Blackboard Training – Discussion Boards and Groups

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To add tabs to the Course Menu for Discussion Boards and Groups

- From the *Control Panel*, select *Course Options* > *Manage Course Menu*
- Add *Tool Area*, choose *Discussion Board*
    - Repeat above steps, choosing *Groups* in the *Tool Area*
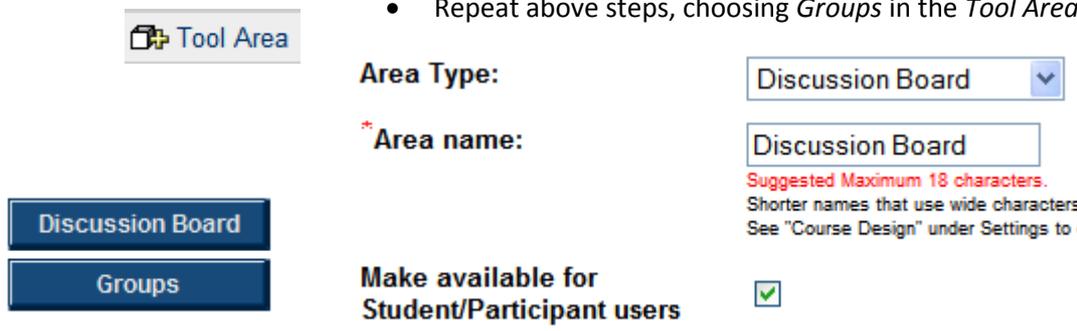
Area Type: Discussion Board

*Area name: Discussion Board
Suggested Maximum 18 characters.
Shorter names that use wide characters
See "Course Design" under Settings to

Make available for Student/Participant users ☑

Creating a Forum in the Discussion Board

The *Discussion Board* is a communication tool that allows course participants to post a series of comments about any particular subject the instructor has chosen to discuss in Blackboard. A Blackboard discussion board consists of one or more *Forums*. Each forum is an area in which a specific area can be discussed, where your students and you can add or reply to comments. A *Thread* is a series of posted comments by different users. At least one thread needs to be added to the forum before students can post.

- From the *Control Panel*, select *Course Tools* >*Discussion Board*
- Select *Add Forum*
- Enter the *Title* of the forum (*Title* is the name of the forum you are creating, and should descriptive of the topic under discussion)
- Enter a *Description* of the forum (*Description* could be specific instructions about the forum, what the discussion is going to be about, or questions being asked.
- Modify the *Forum Settings* and *Forum User Settings* as required.

Forum Settings:
- ☑ Allow anonymous posts
- ☐ Allow author to edit message after posting
- ☐ Allow author to remove own posted messages
- ☑ Allow file attachments
- ☑ Allow new threads

Forum User Settings:
- ᴀ = Forum **Administrator** privileges
- ᴀ = Permanent Forum **Administrator**
- ᴃ = User is **blocked** from posting

ADMIN   NORMAL
BLOCK   UNBLOCK

Note that if you want students to be able to post to your forum, ensure that *Allow new threads* is checked.

Posting a message

To start a discussion within a Forum, click on *Add New Thread*. A *thread* is a series of posted comments by different users on a specific topic. When adding a new thread, you are posting an initial message to start the discussion.

Q:	How do I add a file to my Discussion Thread?
A:	In the Reply area, you may Attach a File to your response. Click on the *Attach a file* link. Next, click Browse and select your file.
Q:	How do I post a link to a web site in the Discussion Board?
A:	Type the link as it appears in the address window of your web browser - the important thing to remember is you must include the "http://", e.g. http://elearn.itcarlow.ie.

Printing Discussion Board comments

First enter a Forum and, if required, click on *Show Options*. Then click on the boxes next to the threads that you would like to print (if you would like to print all threads, select *Select All*). Next, click the *Collect* button. Finally, click the *Print* button.

Managing Groups

The Manage Groups feature allows instructors to create Groups within courses. This gives members access to a private group Discussion Board, File Exchange, and Email. If you have a large number of students on a course, you may wish to have discussions within Groups to have smaller numbers participating in each Discussion Board as an alternative to directing students to different forums (which are still visible by all).

- From the *Control Panel*, select *User Management > Manage Groups*
- Select *Add Groups*
- Choose *Group name* and give brief *Description*
- Enable *Group Discussion Board* and other desired Functions

- Once created, select *Modify* to add, list or remove users or to change the Group Name, Description and enabled functions as chosen in previous steps
- To add users, select *Add Users To Group* (suggest *List All* and select specific users)

Q:	Once I add a student into a group, can I move him/her into another?
A:	No, you cannot move the student. You would need to Remove the student and then Add him/her back into the correct group. Note: Do not remove the student if they have participated in any of the tools (discussion, chat, or file exchange). All information connected to that student will be lost.

Reference: University of Denver Blackboard Support, http://ctl.du.edu/support/blackboard/knowledge/search.cfm