

Blackboard Help Topic

Blackboard Help Topic: Effective Use of the Discussion Board

Walden 2013

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This Blackboard Help Topic explains best practices for effectively using your Discussion Board.

Learning Objectives:

In this Blackboard Help Topic, you will learn how to:

- Simplify Discussion Forum navigation using the **List View** and **Collapse All** features
- Expand posts while using the **Collapse All** feature
- Understand how to use **Read** and **Unread** indicators
- Review Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) including how to use the **Collect** and **Sort By** features

Effective Use of the Discussion Board



A screenshot of a forum interface. At the top right, "List View" is selected and circled with a red "2", with "Tree View" next to it. The main heading is "Forum: Week 1 Forum". Below it is a paragraph of instructions: "Organize Forum Threads on this page and apply settings to several or all threads. Threads are listed in a tabular format. The Threads can be sorted by clicking the column title or the caret at the top of each column. [More Help](#)". Below this is a navigation bar with "Search", "Discover Content", "Display" (with a dropdown arrow), and "Tags" (with a dropdown arrow). Below the navigation bar is a table of threads. The first row of the table has a "Date" column header circled with a red "3". The first data row shows a date of "10/10/12 11:20 AM", a thread title "Discussion - Week 1", an author "Anonymous", a status "Published", "0" unread posts, and "4" total posts. Below the table are "Thread Actions" and "Collect" buttons.

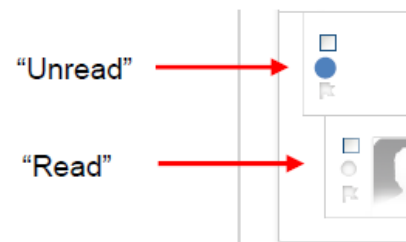
<input type="checkbox"/>	Date	Thread	Author	Status	Tags	Unread Posts	Total Posts	Grade
<input type="checkbox"/>	10/10/12 11:20 AM	Discussion - Week 1	Anonymous	Published		0	4	-

Overview:

1. Click the "Post to Discussion" link in your classroom. This is often found by clicking the specific week or module from the navigation panel, selecting "Discussion" from the sections available on that page, and then clicking "Post to Discussion."
2. Within a forum, select "List View."
3. Select the Thread for your discussion. In some cases, there may be more than one thread available.

(Note: In some programs or specific courses, you may need to click the "Discussion Forum" link from the navigation panel and then select the appropriate forum for a particular assignment).

4. Once the thread loads, click the “Collapse All” button at the top of the page.
5. Scroll down the page. When you scroll with all posts collapsed, they will not automatically mark as read.
6. To read a post, hover over that post. An “Expand” link with a squiggly line should appear in the middle of the post. Click on this link to read the post.
7. **Note:** The blue dot on the left will now turn gray to indicate that the post has been read. Clicking that gray dot will turn it blue again and mark the post unread.



FAQs

Q: Do I have to use List View? What if I want to use Tree View?

A: You can use Tree View. However, we strongly recommend using List View, and collapsing all posts, as the most effective way to use the Discussion Board.

Q: What does the Collect option do?

A: The “Collect” button will collect the posts you have selected and present them in a linear fashion. With these options, you can sort by the author's first name, last name, subject, date of last post, and thread order. There is also a print option on this page. (Note: Using the Collect button to view posts removes the tabbing, which helps you easily view who is replying to whom in a discussion.)

Q: What if I just want to see unread posts?

A: You can see all unread posts in Collect view by selecting the unread posts number highlighted in blue under “Unread Posts” while in a forum. (Note: Viewing posts in Collect view removes the tabbing, which helps you easily view who is replying to whom in a discussion.)



Thread Actions	Date	Thread	Author	Status	Tags	Unread Posts	Total Posts
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7/25/12 11:52 AM	Discussion - Module 2	Anonymous	Published		14	15

Displaying 1 to 1 of 1 items