Seaport 3: Discussion Forums – Overview

Discussion Forums are one way to create instructor's unique "presence" in the course; they can be used to build a learning community within the course, and can easily be accessed and graded. Discussion threads (posts) can be responded to by the instructor or fellow students.

After logging in and selecting your course, click **Discussion Forums** in the left navigation menu (Figure 1). The columns, various icons, and links are explained below (Figure 2).
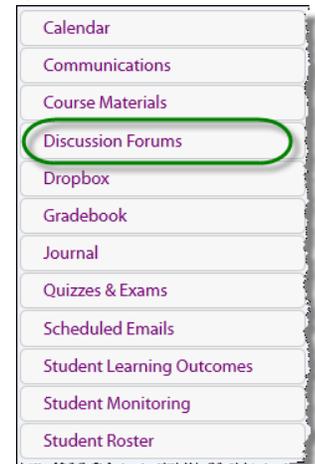

Figure 1

a. View All (Figure 2a) – When the Discussion Forum Topics page is first displayed, the first 10 topics are listed. If you have more than 10 topics, click **View All** to display the entire list of topics.

b. Status (Figure 2b)
   - Green checkmark – The forum is currently open.
   - Red circle with slash – The forum was open but is now closed. Students can open the forum to view the thread (postings) but they cannot post a new message or edit an existing message.
   - Hourglass – The forum is pending, meaning the forum's open date is in the future. Students can see the forum topic in the list but they cannot open the forum thread.

c. Discussion Topic (Figure 2c) – Click the topic name to open the thread and view the postings.

d. Viewed (Figure 2d) – The number of times that the forum thread has been viewed/opened by a student or instructor.

e. Replies (Figure 2e) – The number of replies by a student or instructor in the forum thread.

f. Visible (Figure 2f)
   - Green checkmark – The forum is visible, students can see the forum topic listed.
   - Red circle with slash – The forum is NOT visible. Students are not able to see the forum topic in the list.

g. Graded (Figure 2g)
   - Green checkmark – The forum is a graded assessment and is connected to an assessment in the Gradebook. This enables the instructor to enter a grade directly from the student's posting.
   - Red circle with slash – The forum is not graded.

h. Open Date (Figure 2h) – The date the forum is open for students. Students are not able to open the thread before this date.

i. Close Date (Figure 2i) – The date the forum is closed for students. Students can post to the forum up until the end of the close date. After that time, students can still view the thread but they will not be able to post a new message or edit an existing message.

j. Edit (Figure 2j) – Click the Edit icon to edit the forum title or message, set the open and close dates, and set the Visible status.

k. Delete (Figure 2k) – Click the Delete icon to delete the Forum thread. A pop-up window will appear to confirm the deletion request. Clicking **OK** will permanently delete the Thread (all postings) from the Discussion Forum.

l. Page (Figure 2l) – If there are more than 10 forum topics, additional pages will be added. Click the page number to navigate through the list of topics.

m. Save New Order (Figure 2m) – To change the order of the topics, click on the topic row and then drag the row to the desired location. Repeat these steps for the other topics if needed. Click **Save New Order** to save the topic order.

Figure 1