

Discussion Forums and Topics

The Discussions Tool

As its name implies, the Discussions tool is used to facilitate class discussions. Your instructor will typically post a discussion topic related to the course material and you and your classmates respond by posting messages. The Discussions tool is much like a message board in an online community, as communication does not take place in real time and messages are typically organized into threads.

Topic

Introduce Yourself  **Discussion Topic**

 Locked before Friday, April 13, 2018 2:14 PM EDT.

The purpose of this discussion topic is for you to introduce yourself to the class and to get to know your instructor and classmates.

Write a self introduction describing a little about you. Don't forget to use proper "[Netiquette](#)."

Be sure to address each of the following:

- Background (e.g., hometown, where you live, prior education etc.)
- Academic / Career Goals (e.g., career aspirations, why you are taking this course, etc.)
- Hobbies and Interests (e.g., things you are doing when you're not working or studying, etc.)
- Something interesting or unusual about yourself (e.g., a interesting life experience, special skill, talent, etc.)

Respond to at least 2 of your classmates.

Discussions Features

The Discussions tool has the following features:

- You may be allowed to rate messages using a five-star rating system.

- You can attach files to messages. For example, you might want to attach a document to allow your peers to review it and provide comments.
- You may be allowed to edit your messages after you have posted them.
- Your instructor may create a topic that is assigned specifically to a group of which you are a member.
- Your instructor may lock a topic, so that the messages are read-only and you cannot post any new messages.
- Discussion topics may be gradable, meaning that your participation in the discussion will be counted towards your final grade for the course.

The Discussions tool appears on the course navigational bar. If you click the **Discussions** link, you are taken to the main screen for the Discussions tool. Alternatively, your instructor may add a link to a discussion **topic** to the Action Menu of a learning module. If you click the discussion topic link in a module, you are taken to a screen that contains that specific discussion topic.

Finding Messages

Once a discussion gets going, new messages can come in very quickly. To help you keep on top of things, new messages are identified in a number of places.

On your course homepage, the **Updates** widget lists the total number of unread messages for all discussion topics in your course.

On the main discussions page, the number of unread messages appears beneath each topic. To see only topics with new messages, select **Topics with Unread** from the **Display** drop-down list. If you have the **Discussions List** pane visible you can see topics with unread messages in bold.

Columbus State University vigorously promotes the use of online discussions as a critical medium for developing a cohesive online learning community.

Discussion Forum and Topic List

Discussion forums and topics are listed on the main screen of the Discussions tool. Your instructor may provide a brief description of the topic, elaborating on the subject or providing instructions or suggestions. You and your classmates can post messages in response to the topic as well as respond to one another's messages.

You enter the discussion board by clicking on a discussion topic. Each discussion forum (e.g., Module Discussions) may have one or more topics associated with it. The numbers of posted messages are shown below the discussion topic name (e.g., 23). You enter the discussion topic by selecting the topic name. Once inside the topic you can navigate through the various threads by clicking on the Subject. Using the + and – signs you can minimize the viewing threads as well.

To return to the full Forums and Topics list, you can use the **Back to Forums & Topics List** link at the top right of the window.

You can also use the **Expand** icon beside Discussion Topics to expand the views.

Discussion Threads

A series of replies to the same message is called a **thread**. You are probably already familiar with threads, as threads in the Discussions tool are just like the threads that are created in a typical email. For example, when someone sends you an email and you reply to it, the subject heading does not change and the sender's message appears below yours; this is a thread. Alternatively, if you were to compose a *new message* rather than *reply* to the original message, the messages are not threaded.

As stated in the syllabus, an "adequate discussion post/response" is one which contributes to the discussion significantly.

Prompts:

1. Where were you born and where do you live now?
2. What degree program are you in at CSU and why did you choose that path?
3. What is your favorite hobby and what do you like most about it?

This is how a Discussion Thread will look in a "Grid Style" setting. You may choose to display threads in "Reading Style" view which will open each

P.S. Be sure to check out your instructor's profile as well!

Search For: Search [Show Search Options](#)

			Subject	Authored By	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>			Cougar Girl says hey!	Teach3 Student	Oct 26, 2012
<input type="checkbox"/>			Hey Everyone! Nice to Meet You!!!	Teach3 Student	Oct 26, 2012
<input type="checkbox"/>			Student 1 says "hello!"	Teach3 Student	Oct 26, 2012
<input type="checkbox"/>			Re: Student 1 says "hello!"	Teach3 Student	Oct 26, 2012
<input type="checkbox"/>			Re: Student 1 says "hello!"	Teach3 Student	Oct 26, 2012

There can be multiple threads within a topic. Discussions are time sensitive and may be locked or removed as the semester goes on.