

Discussion Posting Tutorial for Fully Online Courses

This tutorial describes how to submit initial postings and replies in the weekly discussion forums in Ottawa's fully online courses. This format may or may not apply to blended courses or ground courses that use Blackboard for some portions of course work.

Submitting Initial Posts

In order to submit your initial post in response to the discussion prompt/question for the week, you will need to go into the Discussions area of the course and find the forum for the given week. Click on the forum title (e.g., Week 1 Discussion Forum) to enter the forum.

You can read the prompt/question you will be responding to both in the weekly lesson in the Weekly Materials section and in the Discussions section of the course. You may want to prepare your response in a Word document so that you can save it to your computer or flash drive, however, it is not required that you do so. If you choose to type your response in a Word document, you will then need to copy and paste it into the discussion forum (please do not submit discussion posts as attachments).

In order to keep each weekly discussion forum organized, you will not be creating a new thread for your initial posts. You will need to click on the prompt you want to respond to and then click Reply to submit your post.

Naming Your Initial Post

To assist your peers and instructor in navigating the discussion forum, it is beneficial if you rename your initial post so that it is obvious who submitted the response. Once you click Reply, you will see something like this...

* Indicates a required field.

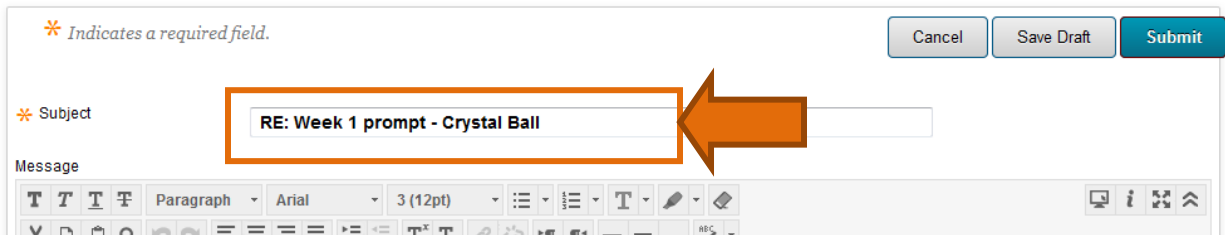
Cancel Save Draft Submit

* Subject RE: Week 1 prompt

Message

Rich text editor toolbar: Paragraph, Arial, 3 (12pt), Bold, Italic, Underline, Text Color, Background Color, Bulleted List, Numbered List, Indent, Outdent, Undo, Redo, Source, HTML, CSS.

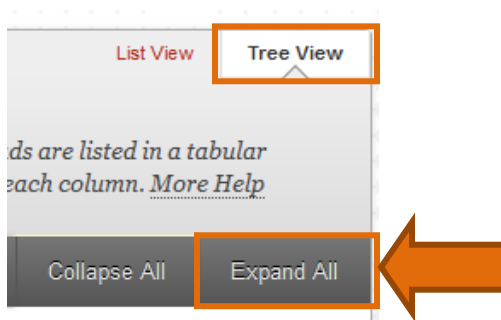
As you can see, the Subject line reads **RE: Week 1 Prompt 1** because that was the title of the prompt you are replying to. In order to help others know who is posting this reply, append your name after the end of this subject line. In this example, it would read something like **RE: Week 1 Prompt 1 – Crystal Ball**.



Replying to Peers

When replying to others it's helpful to expand the list of posts so that you can see all of them, including which ones are replies to the initial post/question and which ones are replies to peers.

- Make sure you are in Tree View (not List View) in the upper right corner of the screen.
- Then click Expand All.



Once the posts are expanded, you can see the different levels, representing whether they are replies to the initial prompt or replies to other students' posts.

Message Actions	Collect	Thread	Author	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Prompt 1	Karen Ludwig	9/7/12 2:58 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>		RE: Prompt 1 - Rocky Akers	Rocky Akers	1/25/13 1:04 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> RE: Prompt 1 - Otto Graf	Otto Graf	1/25/13 1:02 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>		RE: Prompt 1 - Otto Graf	Rocky Akers	1/25/13 1:05 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>		RE: Prompt 1 - Lilly Pond	Lilly Pond	1/25/13 1:01 PM

Message Actions Collect

If you have any questions about this process or whether you are posting your initial responses and replies to peers effectively, please ask your instructor. If you have any technical difficulties in posting, please contact OU Help (<http://www.ottawa.edu/ouhelp> or 855-268-4357). We look forward to “speaking” with you in the discussion forums!