

Faculty Tutorial:

Create a Discussion Forum and Thread and Grade a Discussion Forum

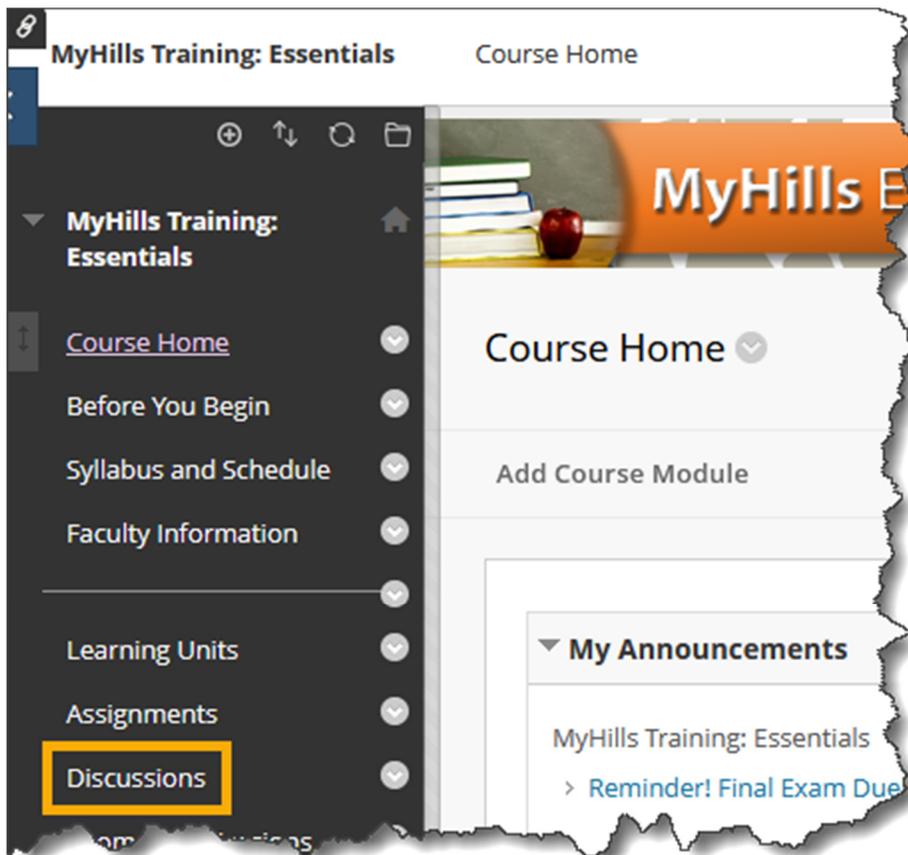
Purpose: To show faculty how to create a “Discussion Forum,” a “Discussion Thread,” and add a “Discussion Forum Link” to a learning unit, and how to grade a “Discussion Forum.”

Note: The “Discussion Board” is an area in a MyHills course in which one or more “Discussion Forums” live. There is one “Discussion Board” per course. A “Discussion Forum” is an area where users discuss a single topic or several topics related to the course. There may be one or more “Discussion Forums” on the “Discussion Board.” A “Discussion Thread” is an actual conversation taking place in a “Discussion Forum.”

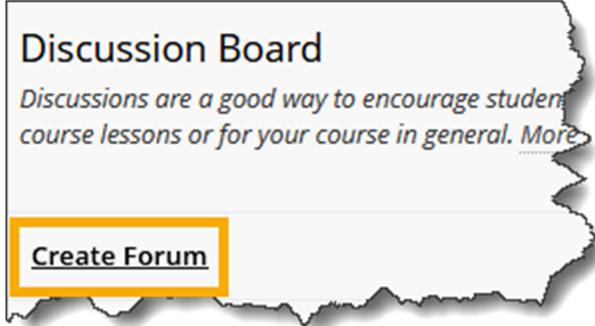
First, let’s create a “Discussion Forum.”

From within your course, click “Discussions,” which is located in the black “Course Menu.”

Note: You may also access “Discussions” by clicking “Course Tools,” and then clicking “Discussion Board.”



On the "Discussion Board" page, select "Create Forum."



The "Create Forum" page will open. Under "Forum Information," type the title of the discussion forum in the "Name" box.

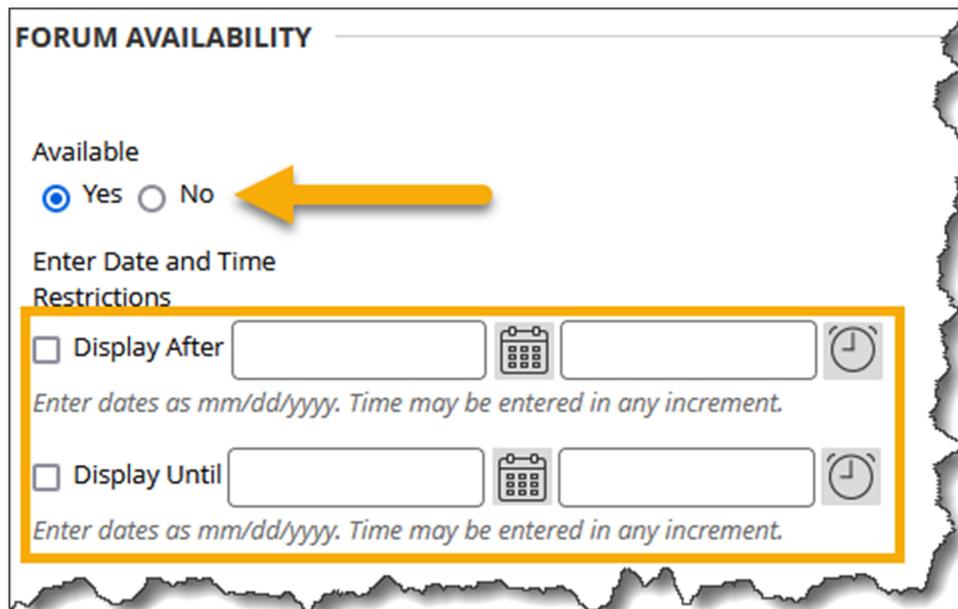
Note: The orange asterisk indicates that this is a required field.

Type a description for the forum in the "Description" text box.

Note: The "Description" text box is optional and not required.

A screenshot of a web form titled "FORUM INFORMATION". The form has two main sections: "Name" and "Description". The "Name" section has a label with an orange asterisk and a text input field containing "Introduce Yourself". The "Description" section has a label and a text area containing the text: "Please take a moment to introduce yourself to the class. What is your name and where are you from? What hobbies/activities do you enjoy? What do you hope to get out of this course?". Above the text area is a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for text formatting, alignment, and insertion. The "Name" field and the description text area are both highlighted with a thick orange border.

Under “Forum Availability” keep “Yes” selected for “Available.” This ensures that the forum is available to students. If you would like the forum to only be available for a particular time frame, you may set time and date restrictions. Check the box next to “Display After” and/or “Display Until.” Then, click the calendar icon to select a date and the clock icon to select a time.



FORUM AVAILABILITY

Available

Yes No

Enter Date and Time Restrictions

Display After  

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

Display Until  

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

Under “Forum Settings,” “Standard View” will be selected by default. The option “**Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum**” requires students to post to the forum *before* they can view what others have posted.

Note: If you choose the post first option and the description field is empty, you will be prompted to enter instructions in that area.



FORUM SETTINGS

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

Viewing Threads/
Replies

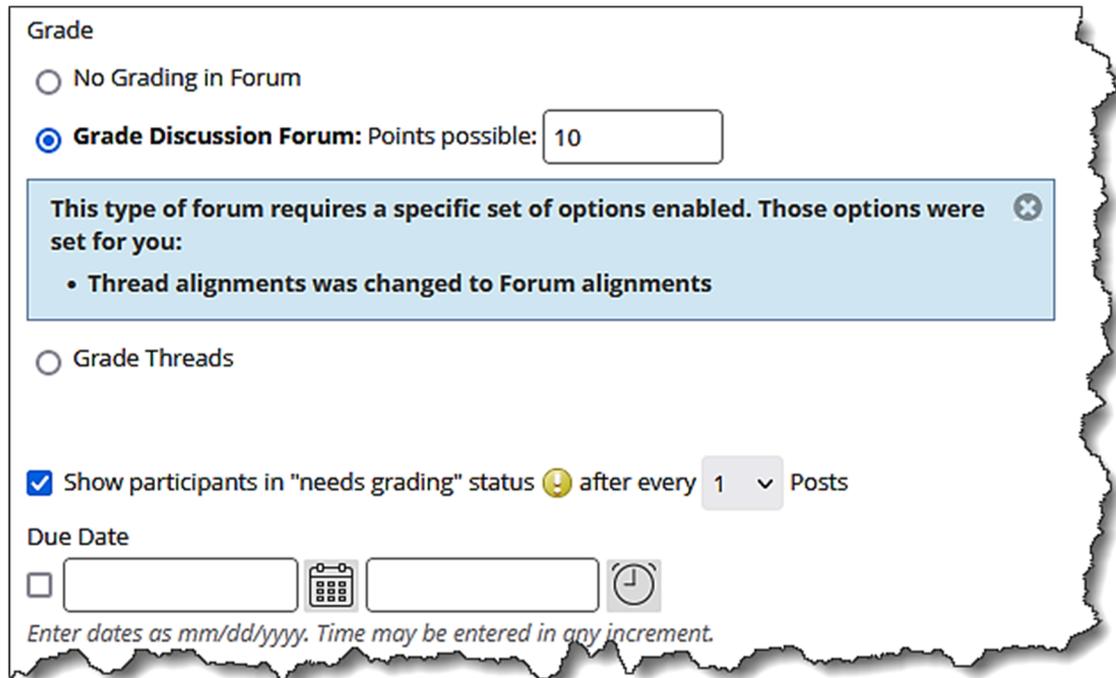
Standard View

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.

For “Grade,” select “Grade Discussion Forum” and enter the number of points possible in the box provided.

Note: Only keep the default setting “No Grading in Forum” if you do not want to grade the discussion forum. This is not recommended, as students are much more likely to post to the forum if points are awarded. However, open forums, created only for students to ask general question, need not be graded.



Grade

No Grading in Forum

Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible:

This type of forum requires a specific set of options enabled. Those options were set for you:

- Thread alignments was changed to Forum alignments

Grade Threads

Show participants in "needs grading" status ⚠ after every Posts

Due Date

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

If you would like users to appear in the “needs grading” area of the course after they have posted to the forum the required number of times, keep the box next to “Show participants in needs grading status...” checked. Then, select the number of required posts from the drop-down menu by clicking the arrow.

Note: To view students who are in “needs grading” status, click “Grade Center,” which is located in the “Course Management” menu. Then, in the sub-menu that opens, click “Needs Grading.” For more information on the “Grade Center,” see the appropriate tutorial.

When “Grade Discussion Forum” is selected, you have the option to enter a “Due Date” for the forum. Click the check box to select this option. Then, click the calendar icon to select a date and the clock icon to select a time.

Note: It is recommended that you enter a “Due Date” for the forum, as then it will appear for students in their “To Do” module on the “Course Home” page. However, students may still post to the forum after the “Due Date” has passed. If you do not want students to post to the forum after a certain date and time, limit the availability of the forum, which is shown earlier in this tutorial.

Grade

No Grading in Forum

Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible:

This type of forum requires a specific set of options enabled. Those options were set for you:

- Thread alignments was changed to Forum alignments

Grade Threads

Show participants in "needs grading" status after every Posts

Due Date

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

Choose “Grade Threads” if you want to grade student responses to threads you create. Students will not be allowed to create new threads when “Grade Threads” is selected.

Note: “Grade Threads” may only be selected for a “Standard View” discussion forum.

Grade

No Grading in Forum

Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible:

This type of forum requires a specific set of options enabled. Those options were set for you:

- Thread alignments was changed to Forum alignments

Grade Threads

Show participants in "needs grading" status after every Posts

Due Date

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

When “Grade Threads” is selected, specific options will be selected in the forum automatically.

Note: You will choose the points possible for the thread when the thread is created.

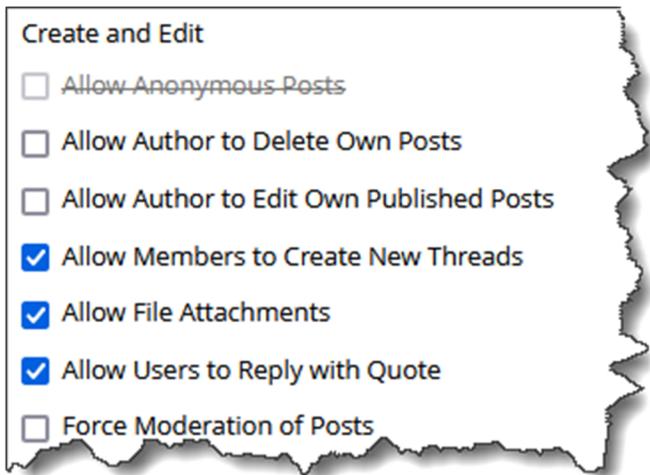
When students *subscribe* to the discussion forum, they will receive an email to their Indian Hill email account *every* time there is a new post or reply. If you would like to give students the *option* to subscribe to the forum, keep the default setting, “Allow members to subscribe to forum” selected.

Note: Since an email is sent *every* time there is a new post or reply in the forum, this can overwhelm a person’s email account very quickly. Therefore, allowing subscriptions is not recommended. The recommended setting is “Do not allow subscriptions.”



The email notification that students receive when they subscribe to a discussion forum will include either a link to the post or the post itself will be included in the body of the text, depending on the option selected by the instructor.

Note: “Include link to post” will be selected by default and is the recommended setting if you would like to allow subscriptions because only a link to the forum, as opposed to the entire post, will be sent to students via email. Remember “Do not allow subscriptions” is the recommended setting.



“Allow Anonymous Posts” will **not** be checked by default. It is recommended that you keep this option unchecked, because students should be held accountable for what they post. This is particularly important if something inappropriate were to be posted to your course.

It is **not** recommended to “Allow Author to Delete Own Posts,” as this option would allow students to delete posts that have already been published.

Note: If you do decide to allow students to delete their published posts, you have the option to allow them to delete “All posts” or “Only posts with no replies.”

It is recommended that the box next to “Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts” **not** be checked as this option would allow students to change what they have already posted. This can create confusion if posts are graded.

If you would like to allow students to create new threads, then keep “Allow Members to Create New Threads” checked. If you would only like students to respond to threads that you post, then uncheck this option.

Note: “Allow Members to Create New Threads” will be unchecked automatically when “Grade Threads” is selected and will be checked automatically when “Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum” is selected.

“Allow File Attachments” permits students to upload files to the Discussion Forum. Then, every other member of the forum must download the file in order to view it. Overall, this can be very inconvenient and time consuming, so it is **not** a recommended setting. However, if you wish to have students create posts using audio and video, this setting **MUST** be checked.

“Allow Users to Reply with Quote” gives users the option to quote the post in which they are replying. This is **not** recommended, as it can make posts very lengthy.

“Force Moderation of Posts” requires the instructor to approve each post before it is published. This setting is only recommended if there are issues in a discussion forum, and the instructor feels it is necessary to check each post before it is published.

Users can “tag” posts with words or phrases when “Allow Post Tagging” is checked. This can make searching for posts on a particular topic easier.

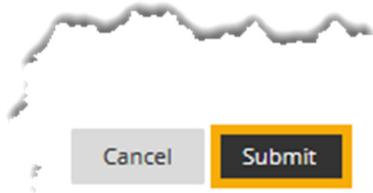
“Allow Members to Rate Posts” adds an additional social element to discussions, but can also create unintended challenges, as students rate posts made by one another and the professor.



Additional Options

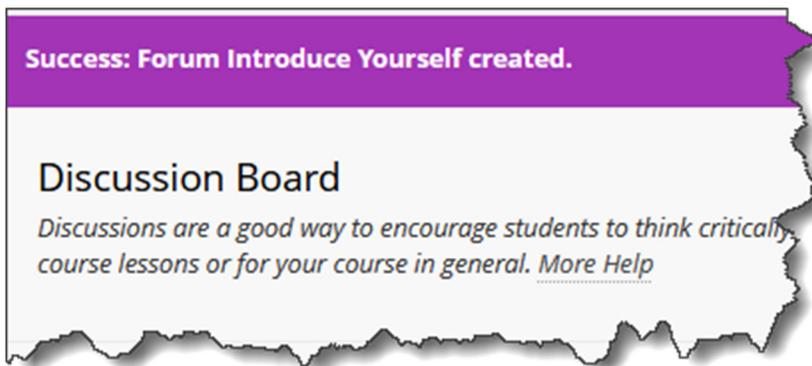
- Allow Post Tagging
- Allow Members to Rate Posts

Once you have made your selections, click “**Submit.**”



Cancel Submit

A success message will appear at the top of the “Discussion Board” page, and the forum you created will appear under “Create Forum.”



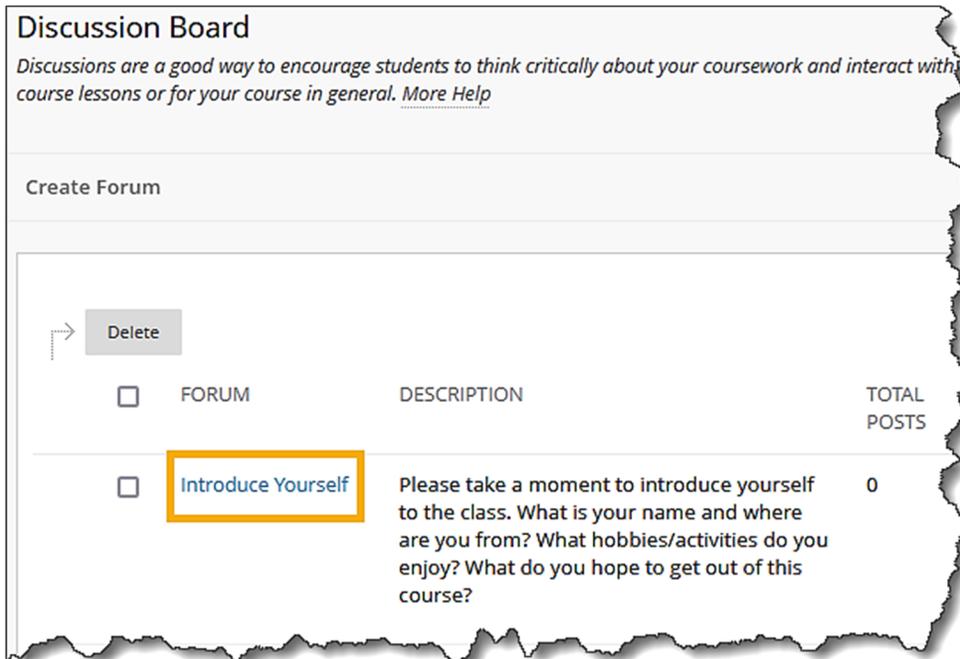
Success: Forum Introduce Yourself created.

Discussion Board

Discussions are a good way to encourage students to think critically, course lessons or for your course in general. [More Help](#)

Now, let's create a "Discussion Thread."

From the Discussion Board page, click the name of the Discussion Forum in which you would like to start a thread.



Discussion Board
Discussions are a good way to encourage students to think critically about your coursework and interact with course lessons or for your course in general. [More Help](#)

Create Forum

Delete

<input type="checkbox"/>	FORUM	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL POSTS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduce Yourself	Please take a moment to introduce yourself to the class. What is your name and where are you from? What hobbies/activities do you enjoy? What do you hope to get out of this course?	0

On the "Forum" page, select "Create Thread."



Forum: Introduce Yourself
Forums are made up of individual discussion threads that can be viewed and all replies to it. When you access a forum, a list of threads

Create Thread Grade Discussion Forum Subs

The "Create Thread" page will open.

The "Forum Description" will appear at the top of the page.
Under "Message," type the title of your thread in the "Subject" box.
Next, type what you would like to say in the "Message" box.

You can edit your post using the WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor, above the text box. You may change the font, add images, create a bulleted or numbered list, use spell check, etc. Hover your cursor over a button to view its function.

FORUM DESCRIPTION

Please take a moment to introduce yourself to the class. What is your name and where are you from? What hobbies/activities do you enjoy? What do you hope to get out of this course?

MESSAGE

* Subject

Welcome - I'm Professor Mentor

Message

For the toolbar, press ALT+F10 (PC) or ALT+FN+F10 (Mac).

Rich text editor toolbar: Bold (B), Italic (I), Underline (U), Undo, Paragraph, Open Sans, ari..., 10pt, Bulleted list, Numbered list, Text color, Background color, Strikethrough (I_x), and a menu icon.

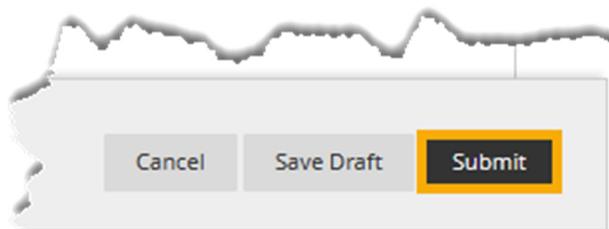
Rich text editor toolbar: Source code, Undo, Redo, Bulleted list, Numbered list, Indent, Outdent, X², X₂, Link, Unlink, Text color, Background color, ABC, and a checkmark.

Rich text editor toolbar: Text color, Background color, Font size, Font family, Paragraph, Bulleted list, Numbered list, Indent, Outdent, X², X₂, Link, Unlink, Text color, Background color, ABC, and a checkmark.

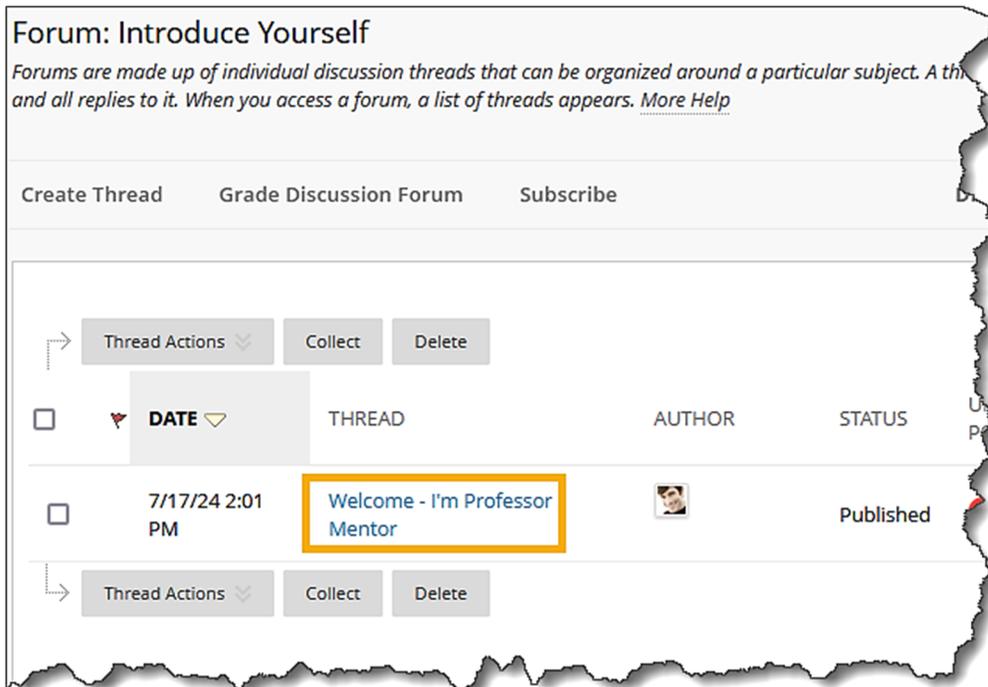
Message body: Hello, and welcome! My name is Jordan Mentor. I am pleased to be your instructor for this course. I was born and raised in Ottumwa, Iowa. I earned my bachelor's and master's degrees online, allowing me to stay in the area, which is good, because that's how I eventually met my future wife. I am married and have two children: a daughter, who is five, and a son, who is two. They keep my wife and me very busy, but we wouldn't have it any other way! In my spare time (of which I have very little), I enjoy extreme cardio workouts, rocking out on my guitar, playing Playstation with my pals, and attending fine arts events hosted by Indian Hills. I hope you enjoy the course!

Once you are ready to post your initial Discussion Thread message, click **“Submit.”**

Note: If you are not yet ready to post, you may select “Save Draft” instead of “Submit.” Then, you may edit and post at a later time.

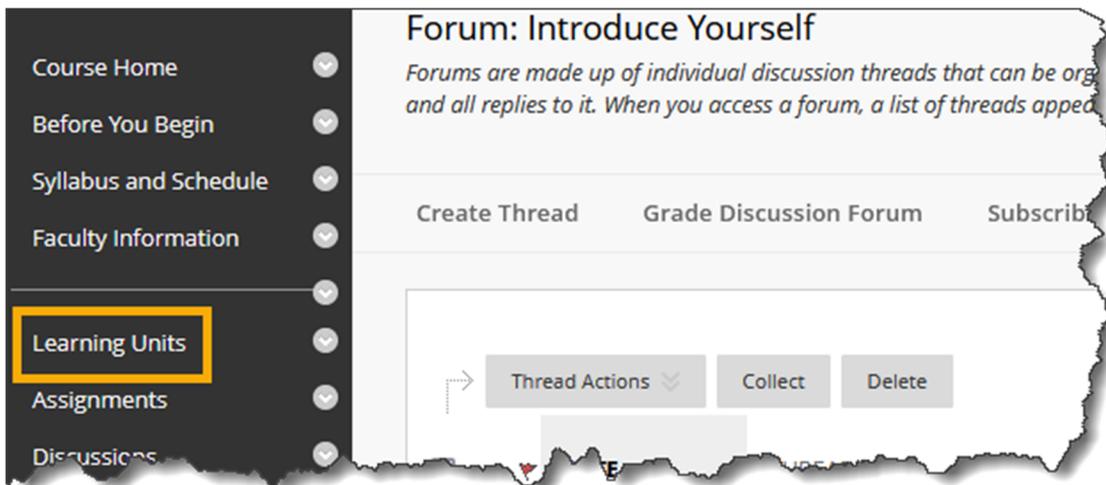


A “Success” message will appear on the “Forum” page, along with the “Discussion Thread” you created.

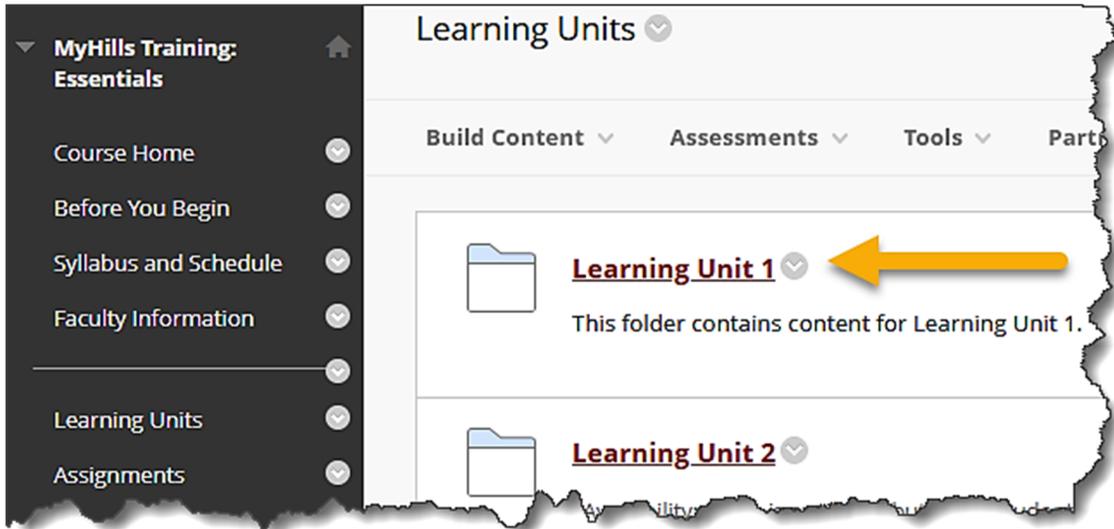


Now, let’s add a link to the “Discussion Forum” we created in a learning unit of the course.

In the black Course Menu, select “**Learning Units.**”

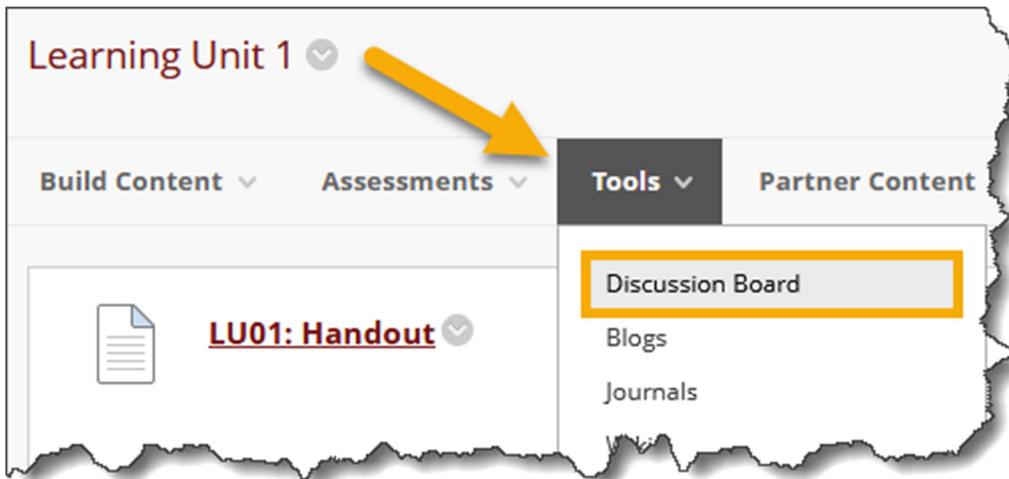


Select the learning unit to which you would like to add the link.



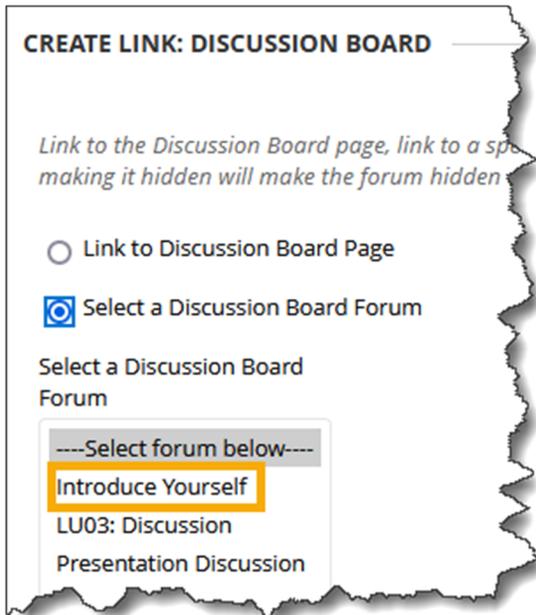
Once you are in the learning unit in which you would like to add the link, hover over “Tools.”

In the sub-menu that opens, select “Discussion Board.”

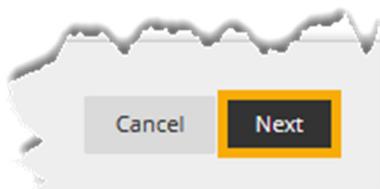


The “Create Link: Discussion Board” page will open.

Under “Create Link: Discussion Board,” click the radio button to the left of “**Select a Discussion Board Forum.**” Then, select the discussion forum you created in the “Select a Discussion Board Forum” box.



Click “Next.”



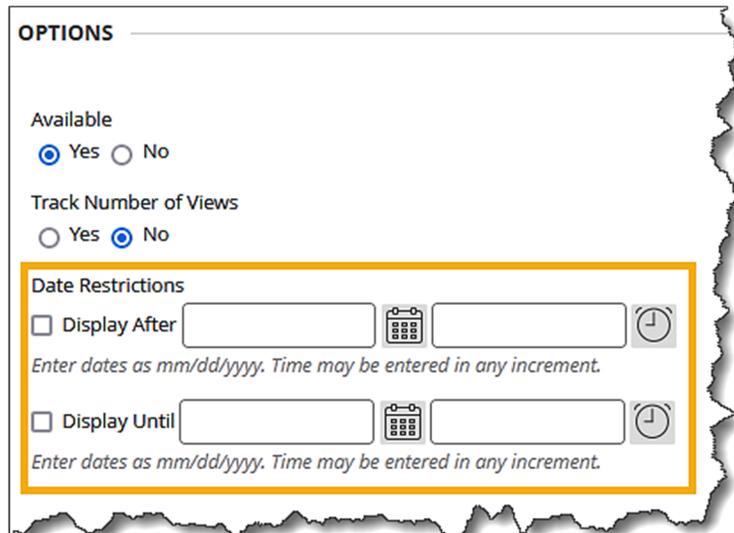
On the next page, the “Link Name” field will automatically be populated with the “Name” of the Discussion Forum (shown earlier in this tutorial).

Note: It is recommended that you do not change this.



If you selected time and date restrictions for the discussion forum (shown earlier in the tutorial) you may want to set the same time and date restrictions for the discussion forum link. Check the box next to “Display After” and/or “Display Until.” Then, click the calendar icon to select a date and the clock icon to select a time.

Note: The “Date Restrictions” set here only apply to the discussion forum link. They do not apply to the discussion forum itself.



OPTIONS

Available
 Yes No

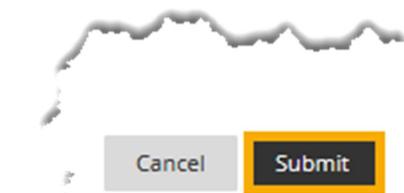
Track Number of Views
 Yes No

Date Restrictions

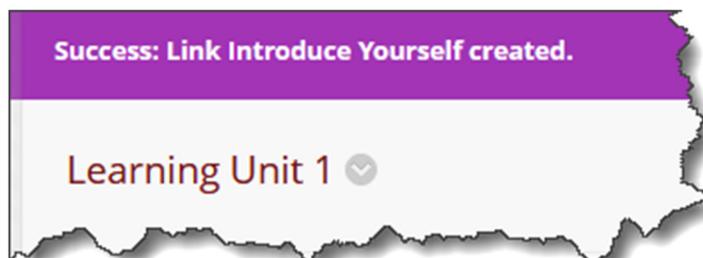
Display After  
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

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

Once you have selected your options, click “**Submit.**”



You will be taken back to the selected learning unit. A “Success...” message will appear at the top of the page.



The discussion forum link will be the last item listed on this page. Both students and the instructor may access the discussion forum by clicking the discussion forum link.

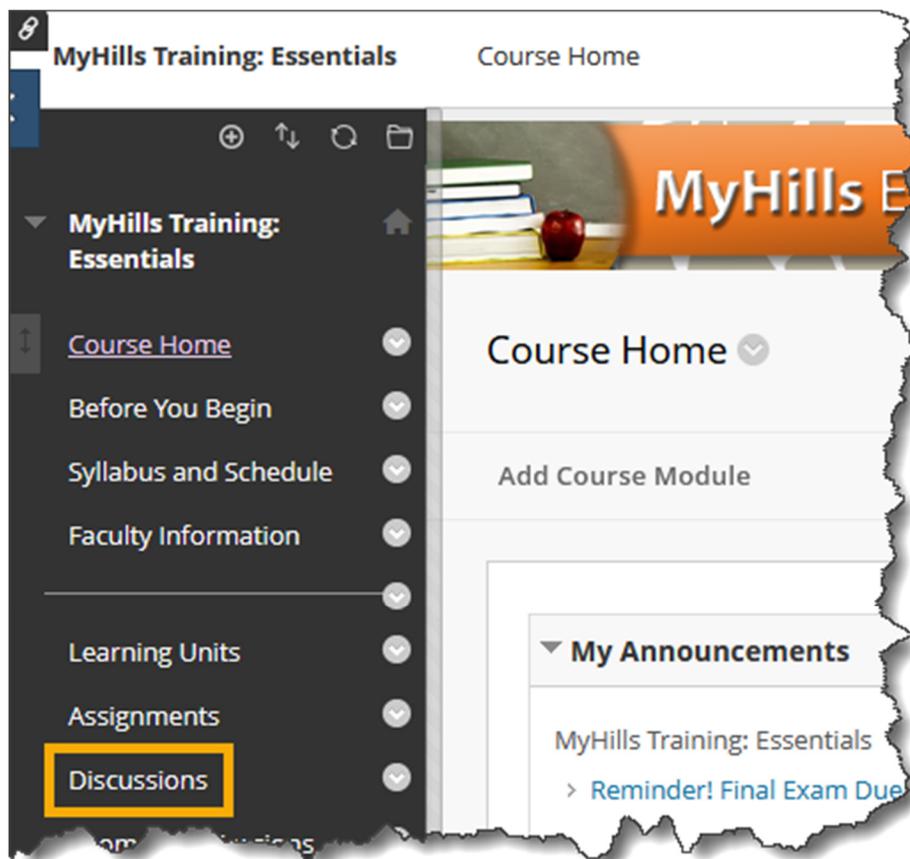
Note: You may change the order of the discussion forum link by clicking and dragging it up to the appropriate point on this page.

Congratulations! You now know how to create a discussion forum, a discussion thread, and add a discussion forum link to a learning unit!

Grade a Discussion Forum

Now that you know how to Create a Discussion Forum and Thread, let's Grade a Discussion Forum. From within your course, click "**Discussions**," which is located in the "Course Menu."

Note: You may also access "Discussions" by clicking "Course Tools," and then clicking "Discussion Board."



On the "Discussion Board" page, hover your cursor over the forum that you would like to grade. Then, click the drop-down arrow that appears.

Note: You can also grade discussion forums from the "Needs Grading" area of your course. Please see the tutorial "Grade Center: Needs Grading" for more information.

Discussion Board

Discussions are a good way to encourage students to think critically about your coursework and interact with each other. [More Help](#)

Create Forum

→ Delete

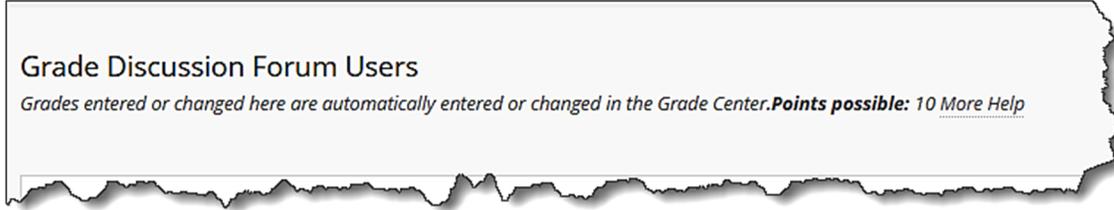
<input type="checkbox"/>	FORUM	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL POSTS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduce Yourself ▾	Please take a moment to introduce yourself to the class. What is your name and where are you from? What hobbies/activities do you enjoy? What do you hope to get out of this course?	1

In the sub-menu that opens, select “Grade.”

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Introduce Yourself	Please take a moment to introduce yourself to the class. What is your name and where are you from? What hobbies/activities do you enjoy? What do you hope to get out of this course?
<input type="checkbox"/>	LU03: Discussion	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation Discussion	

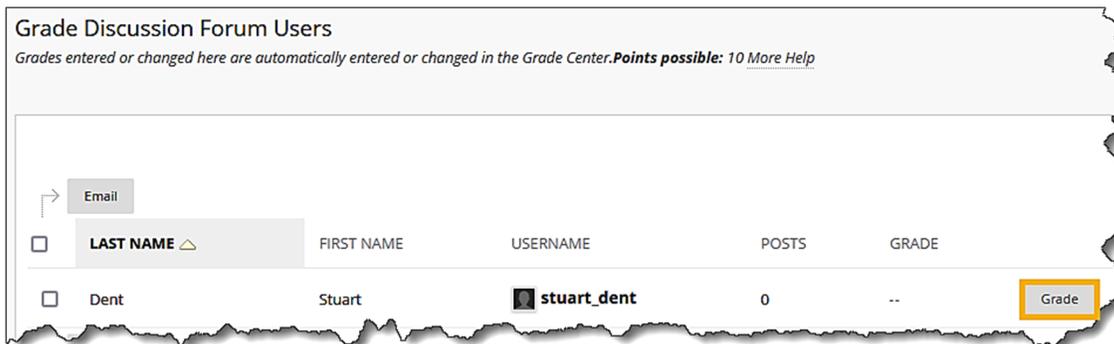
- Open
- Edit
- Grade**
- Manage
- Change Due Date
- Copy
- Delete

The “Grade Discussion Forum Users” page will open.

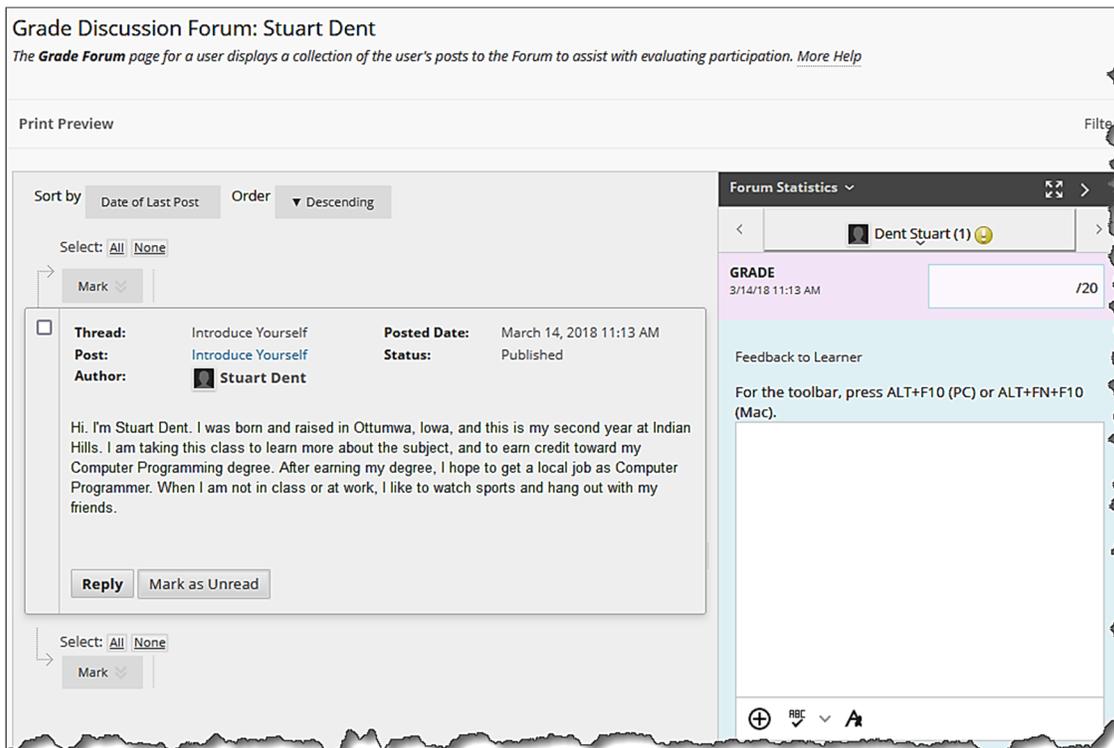


Students who have posted to the discussion forum will appear on this page.

Click “Grade” to access the posts of the student you wish to grade.



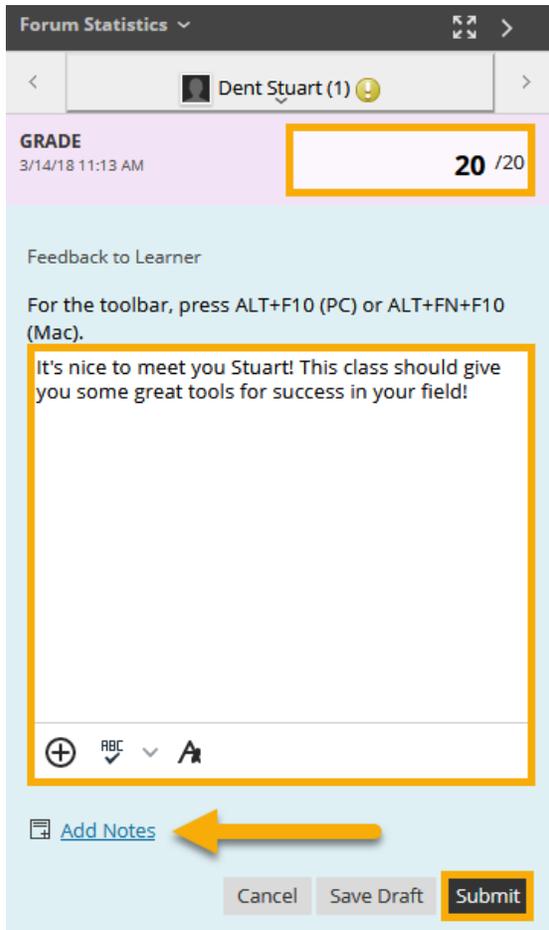
The “Grade Discussion Forum” page for the student you selected will open. On this page, you can view that student’s individual posts, and assign him/her a grade for the forum.



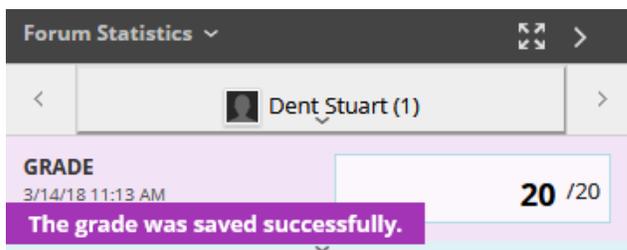
You can “Reply” to an individual post, or “Mark as Unread,” using the buttons below the post.

In the area to the right, you can enter a “Grade,” “Feedback to Learner,” and “Add Notes” in the areas provided. Then, click “Submit.”

Note: “Feedback” and “Add Notes” are optional. “Feedback” is visible to both the instructor and the student, while the area to “Add Notes” is visible only to the instructor.

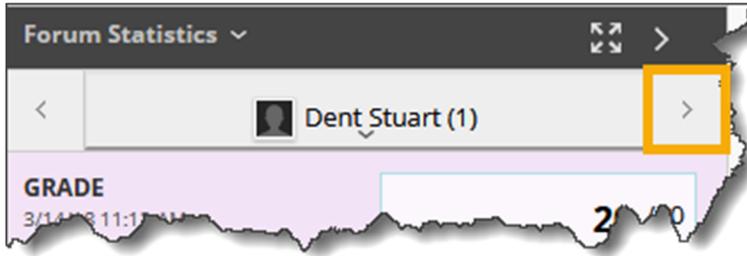


The message “The grade was saved successfully” will appear.



Note: After the post has been graded, you may still click “Edit Grade” to change the grade and to add “Feedback” and/or “Grading Notes.”

Use the arrow buttons to scroll to the next student's posts. Then, you can use the same process (shown earlier) to grade those posts.



To return to the "Grade Discussion Forum Users" page, click "OK."



The students whose forum participation you graded will now appear with a grade on the "Grade Discussion Forum Users" page.

Grade Discussion Forum Users
Grades entered or changed here are automatically entered or changed in the Grade Center. Points possible: 20 More Help

<input type="checkbox"/>	LAST NAME <input type="text"/>	FIRST NAME	USERNAME	POSTS	GRADE	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dent	Stuart	stuart_dent	1	20.00	Grade
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prince	Diana	diana_prince	0	--	Grade

Congratulations! You now know how to grade a "Discussion Forum" in MyHills!

Office of Online Learning

Looking for more computer tutorials? Please visit: www.indianhills.edu/tutorials.

For further assistance on this topic or other technical issues, please contact the **IT Help Desk**
Phone: (641) 683-5333 | **Email:** helpdesk@indianhills.edu | **Web:** www.indianhills.edu/helpdesk