Navigating Discussions

When you access the Discussions tool from the course navigational bar, you are taken to the main screen for the Discussions tool. The Discussions screen lists all of the topics that are available to you. For each topic, the Discussions screen lists the total number of messages posted and the number of unread messages.

Reading Messages in Discussions

unread!

🏳 **Student 1 says "hello!"**

Test1 Student - Oct 26, 2012 2:11 PM

Mark Read [Reply] [Assess] More actions...

Hey everyone! My name is Student 1 and I'm glad to be in this class. Looking forward to meeting everyone you want to meet up for a study group, let me know. My answers to the Instructor's prompts are:

1. Where were you born and where do you live now? **I was born in Ohio, but now live in Columbus G pursuing a new degree.**
2. What degree program are you in at CSU and why did you choose that path? **I am in the American Hi digs this summer. I hope to pursue a Master's in Archeology later.**
3. What is your favorite hobby and what do you like most about it? **My favorite hobby is reading, ficti of before.**

⊟ Collapse Replies

unread!

🏳 **Re: Student 1 says "hello!"**

Test2 Student - Oct 26, 2012 2:18 PM

Mark Read [Reply] [Assess] More actions...

Hey Student 1! That was a great post...maybe I'll get to pull you in as my archeology expert some day Lord of the Rings...great trilogy, better than the movies even.

Good to know someone in Orlando, might be heading down that way for break. See ya!

> This is how the **"Reading Style"** option will display discussion threads.

There are two ways of viewing the messages inside a topic — using the **Grid Style** message list or the **Reading Style** message list. See **Discussion Settings** to learn how to change your view.

In the **Grid Style** message list (the view shown on the previous page), a list of messages appears at the top of the page, showing the subject, author, and date for each message. Click a message's subject to read the message; the full message appears either at the bottom of the screen or in a new window, depending on your personal settings.

In the **Reading Style** message list (as shown above), the full text of every message is always displayed. Click the **Mark Read** link below a message's header to tell the system when you have read a message.

In either style, use the **View** drop-down list at the top right of the page to switch between **Threaded** view, where messages are grouped with their replies, and one of the **Unthreaded** views (All Messages, Unread Only, Flagged Only) where you can sort messages any way you like.

Personal Settings

Display Settings:	☐ Show the discussion topics list ❔
	☑ Show the search bar ❔
	☑ Show the preview pane ❔
	☐ Display deleted messages ❔
Default Message List View:	⦿ Threaded View
	◯ Un-threaded View ❔
Message List Style:	◯ Grid Style ❔
	⦿ Reading Style ❔
Message Fields to Display:	☐ Org Defined ID ❔
	☐ Message ID ❔
Character Limits:	☐ Limit the number of characters of the subject to display in the Message
	Subject Characters to Display: 0 ❔
Reply Settings:	☑ Include original message text in reply ❔

Personal Settings is the option for selecting how you wish to view a Discussion Thread.
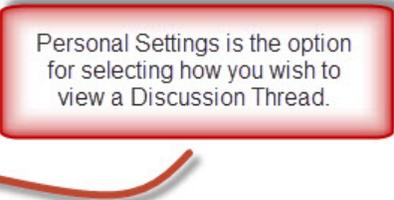
You can reply to any of the listed messages. Your reply will be added to the thread of that message.

Posting a Message in Discussions

To post a new discussion, click **Compose** at the top of the message list. The Compose screen appears, where you can enter the discussion text and click **Post** to post the discussion. When the discussion is posted, it will start a new thread.

Marking a Discussion Message as Read or Unread

If you are using the Grid Style message list, messages are automatically marked as read when you open them (depending on your site's configuration), but if you are using the Reading Style message list or you print messages to read them you will need to manually mark messages as read to indicate to the system that the message is no longer new.

In some cases you might also want to manually mark a message as unread — for example, if you open the message from the Grid Style message list but do not finish reading it.

Mark a message read or unread

Do one of the following:

- In the Grid Style message list, select one or more messages from the list and click the **Mark Read** or **Mark Unread** icon at the top of the list.
- In the Reading Style message list, click the **Mark Read** or **Mark Unread** link below the message header.
- In either view, to mark all messages in the topic read click **Mark All Read** on the action bar.

Rating a Message

To increase engagement in the Discussion forum, your instructor may allow you to rate messages using a five-star system. This rating system does not have any automatic grading functions and is not related to the Grades tool.

Flagging a Message in Discussions

Flagging messages is a good way to mark a message if you want to read it again later or monitor replies.

To flag or unflag a message, click the **Not Flagged – Click to Flag this item** or **Flagged – Click to Unflag this item** icon next to the message's subject.

You can quickly find your flagged messages by selecting "Flagged Only" from the **View** drop-down list at the top right of the message list.

Printing Messages in Discussions

If you are using the Grid Style message list, you can view messages in a printable format and send the messages to your printer.

1. In the Grid Style message list, select the messages you want to print.

2. Click the **View Selected Messages as Printable** icon at the top or bottom of the list.

3. Click the **Print** button.

You can save your message as a **Draft** instead of posting it right away. Saving a draft lets you return to the message later to edit it before posting it to the topic.