

# Blackboard Help

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## Respond to Discussions



A special note from Product Management on COVID-19: The team has been taking several pre-emptive infrastructure measures to help prepare for significantly increased traffic as a growing number of schools move to fully online courses. We will continue to monitor closely and take any additional steps required to provide a seamless service.

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In discussions, 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.

### Discussion etiquette



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:

- Use descriptive subject lines to make threads easy to follow and scan.
- Keep posts short and use plain language. Your audience is reading onscreen and may have several messages to read.
- Support your statements with evidence 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 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. You can even share some exemplary posts. You can also use rubrics to help students understand your objectives. When you compile your grading criteria in a rubric, you can provide students with clear performance standards and grade consistently.

[➔ More on rubrics](#)

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### Reply to a thread



➔ Doesn't seem familiar? Jump to the "Ultra" help about replying to a discussion.

Users can reply to published threads, but can't reply to locked or hidden threads.

1. Open a thread inside a forum.
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. Point to the post to see options such as *Reply*, *Quote*, *Edit*, *Delete*, and *Email Author*. The *Quote* option includes the post's text as part of your reply. Select *Reply*. If you want to view only the unread posts in the thread, select *Unread*. The unread posts appear on one page.

Thread: Assignment: Advanced Astronomy

Select: All None

Message Actions Expand All Collapse All

Thread 9 of 9

2 Post(s) in this Thread 0 Unread 0 Replies to me

Porter Durand  
Assignment: Advanced Astronomy  
15 days ago  
Overall Rating: ★★★★★

What I liked most about the reading on advanced astronomy was dark matter, which makes up about 85% of the mass in the Universe, is more than simply dark. True, it can't shine by its own light, like hot coals, or even reflect light, like clouds or water. Neither electricity nor magnetism affect it.

Reply Quote Email Author

Ashby Cooper  
RE: Assignment: Advanced Astronomy  
3 minutes ago  
Overall Rating: ★★★★★


That's interesting, Porter. I also read that dark matter appears as clumps throughout the universe and that scientists don't really know what it's made out of.

Select: All None

Message Actions Expand All Collapse All

← OK

4. The page expands below the post you're responding to. You can view the post and access the editor.
5. If needed, edit the *Subject*. Type your reply in the *Message* box. You can also attach a file.
6. After the *Message* box, you can attach a file. Select *Browse My Computer* to upload a file from your computer. You can also upload a file from the course's file repository: Course Files or the Content Collection.

 *Files that students upload aren't saved to the file repository.*

7. Select *Save Draft* to store a draft of the post or select *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* option, the image appears with the text.

➔ [More on replying with JAWS®](#)

## Rate posts



The discussion board can also be used 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.

Thread: Assignment: Advanced Astronomy

Select: All None

Message Actions Expand All Collapse All

1 Post(s) in this Thread 0 Unread 0 Replies to me

Porter Durand  
Assignment: Advanced Astronomy  
6 minutes ago

What I liked most about the reading on advanced astronomy was dark matter, which makes up about 85% of the mass in the Universe, is more than simple dark matter. It can't shine by its own light, like hot coals, or even reflect light, like clouds or water. Neither electricity nor magnetism affect it.

Overall Rating: ★★★★★  
Your Rating: ★★★★★

Reply Quote Email Author

Select: All None

Message Actions Expand All Collapse All

Rating posts also helps users focus on messages that others consider especially informative or useful. If you enabled rating, users can rate posts with a five-star system. You can also rate posts.



*You must enable Allow Members to Rate Posts in forum settings for this option to appear.*

1. Open a thread inside a forum.
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 remove stars at any time.
4. Your rating is included in the *Overall Rating*—the combined rating of all users.

➔ [More on rating posts with JAWS](#)

## ULTRA: Respond to a discussion



➔ [Doesn't seem familiar? Jump to the "Original" help about replying to a discussion thread.](#)

From your mobile device or desktop, jump into discussions at any time. You can also review and

From your mobile device or desktop, jump into discussions at any time. You can also review and respond directly from the [activity stream](#).

**From the activity stream:** The activity stream is your key to access new course content quickly in Blackboard Learn. You can participate in any discussion for any of your courses instantly. Select a discussion and a layer opens where you can type and submit your response. New responses and replies are highlighted so you can see what's changed since you last visited the discussion. You can reply to the initial discussion topic, your students' responses, and replies to those responses. Close the layer to return to the activity stream.

**Within a course:** In a course, you can access a discussion from the *Course Content* page or from the discussions page. The discussions page shows all of the discussions available in your course at once. Select a discussion to join in. New responses and replies are highlighted so you can see what's changed since you last visited the discussion. You can reply to the initial discussion topic, your students' responses, and replies to those responses. You can use the options in the editor to format text.



*Disabled and unavailable users don't appear in the Participants list.*

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## Case Study 1 Discussion

Visible to students ▾

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### Discussion Topic

In this case study, you were introduced to Genie. She's an interesting and tragic example of a girl who was severely abused and isolated for many years. As a result, she didn't acquire a first language. Genie's is a shocking and sad story. What can we learn from it?

### Discussion Settings

Grading [Discussion isn't graded](#)

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### Responses (13)

**Chris Casper**  
7/17/19, 4:40 PM • NEW

Humans are hardwired to interact with others, especially during times of stress. When we go through a trying ordeal alone, a lack of emotional support and friendship can increase our anxiety and hinder our coping ability.

Reply

Text Style ▾ **B** *I* U ~~A~~ ▾ ☰ ▾ 🔗 🔒 🖼️ ⊕ ▾

We have an upcoming lesson about stress and how it affects individual, families, work productivity, and society in general.

Word count: 19

Save Draft

Cancel
Reply

### Participants (25)

- Cathy Chu (Me)**  
1 Response | 7 Replies
- Chris Casper**  
3 Responses | 5 Replies
- Harper Stenson**  
1 Response | 6 Replies
- Duncan Carroll**  
2 Responses | 3 Replies
- Porter Durand**  
2 Responses | 2 Replies

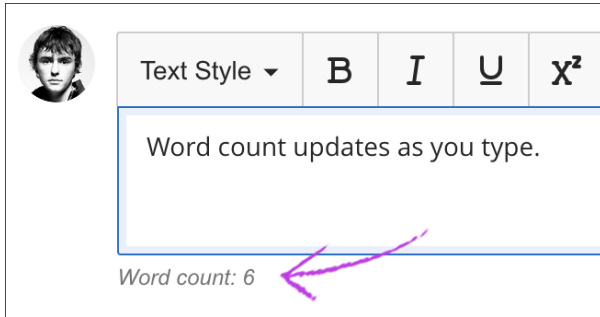
+20 more...



*To use your keyboard to jump to the editor toolbar, press ALT + F10. On a Mac, press Fn + ALT + F10. Use the arrow keys to select an option, such as a numbered list.*

## Word count for discussion responses

As you and your students create discussion responses, the word count appears below the editor. After you save your response, the word count no longer appears.



These items are included in the word count:

- Individual words
- Web links
- Text in bulleted or numbered lists, but the bullets or numbers themselves aren't included
- Superscript and subscript text not part of another word

These items and formatting elements don't affect the word count:

- Images, videos, and file attachments
- Math formulas
- Blank spaces and lines
- Alternative text

When you use punctuation to attach words or numbers, the count is affected. For example, "We went...without you" is counted as three words. The words or numbers on either side of the punctuation are counted as one word.

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