

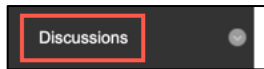
## Blackboard Learn – Creating & Grading Discussions

Discussion forums are a form of assessment in which students and instructors can discuss and collaborate on topics. Discussion forums can either be graded or ungraded; if they are graded, a column is automatically added to the Grade Center upon creation, where instructors can access student submissions and provide grades and feedback.

### Creating Discussion Forums

#### Accessing the Discussion Board

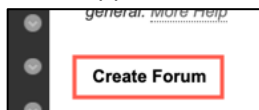
1. Access a Blackboard course site and click on the **Discussions** menu tab along the left side of the page.



- a. Alternatively, click the **Tools** menu tab, then click the **Discussion Board** link on the Tools page.

#### Creating Discussion Forums

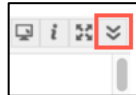
1. Access the Discussion Board of your Blackboard course.
2. In the upper left corner, click **Create Forum**.



3. The Create Forum page will load, where you can enter forum details and settings.

#### Forum information

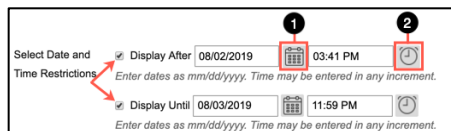
1. In the Forum Information section, give the forum a detailed **Name**.
  - a. The forum name will also become the Grade Center column name.
2. Use the **Descriptions** text box and associated word processing tools to provide detailed forum instructions for the students.
  - a. Expand the text box tools by clicking the **Show More** button in the upper right corner of the text box.



**Note:** Pasting text from Word can cause formatting issues; to avoid such issues, ensure to SELECT ALL content in the Word document (CTRL+A) then press (CTRL+C) to copy and (CTRL+V) to paste.

#### Forum Availability

1. Ensure the **Available** radio button is selected to **Yes**.
2. If desired, use the **Display After** and **Display Until** radio buttons to activate date restrictions on the forum.
  - a. Use the Date Selection Calendar **(1)** and Time Selection Calendar **(2)** to select respective days and times for the item to be available to students.



#### Forum Settings

1. In the Viewing Threads/Replies section, choose how students will see the forum upon entry.
  - a. **Standard View** allows students to see all previous threads created.
  - b. The other setting will hide any previous threads from students until after they create their own thread.
2. In the Grade section, choose if the forum will be graded.
  - a. If you wish to grade the forum, ensure the **Grade Discussion Forum** radio button is selected and assign a number of **Points possible**.
  - b. Ensure the **Show participants in “needs grading” status** radio button is selected and set to 1 post.
3. If desired, check the **Due Date** radio button to activate a due date for the forum.
  - a. Use the Date Selection Calendar **(1)** and Time Selection Calendar **(2)** to set a respective due date and time.



**Note:** Due dates do not affect the availability of discussion forums in a course.

4. Create/associate a **Rubric** if desired.
  - a. See the “Creating a Rubric” section of this document for details.

Login: <https://pfw.blackboard.com>

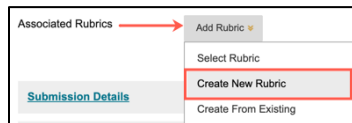
- In the Subscribe section, choose if you want to allow students to subscribe to threads/forums.
- In the Create and Edit section, choose the settings to allow when students are interacting with the forum.
  - Ensure **Allow Members to Create New Threads** is selected if you wish for students to be able to create their own posts from scratch.
- Select any Additional Options.
- When finished, click **Submit**.

### Creating a Rubric

Rubrics can be created within the Blackboard system to give students performance benchmarks as well as provide a simple, uniform way for instructors to provide grades.

**Note:** The discussion forum must be a graded forum to be able to create/associate a rubric.

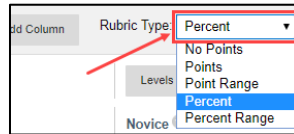
- In the Forum Settings, hover your mouse cursor over the **Add Rubric** button and click **Create New Rubric**.



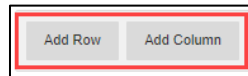
- In the Rubric Information section, give the rubric a detailed **Name** and provide a detailed **Description**.
- In the Rubric Detail section, use the Rubric Grid to add rows or columns and identify the Rubric Type, Criteria, and Levels of Achievement.

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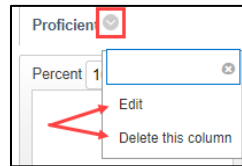
- Use the **Rubric Type** dropdown box to select the type of rubric, or how the Levels of Achievement are differentiated.



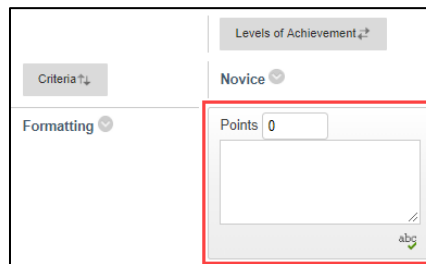
- Use the **Add Row (Criteria)** or **Add Column (Level of Achievement)** buttons to add rows and columns.



- Edit or Delete rows and columns by clicking the **More options** chevron button directly to the right of the row/column name.



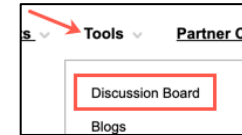
- Use the respective text boxes within the rubric to designate points/percentages and provide detailed descriptions for each **Level of Achievement**.



- When finished, click **Submit**.

### Creating a Discussion Forum link in a Content Area

- Access a content area of your Blackboard course and hover your mouse cursor over the **Tools** tab.
- In the expanded list, click **Discussion Board**.



- On the Create link page, choose which type of link to include by selecting the respective radio button.
  - Linking to the **Discussion Board Page** will provide a link that directs students to the discussion board housing all discussion forums in the course.
  - Selecting a Discussion Board Forum** will allow instructors to select a previously made forum to link directly to from the content area.
  - Users can also Create a New Forum from the Create Link page.

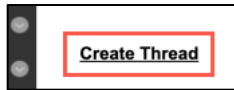
- Click **Next**.
- Give the Forum Link a detailed Name, Description, and set Availability/Date Restriction options.
- When finished, click **Submit**.

### Creating Discussion Threads

- Access the Discussion Board of your Blackboard course.
- Click the respective forum link in which you wish to create a Thread.

Login: <https://pfw.blackboard.com>

3. At the upper left corner of the forum, click **Create thread**.



4. Give the Thread a detailed **Subject**.
5. Use the **Message** text box and associated word processing tools to provide a detailed message.

- a. Expand the text box tools by clicking the **Show More** button in the upper right corner of the text box.



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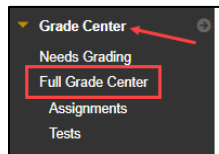
- b. Use the **Browse My Computer** and **Browse Course** buttons to search for and attach files as necessary.

6. When finished, click **Submit**.

## Grading Discussion Forums

### Accessing the Full Grade Center

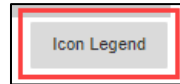
1. Access your Blackboard course and click **Grade Center** within the Control Panel.
2. In the expanded list, click **Full Grade Center**.



Blackboard Learn – Creating & Grading Discussions – Quick Guide

### Interpreting Grade Center Icons

1. When in the Full grade Center, at the bottom right corner, click the **Icon Legend** button to open a legend explaining the numerous icons that may appear.

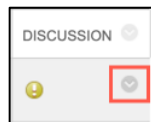


### Accessing Student Submissions

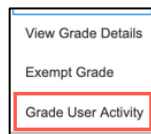
1. Access the Full Grade Center of your Blackboard course.
2. On the Full Grade Center page, you will see a gradebook table with rows (students) and columns (assignments). If a student has a submission that is ready for grading, you will see the “Needs Grading” icon in the respective grade cell.



3. To access a collection of the students posts to a particular forum, hover your mouse cursor over the respective grade cell and click the **More Options** chevron button.



4. In the expanded list, click **Grade User Activity**.

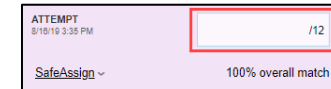


- a. All posts the respective user has made for that particular forum will appear on the submission page for grading.

## Providing Grades and Feedback

### Providing Scores to Submissions and Using the Feedback to Learner Text Box

1. Access the respective submission via the Full Grade Center.
2. On the right side of the Grade Discussion Forum page, use the pink **Attempt** box to type in a score for the submission.



3. Expand the **Grading Panel** by clicking the thin blue button directly under the pink Attempt box.



4. Use the **Feedback to Learner** text box in the Grading panel to type in feedback for the respective student/submission.

- a. Attachments can be added to feedback by clicking the **Insert File** button.



- b. Private Grading Notes, only visible by the instructor, can be added by clicking the **Add Notes** button under the text box.

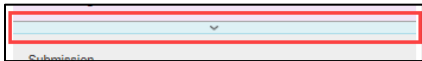
5. When finished, click **Submit**.

**Note:** Any Replies to postings on the discussion board will be visible to all users in the course. Never provide grade specific feedback via a Discussion Reply.

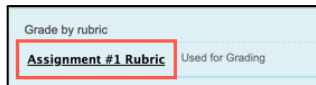
### ***Grading with a Rubric***

**Note:** A rubric must be added to the discussion forum during the creation process in order to be used for grading.

1. Access the respective submission via the Full Grade Center.
2. On the right side of the Grade Assignment page, expand the **Grading Panel** by clicking the thin blue button directly under the pink Attempt box.



3. Click the name of the rubric within the Grading Panel to expand it.



- a. Use the **Show Descriptions** and **Show Feedback** buttons to toggle the visibility of each in the rubric.
  - b. Assign a Level of Achievement for each grading Criteria listed in the rubric and provide any desired feedback.
  - c. If desired, you can change the number of points.
4. When finished assigning scores via the rubric, click **Save Rubric**.
  5. Click **Submit** in the blue Grading Panel to submit the grade via the rubric.