

# Participating in a Discussion

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Blackboard's discussion board is an important communication tool for online learning.

In the Discussion Board, people in the course share their thoughts and ideas with each other and essentially engage in "conversation".

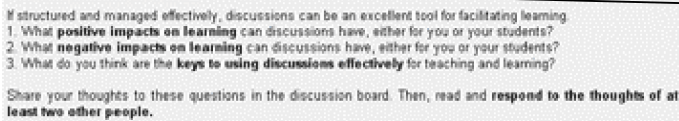
Accessing the Discussion Board

To get to a discussion forum, follow the steps below.

**Step 1:** Select the Discussion Board Button.



**Step 2:** Click the name of the forum in which you want to post a message.



If structured and managed effectively, discussions can be an excellent tool for facilitating learning.

1. What **positive impacts on learning** can discussions have, either for you or your students?
2. What **negative impacts on learning** can discussions have, either for you or your students?
3. What do you think are the **keys to using discussions effectively** for teaching and learning?

Share your thoughts to these questions in the discussion board. Then, read and **respond to the thoughts of at least two other people.**

This will take you into the discussion where you can read, post, and reply to messages

## Starting a New Thread

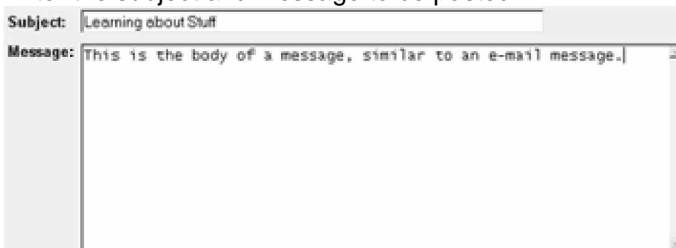
Starting a New Thread is the on-line version of beginning a new train of thought in a discussion.

To start a new thread, follow the 4 steps below.

**Step 1:** Click the Start New Thread button.



**Step 2:** Enter the subject and message to be posted.



Subject: Learning about Stuff

Message: This is the body of a message, similar to an e-mail message.

**Step 3:** Select the appropriate Options. The option you select will become the default for all replies.

Options:  Smart Text  Plain Text  HTML

**HTML:** Use this option when extensive HTML coding is used within the text.

**Plain Text:** This option is useful if the text contains HTML tags but you do not want the tags to be interpreted.

**Smart Text (default):** The line breaks (carriage returns) and simple HTML will be reflected in the finished posting. We recommend this option

**Step 4:** Click Submit to post your message.



You can preview your message before it is posted, by clicking on preview.

Your thread will be displayed with a **New** icon.

**Discussions for Teaching** **McNabb, Lee Anne** **Tue Dec 10 2002 10:05 am** **New**

## Reading/Replying to a Message

To read or reply to a message, follow the 7 steps below.

**Step 1:** Click the name of the forum you would like to enter.

[Discussions for Learning](#)

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**Step 2:** Click the subject title of the message to which you would like to respond.

[Re: Discussions for Teaching](#) [Whelan, Lynn](#) Tue May 7 2002 1:20 pm Date and time of message

Subject title of the message

**Step 3:** Click the Reply button to post a reply.

Reply

If you click on the name, Blackboard will try to e-mail the person directly. You must have e-mail set up on your browser for this feature to function properly.

**Step 4:** Enter the appropriate information in the text fields.

Subject:

Message:

**Note:** The message to which you are responding is displayed under the text fields for the reply.

### The Message To Which You Are Responding

Current Forum: Discussions for Learning Read 80 times

Date: Wed May 1 2002 11:00 am

Author: Boelryk, Annique <[aboelryk@georgianc.on.ca](mailto:aboelryk@georgianc.on.ca)>

Subject: Discussions for Teaching

Hi there

**Step 5:** Click Preview to view your message before it is posted. Click Submit to post your message.

Preview Cancel Submit

**Step 6:** Your message is posted and marked with the **New** icon.

[Re: Discussions for Teaching](#) [McNabb, Lee Anne](#) Tue Dec 10 2002 10:05 am **New**