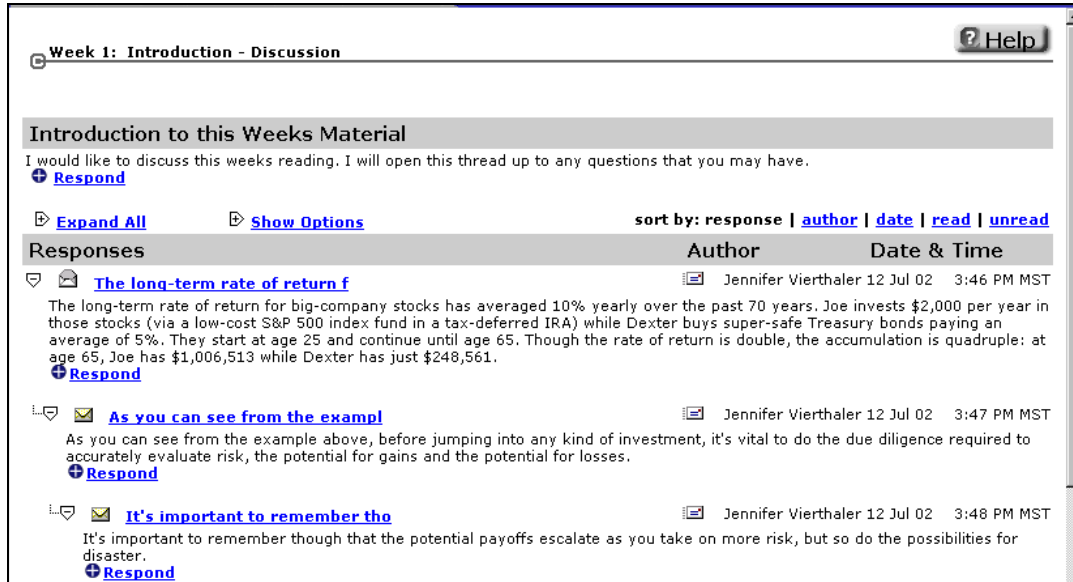


Using Threaded Discussions

The Threaded Discussion content item simulates traditional classroom discussions. A threaded discussion (thread) allows students to post comments to a discussion topic, react to other students' comments, and respond to ideas shared by you or by others in the course.

Discussions take place *asynchronously*—each threaded discussion begins with a topic you identify. Students log into the course when they can and then post to the threaded discussion at their convenience. Responses to each topic display below the topic.



The screenshot shows a web interface for a threaded discussion. At the top, there is a navigation bar with "Week 1: Introduction - Discussion" and a "Help" button. Below this is a section titled "Introduction to this Weeks Material" with a paragraph of text and a "Respond" button. Underneath are "Expand All" and "Show Options" buttons, followed by a sorting menu set to "response". A table titled "Responses" lists three entries, each with a "Respond" button. The first response is titled "The long-term rate of return f" and discusses investment returns for Joe and Dexter. The second is "As you can see from the exampl" and discusses due diligence. The third is "It's important to remember tho" and discusses potential payoffs and risks.










Week 1: Introduction - Discussion ? Help

Introduction to this Weeks Material

I would like to discuss this weeks reading. I will open this thread up to any questions that you may have.

[+ Respond](#)

[Expand All](#) [Show Options](#) **sort by: response** | [author](#) | [date](#) | [read](#) | [unread](#)

Responses	Author	Date & Time
  The long-term rate of return f	 Jennifer Vierthaler	12 Jul 02 3:46 PM MST
<p>The long-term rate of return for big-company stocks has averaged 10% yearly over the past 70 years. Joe invests \$2,000 per year in those stocks (via a low-cost S&P 500 index fund in a tax-deferred IRA) while Dexter buys super-safe Treasury bonds paying an average of 5%. They start at age 25 and continue until age 65. Though the rate of return is double, the accumulation is quadruple: at age 65, Joe has \$1,006,513 while Dexter has just \$248,561.</p> <p>+ Respond</p>		
  As you can see from the exampl	 Jennifer Vierthaler	12 Jul 02 3:47 PM MST
<p>As you can see from the example above, before jumping into any kind of investment, it's vital to do the due diligence required to accurately evaluate risk, the potential for gains and the potential for losses.</p> <p>+ Respond</p>		
  It's important to remember tho	 Jennifer Vierthaler	12 Jul 02 3:48 PM MST
<p>It's important to remember though that the potential payoffs escalate as you take on more risk, but so do the possibilities for disaster.</p> <p>+ Respond</p>		

You may want to pose one or more questions for discussion each week. Students may have a set amount of time to respond and/or may be graded on their participation and the quality of their comments.

Students enjoy using threaded discussions because they can compose their thoughts before they post a comment, respond more thoughtfully to discussion topics, and engage in lively debates that are less threatening than in a live classroom environment.

Note: You cannot delete a Threaded Discussion content item if there are topics in the Threaded Discussion. Similarly, you cannot delete a Thread topic if there are responses within the topic. In sum, to delete a Threaded Discussion content item, you must start at the “bottom” and move up—deleting individual responses to topics first, then topics, and finally the Threaded Discussion content item.

Adding a new Thread

As an instructor, you can add threaded discussions to your course and choose what topics should be discussed within each thread.

To add a threaded discussion content item:

- Step 1: Click the **Author** tab in the upper left corner of your screen.
- Step 2: In the left toolbar, click the unit to which you want to add a threaded discussion.
- Step 3: Click **Add Content Item** at the top of the screen.
- Step 4: From the **Select Item(s)** drop-down list, select the Threaded Discussion item. As a default, this item is called **Discussion**; however, if you re-named this item, it may now be called something other than Discussion.
- Step 5: Click **Add to Unit**. The threaded discussion item appears in the current unit.
- Step 6: You'll need to create a thread topic before your students can use the threaded discussion item. See the Help section **Adding a Topic to a Thread** for more information.

Adding a Topic to a Thread

Once you have added a threaded discussion content item, you can create topics for discussion within that thread. There is no limit to the number of topics that can exist in each threaded discussion.

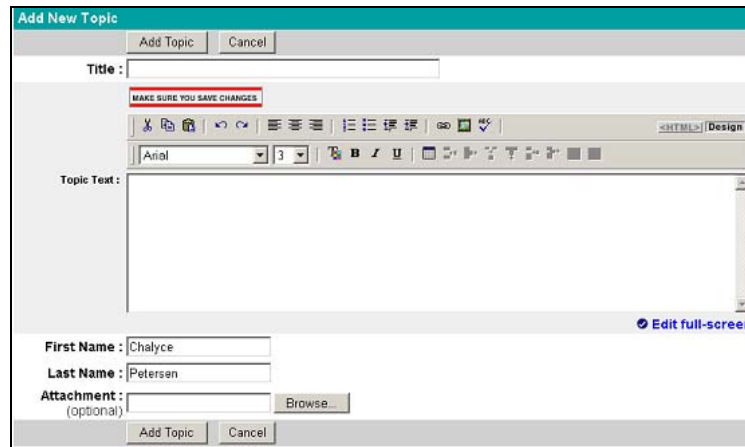
While both you and your students can respond to a threaded discussion, only you can create thread topics.

To add a topic to a thread:

- Step 1: On the left side of your screen, click the unit that contains the threaded discussion you want to edit. **Note:** *You need to have added a threaded discussion content item to the unit before you can add thread topics. See the Help topic **Adding Content** for more information.*
- Step 2: Click the threaded discussion content item in the unit.
- Step 3: Click the **Author** tab.

Tip: You can choose to add Introductory Text for your thread that will display above your thread and any thread topics. This text may contain general information or instructions to students (for example, "Select one of the following topics and respond by Friday"). Introductory text is optional; however, if you'd like to add this text, click the **Add Intro Text** link on the main Threaded Discussion editing screen. You can also use this link to assign the Thread to a specific group or groups.

Step 4: Click **Add New Topic**. The Add New Topic screen opens.



Step 5: Enter a title for your topic. The topic title is what displays in the **Select a topic** drop-down list.

Step 6: Enter the discussion topic text. This is the actual topic that students will see and respond to. You can use the Visual Editor toolbar to format your new discussion topic.

You can also include an attachment in the topic—a document, video, or image that students can review and then comment on, for example. To include a file attachment, click **Browse**, locate the file, and click **Open**. The file path appears in the **Attachment** text box.

Step 7: Click **Add Topic** to add the new topic to the thread.

Note: To assign the new topic to a specific group, make sure you click the **Add Intro Text/ Assign to Groups** link on the main thread page.

Responding to a Thread

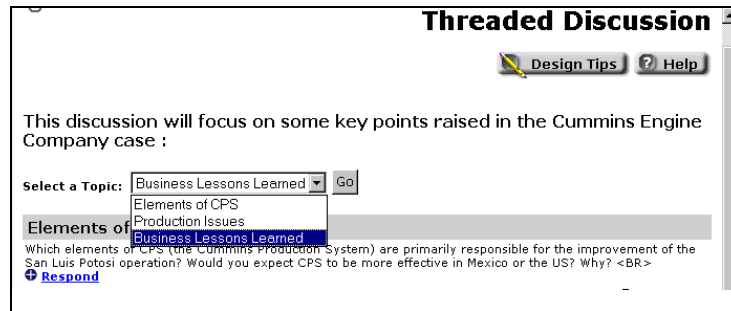
Once a topic has been posted, both you and your students can respond to the topic and to each other. One line of discussion constitutes a thread. You and your students can also email the author of a thread. As an instructor, your responses will appear in **bold** to easily distinguish them from student names and responses.

To respond to a thread:

Step 1: Locate the threaded discussion you want to respond to by clicking the appropriate unit button on the left. Click the threaded discussion

within the unit.

- Step 2: If there is more than one topic in the threaded discussion, you'll need to **Select A Topic** from the drop-down list and click **Go**.



- Step 3: To respond directly to the topic, click the **Respond** button below the topic.
- Step 4: To respond to a comment from a student or from someone else, first open or "expand" the comment by clicking the "+" button next to it.
- Step 5: Next, click the **Respond** button below that comment.
- Note:** You can view threaded discussion responses and sub-threads one at a time, or you can expand them all at once. To expand a single thread, make sure you click on the **title** of the response you want to view or read. If you click the "+" sign next to the thread, all sub-threads and responses will expand.
- Step 6: Type your response in the space provided. You can attach a document if you wish (click **Browse**). You can also check for misspelled words in your response by clicking the **Check Spelling** button.
- Step 7: Click **Post**. Remember, as an instructor, your responses will appear in **bold**.

To email the author of a thread:

- Step 1: Locate the threaded discussion and the topic or response within that thread that you want to respond to.
- Step 2: Click the **email** icon (✉) next to the author or submitter's name.
- Step 3: Enter your email message in the text box provided. You can include an attachment in your email using the **Browse** button. You can also check the spelling in your response by clicking **Check Spelling**.
- Step 4: When you're done composing your email, click **Email Response**. The message is sent only to the author of the thread.

Viewing Threads

Once a threaded discussion is underway, you can sort and view comments by response, author, date, or by whether the response has been read. By default, threaded discussions are sorted by response. You can also print a threaded discussion. Remember, any responses you post (as an instructor) will display in **bold**.

To sort threads:

- Step 1: Locate the threaded discussion you want to view.
- Step 2: In the threaded discussion main screen, find the **Sort by:** option in the top-right corner and click one of the following sort options:

response	sorts responses hierarchically—responses are indented beneath the topic or response they're responding to
author	sorts responses by the authors' last names
date	sorts responses by the time and date they were posted
read	groups all responses you have read or opened first
unread	groups all responses you have not read or opened first

Note: You can view threaded discussion responses and sub-threads one at a time, or you can expand them all at once. To expand a single thread, make sure you click on the **title** of the response you want to view or read. If you click the "+" sign next to the thread, all sub-threads and responses will expand.

To mark threads and responses as read or unread:

- Step 1: Open the threaded discussion.
- Step 2: Click **Show Options** in the top-left corner of the screen. A checkbox will appear to the left of each response in the thread and you'll see the options **Mark Read** and **Mark Unread** at the top of the threaded discussion.
- Step 3: Check the checkbox next to all responses or threads that you want to mark as either "read" or "unread."
- Step 4: Click **Mark Read** to mark all the responses you had selected as "read" or opened. Click **Mark Unread** to mark all the responses you had selected as "unread" or unopened.

Remember, you can sort your threaded discussion by read (opened) or unread (unopened) responses.

Printing Threads

There are two ways to print Threaded Discussions. You can print a "what you see is what you get" version of the thread in which you can "expand" select responses (or all responses) and then print exactly what displays on your screen, or you can print the "Print Friendly" version of the thread. The Print Friendly version prints the threaded discussion without all the links (like "Reply," "Edit," and "Email", for example) under each response. The Print Friendly option does include the Read/Unread status of each thread so you can quickly identify responses that have not been opened.

To print exactly what displays in the Threaded Discussion interface:

- Step 1: Locate the threaded discussion you want to print.
- Step 2: Click **Expand All** to "open" all the thread responses, or simply click the "+" sign next to the responses you want to see and therefore print. Only "expanded" responses will be printed.
- Step 3: Click **Print** in your browser. Whatever is displayed on your screen will print.

To print the "Printer Friendly" version of the Thread:

- Step 1: Locate the threaded discussion you want to print.
- Step 2: Click **Show Options** at the top of the Threaded Discussion.
- Step 3: From the options that display, click **Printer Version**. A Printer-Friendly version of the Thread opens in a new browser window.
- Step 4: Click the **Print** button in the browser.