Sakai 12: Forums
Student User Guide
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What is the Forums Tool?
The Forums tool allows your instructor to create an unlimited number of discussion forums, and is integrated closely with other tools such as Resources and Gradebook.

A Forum is a mandatory category or grouping for topics. Topics, which are created within forums, are where participants can post conversations. A Conversation is the thread of messages in which participants post their contributions. A conversation can be created by instructors or students inside of a topic.

Features of Forums
Some the features in the Forums tool include:

- **Grading**: Interactions can be assigned a point value and sent to the gradebook with comments. These are created by your instructor.
- **Availability dates**: Forums and topics can be accessed according to specified dates.
- **Moderation**: Instructors can moderate messages posted to topics.
- **Counts of unread posts at a glance**: On your site's Home or Overview page, you can see how many unread messages or posts you have in both Messages and Forums. From Home, you can see these totals for all sites in which you are enrolled.
- **Email notifications**: You can elect to receive no email notification, notification for all new postings in a site, or notification for responses to conversations they’ve posted in. The default is to receive notifications about new postings in conversations to which you have contributed.
- **Statistics**: Forum statistics are available for instructors to determine the participation level of individual participants.
- **Post before reading option**: The instructor can require you to submit your posts to a topic before you have permission to read the responses of others.
- **Group awareness**: Instructors can change forum and topic settings in combination with predefined groups to allow or deny access to specific discussions per group.
- **Direct link to individual messages**: Instructors can copy a direct link to individual messages to use elsewhere.
- **Composing messages**: A rich-text editor allows rich text, plaintext, and HTML editing. You can add attachments to any message by linking to files or web links in Resources.
- **Quoted text**: Use the Insert Original Text option to insert the previous post into your response.
- **Email the author of a message**: Instructors can directly email the author of a posting within the Forums tool.

*Note: A forum with the name of the site and a topic titled “General Discussion” are created by default.*
How do I access Forums?

To access this tool, select **Forums** from the Tool Menu in your site.

How do I post to a forum topic?

Forums are organizational units that group topics within the site. You cannot post directly to a forum, you must first enter a topic and post your message there.

In order to post to a forum topic, you will **Start a New Conversation** or thread.

Go to forums.

Select the **Forums** tool from Tool Menu in your site.

Choose a forum.
Forums

Case Studies  New Topic | Forum Settings | More ▼
Use this area to discuss case studies from each chapter of your textbook.
› View Full Description and Attachment(s)

Chapter 1 Case Study 0 unread of 0 messages  Topic Settings | More ▼
Please discuss the case study from chapter 1.
› View Full Description and Attachment(s)

Discussion 2 SMPL202 Forum  New Topic | Forum Settings | More ▼

General Discussion 0 unread of 0 messages  Topic Settings | More ▼