Discussion Boards are places for online discussions.

Within a discussion board your instructor may post a question for the class to answer, or he or she may ask you to post a draft of a paper for your classmates to read and comment on. There may be an area within the discussion board where you and your classmates can discuss non-course-related topics as well.

To access the Discussion Board, click on the “Discussion Board” button (shown right).

The first panel of the Discussion Board is a list of Forums available for your course. A “forum” is a collection of comments on a specific topic. Your instructor will create forums in which you and your classmates take part. Shown below is an example of the forum list for a course:

In this example, the instructor has created 2 forums for their students: “The Green Room” and “Week One Discussion.” Your course may have more than two forums; it may have less. You may have one forum for each week of the course, or each course topic; there may even be a “getting to know you” or “off-topic” forum where you and your classmates can get to know one another and discuss things outside of your course. Each course you take will have slightly different forums, but your instructor should make it clear what the functions of each discussion board forum are and what you are required to write in each of them.
To enter a discussion board forum, click on the name of that forum.

They are named “first forum” and “second forum” in the example shown at right. In a real online classroom, the forums will be named by topic or by week.

Once you are in a forum, you will see a list of all the postings that have been made in that forum.

Individual posts in a discussion board forum form a chain called a “thread.” This example of a discussion board forum contains many threads, each one on their own line with their own topic. There is a lot of information you can learn just from this forum list (shown below):

After looking at the list of threads there are three main things you may need to do:

1. Create a new thread.
2. Read and respond to the threads of others.
3. Read and upload attachments.

You can also find tutorials for each of these tasks on the Student Tutorials Page.