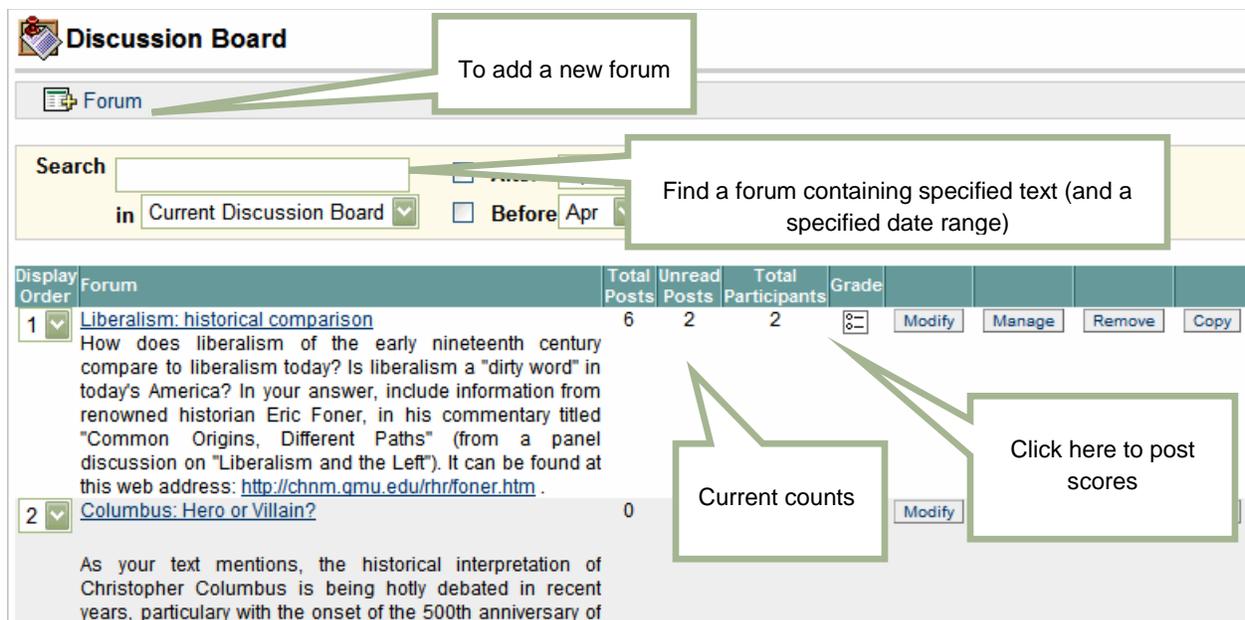


The discussion board is used for asynchronous (different-time) communication. The instructor can create a forum from which students submit responses (“threads”) and replies to threads (“posts”). The following guide describes the many features available with this tool, including how to create a forum, controlling the flow of postings, grading student submissions, and allowing peer review.

It’s best to devise a strategy for how students post threads and replies and how many. For example, you could require that students reply to at least two other students in the class and set a deadline for submissions. You can also use the Groups function in Blackboard to break class discussions into smaller groups.



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Discussion Board interface. Key features are highlighted with callouts:

- To add a new forum:** Points to the **Forum** button in the top navigation bar.
- Find a forum containing specified text (and a specified date range):** Points to the search filters, including a search box, a dropdown for "in Current Discussion Board", and a date range selector set to "Before Apr".
- Current counts:** Points to the "Total Posts" and "Unread Posts" columns in the forum list table.
- Click here to post scores:** Points to the "Grade" column in the forum list table.

Display Order	Forum	Total Posts	Unread Posts	Total Participants	Grade	Modify	Manage	Remove	Copy
1	<a href="#">Liberalism: historical comparison</a> How does liberalism of the early nineteenth century compare to liberalism today? Is liberalism a "dirty word" in today's America? In your answer, include information from renowned historian Eric Foner, in his commentary titled "Common Origins, Different Paths" (from a panel discussion on "Liberalism and the Left"). It can be found at this web address: <a href="http://chnm.gmu.edu/rhr/foer.htm">http://chnm.gmu.edu/rhr/foer.htm</a> .	6	2	2	8=	Modify	Manage	Remove	Copy
2	<a href="#">Columbus: Hero or Villain?</a> As your text mentions, the historical interpretation of Christopher Columbus is being hotly debated in recent years, particularly with the onset of the 500th anniversary of	0				Modify			

## ADDING A NEW DISCUSSION BOARD FORUM

- Step 1:** From the Control Panel, click **Discussion Board** – or click **Discussion Board** on the course menu, if available.
- Step 2:** Click  **Forum** .
- Step 3:** At the *Add Forum* screen, give the forum a *Name*. Provide a *Description* for the forum (what will the students be talking about – what question will they be answering).
- Step 4:** For the *Forum Settings*, decide on what you want to allow students to do in the discussion. For example:

- Enabling *Allow anonymous posts* removes names from postings.
- Disabling *Allow members to create new threads* lets you divide the discussion into subtopics, for example; students would only reply to your threads.
- Enabling *Grade Forum* and setting the points possible creates an item in the gradebook and provides a convenient method for scoring student submissions.



All the options are described at the end of this guide (under Add Forum Settings).

**Step 5:** Click  .

## ADDING A THREAD TO A FORUM

A **thread** is a reply to a forum. Threads can be created by instructors or by students. A discussion forum can have multiple threads.

**Step 1:** From the Discussion Board area, click the forum name.

**Step 2:** Click  **Thread** .

**Step 3:** Create your thread by entering a *Subject* and *Message*.



It's best to keep the subject text short (like a keyword or phrase).

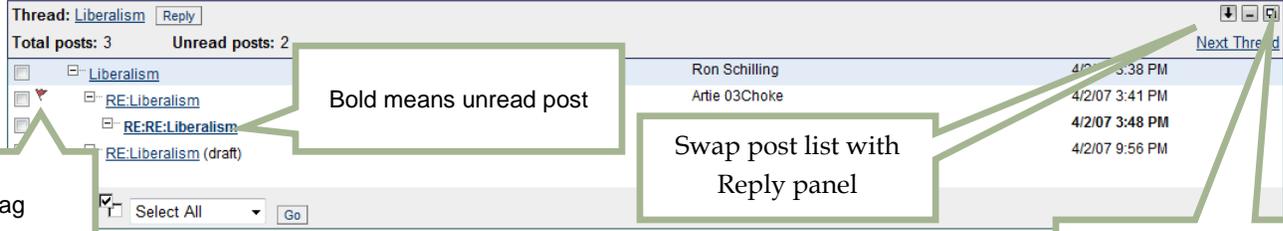
**Step 4:** To preview the message, click  .

**Step 5:** Click  .



Clicking on  will save the thread and displays the word *(draft)* after the message title. This does **not** make it public to the group. Make sure students know the difference!

## READING AND REPLYING TO A THREAD OR POST



The screenshot shows a forum thread titled "Thread: Liberalism" with a "Reply" button. It indicates "Total posts: 3" and "Unread posts: 2". The post list includes "Liberalism", "RE: Liberalism", "RE: RE: Liberalism", and "RE: Liberalism (draft)". A "Next Thread" link is visible. A table of posts is shown on the right:

Author	Date	Time
Ron Schilling	4/2/07	3:38 PM
Artie 03Choke	4/2/07	3:41 PM
	4/2/07	3:48 PM
	4/2/07	9:56 PM

Annotations on the screenshot include:

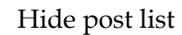
- Flag**: Points to the flag icon next to the "Liberalism" post.
- Bold means unread post**: Points to the bold text "RE: Liberalism" in the post list.
- Swap post list with Reply panel**: Points to the "Next Thread" link.
- Maximize to see all posts**: Points to the maximize button in the window title bar.

Blackboard Academic Suite 8.x

A **post** is a reply to a thread. To respond to a thread, a student posts a reply.

**To view a thread or post:**

**Step 1:** Click on the subject text. The *Thread Detail* screen appears, with three panels: 1) search; 2) thread subject with any current posts; and 3) detail of thread (author, creation date, message text, etc.).



Hide post list

**To reply to a thread or post:**

**Step 1:** Click on the *subject* of the thread or post, then click [Reply](#).



To reply to someone else's reply, click on the reply first, before clicking [Reply](#).

**Step 2:** Write your message in the message field box and format as desired.

**Step 3:** Click [Submit](#). The reply appears indented below the original message.



Clicking on [Save](#) will save the thread or post and displays the word "(draft)" after the *Subject* text. This does **not** make it public to you or fellow students. Make sure students know the difference!