Accessing a Discussion

1. Click on the **Tools** or **Discussions** link from course menu *(if you went to the Tools page, click Discussion Board)*.
2. Select the link for the Discussion Forum that you wish to access.

A discussion forum may have a number of threads – topics that organize your online conversation. Click the link for the Thread that you wish to access.

By default, the upper area of a Thread page will show the organization of messages and their replies. An indented link indicates that it is a reply to the message that is one tab to the left. The lower panel of a Thread page shows a specific message *(the one that is highlighted in the upper panel)*.

Replying to a Message

3. Click the **Reply** button on the right side of a message.
4. Notice that an RE: is automatically placed at the beginning of the original message’s Subject line. You can change the text in the Subject line to make your message more easily identified as to its content or main point.
5. Type your reply in the Message textbox.
6. If your instructor has allowed, you may use the **Browse My Computer** button to attach a file.
7. Click the **Submit** button.

**Parent Post**: Sometimes replies do not follow immediately after the message to which they refer. At the top of each reply message, a Parent Post link can be clicked to expand the message that the reply was to.

Creating a New Thread

Some forums are set up to allow you to create a new focus for the discussion. In those forums you will see a **Create Thread** button when you open a forum link.

8. Click the **Create Thread** button.
9. Give the new thread a Subject and type in your Message.
10. If you will be adding an attachment, click the **Browse My Computer** button.
11. Click the **Submit**.
Navigating through Messages and Threads

12. When in a Thread, you can select a message by clicking its link in the upper panel or you can see the next or previous message by clicking the Next/Previous Message arrows at the top or bottom left corner of the bottom panel (next to the Subject line of the message).

13. Next/Previous Thread buttons are located at the top left of the upper panel (next to the Thread’s Subject link).