



## What's New: *Discussions*

Discussions have been updated in two primary ways: the *Thread Detail* page has been thoroughly redesigned while maintaining all of its current functionality. New functionality has been added to support specific pedagogical needs for the use of discussions.

### What's New:

- **All posts on one page:** The entire discussion thread appears on a single page, thereby maintaining the context of the post and replies to one another. Larger avatars help you easily identify the author.
- **Avatars:** The user profile avatars are more prominent in the new Discussions.
- **Role highlighting:** Posts made by forum managers and moderators now contain the user's course role and forum role.
- **Inline replies:** When replying to a post, the content editor used to write a response appears on the same page, in the context of the discussion.
- **Post First setting:** This forum setting allows instructors to require students to post to a discussion before seeing other students' posts.

### Essentials:

The *Post First* setting only applies at the forum level, not the thread level. This means that *Post First* is NOT an option when students are NOT permitted to create threads.

### Best Practice(s):

Best use practices in using the discussion tool include:

- Introductory / Ice break discussion;
- Post ideas for projects and papers, and ask students to weigh in;
- Share initial thoughts about a topic before it is discussed in-depth in individual blogs;
- Express opinions to help divide students into work groups.

It is also recommended that you provide a grading form/rubric for discussion activity. For more information on using rubrics for discussions, please contact your Instructional Consultant.

### Additional Resources:

- [Blackboard Learn Quick Hit: Discussions](#) (YouTube | 1 m 22 s)