REPLY TO DISCUSSION POSTS

In the discussion board, threads grow as users respond to the initial and subsequent posts. Replies build on one another to construct a conversation. As the number of posts grows, users can filter, sort, collect, and tag posts, if tagging is enabled. To learn more about tagging, see How to Tag Threads.

To help students understand your expectations, establish discussion etiquette immediately. You can model proper online interaction and reinforce appropriate behavior with public recognition. In addition, you can provide specific guidelines, such as:

- Use descriptive subject lines to make threads easy to follow and scan.
- Keep posts short and use uncomplicated language. Your audience is reading onscreen and may have several messages to read.
- Back up your statements when you agree or disagree with others.
- Use professional language, including proper grammar, in academic-related posts. No slang, emoticons, or chat acronyms allowed.
- Use attachments or links to websites for long, detailed information.
- Stay on topic. If you want to introduce a new tangent, find a suitable forum or start a new thread if it is allowed.
- Be respectful of other people's opinions and remember the golden rule—to treat others as you want to be treated.
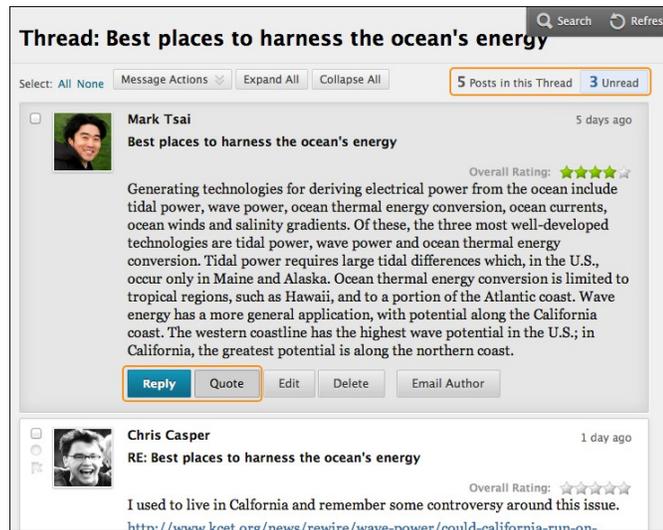
For graded forums and threads, tell students specifically what you expect both in terms of quantity and quality of posts, and consider sharing some exemplary posts. You can also use rubrics to help students understand your objectives. By compiling your grading criteria in a rubric, you can provide students with clear performance standards and grade consistently.

HOW TO REPLY TO A THREAD

Users can reply to published threads, but cannot reply to locked or hidden threads. To learn more, see How to Change a Thread's Status.

1. Access a forum and select a thread.

2. On the thread's page, you can view the text of the post and information, such as the author and posted date. All replies appear on the same page with the parent post.

3. For the first post, click **Reply**. Point to the post to see other functions such as **Quote**, **Edit**, **Delete**, and **Email Author**. The **Quote** function includes the post's text as part of your reply. For other posts on the page, point to the message and **Reply** and the other functions appear.

Note: If you want to view only the unread posts in the thread, click the unread link on the action bar. The unread posts appear on one page.

4. The page expands below the post you are responding to, allowing you to view the post and access the content editor.

5. If needed, edit the **Subject**. Provide your reply in the **Message** box.

6. To attach a file, following the **Message** box, attach a file using one of the following options:

- To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.

- To upload a file from the course's storage repository:

    ▪ If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.

    -OR-

- If your institution licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

1. Click **Save Draft** to store a draft of the post or click **Submit** to publish your reply.

On the thread page, your reply appears at the end of the list. If you attached a file, a paper clip icon appears next to the post's title. If you used the **Insert/Edit Image** function, the image appears with the text you provided.

HOW TO RATE POSTS

You can use the discussion board for peer review. Students start threads and include their work in their initial posts. Other users review the work, assign a rating to the initial post, and include comments in a response.

Rating posts also allows users to focus on messages considered especially informative or useful by others. If you enabled rating, users can rate posts using a five star system. You can also rate posts.

Note: To enable rating, select the **Allow Members to Rate Posts** option when creating or editing the forum. To learn more, see How to Edit Forums.

1. Access a forum and select a thread.

2. On the thread's page, when you point to a thread's rating area, it changes to show **Your Rating**.

3. Select one to five stars. You can add and delete stars at any time.

4. Your rating is included in the **Overall Rating**—the combined rating of all users.