

Reading and Posting in Discussion Board

Overview

Discussion boards are online spaces that can extend communication beyond the confines of the classroom. Only instructors can create discussion forums. Students and instructors can participate in discussions by replying to posts or creating new threads (if the instructor has made that option available to students). This document contains step-by-step instructions for reading and posting messages on discussion boards.

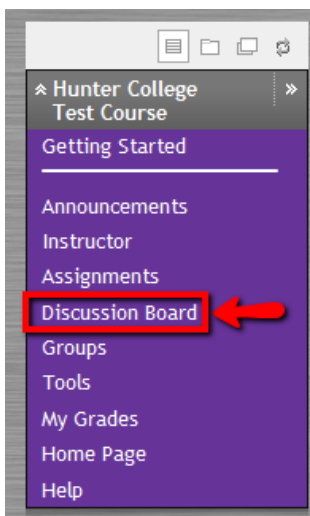
NOTE: The screen shots in this document correspond to the student view of the discussion board. Instructors have additional options that are not shown or discussed in this document.

Forums and Threads

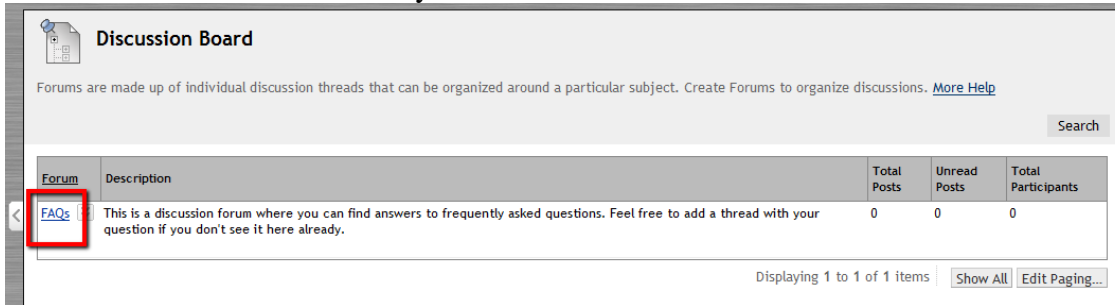
Discussion boards in Blackboard are composed of two items—**forums** and **threads**. **Forums** are areas that include one or more threads related to a theme. **Threads** are generally used to discuss a specific topic, answer the question posed or share experiences related to a topic. For example, a “Hamlet” forum can be created with threads discussing different aspects, characters, or acts of the play. A “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) forum can be created with each thread containing a question repeatedly asked in class. Because only instructors can create forums, you will need to create them before your students can begin using the **Discussion Board**. For information on how to set up a discussion board, please see document **Creating Discussion Forums and Threads**.

Reading a Discussion Board Post

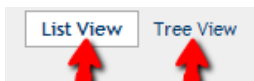
1. Click on **Discussion Board** on the course navigation menu.



2. Click on the name of the forum you wish to read.



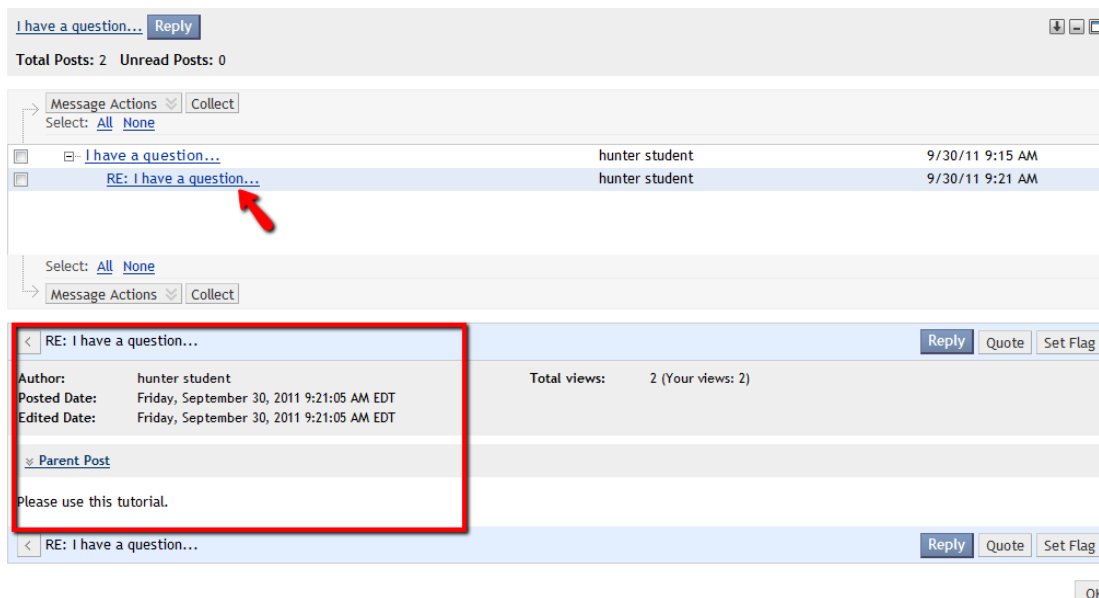
Once you are in a forum, you will see that there are two ways to view the threads in the forum: **List View** and **Tree View** located on the upper right corner.



List View displays a list of all threads. The total number of posts in each thread is displayed in the **Total Posts** column. Threads containing an unread post appear in boldface.

Tree View gives you a visual indication of which threads have responses. You can click on the + sign to the left of the thread title to see the entire structure of a thread, including responses and responses to responses. A post that is indented is a response to a previous post.

3. To view the content of a thread or post, click on its title. In the top box, you will see the structure of the thread. A post that you have not read yet appears in boldface. In the bottom box, you will see the text of the post.

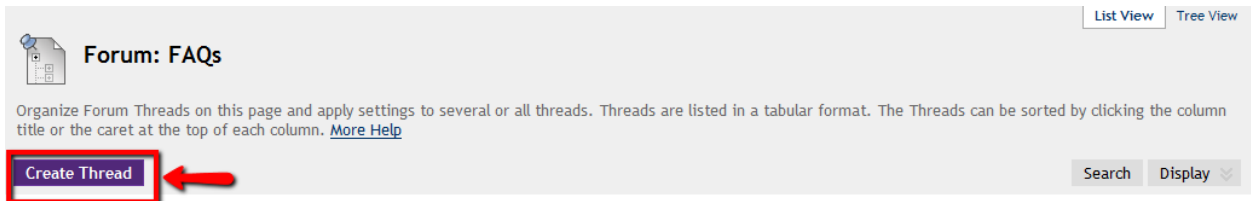


Posting to a Discussion Board

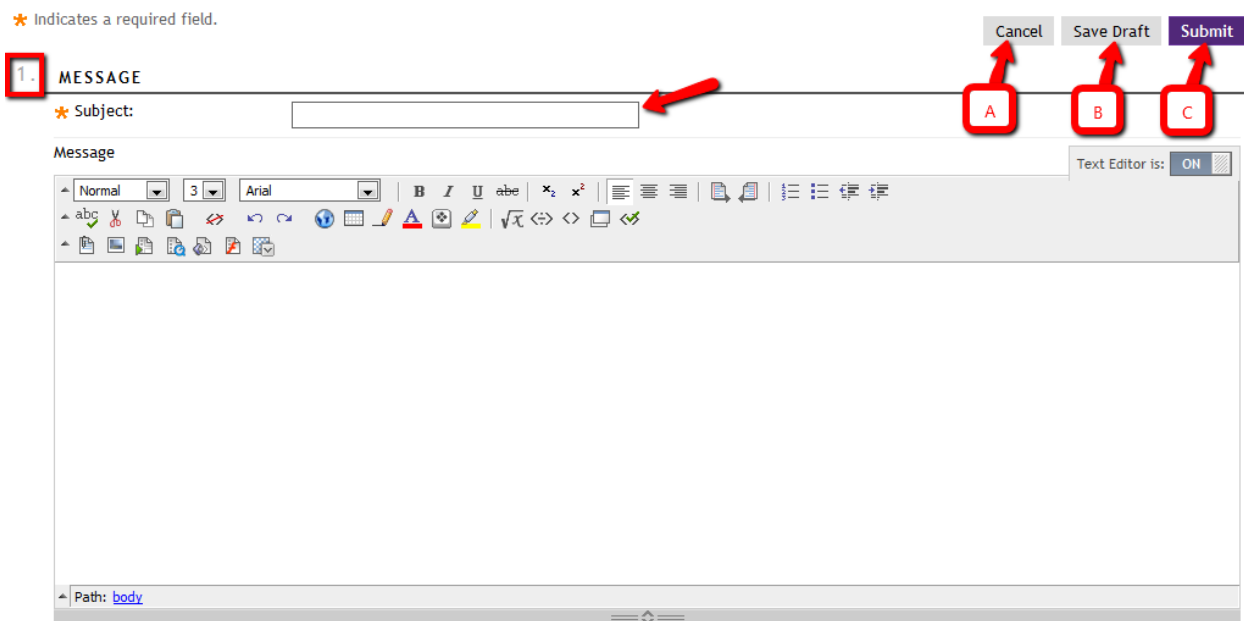
There are two ways to participate in discussion boards. Once the forum is created by the instructor, students can start a new thread (if the instructor made the option available) or reply to a post.

To start a new thread, follow the instructions below:

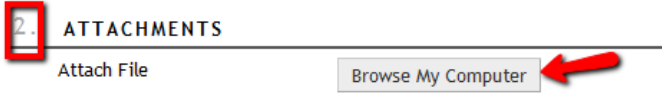
1. Click on the name of the forum in which you wish to start a thread.
2. Click on the **Create Thread** button to create a new thread.



3. For step 1, type the subject of your new thread and a message in the message box. You also have the options to (a) Click **Cancel** to quit, (b) Click **Save Draft** to save a draft of this message, (c) Click **Submit** to submit the post.



4. For step 2, you have the choice to attach a file to your discussion board post. Click on **Browse My Computer** and search for the file of interest.

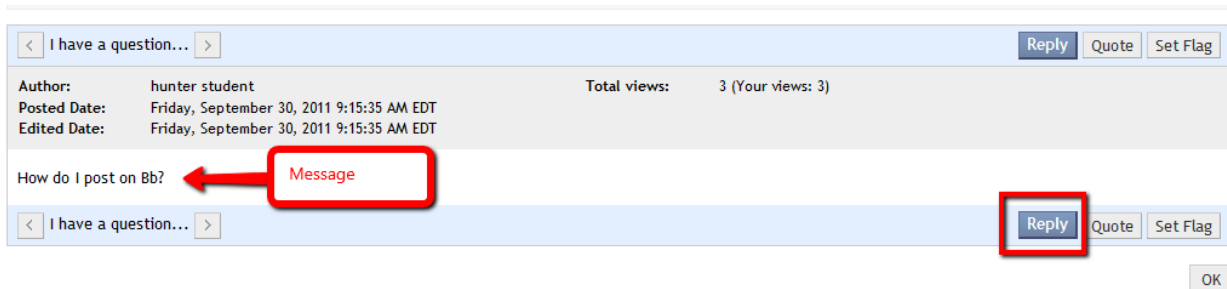


- Step 3 enables you to **Cancel**, **Save Draft** or **Submit** your post. Clicking on submit saves the thread and posts it to a forum.



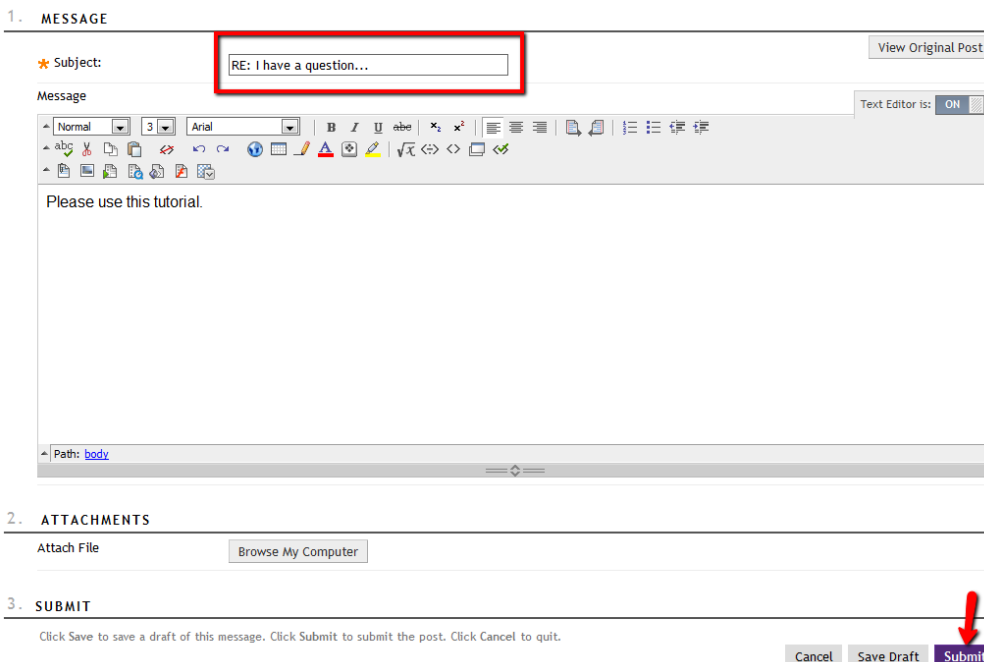
Replying to a Post

- View the thread to which you want to reply and click on the **Reply** button.



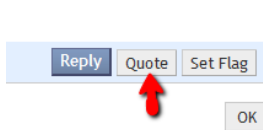
- Type your reply in the message box and click submit. You also have the option to include an attachment in your reply.

NOTE: The subject of the reply will start with **RE:**

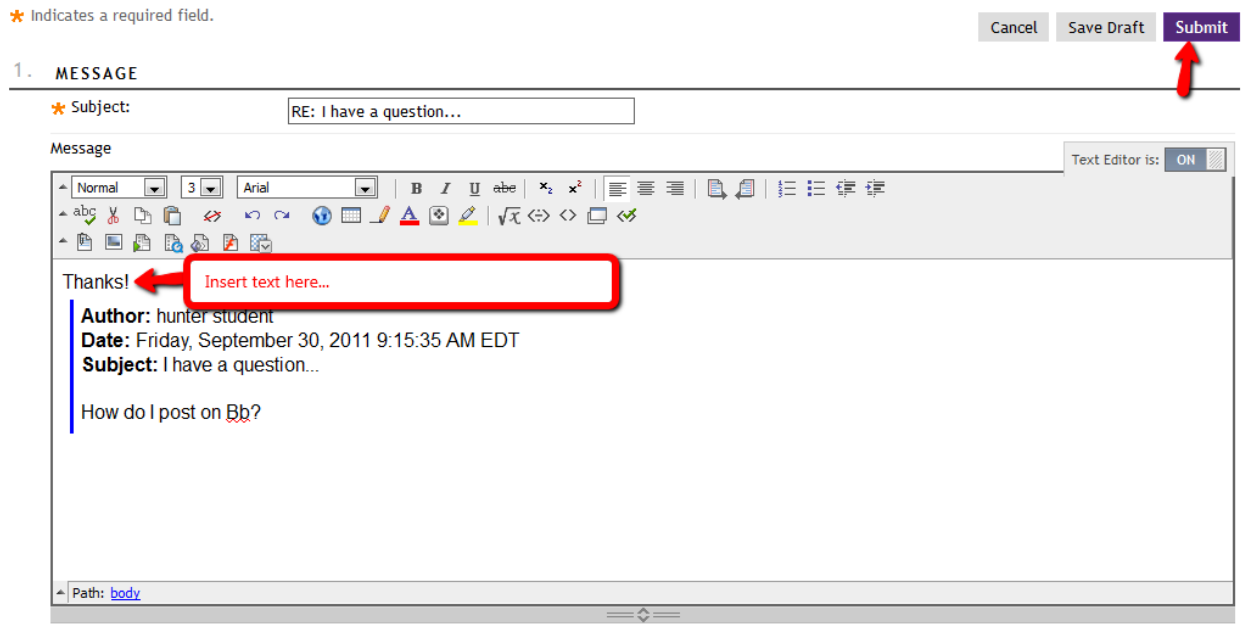


Quoting a Post

1. View the post to which you want to quote and click on the **Quote** button.



2. The message box that opens up will have message you are quoting. Insert your message in the space above the message. Then click **Submit** to submit your post.

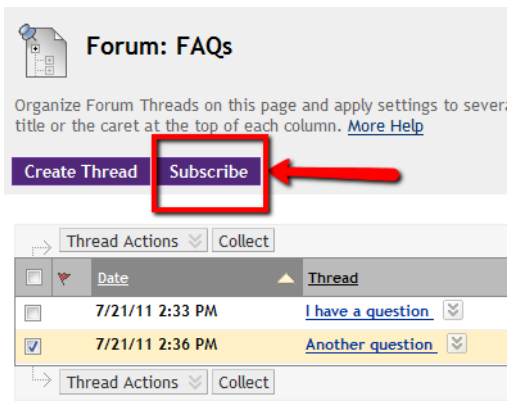


Subscribing to the Discussion Board

One way to help you stay abreast of new posts in discussion boards is by subscribing to a forum. This feature needs to be enabled by instructor first. Then you may subscribe to a forum to receive email notifications when a new post has been added.

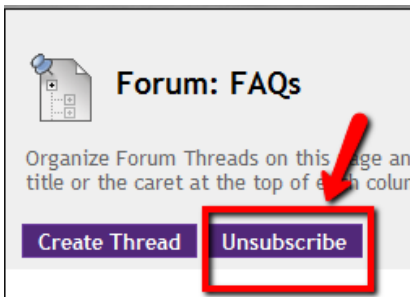
To subscribe to a forum:

1. Click on the forum you wish to subscribe to.
2. On the top purple tool bar, click on **Subscribe**. From now on, you will receive an email every time a new post is added to this forum.



Note:
This option is only visible if the Instructor chooses to make it available.

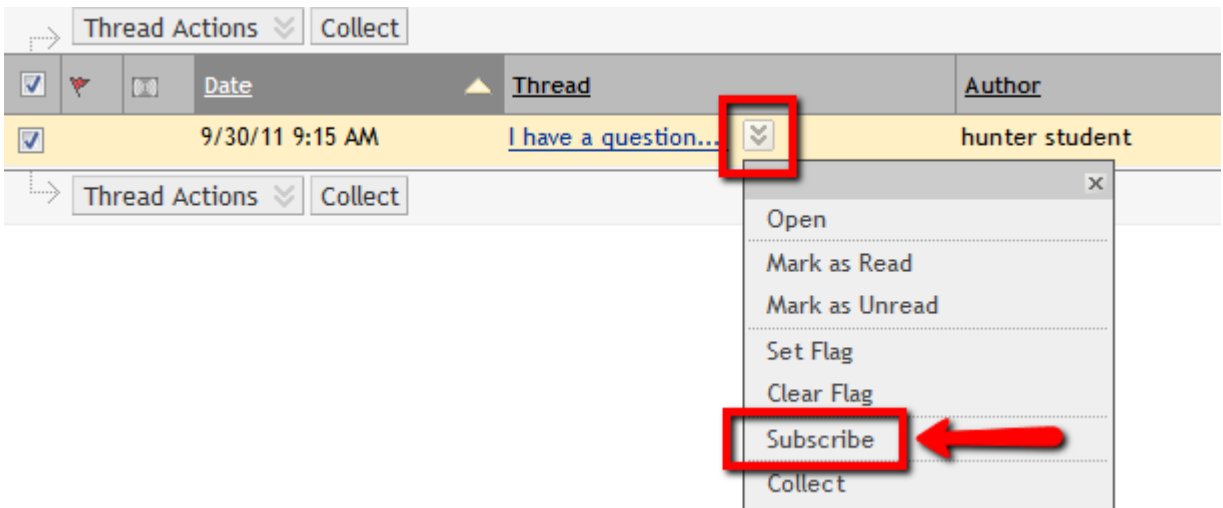
3. If you no longer wish to receive email messages when new discussion board posts are added, you can **Unsubscribe** from the forum at a later time.



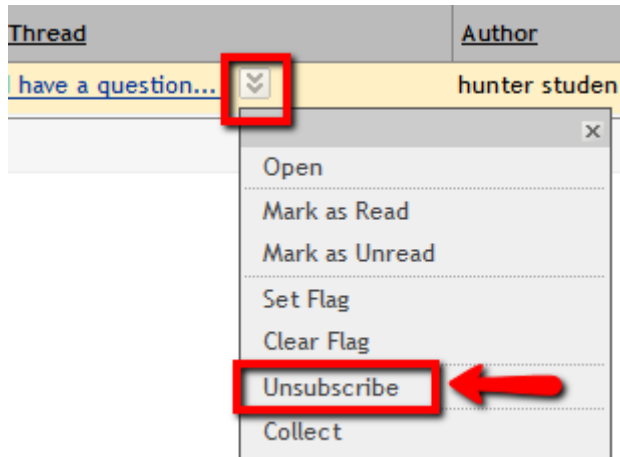
4. Repeat this process for every forum you wish to subscribe to.

To subscribe to a Thread:

1. Enter the forum that contains the thread you would like to subscribe to.
2. Click on the double arrow drop down menu next to the thread you wish to subscribe to. You will see the option to **Subscribe**.



3. If you no longer wish to receive email messages when new discussion board posts are added, you can **Unsubscribe** from the forum at a later time.



4. Repeat this process for every forum you wish to subscribe to.

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