

MODERATE DISCUSSIONS

You can employ both the art and science of moderating discussions to maintain discussion activity throughout the term. Without vigilance on the your part, even discussions starting out with ample excitement can dwindle as the term progresses.

The *art of moderating* involves finding the right balance between guiding the conversation and standing back to allow students to discover new ideas.

The *science of moderating* involves using the discussion board functions to keep students focused on relevant discussions and to determine a student's level of access.

ABOUT FORUM ROLES

You can assign forum roles to limit access to a forum or to help with forum administration. For example, to help control the discussion board content that is presented to your students, you can assign a responsible user the role of moderator.

In a forum, each user has a forum role and can have only one role per forum. By default, instructors have the role of manager and students have the role of participant. When you are logged in as an instructor, you cannot change your own forum role.

Note: Your institution determines which course roles are available. The following table describes the forum roles and their permissions.

Role	Permissions
Manager	<p>Managers have full control over a forum and can change forum settings, moderate posts, and assign roles and grades.</p> <p>Users with a course role of instructor or teaching assistant are granted this role by default.</p>
Builder	<p>Course builders can edit, copy, and delete forums, but not grade or manage forums. Inside a forum, a course builder can perform the same actions on posts as an instructor, with the exception of grading threads.</p> <p>Course builders can also create new threads in a forum, and can enable grading for a thread and type a value.</p> <p>Users with a course role of course builder are granted this forum role by default.</p>
Moderator	<p>Moderators can delete, edit, and lock all posts in any forum, even if the forum does not use the moderation queue.</p> <p>If you use a moderation queue, the moderator approves or rejects posts in the queue before they are made available to all users.</p> <p>Users with a course role of instructor or course builder are granted this forum role by</p>

Role	Permissions
	default.
Grader	Graders can read, reply to, and grade posts. The grader role has some access to the Grade Center, but cannot assign grades to their own work. Users with a course role of grader are granted this forum role by default.
Participant	Participants can read and reply to posts. Users with a course role of student are granted this role by default.
Reader	Readers can read the contents of a forum, but cannot post responses or add threads.
Blocked (Block user from forum)	Blocked users cannot access the forum.

HOW TO ASSIGN FORUM ROLES

1. Access a forum's contextual menu.
2. Select **Manage**.
3. On the **Manage Forum Users** page, a list of users appears. Access a user's contextual menu.
Tip: If you want to show only one role at a time, make a selection in the **Display Forum Role** drop-down list on the action bar and click **Go**.
4. Select a new forum role. The new role appears in the **Forum Role** column for the user.
5. Click **OK** to return to the discussion board. Alternatively, click the forum title on the orientation bar to return to the forum.

Tip: To change multiple roles at one time, select the users' check boxes and point to **Edit Role** on the action bar to access the drop-down list. Select the check box in the header row to select all users.

The screenshot shows the 'Manage Forum Users' interface. At the top, there is a 'Display Forum Role' dropdown menu set to 'All Forum Users' with a 'Go' button. Below this is an 'Edit Role' dropdown menu that is open, showing a list of roles: Blocked Users, Builders, Graders, Managers, Moderators, Participants, and Readers. The 'Change to Reader' option is highlighted. Below the dropdowns is a table with columns for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Username', and 'Forum Role'. The table contains several rows of user data, including Tony Brown, Chris Casper, Cathy Chu, Alyssa Dubois, Andy Farrell, Monica Gonzales, and Juan Hernandez. The 'Chris Casper' row is highlighted in yellow, and a small dropdown menu is open over it, showing options to change the user's role to Manager, Builder, Moderator, Grader, Participant, Reader, or to block the user from the forum.

ABOUT MODERATING

As an online instructor, your role is to facilitate the conversation and exchange of ideas on the discussion board. You need to ensure that students feel comfortable to share, while also monitoring responses and keeping everyone focused and on track. At the same time, you want to be careful not to dominate or impede the flow of the discussion.

Occasionally, students may introduce inappropriate material for the class discussion. Depending on the maturity and sensitivity of the students in your course, you may need to review student posts for inappropriate content before sharing posts with the rest of the class.

In a discussion forum, you can assign a user the role of moderator. A moderator reviews posts before they are added to a thread and appear in the discussion board.

When you create a moderated forum, all posts to the forum are added to a moderation queue. The moderator reviews each post and does one of the following:

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

The moderator can delete, edit, and lock posts in a forum even if the forum does not use the moderation queue.

You can choose to moderate a forum when creating it or by editing an existing forum. Only posts added after enabling forum moderation are available for review in the moderation queue.

Note: If you do not assign a moderator, the manager must take responsibility for approving posts in a moderated forum.

HOW TO ALLOW MODERATION OF POSTS

1. Access a forum's contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit**.
3. On the **Edit Forum** page, in the **Forum Settings** section, select the **Force Moderation of Posts** check box and click **Submit**.

Tip: When choosing a moderated forum, do not allow students to edit or delete posts. This ensures that the post approved is the one viewed by users.

3. Forum Settings

Viewing Threads/Replies Standard View
 Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum.

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

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

- After posts are submitted, access the forum. In the moderator view, no posts appear because the messages are waiting approval. On the action bar, click **Moderate Forum**.



Note: The **Moderate Forum** function appears only to those users who have a forum role of manager or moderator. In the student view, the author can see the post in **Tree View** with a reminder it is in the moderation queue.

- On the **Moderation Queue** page, the posts appear in alphabetical order by title. Click the column title or caret to sort by post title, author, or date. To review a post, click **Moderate**.

Moderation Queue			
Post	Author	Date	
Any domestic oil we can find is good	Sarah Spooner	Apr 10 10:45:45 EDT 2013	Moderate
I am against offshore drilling	Mark Tsai	Apr 10 11:16:27 EDT 2013	Moderate
Stop Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling	Bruce Lopez	Apr 11 10:41:35 EDT 2013	Moderate
We have too much reliance on foreign oil so...	Chris Casper	Apr 12 11:17:16 EDT 2013	Moderate
Worth the risk?	Mina Akbar	Apr 12 12:47:49 EDT 2013	Moderate

- On the **Moderate Post** page, read the post and select the Publish or Return option. Published messages are immediately posted to the thread.
- Optionally, type feedback in the text box. You can use the content editor functions to format the text, link to files in Course Files or the Content Collection, and include web links, multimedia, and mashups.

Note: Though feedback is optional, this is an opportunity to provide guidance, ask questions, redirect a student's focus, and explain why a post was returned.

- Click **Submit**.

Returned posts no longer appear in the moderation queue. In tree view, students see their returned posts in the forum. Expand the post using the plus sign. If feedback was included, students can see why their posts were returned. On the thread page, returned posts display **Returned** next to the post's title.

From the thread page, students can edit their posts while viewing the moderator's feedback and resubmit them. The posts are returned to the moderation queue. **Moderation Queue** appears next to the post's title.

