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Required?</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Recommended?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Allow anonymous posts</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Clicking on the check box will allow anonymous posts on the Forum.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Allow author to remove</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Clicking on the check box will allow authors to remove</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Allow author to edit own published posts</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Clicking the check box will allow authors to edit their own published posts.</td>
<td>No – if graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Allow post tagging</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Clicking the check box will allow tags (Text Labels) to be added to messages on the Forum. See the Tagging Posts tutorial for more information.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Allow users to reply with quotes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Allows users to include the text of the original message in any replies to that message. This is enabled by default.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Allow file attachments</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Allow files to be attached to messages within the Forum. This is enabled by default.</td>
<td>Yes, with restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Allow members to create new threads</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Allow Forum members to create new threads in the forum. This is enabled by default.</td>
<td>Yes, but the conversation could get out of control quickly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12. Allow members to subscribe           | No | • By default the “Do not allow subscriptions” option is checked  
   • Checking the “Allow subscription to threads only allows members to receive an email alert when a post is updated or a user posts a reply.  
   • Clicking the “Allow members to subscribe to | Yes |                     |
“No grading in forum” allow subscription to the entire forum. Refer to the Creating Subscriptions tutorial for additional information.

| 13. Allow members to rate posts | No | Clicking the check box will enable forum members to rate individual posts. Refer to the Rating Posts tutorial for more information. | Yes, if clear guidelines for peer assessment are defined |

| 14. Force moderation of posts | No | Clicking this check box will require that all messages be reviewed before they are posted to the forum. See the Forcing Moderation tutorial for additional information about this function. | Depends on the class |

| 15. Grade forum | No | “No grading in forum” is set by default. |

| No | Clicking on the “Grade Forum” radio button will enable grading at the Forum level. When setting this option enter the total number of points possible in the text box. | Yes, will include all threads of each student |

| No | Clicking the “Grade threads” radio button will enable grading at the thread level. | No, too much work |

16. Click the [Submit] button to post the discussion forum.

Video - Creating a Discussion Board Forum – Topics: creating forums, selecting forum options – Length: 2 mins. 55 secs.
Adding, Editing & Removing Threads

Threads are a series of posts related to a similar topic. When creating a Forum, the Instructor has the option of allowing or not allowing users to start threads.

*Note: If threads are graded, users cannot start threads.*

**To add a thread:**
1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify.
2. Then click on the title of the forum you want to add a thread to.

3. Next click on the **[Create Thread]** button in the tools menu. The Create Thread screen will be displayed.
4. Enter a title for the thread in the **Subject** text box.

5. Enter conversation text in the **Message** text box.

6. **Optional field:** Attachments can be added to the threads if the feature was activated when the forum was created.

   o To add a file from your local computer:
     - Click on the [Browse My Computer] button to add a file from your local computer.
     - Navigate to the file to be attached.
     - Select the file then click on the [Open] button at the bottom of the file window. You will be returned to the Blackboard window.
     - Click in the “Name of link to file” field and type a descriptive name for the file.

   o To link to a course file:
     - Click on the [Browse Course] button. The **Select File or Folder** screen will be displayed.
     - Navigate to the file to be attached.
Click on the checkbox (PC) radio button (MAC) to the left of the file name.

Then click the [Submit] button. You will be returned to the Discussion Thread window.

Click in the “Name of link to file” field and type a descriptive name for the file.

7. Click the [Submit] button to add and post your message to the discussion forum.

**To Modify a thread:**
1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify by clicking on the board title.
2. Then select the forum you want to modify by clicking on the forum link.
3. Then select the Thread you want to modify by clicking on the thread title.

4. Click on the [Edit] button, located in the Subject area of the post. The *Edit Post* screen will be displayed.

5. Make the changes you want to make to the thread, and then click the [Submit] to save the changes.

**To Remove a Thread:**
1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify.
2. Then select the forum you want to modify.
3. Next click on the Check Box next to the thread you want to remove.
4. Then click on the chevron to the right of the thread title. An options menu will be displayed.

5. Next click the Delete link. A delete confirmation window will be displayed.

6. Click on the [OK] button in the verification window to complete the removal request.

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**Setting Forum Roles**

Discussion Boards can serve several different purposes in a Course. In many cases, you may want to take a “guide on the side” role by passing off some or all of the administration of the Discussion Board to a peer leader or another responsible user. Discussion Board Forums include roles for each user involved in the Forum. These roles define privileges within the Forum. The Forum Roles with administrative roles that can be assigned to users in a Forum are: Manager, Moderator, and Grader.

To modify forum roles:

1. Click on the chevron to the right of the Discussion Forum you wish to modify. A selection menu will be displayed.

2. Click on the Manage link. The Manage Forum Users page will be displayed.
3. Click on the chevron to the right of the user name you wish to modify. A selection menu will be displayed.

4. Click on the drop down arrow across from the name of the user you wish to change, then click on their new role for the Discussion Forum. If you would like to change the role for multiple users click on the checkbox to the left of the user names, and then click on the [Edit Role] button at the top or bottom of the screen.

   • **Change to Manager**—can change the forum settings, moderate posts, and assign grades.
• **Change to Moderator** – can grant participant privileges, and modify, delete & lock posts. If Moderation Queue is used, the moderator may also approve or reject posts in the queue.

• **Change to Grader** – has user participant privileges and grading privileges for the forum.

• **Change to Participant** – has read and write privileges to the forum.

• **Change to Reader** – can view forum content but cannot add or respond to posts.

• **Block user from forum** – user is blocked from accessing the forum.

**Note:** the screen defaults to a display 25 users at a time. To expand the user list, click on the [Show All] button at the bottom of the page.

5. Click the [Submit] button on the lower right-hand-side of the screen (you may have to scroll down to see the button.)

| Video | Managing Discussion Board Roles – Topics: manage forums, selecting roles, assigning roles – Length: 2 mins. 45 secs. |

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**Forcing Moderation**

By default, Discussion Board users are given forum roles based on their course, organization, or system role. Instructors are given the Manager role by default. Managers control user privileges within the Discussion Board through the use of roles. For example, the Manager may delegate responsibility for reviewing posts to a Moderator.

When creating a forum or modifying a forum's settings, instructors have the option of forcing moderation. If moderation is enabled, when a user other than a Moderator or Manager submits a post, the post is saved to the Moderation Queue. Student posts are displayed in the queue for review and publication. If a post is returned, a return message can be attached to the post allowing the Moderator to inform the user why the post was not accepted for posting. (University of Pennsylvania Faculty Support Center)

**To Force Moderation of Forums:**

1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify. The forum page will be displayed.
2. Click the chevron to the right of an existing forum. A selection menu will be displayed.

3. Click on the **Edit** link. The **Edit Forum** screen will be displayed.

4. Under the Forum Setting click in the check box to the left of the “**Force Moderation of posts**” header.

5. Then click the **[Submit]** button located in the lower right-hand corner of the browser window to save the change.
To moderate posts:

1. Navigate to the forum to be moderated, and then click on the [Moderate Forum] button. The *Moderation Queue* screen will be displayed.

2. Click on the [Moderate] button to the left of the thread to be reviewed. The *Moderate Post* screen will be displayed.
3. The Message area in the Post Contents section contains the thread text to be reviewed.

4. Click on the radio button to the left of Publish in the Set Status area if the posting meets the assignment criteria, or

5. Click on the radio button to the left of Return in the Set Status area if the posting is inappropriate or fails to meet the assignment criteria.

6. Enter feedback in the text box if the posting is being returned to the student or you would like to provide some positive reinforcement.

7. Then click on the [Submit] button. If the status was set to “Publish” the posting will be made available to all course members. If the status was set to “Return” a copy of the posting would be returned to the student and comments along with the comments entered in the text field.

Note: when posting to moderated discussion students will see the following message when posting a message.
When their post has been approved the “Moderation Queue” status will be removed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turbulent Whitewater Discussion</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>8/16/10 5:28 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reply: Turbulent Whitewater Discussion (returned)</td>
<td>JoAnn Gonzalez-Major-Student</td>
<td>12/15/10 1:59 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation for returned post</td>
<td>JoAnn Gonzalez-Major</td>
<td>12/15/10 2:46 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If their post is returned the status will be changed to “returned” and any notes entered in the text field of the *Moderate Post* window will be available in the “Explanation for returned post” thread.

**Video** – *Moderating Discussion Board Forums* – Topics: accessing the moderation queue, review and return posts, review and publish posts – Length: 2 mins. 24 secs.

**Copying Discussion Forums in a Course**

Discussion Forums can be copied from one discussion board to another within a course. This is a nice tool for setting up team-based forums where each team will address the same set of questions, or for creating forum templates.

To copy a Discussion Forum:

1. Navigate to the **Discussion Board** you wish to copy content from, and then click on the chevron to the right of the forum to be copied. An action menu will be displayed.
2. Click on the **Copy** link. The **Copy Forum** screen will be displayed.

![Copy Forum Screen]

3. Enter a name for forum copy in the **Name** text window.
4. Click the radio button next to the type of information that you would like copied.
   a. **Entire Forum** – this option will copy all content in the forum except attachments. This is a nice option to use if user groups are working on different aspect of the same question, or groups discuss and refine a topic and their results are then moved to a Discussion Board that is accessible to the entire class.
   b. **Forum Settings Only** – No postings or attachments will be copied. This setting can be used if you would like the same setting all several forums.
5. Click on the Discussion Board where the forum should be placed.
6. Click the [Submit] button to execute your request.

### Viewing Forums

The Forum view lists the threads in the Forum and includes several options for displaying and managing threads. The Forum can be viewed in one of two contexts: Tree View or List View. This choice remains in effect until the user changes it; it can be changed at any time.

![Forum View]

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The Tree View presents the thread starter messages and their responses messages.

1. Response messages can be expanded and collapsed by using the plus/minus icon next to each starter message.
2. Unread threads and posts are displayed in bold type; if a thread starter message has unread responses, then the thread starter message is displayed in bold if the response messages are collapsed.

The List View presents the list of threads in a tabular format. The threads can be sorted by clicking the column headers.

*Note*: Different tools are available in each view window, so if you don’t see the tool that you are looking for in one view switch to the other view.

**Searching Discussion Boards**

A search function appears as a hyperlink at the top of the page throughout the Discussion Board. Click this link to show or hide the search fields, thus conserving screen space in the Discussion Board.
The search fields include keyword, date and time restrictions, and options for where to search. The search function starts at the current level and options exist to work up. For example, in a thread, the default search option only searches that thread but options exist to search the entire Forum or all Forums. From the search function, users can search all Forums in the Course, including any Forums that appear in the student’s groups.

1. Select the **Discussion Board Forum** you want to search. This will take you into the discussion where you can read, post, and reply to messages.

2. Click on the name of the Discussion Forum you would like to search.

3. Click the **[Search]** link located in the top right-hand-side of the browser window to search through messages.

4. Enter keywords into the **Search** box and if appropriate enter dates into the **After** and **Before** fields to narrow the search.

5. Click on the “in” dropdown arrow to select another forum to search. (This drop down menu is available to search in: current forum, all forums in the discussion board, or just the current discussion board).

6. Next click the **[GO]** button to execute the search.

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**Video – Searching & Collecting Discussion Board Posts** – Topics: using the search tool, collecting posts – Length: 1 mins. 23 secs.

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**Creating Collections**

Collections gather posts into a printable, sortable format. Collections are a good way to organize posts for quick reading.

1. Click on the name of the **Discussion Board** where you want to sort the messages. This will take you into the discussion where you can read, post, and reply to messages.
2. Click on the **Forum** in which you would like to collect items. The threads will be displayed.

3. Select the messages you want to view by either clicking on the check boxes next to each post, or clicking on the **Select All** box at the top of the message list.

4. Click on the [Collect] button. The Collection page will be displayed.

5. You can then use the **Filter** and **Sort by** options to narrow your selections.

6. Forum users can create and apply text labels to their own choosing to messages in a forum by selecting the message(s) then entering a key word in the **Tag** field, then clicking the [Go] button to the right of the field.

   **Note:** These tags will allow members to read, filter, and search messages using the tags. Tags allow arbitrary message grouping independent of thread or thread status.

7. Click the [Print Preview] button to view and print the message collection.
8. Click the [OK] button at the bottom of the screen to exit the Collection window.

**Tagging Posts**

Forum users can create and apply text labels of their own choosing to messages in a Forum; other Discussion Board users can read, filter, and search messages using the tags, but cannot create new ones. (Blackboard User Guide)

Tags allow arbitrary message grouping independent of thread or thread status.

*Note: Tagging is only available if “Allow post tagging” is selected in Forum Settings.*

**Tagging Posts (List View):**

1. Select the Discussion Board Forum where you want to add tagging.
2. Next select the specific messages to be tagged by clicking on the Check Box next to the messages.
3. Click on the [Collect] button. The Collection screen will be displayed.
4. Select the messages to tag from the message list using the check boxes.
5. Or select all messages by clicking in the All link in the Select section of the screen.
6. Next enter a tag name in the add Tag text box.
7. Then click the [Add] button to create the new tag.
8. You can also click on the [Add] Tags button at the bottom of postings if you would like to add tags to one posting at a time.
9. Click on the [OK] button located in the bottom right-hand corner of the view screen to close the Collections screen.

Viewing Tags (Available Only from Forum List View):

1. Click on one of the text hyperlinks in the Tag column
2. Or select the desired Tag category from the Tags dropdown list.
3. The Discussion message listing will be refreshed displaying only the messages with the selected tag.
4. Click the [OK] button located in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen to display complete list of messages again.
Removing Tags (Available Only from Forum List View):
1. Click on the keyword hyperlink in the Tag column that you would like to remove. The Collection screen will be displayed.

2. Click on the Red X icon to the right of the word you would like to remove. The verification Window will be displayed.

3. Click on the [OK] on the verification window to complete the action.

Video – Tagging Discussion Board Posts – Topics: enabling post tagging for a forum, collecting thread posts, tagging posts – Length: 2 mins. 15 secs.

Creating Subscriptions

Subscriptions to a Discussion Forum allow Blackboard to notify users by email each time a new Post is added to a Thread or Forum. If you enable this feature then users must elect to use the feature by selecting the [Subscribe] button, which appears on the Forum page and in the Thread detail page.
To Enable Subscriptions:

1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify, and then click on the chevron to the right of the forum. A selection menu will be displayed.

2. Click on the Edit link. The Edit Forum screen will be displayed.

3. Under the Forum Setting select one of the following options by clicking on the radio button to the left of the option.

   a. **Allow members to subscribe to threads** – Use this option to restrict subscription to specific threads in a Forum.

   b. **Allow members to subscribe to forum** – Use this option to allow subscriptions to all threads within a Forum. With this option also, select one of the following:

      i. **Include body of post in email** – Use this option to include the message text in the email notification and a link to reply to the message.  
         *Note: this option will move posting out of the secure course management system and into a public mail system. Use this option with caution.*

      ii. **Include link to post** – Use this option to include a link to the message in the email notification.  
         *Note: this option will keep the posting in a secure environment and drive the students back into the course.*

4. Click the [Submit] button located in the lower right-hand corner of the browser window to save the changes.

Disable Subscriptions:

1. Click on the [Modify] button for an existing forum. The Modify Forum screen will be displayed.

2. Under Forum Settings, click on the Do not allow subscriptions in the Subscribe section.

3. Click the [Submit] button located in the lower right-hand corner of the browser window to save the changes.
Blocking Discussion Board Users

There may be an instance where a user should not be allowed to post at all because of past history of inappropriate posts or if the user has not been participating in discussions throughout the term.

Follow the steps below to block users from accessing a particular discussion forum.

1. Click on the Manage link for an existing forum. The Manage Forum screen will be displayed listing the course users.

2. Click on the chevron to the right of the last name of the user you wish to block.

   **Note:** the screen defaults to a display 25 users at a time. To change the display option click on the [Show All] button at the bottom of the screen. The full list of users will be displayed on one page.

3. Click on the “Block user from forum” entry in the dropdown menu. A “Success” message will be displayed at the top of the screen.

   **Note:** This action will prevent all selected users from accessing this particular forum. Please keep in mind that this will prevent them from accessing it altogether not just from posting messages.
Hiding Threads

Threads within a forum can be hidden by the forum Manager or course Instructor(s) so they are no longer visible to users. This may be useful in active forums that span several themes or topics.

There are two statuses for hidden threads.

A. **Hidden**: Hidden threads do not display unless the user chooses. Hidden threads may not be modified.

B. **Unavailable**: Unavailable threads are only visible to forum managers & instructors. Even then, forum managers must choose to view these threads. Making threads unavailable means that users can no longer view the thread.

To hide a series of threads:

1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify, and then click on the Form in which you wish to hide the messages.
2. Click on the check box to the left of the threads to be hidden.
3. Next click on the **[Thread Actions]** button.
4. Then click on either the **Hidden** or **Make Unavailable** entry.

Locking Posts

It is not possible to archive a discussion board or thread, however, you can lock the discussion to preserve it from further posts. Locking enables students to read but not post to the discussions. To lock or unlock a thread:
1. Navigate to the forum where you wish to lock posts.

2. Click the boxes next to the threads (posts) you wish to lock.

3. If you want to lock all of the messages, click the Select All box.

4. Click on the [Thread Actions] button, and then click on Lock in the dropdown menu. The Thread status will be changed to “Locked”

Rating Posts

A common learning tool in classrooms are peer assessment techniques. Students prepare an essay, report, or presentation and share it with the class. Other students are asked to comment on the work and offer criticisms for improvement. This process helps the student improve their work and the reviewers improve their communication skills.

In an online learning environment the Discussion Board can also provide opportunities for peer assessment. Each student can start a thread with their work in the body of the post or attached to the initial post. Other students then review the work, assign a rating to the initial post, and include comments in a response. As users respond, the feedback expands as users reinforce and build on points made by other students.

Users can respond to a post using a 5-star rating system (we would suggest that instructors define parameters for the rating system at the beginning of the course). To enable this feature:
1. Navigate to the Discussion Forum you wish to modify.

2. Click on the chevron to the right of the forum, and then click on Edit in the dropdown menu.

3. Under the Forum Setting click on the check box next to the “Allow members to rate posts” header.

4. Click the [Submit] button located in the lower right-hand corner of the browser window to save the change.

To rate a post:

1. Navigate to the forum containing the post to be rated. The Thread listing will be displayed.

2. Click on the thread to be rated. The Thread Details screen will be displayed.

3. Click on the number of stars that you wish to assign to the posting. **Note:** a user may not rate the same post more than once, and once the stars are clicked the rating cannot be changed.

4. Click on the [Reply] button to add comments.

5. Enter comments into the Message field.

6. Click the [Submit] button to return to the Thread listing screen.

Grading Discussions

The Discussion Board Grader simplifies the process of evaluating and grading a student’s participation in discussion board forums. With the Discussion Board Grader, you have access to a single page with every message that a student has posted to a particular forum, number of words per message, and number of original messages and replies.

Grading options are available when a Forum is created or by modifying a Forum. Once Grading has been enabled, a Grade Center Item is created and all the advanced management features that can be applied to the item should be managed from the Grade Center.

*Warning:* Do not change the Grade Center Name once you have added grading to the forum. Doing so will break the link between the forum and the gradebook.

Enabling the Grading Feature:

1. Select the Discussion Board you wish to modify, and then click on the chevron to the right of the forum.
2. Click on the **Edit** link. The *Edit Forum* screen will be displayed.
3. Under *Forum Settings*, click on the **Grade Forum** radio button, and then enter a point value in the *Points Possible* field.
4. Next click on the **[Submit]** button to save your changes. The forum listing screen will be displayed.

Grading Forums:

1. Click on the chevron to the right of the forum to be graded. Discussion Board **Forum** that will be graded, and then click on the **Grade** link in the Action menu. The *Grade Forum Users* screen will be displayed.

![Grade Forum Users](image)

2. Click on the **[Grade]** button to the right of the student you want to grade. The Grade Forum for the selected student will be displayed.
3. Review student posts.

4. Then click on the [Edit Grade] button in the box to the right of the posts. The Forum Grade section will expand.

5. Enter the student’s grade in the Current Grade Value field.

6. Enter feedback to the student in the Feedback field (students can view these notes in My Grades). Optional

7. Enter grading notes in the Grading Notes field (only instructors and TAs see notes entered in this field). Optional

8. Next click the [Save Grade] button to save changes. Note: The grade will automatically be added to the Grade Center.

9. Click the [OK] button at the bottom of the screen to return to the Grade Forum Users page to grade the next student.
Video – Grading a Discussion Board Forum – Topics: accessing the grade area, select a student and evaluate his/her posts, assign a grade – Length: 2 mins. 15 secs.
Viewing Forum Statistics

The Performance Dashboard keeps track of user activity throughout the course, including the Discussion Board. This information can help Instructors quickly identify Students that are outside the normal range of participation. Instructor can use this information to reward achievement and assist students that are struggling with the material.

The tool can be accessed from the Course Management area and is located in the Evaluation area. The Performance Dashboard provides a variety of tools for tracking student involvement in a course. For this document, we will focus on just the Discussion Board portion of the Performance Dashboard.

You can click on the hyperlinked numbers in the Discussion Board column to see more information about posts from a specific user.

You can then click on a forum title link in the Forum column, or the underlined number in the Total Posts column, and see the contributions from that user in that forum. If the forums had grading options selected, the user’s grade would be shown in the Grade column.