Teaching with Technology Tip
Blackboard Discussion Board Forums, Posts and Replies
September 23, 2013

The Discussion Board in Blackboard provides space for users to share ideas and information about course topics, ask questions, and post assignment files that are available to classmates. The discussion board is commonly accessed from the course menu, although instructors can provide a link to it in a content area (example: Week 1 or Lesson 2 folder). Instructors can set up navigation to the discussion board so that users can see all forums, provide a link to a specific forum, or create private group discussion boards and forums.

Discussion Board posts contain a picture (avatar) of the person who has written the post if they have personalized their Blackboard profile. Users can also flag posts for review, and choose to reply or email the author directly. The new Content Editor allows users to link files and create audio or video content within the post.

Instructors usually create forums as a place to discuss a specific topic. Users respond in the forums by creating threads, or using “Reply” to continue the conversation. The Discussion Board allows users to choose from “Tree View” or “List View” to navigate the forums and threads. New “Expand” and “Collapse” options provide easy ways to see more or less information as desired. Filters also allow users to search for posts by specific users. Useful options when setting up a forum:

- **Grading** allows instructors to grade and give feedback directly and privately in the Forum, and automatically appears in the Grade Center.
- **Subscribe** gives users the choice of receiving an email when a new post has been made.
- **Post First** requires students to post a response before they can view the responses of others; which encourages diversity and originality of contributions.

Instructors can copy a Discussion Board Tutorial into their course from the Faculty Resource Site. Log into the Faculty Resource Site, then click on Blackboard > Tutorials for Students > Blackboard for Students > How to Use the Discussion Board. Use the Copy option in the menu.

For more information about using the Discussion Board, follow these links:

- **How to Use the Discussion Board.pdf**
- **Overview of how to Use Blackboard Discussions: Video, Blackboard (4 min)**
- Atomic Learning Tutorials: Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP12 – What’s New? (Requires UND Log In)
  - Overview of the redesigned thread detail page (1.15 min)
  - Managing forum settings (1.35 min)
  - Organizing and printing threads (1.34 min)