

The Center for Teaching, Learning, & Technology

Instructional Technology Workshops



Blackboard 9.1 SP 13 Discussion Board

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CREATING DISCUSSIONS

THE DISCUSSION BOARD

Instructors have the same Discussion Board functions as students, with these additional functions:

- ✓ Create forums
- ✓ Edit forum settings
- ✓ Grade forums
- ✓ Manage forum roles
- ✓ Copy forums
- ✓ Delete forums

Discussion Board

Forums are made up of individual discussion threads that can be organized around a particular subject. Create Forums to organize discussions. [More Help](#)

Create Forum **A** Search ↑↓

<input type="checkbox"/>	Forum	Description	Total Posts	Unread Posts	Total Participants
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Global Warming	Please write what you think about Global Warming? Be specific!	0	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			0	0	0

Options Menu: Forum

- Open
- Edit **C**
- Grade
- Manage
- Copy
- Delete

Displaying 1 to 2 of 2 items | Show All | Edit Paging...

► Take Note

A. Create Forum – click to create a new forum and select settings.

B. Action Link – click to access the contextual menu for an item.

C. Contextual menu – select an option for the item.

CREATING FORUMS

Forum settings allow you to use the Discussion Board in different ways. For example, to control the forum, the instructor creates all threads, and moderates and grades the posts. For a student-led discussion, allow students to create new threads with the option of posting anonymously.

► QUICK STEPS: creating forums

1. On the main **Discussion Board** page, on the Action Bar, click **Create Forum**.
2. On the **Create Forum** page, type a **Name**. Users click this name to access the forum.
3. Optionally, type instructions or a description in the **Description** text box. Format the text using the Text Editor functions, if you want. The **Description** appears below the forum name.
4. Under **Forum Availability**, select the **Yes** option.
5. Select **Forum Settings**.
6. Click **Submit**.

Create Forum

Forums are made up of individual discussion threads that can be organized around a particular subject. Create Forums to organize discussions. [More Help](#)

* Indicates a required field.

Cancel

Submit

1. Forum Information

* Name **2**

Description

3

The **Declaration of Independence** is a statement adopted by the [Continental Congress](#) on July 4, 1776, which announced that the [thirteen American colonies](#), then at war with [Great Britain](#), regarded them selves as independent states, and no longer a part of the [British Empire](#). Instead they formed a union that would become a new nation—the [United States of America](#). [John Adams](#) was a leader in pushing for independence, which was unanimously approved on July 2. A [committee](#) had already drafted the formal declaration, to be ready when Congress voted on independence.

Path: p Words:0

2. Forum Availability

Available **4** Yes No

Enter Date and Time Restrictions

Display After

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

TIP: Create forums ahead of time and set the availability to **No** until the discussion is ready to start.

Blackboard 9.1 SP 13 – Discussion Board

3. Forum Settings

If a Due Date is set, submissions are accepted after this date, but are marked late.

Viewing Threads/Replies

- Standard View
 Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum

If participants are required to create threads in order to view other threads in the forum, they cannot delete or edit their own posts, and cannot post anonymously. Those options will be set for you automatically.

Grade

- No Grading in Forum
 Grade Discussion Forum Points possible:
 Grade Threads

Subscribe

- Do not allow subscriptions
 Allow members to subscribe to threads
 Allow members to subscribe to forum
 Include body of post in the email
 Include link to post

5

Create and Edit

- Allow Anonymous Posts
 Allow Author to Delete Own Posts
 All posts
 Only posts with no replies
 Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts
 Allow Members to Create New Threads
 Allow File Attachments
 Allow Users to Reply with Quote
 Force Moderation of Posts

Additional Options

- Allow Post Tagging
 Allow Members to Rate Posts

4. Submit

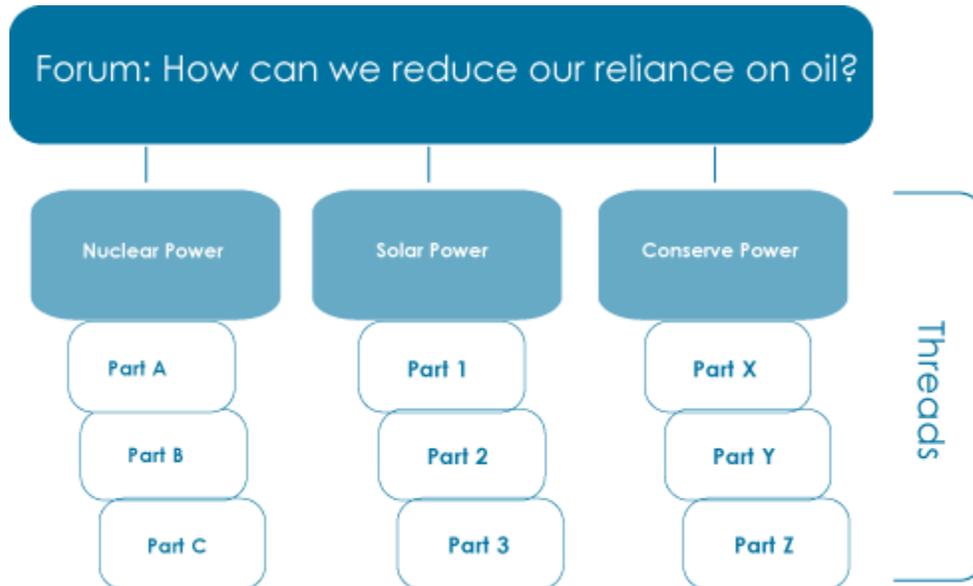
Click Submit to proceed. Click Cancel to quit.

Cancel

6
Submit

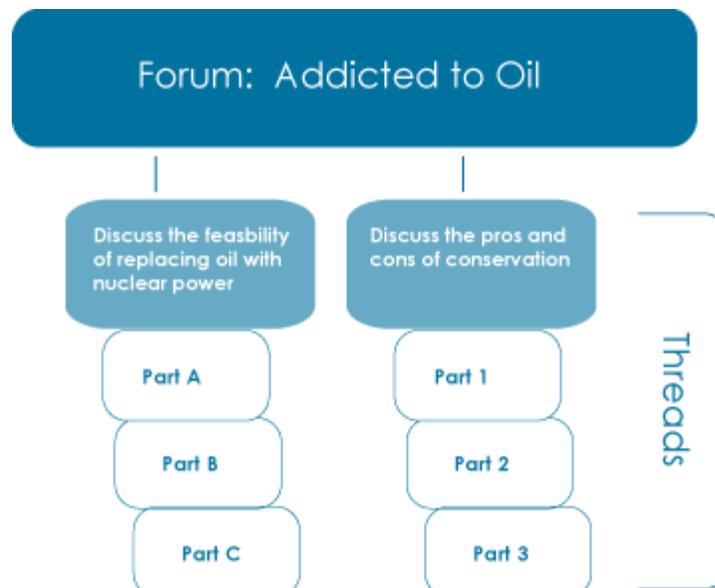
Suggestions for Organizing Discussions

The most common approach for organizing discussions is to type your discussion topic in the forum title and add details in the forum description.



1. Type a subject or a discussion question in the forum title and provide instructions or details in the description.
2. Allow students to create threads. In the preceding example, each thread represents a student's solution to the problem of oil addiction.
3. Users can post to existing threads to comment on given answers or create new threads to present new solutions.

Another approach is to pose the discussion question or topic in a thread. This can be an efficient way to organize related topics.



1. Type the general subject in the forum title.
2. Create threads containing the specific issues to be discussed.
3. In this case, consider disallowing thread creation, ensuring that students can only post to existing threads.

CREATING THREADS

Once in a forum, threads can be created. Users can create new threads, if the forum is set to allow users to add new threads and threads are not graded. Creating a thread as an instructor is the same as creating a thread as a student, with the option of grading the thread.

In the following example, a graded thread is created.

► QUICK STEPS: creating threads

1. Access the forum.
2. On the Action Bar, click **Create Thread**.
3. On the **Create Thread** page, type a **Subject**.
4. Type the reply in the **Message** text box. Format the text using the Text Editor functions, if you want.
5. Under **Attachments**, browse for a file to attach to your message. Use the Text Editor **Attach File** function to attach multiple files.
6. To add a grade column to the **Grade Center**, select the **Grade Thread** check box and type **Points possible**.
7. Click **Save Draft** to store a draft of the post or click **Submit**.

Forum: Declaration of Independence

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](#)

2

Create Thread

Subscribe

Search

Display ▾

If the forum is set to grade by thread, decide on a thread-by-thread basis whether to grade the thread.

The new thread appears in the forum.

Forum: Declaration of Independence

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](#)

Create Thread Subscribe Search Display ▾

Thread Actions ▾ Collect Delete

<input type="checkbox"/>	Date ▾	Thread	Author	Status	Unread Posts	Total Posts	Grade
<input type="checkbox"/>	1/2/14 11:33 AM	Lipsum	Delwar Sayeed	Published	0	1	Grade B
<input type="checkbox"/>	1/2/14 11:32 AM	Lorem Ipsum	Delwar Sayeed	Published	0	1	A Grade Thread

Thread Actions ▾ Collect Delete

► Take Note

In the **Grade** column:

- A. **Grade Thread** allows you to evaluate the posts.
- B. **Grade** allows you to enable grading for a thread and type a value

Allowing Email Subscriptions

Students can be allowed to either subscribe to an entire forum or to specific threads within a forum.

When email subscription is enabled, Blackboard Learn™ sends out email alerts if there are new posts or replies. The instructor decides whether the subscription email contains the entire message or a link to the message.

► QUICK STEPS: allowing email subscriptions

1. Click the forum’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit**.
3. On the **Edit Forum** page, under **Forum Settings**, select the **Subscribe** options.
4. Click **Submit**.

ADDING A FORUM TO A COURSE AREA

► QUICK STEPS: add a discussion forum to a course area

1. Access the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder where the forum will be linked.
2. Ensure **Edit Mode** is **ON**.
3. Point to **Add Interactive Tool** on the Action Bar.
4. Select **Discussion Board**.
5. On the **Create Link: Discussion Board** page, select **Link to Discussion Board Page** to link to the main page or select **Select a Discussion Board Forum** and select a forum from the list.
6. Click **Next**.
7. On the next **Create Link: Discussion Board** page, type a **Link Name**. Students click the Name to access the forum.
8. Optionally, add instructions or a description in the **Text** box. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text.
9. Select **Yes** for the **Available** option. Set other options as needed.
10. Click **Submit**.

ASSIGNING FORUM ROLES

► QUICK STEPS: assigning forum roles

1. Click the forum's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Manage**. A list of users appears.
3. On the **Manage Forum Users** page, click the user's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
 4. Select a new forum role. The new role appears in the **Forum Role** column for the user.

Discussion Board

Forums are made up of individual discussion discussions. [More Help](#)

Create Forum

Delete

<input type="checkbox"/>	Forum	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Glo...arming	Please write what
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		

Options Menu: Forum

- Open
- Edit
- Grade
- Manage **2**
- Copy
- Delete

Manage Forum Users

Edit a course member's forum role by selecting a new role in the forum

Forum Role

Edit Role

<input type="checkbox"/>	First Name	Last Name 3	Username
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Albert	Robinson	20080
<input type="checkbox"/>	Albert	Robinson	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Delwar	Sayed	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Stestpers	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Stestpers	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Stestpers	20040
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Stestperson4	20040

Change to Reader **4**

- Change to Manager
- Change to Builder
- Change to Moderator
- Change to Grader
- Change to Participant
- Change to Reader **4**
- Change to Reader

MODERATING POSTS

When a moderated forum is created, all posts to the forum are added to a Moderation Queue. The Moderator reviews each post and does one of following:

- ✓ Publishes the post
- ✓ Returns the post to the sender without a message
- ✓ Returns the post to the sender with a message

► QUICK STEPS: allowing moderation of posts

1. Click the forum's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit**.
3. On the **Edit Forum** page, under **Forum Settings**, select the **Force Moderation of Posts** check box and click **Submit**.
4. After posts have been submitted, access the forum.
5. On the Action Bar, click **Moderate Forum**.
6. On the **Moderation Queue** page, click **Moderate** next to the post.
7. Read posts and publish or return them by selecting the appropriate option. Optionally, type feedback in the text box and **Submit**.

COPYING FORUMS

Discussion forums can be copied and added to the current Discussion Board or to a Group Discussion Board in the same course. To copy a Discussion Board to another course, use the Course Copy utility.

► QUICK STEPS: copying forums

1. Click the forum's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Copy**.
3. On the **Copy Forum** page, type a **Name**.
4. Select the option to copy: **Entire forum** or **Forum settings only**.
5. Select the **Location** from the list.
6. Click **Submit**.

Copy Forum

Forums can be copied entirely including all the posts, or with settings only. Forums can be copied from a Course Discussion Board to one or more Group Discussion Boards. [More Help](#)

* Indicates a required field.

Cancel

Submit

1. Forum Information

Specify a name for the copy and a Discussion Board where the copy should be placed. Also select whether the entire forum or only its settings should be copied to the selected location. If copying the entire forum, all content except for uploaded file attachments will be copied to the new location.

* Name 3

Copy

Entire forum 4

Forum settings only

* Location 5

2. Submit

Click Submit to proceed. Click Cancel to quit.

Cancel

Submit 6

NOTE: Discussion forums copied to a Group Discussion Board only include messages authored by the Group's members.

Example: Copy forum settings only

Copy the settings of a forum with research paper instructions because a new forum is needed for another activity with identical settings.

Example: Copy the entire forum

If two distinct topics emerge during a discussion, it is possible to create separate forums for these topics. Copy the forum and then delete the off-topic postings from each forum.

When content is copied, all threads and replies appear in the new location, along with any file attachments.

Deleting Forums and Threads

NOTE: Do not delete graded forums or threads unless the grades are no longer needed in the Grade Center.

► QUICK STEPS: deleting forums and threads

1. Select the check box next to the item or items to delete.

- On the Action Bar, click **Delete**.



On the **Thread Detail** page, you can delete individual messages when viewing a post within a thread.

GRADING DISCUSSIONS

ASSIGNING FORUM GRADES

Discussion grades can be assigned within the forum or thread. Students can be graded on their participation in a discussion, on the quality of their postings, or a combination of the two. Rubrics can be created and used to grade forums and threads, but the rubrics must be created and added to the appropriate Grade Center columns in advance. First, we will look at grading forums.

Reminder: Grading options are enabled when the forum is created or by editing the forum. Once grading has been enabled, a Grade Center column is created.

► QUICK STEPS: assigning forum grades

- Click the forum's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
- Select **Grade**.
- On the **Grade Forum Users** page, click **Grade** from a user's row.
- The **Grade Forum** page for the user appears with a collection of the user's posts and a side panel containing three sections:
 - Forum Statistics:** Includes information about the user's posts, such as **Date of Last Post**, **Average Post Length**, and **Average Post Position**.
 - Forum Grade:** Grade, Feedback, and Grading Notes are added in this section. The Grade Date appears here also.
 - Contributors:** Users, who have submitted one or more posts, appear with exclamation marks, the needs grading icon. Use the **Previous User** and **Next User** arrows in this section to navigate among users to grade or click a user's name in the list. Click **Show All** to see all users in the course; users who have not posted to the graded forum are included in this list. Click **Show with Posts Only** to return to the list of users who have posts needing a grade.
- In the content frame, evaluate the currently selected user's posts and click **Edit Grade** in the **Forum Grade** section.

6. Type a point total in the **Current Grade Value** text box. **Note:** If a Rubric has been created for this graded forum, click **View Rubric**.
7. Optionally, type **Feedback** for the user and **Grading Notes**, which appear to the forum Manager or Grader only. Optionally, use the **Spell Check** function in the bottom of each text box.
8. Click **Text Editor** to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.
9. Click **Save Grade** to add the Feedback, Grade, and Grading Notes to the **Forum Grade** section and to the Grade Center.
10. The Grade or Feedback can be edited by clicking the **Edit Grade** function again at any time. The changes appear in the **Forum Grade** section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the **Grade History** tab on the user's **Grade Details** page.
11. When grading is complete, click **OK** to return to the **Grade Forum Users** page or use the breadcrumbs to return to the Discussion Board.

Note: Only users with a role of Manager or Grader can add grades for posts. A Grader cannot view his or her own work.

The image shows two parts of the Blackboard interface. On the left, a forum thread titled 'Evolution Talk' is selected, and an options menu is open. The menu items are: Edit, Grade (circled in red with a '2'), Manage, Copy, and Delete. A red circle with a '1' is placed over the 'Evolution Talk' title. On the right, the 'Grade Discussion Forum Users' page is shown. It features a table with columns: Last Name, First Name, Username, Posts, Grade, and a 'Grade' button for each user. A red circle with a '3' is placed over the 'Grade' column header. The table lists five users: Brown, Casper, Cooper, and Durand, each with a 'Grade' button highlighted in a yellow box.

Last Name	First Name	Username	Posts	Grade	Grade
Brown	Tony	ttbrown	3	--	Grade
Casper	Chris	cccasper	0	--	Grade
Cooper	Ashby	aacooper	2	--	Grade
Durand	Porter	ppdurand	2	--	Grade

Since a forum grade can be based on multiple posts within multiple threads, all messages posted by the student are included for review. You can also view information about the posts, such as the number of posts the student contributed and the average post length. Filter, sort, and print the posts using the functions on the Action Bar.

Grade Discussion Forum: Tony Brown 4

Print Preview Filter

Sort by Order

Mark
 Select: [All](#) [None](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Thread: I got a few good shots</p> <p>Post: I got a few good shots</p> <p>Author: Tony Brown</p>	<p>Posted Date: June 20, 2011 5:32 PM</p> <p>Status: Published</p>
--------------------------	---	--

Well, I finally tried and got a few good shots of the moon and one good shot of Saturn.

I used a 4.5" zhumell eclipse telescope with a 20mm and 9mm lense and a SONY Cybershot digital camera just put up to the lense.

The best moon shot was with a wide angle (20mm) and a zoomed in (9mm). The only good shot of Saturn was with the 9mm.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Thread: Saturn</p> <p>Post: RE: Saturn</p> <p>Author: Tony Brown</p>	<p>Posted Date: June 17, 2011 9:15 AM</p> <p>Status: Published</p>
--------------------------	---	--

Hey, my uncle owns a photography place and he said when he does a prime focus,

Forum Statistics

Statistics for: Tony Brown

Total Posts: 3

Date of Last Post: Jun 20, 2011 5:32:22 PM

Average Post Length: 238

Minimum Post Length: 96

Maximum Post Length: 379

Average Post Position: 2

Forum Grade

5

Grade for: Tony Brown

Grade: -- out of 10

Grade Date: --

Feedback: --

Grading Notes: --

Contributors

- Ashby Cooper (2) !
- Henry Wagner (1) !
- Javier Perez (1) !

The grade is added to the Discussion Board's **Grade** column on the **Grade Forum Users** page, as well as to the Grade Center.

ASSIGNING THREAD GRADES

If **Grade Threads** was enabled during forum creation, grades can be assigned for threads within that forum.

NOTE: Students cannot create new threads in a forum where threads are graded.

► QUICK STEPS: assigning thread grades

1. Click the forum containing the thread you want to grade.
2. In **List View**, on the thread listing page, click **Grade Thread** in the thread's row.
3. On the **Grade Thread Users** page, click **Grade** from a user's row.
4. The **Thread Grade** page for the user appears with a collection of the user's posts and a side panel containing three sections:
 - a. **Thread Statistics:** Includes information about the user's posts, such as **Date of Last Post**, **Average Post Length**, and **Average Post Position**.
 - b. **Thread Grade:** Grade, Feedback, and Grading Notes are added in this section. The Grade Date appears here also.
 - c. **Contributors:** Users, who have submitted one or more posts, appear with exclamation marks, the needs grading icon. Use the **Previous User** and **Next User** arrows in this section to navigate among users to grade or click a user's name in the list. Click **Show All** to see all users in the course; users who have not posted to the graded thread are included in this list. Click **Show with Posts Only** to return to the list of users who have posts needing a grade.
5. In the content frame, evaluate the currently selected user's posts and click **Edit Grade** in the **Thread Grade** section.
6. Type a point total in the **Current Grade Value** text box. **Note:** If a Rubric has been created for this graded thread, click **View Rubric**.
7. Optionally, type **Feedback** for the user and **Grading Notes**, which appear to the Discussion Board Manager or Grader only. Optionally, use the **Spell Check** function in the bottom of each text box.
8. Click **Text Editor** to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.
9. Click **Save Grade** to add the Feedback, Grade, and Grading Notes to the **Thread Grade** section and to the Grade Center.
10. The Grade or Feedback can be edited by clicking the **Edit Grade** function again at any time. The changes appear in the **Thread Grade** section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the **Grade History** tab on the user's **Grade Details** page.
11. When grading is complete, click **OK** to return to the **Grade Thread Users** page or use the breadcrumbs to return to the Discussion Board.

Note: Only users with a role of Manager or Grader can add grades for posts. A Grader cannot view his or her own work.

List View

Tree View

Forum: Pluto Controversy

Create Thread

Search

Display ▾

Thread Actions ▾ Collect Delete

<input type="checkbox"/>	Date ▾	Thread	Author	Status	Unread Posts	Total Posts	Grade 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	6/15/11 2:30 PM	Pluto Opinion	Cathy Chu	Published	7	7	Grade Thread

Grade Discussion Thread Users

Email

<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name ▾	First Name	Username	Posts	Grade 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	tbrown	1	Grade
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	ccasper	1	Grade

When **Grade** is selected in the user's row, the student's post or posts made to the individual thread appear. Just as with forum grading, review and add the grade in the side panel. After a grade has been assigned, it is saved in the Discussion Board and the Grade Center.

Grade Discussion Thread: Chris Casper

Print Preview
Filter

Sort by Date of Last Post Order ▼ Descending

Mark ▼

Select: [All](#) [None](#)

Thread:	Pluto Opinion	Posted Date:	June 15, 2011 4:29 PM
Post:	I have to vote no	Status:	Published
Author:	Chris Casper		

Alas, Pluto, which is small and icy and orbits just beyond Neptune and has an eccentric orbit that is tipped out of the plane of the solar system, is none other than a Kuiper belt object—a leftover comet from the solar system's formation. If Pluto's orbit were ever altered so that it journeyed as close to the Sun as Earth, Pluto would grow a tail and look like a jumbo comet. No other planet can make this (possibly embarrassing) claim.

Source:
http://www.planetary.org/explore/topics/topten/tyson_pluto_is_not.html

Reply Quote Mark as Read

Select: [All](#) [None](#)

Mark ▼

Thread Statistics 4

Statistics for: Chris Casper

Total Posts: 1

Date of Last Post: Jun 15, 2011 4:29:50 PM

Average Post Length: 641

Minimum Post Length: 641

Maximum Post Length: 641

Average Post Position: 2

Thread Grade

Edit Grade 5

Grade for: Chris Casper

Grade: -- out of 10 View Rubric

Grade Date: --

Feedback: --

Grading Notes: --

Contributors < >

Show All

- Chris Casper** (1) !
- Henry Wagner (1) !
- Javier Perez (1) !
- Linda Herrera (1)
- Ryan Johnson (1) !
- Tony Brown (1) !

NOTE: When you create a thread in a forum where you have enabled thread grading, you can select the **Grade Thread** option and add points possible. At a later time, if you did NOT select the **Grade Thread** option when creating the thread, you can still grade the thread by clicking **Grade** in the thread's **Grade** column on the thread listing page. Because you enabled the grading of threads for the entire forum, you can decide on a thread-by-thread basis to grade a thread at any time. The following image shows the **Grade** column and the **Grade** and **Grade Thread** functions.

EMAILING STUDENTS WHEN ASSIGNING GRADES

While assigning grades, you can use the Email tool in the Discussion Board to quickly contact students. For example, send a student a question prior to assigning a grade or send feedback after assigning a grade.

► QUICK STEPS: emailing students when assigning grades

1. Navigate to the forum or thread to assign a grade.
2. On the **Grade Thread Users** page or the **Grade Forum Users** page, select the check box for the user you want to email.
3. On the Action Bar, click **Email**.
4. On the **Email Forum User** page, edit the **Subject**, if you want. Type a question or feedback in the **Message** text box.
5. Click **Submit**.

Grade Discussion Thread Users

Grades entered or changed here are automatically entered or changed

Email 3

<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name ▲	First Name	Username
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robinson 2	Albert	200805

Email Forum User

Cancel
Submit 5

1. Email Information

To **Albert Robinson**

From delwar.sayed@bcc.cuny.edu

Subject 4

Message

T T T
Arial
3 (12pt)
T
☰
☰
ABC
🔗
📎
📄
📄

Hi Albert,