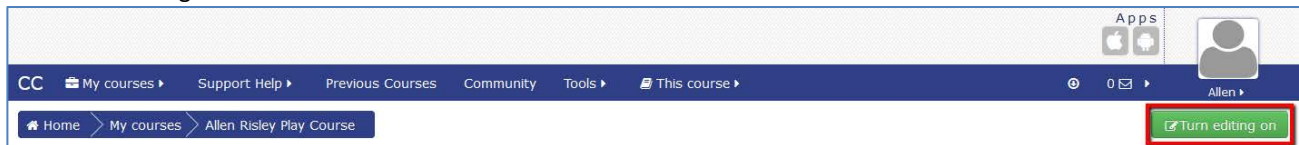## Why Do This

Forums are one of the most powerful and versatile activities in CC. A well-run forum can stimulate a thoughtful exchange of ideas, motivate students to be involved, give the shy students a voice or act as a team workspace. In online courses, the forums may be the primary method by which you, the Instructor, build that sense of community which is so crucial to retention. Forums can be set up with groups, forum posts can be graded, and students can submit attachments to forum posts and replies.

See Using Forums, for a thorough introduction to the different ways to use forums, how to write effective forum questions and a description of the 5 forum types and when to use each.
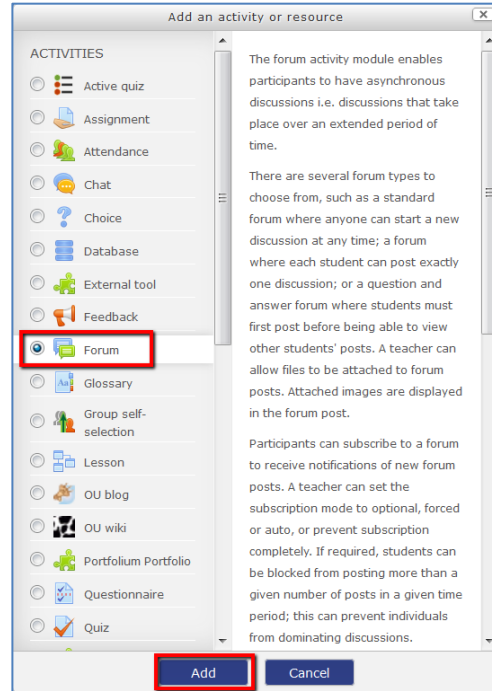
1. Log onto Cougar Courses and go to the main page of your course.
2. Click Turn editing on.

3. Go to the section where you wish to add the Forum.
4. Click the **Add an activity or resource** link at the bottom right of the topic.

5. Scroll down the list of Activities/Resources and click on **Forum.**

6. Click the **Add** button**.**

General Section

7. Enter a descriptive N**ame** for the Forum.

8. Enter a **Description** of your forum and your forum prompts. You can use the HTML editor toolbar to format the text, add images, tables, links, etc.

    Hint: Include specific instructions for the students in this section, regarding the subject of the forum, the grading criteria and number of initial posts and replies you expect, as well as the due dates for each.

9. Select the **Forum type**. See the how to document: *Using Forums* for a description of each type.

Notes:

- *If you are using groups, refer to the Using Forums document and carefully read the forum descriptions and tips. Different forum types handle groups differently.*

- *If using groups with the **Q&A forum** type, see pg 5 of this document for setup instructions.*

Attachments and word count

10. *Attachments:* Determines whether students can add attachments to their post, and limits size and number of these attachments.
11. *Word count:* Specifies whether the word count of each post is displayed, or not.

Attachments and word count

Maximum attachment size ⊙

2MB

Maximum number of attachments ⊙

1

Display word count ⊙

Yes

Subscription and tracking

12. *Subscription mode:* Determines whether participants will receive email copies of forum posts.
    a. Select **Optional** to allow participants *to choose to opt in.*
    b. Select **Auto subscription** to subscribe everyone initially but allow them to unsubscribe at any time.
    c. Forced subscription – everyone is subscribed and cannot unsubscribe. – Use this with caution!
13. *Read tracking:* If enabled, allows users to track read and unread forum messages.

Subscription and tracking

Subscription mode ⊙

Optional subscription

Read tracking ⊙

Optional

Post threshold for blocking

This section can be used to warn and block students from posting more than a given number of posts in a given time period.

Post threshold for blocking

Time period for blocking   Don't block

Post threshold for blocking ⊙   0

Post threshold for warning ⊙   0

Ratings

This section allows you to determine how student posts are graded and to restrict grading to posts submitted within a date range.

Aggregate type: You can rate each post, using a dropdown just below the post. The dropdown will display all points to the maximum assigned.   The aggregate type determines how the ratings for all of a student's posts within the forum are aggregated into one score.

- Average of ratings - The mean of all ratings
- Count of ratings - The number of rated items becomes the final grade. Note that the total cannot exceed the maximum grade for the activity.
- Maximum - The highest rating becomes the final grade
- Minimum - The smallest rating becomes the final grade
- Sum - All ratings are added together. Note that the total cannot exceed the maximum grade for the activity.

If "No ratings" is selected, then the activity will not appear in the gradebook.

Ratings

Roles with permission to rate ⊙

Manager, Instructor, Grader without Design Access, IDS Adm Access

Aggregate type ⊙

Average of ratings ▾

Scale ⊙

Type Point ▾

Scale 1 to 150

Maximum points 5

> Enter total possible points for the forum

Restrict ratings to items with dates in this range: When selected, this setting prevents the instructor from assigning points to posts outside of the specified date range. Students can still view the forum and post.

Restrict ratings to items with dates in this range:

☑

From

1 ▾ February ▾ 2016 ▾ 13 ▾ 10 ▾ 🗓

To

9 ▾ February ▾ 2016 ▾ 00 ▾ 00 ▾ 🗓

Using the Q&A forum

When using this forum type, do not enter your prompt in the description field. Create the "question" (discussion prompt) using the *Add a new question* button.

How do you use active learning techniques?

Click on the discussion and read the prompt, then click reply. This is a Q & A forum, so you will NOT be able to see any other students replies until you have posted, and the 15 minute editing window has passed.

After submitting your original post, read and respond to three of your fellow students. Using the active learning guidelines we've discussed, does their technique meet these guidelines? If not, how could it be improved? If it does, provide an example of how one of their techniques could be used in your classes.

> Use description field for instructions, not the question prompt.
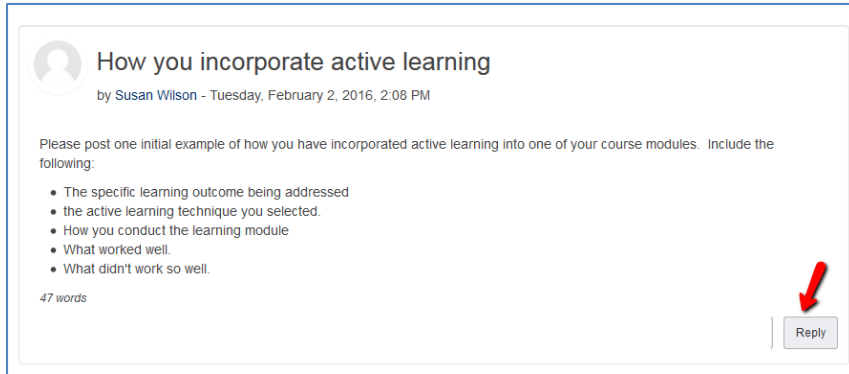
Separate groups (forums)

All participants ▾

Add a new question

> prompt

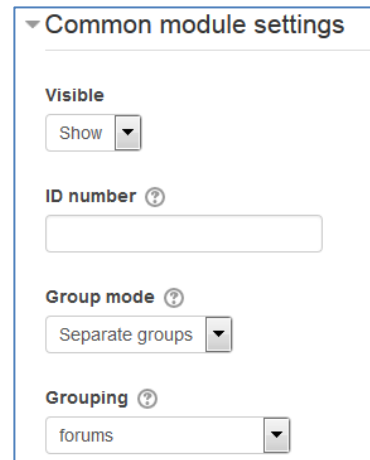| Discussion	Started by	Group	Replies	Unread	Last post
Your use of active learning techniques	Susan Wilson	B	0	-	Susan Wilson ☐ Tue, Feb 2, 2016, 2:09 PM

Students select the discussion, read your "Question" and click *reply* to "Answer".

Using the Q&A forum with groups

Unlike any other forum type, when using the Q&A forum with groups, you must create the initial "question" for every group.

1. In the forum settings, scroll to the **Common module settings**.
2. Set the **Group mode** to Separate groups or Visible groups. You must have the groups already set up set up in your course via Administration>Users>groups.

    o Separate groups - Each group member can only see their own group, others are invisible.

    o Visible groups - Each group member works in their own group, but can also see (not contribute to) other groups.

3. Select a **Grouping**, if you have assigned your groups to a grouping.

4. Click on **Save and display** at the bottom of the page.

5. Click **Add a new question**.
6. Enter the **Subject**.
7. Type your question in the **Message** field.

8. Scroll down and check the box **Post a copy to all groups**.

    Note: If you skip this step, you will have to create a new post, or post a question to each group separately. You won't be able to edit the post in order to check this box.

9. Click **Post to forum**.