

Posting to the Bulletin Board in WebCT 4.0

Overview

A Bulletin Board is often used in WebCT as a place where professors and students can read and respond to posted messages. Initially, a professor sets up topics (e.g., "Thursday's Reading Assignment", "Moby Dick Questions", and "Weekly writing exercises"). You can access your class's Bulletin Board by clicking on the Bulletin Board icon.

When you click on the Bulletin Board icon it will take open up the list of topics.

A sample bulletin board icon on a WebCT homepage.



Discussion Board

The Bulletin Board's List of Topics

The first page you land on in the bulletin board is the list of topics screen. Here you can see a listing of various topics your instructor has set, as well as use the drop-down display choices to see all the messages that you have not yet read or those that have been posted since your last visit.

Within each topic, you can respond to your peers' messages, to a peer's response to another peer, or you can choose to break new ground by posting with a new subject heading.

Homepage > Discussions > **Main**

Discussion Messages: **Main**

Compose message | Update listing | Search | Mark all as read

Display: All Unread | Threaded Unthreaded | Select topic: Main

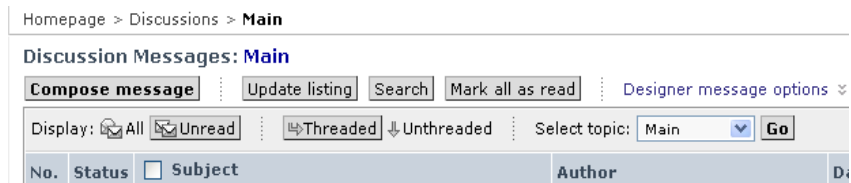
No.	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Subject	Author	Date
229.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet as place for pub...	Kenny Smith	January 28, 2004 12:36am
230.	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Office Hours: January ...	Wyatt Hirsutius	January 28, 2004 10:17am
231.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Test this out	Kendra Jones	
232.	<input type="checkbox"/>	the picture	Kenny Smith	
233.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Re: Test this out	Kendra Jones	

A sample list of postings from the "Main" area

As a default, you will not see messages that you have already read when you log on for a new session. Unless your instructor deleted them, you will be able to look at those messages by clicking the "All" option. To return to

the default view, click the "Unread" button. To follow a "thread" (a series of messages that are in response to one another), click the "Threaded" button.

The interface for the discussion board.



Posting new messages

To write a new message with a new subject heading,

1. Click on the "Compose Message" button to open the discussion board dialog box

The discussion board dialog box

A screenshot of a "Compose Discussion Message" dialog box. The "Topic:" field is a dropdown menu currently set to "Main", with a "Post anonymously" checkbox to its right. The "Subject:" field is an empty text input box. The "Message:" field is a large, empty text area. Below the text area, there are controls for "Height of edit area:" (set to 12), a "Resize" button, and radio buttons for "Don't wrap text" and "Wrap text". There are also buttons for "HTML editor" and "Equation editor". Below these is an "Attachments:" section with a "Browse..." button and an "Attach file" button. At the bottom of the dialog, there are "Post", "Preview", and "Cancel" buttons. The text "There are no files attached." is displayed above the bottom buttons.

2. Choose the correct topic area in the topic drop-down
3. Enter a subject line — within about 15 words or less — describing what the post is about
4. Type your message inside the message box.
5. When you have finished entering text, click on the Preview button to see an approximation of how your final posting will appear to others. At this point, you can choose to correct any mistakes, or post it by pressing the "post" button.

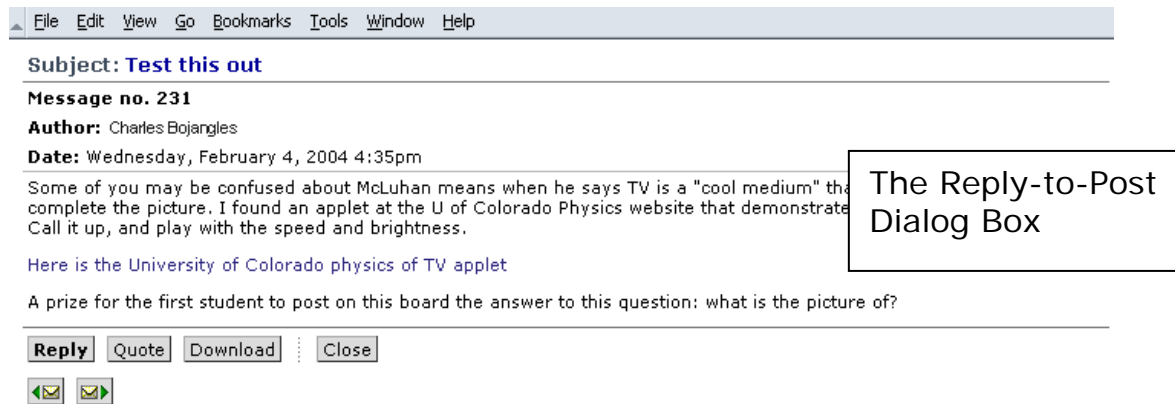
If you have used text with HTML tags, you will need to do this to see the results of your formatting commands. If you enter a URL into the compose box, it will appear as highlighted and "clickable" in the Preview

screen and the subsequent posting. You do not need to add any HTML tags to make links work in the Bulletin Board.

Replying to a Bulletin Board Message

A Reply is a message which does not introduce a new topic, or 'thread' to a Bulletin Board discussion. Instead, it extends a thread that already exists by adding a message to it.

The button to initiate a Reply is found within the message to which you wish to reply. It is the button below the message header.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Go, Bookmarks, Tools, Window, Help). The message header includes: Subject: [Test this out](#), Message no. 231, Author: Charles Bojangles, Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2004 4:35pm. The message body contains text about McLuhan and a link to a University of Colorado physics website. Below the message, there are buttons for Reply, Quote, Download, and Close. A box labeled 'The Reply-to-Post Dialog Box' is overlaid on the right side of the screenshot, pointing to the Reply button.

Note that you can include the previous message in the body of your reply using the "Quote" button, or save it as a text file by pressing the "Download" button.

When you click Reply, the Reply version of the Message window appears. Since you are continuing a conversation rather than initiating one, you may not alter the subject line or the Topic where the message will be located. Otherwise, the process is exactly the same as composing a message. You can preview the message; attach files, or anything else that you can do with the Compose Message window.

For more information about using the WebCT application, please contact the

Brandeis ITS Instructional Technology Resource Center
781-736-4739 (x64739)
itrc@brandeis.edu.