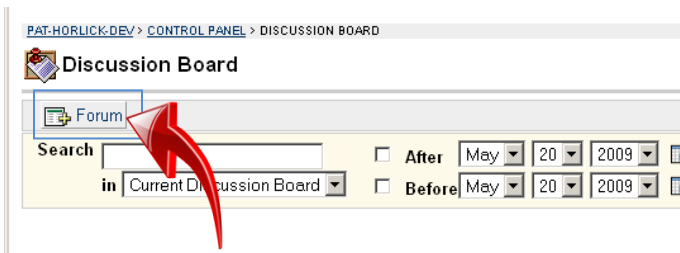


Using the Discussion Board

The Discussion Board consists of one or more “**forums**”. Each forum is used to organize discussions on related topics in the form of discussion “**threads**”. For example a social studies course might include a forum on U.S. Government, with a thread to discuss specific provisions of the US constitution, and another to discuss the first amendment. Forums can be organized in any way appropriate to the course, for example by topic or chapter (it is often useful to include an “icebreaker” forum, where students can introduce themselves). The Discussion Board can be accessed from the Blackboard menu.

To create a Forum in your course, select Control Panel, Discussion Board, located in the Course Tools box.



- Select the **Add Forum** button from the **Discussion Board** window.
- Assign a **Name** and **Description** for your Forum in the fields provided. The description should include any instructions that the student will need to discuss the topic appropriately.

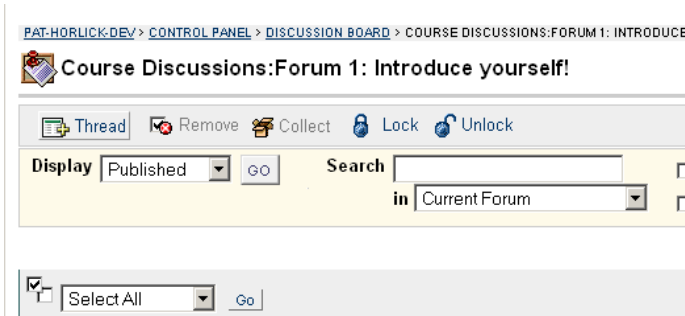
You will also see a list of Forum Settings which will allow you to configure the forum for your purposes.

NOTE: One setting allows you to specify a grade for this particular discussion. Use this if you want your forum to appear in your gradebook, and choose **Submit**.

Once you have a Forum, you will want to add **Discussion Threads**. There are two approaches, depending on your needs:

- If you want each student to respond **directly** to your Forum topic, (and not to each other), instruct each student to add their own **Thread** for their response..
- If you want different sub-topics associated with this Forum, you should create a **Thread** for each sub-topic, and invite the student to respond by choosing **Reply** within each **Thread**.

To add a Thread to a Discussion Forum, navigate to the Forum window and. . .



- Select the **Add New Thread** button within the Forum window
- Enter a name for your thread in **Subject**
- Enter your **Message** in the text box (you may add an attachment if needed)
- Choose **Submit** and **OK**
- **To Reply** to an open thread, choose **Reply**.

Best Practices: Forums can be used in many ways; this document provides a basic introduction. Start with just one or two Forums until you, and your students, get used to this environment. Refer students to the A-B Tech Online [Blackboard FAQ page](#) for additional help with the Discussion Board tool. “I need help using the Discussion Board in Blackboard” can be found at <http://abtech.edu/vcampus/discussionBB.asp>.