

HOLYOKE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Introduction

Discussions in WebCT give teachers and their students the ability to make public statements in the form of text and attachments. A student can type a message in the Message window as plain text or attach a file that can be opened or saved on the disk by others. Messages are organized by “Topics.” Topics are divided into “Subjects.” Each subject is considered a “Thread.” This guide addresses the following issues:

- Reading Messages,
- Replying to Messages,
- Composing New Messages, and
- Attaching Files to Messages.

Reading Messages

To open the discussions window, click on the **Discussions** link. The discussions link can be found in the *Course Menu* or on the course homepage.

Note: The instructor may identify this link by any term. The most common names are Discussions, Bulletin Board, or Class Discussion. Check with the instructor to find out the term being used if it is not clear.



After clicking the **Discussion** link the *Discussions* window will appear.

Discussion Topics

Messages in WebCT are sorted by topic. *Main*, *Notes*, and *All* appear in the *Topic* list of the Discussion tool. The instructor can also create topics that are unique to a course. These custom topics will also appear in the *Topic* list from within the Discussion tool. To access a discussion topic, simply click on the topic name.

Topic	Unread	Total	Status
Main	1	1	public, unlocked
Notes	0	2	public, unlocked
How to use Computer to write a program	1	5	public, unlocked
All	2	8	---

Opening a Thread

Messages are stored in “threads,” which can be expanded or collapsed using the green triangles to the left of the title of the thread.



Status		Subject
▶ 1/1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hello World!!!
▼ 1/1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Java Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Java Program

All vs. Unread

Within each topic there are two ways to control the display of messages. The first option is “All” and the second one is “Unread” messages. This setting will cause WebCT to either display all messages in the topic or only those messages that the user has not yet read.

Note: This is an either/or option. When All is selected the command will appear as plain black text. Similarly, when Unread is selected it will appear as plain text.



New Messages

All unread messages are labeled with a closed envelope icon within the *Status* column. Once a message has been viewed, the closed envelope will appear open.



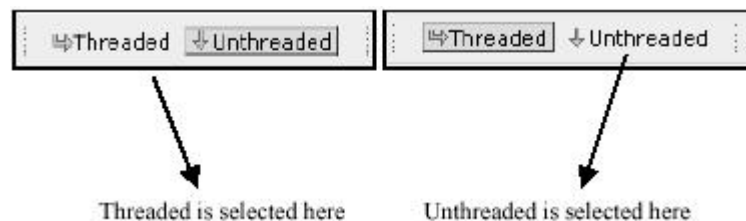
No.	Status	Subject
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hello World!!!
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Java Program!!!
8.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Re: Hello World!!!

New message

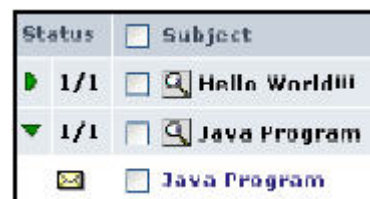
Threaded vs. Unthreaded

Within each topic, the second viewing option is “Threaded” or “Unthreaded.” This setting will cause WebCT to either display messages in terms of who has responded to whom (like branches of a tree) or in chronological order as the messages are created.

Note: Similar to the All and Unread settings, Threaded or Unthreaded commands appear as plain text when selected



The title of each thread is set apart from the individual messages by a gray background. All is selected here. Unread is selected here Threaded is selected here Unthreaded is selected here New message







Status		Subject
▶ 1/1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hello World!!!
▼ 1/1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Java Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Java Program

Opening and Closing Messages

The Discussion Window is broken into four sections: Status, subject, author, and date. The

Status column displays the *New Message* icon as well as the *Attachment* icon (when necessary). The *Subject* column includes the subject of the message. Clicking on the title will open the

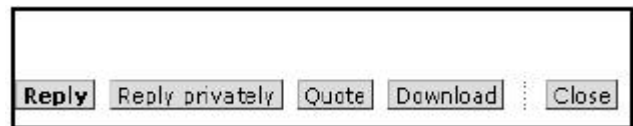
Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Subject	Author	Date
▼ 2/5	<input type="checkbox"/>  Hello World!!!		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hello World!!!	Mansoor Raza (CS100)	September 9, 2003 1:34pm
	<input type="checkbox"/>  Re: Hello World!!!	Mansoor Raza (CS100)	September 9, 2003 3:10pm

message in a new window. The *Author* and *Date* columns display the creator of the message and the creation date and time. Under status a closed envelop sign indicates that there is a new message. In the above image the number two indicates that we have two new messages out of five.

To close a message, click on the *Close* button.

Responding to Messages

There may be as many as three different ways to respond to a message, including *Reply*, *Reply Privately*, or *Quote*, depending on how the instructor has set up the course.



Reply

Use the *Reply* option to send a reply message to all members of the topic without including the text of the original message.

Reply Privately

Use this feature to send a message only to the author of an original message using WebCT mail tool.

Note: Reply privately is only available in courses where the Mail tool is being used

Quote

This option is just like replying except the response includes the original message text.

Reply to Message: 3

Topic: Main

Subject: Re: re Class

Message:



Height of edit area: 12 Resize Don't wrap text / Wrap text

HTML editor

Equation: Create equation

Equation editor

Attachments:

Browse...

Attach file

There are no files attached.

Post

Preview

Cancel

To respond to a message:

- From within an open message, choose *Reply*, *Reply Privately*, or *Quote*.
- The Message screen will appear.
- In the message window type a response.
- Click *Post*.

Note: click the

Preview button to read through the message before posting it.

Composing New Messages

The *Compose Message* button should be used to create a new message (new thread). A student or the instructor can start a new thread in any of the discussion topics.

To create a new thread:

From within a specific topic, click on *Compose Message*. The Compose Message screen will appear.

Type the subject of the message in the *Subject* text box. Type the message in the *Message* text box. Click the *Post* button.

Attaching Files to Messages

To add an attachment to any discussion message

Click *Browse* to locate a file. Select the file that is going to be attached to the message and click *Open*. Click *Attach File*. To send the message, click *Post*.

The attachment section of a message appears as a paper clip if the message has an attachment. By clicking on this paper clip the attached files can be downloaded and viewed.

Discussions

Compose message

Search

Topic settings



Select a file

Attach a selected file

To download an attachment

a. Open the message and then click the “See Attached” link.

[Reply](#) [Reply privately](#) [Quote](#) [Download](#)

Message no. 3

Author: Michael Kowalewski (CRJ214DB)

Date: Thursday, May 27, 2004 10:10am

This is to welcome you to this class

 [See Attached](#)

 [Close](#)

b. Select a file by clicking the little circle next to the blue link

c. Click the “Download” button.

Attachments

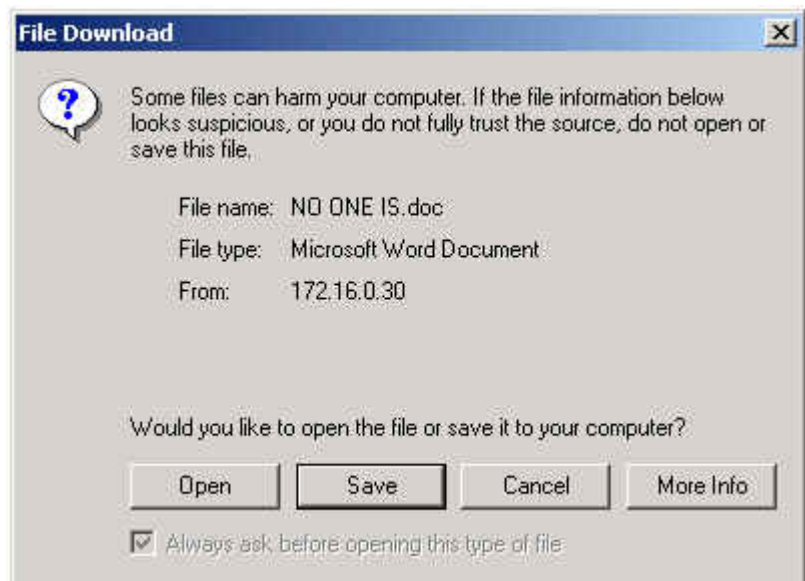
To view a file click on its name.

[Close](#) [Download](#)

[NO ONE IS.doc](#)
(19.5 KB)

d. If a dialogue box appears click the “Save” button.

Note: Pay close attention to the name of the file, the type of file (e.g., .doc, .xls, .rtf, etc.), and where the file is saved.



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