# Communicating with your Professors

In this section, you will learn how to communicate with your instructors and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and Conversations.

## Announcements

To get started, **click Announcements** in course navigation. Here you can see announcements sent by your instructor or institution. In some cases, you can comment on announcements. These replies are public and viewable by any users with access to that announcement.

**Click the Unread button** to hide all announcements that you have already read.

Search for an announcement by typing an announcement title, keyword, or a user name in the Search field.

If you use an RSS reader, you can subscribe to the announcement feed by clicking the RSS button.

To open an announcement, **click the announcement title.** Within the selected announcement and replies, you can search entries or authors. **Click the Unread button** to hide replies that you have already read. You can also collapse or expand replies by clicking the collapse or expand buttons. Mark all of the replies as Read by clicking the Settings icon and selecting Mark All as Read. You can respond to announcements by **clicking Reply** in the main announcement or in other announcement replies. Type your response using the Rich Content Editor and **click Post Reply.**

## Discussions

Discussions are typically used to engage you and your fellow learners around a specific topic, question, video or assignment.

**Click Discussions** in course navigation. Discussions are public, so all members of the course or group in which the discussion is created will be able to view any responses. To start a new discussion, **click the Add Discussion button,** this option has been enabled by your instructor. You can then fill in the content for your discussion topic using the Rich Content Editor and Content Selector. **Then click Save.**

To respond to existing discussions, open the discussion and **click Reply.** Type your reply using the Rich Content Editor and **click Post Reply.**

## Conversations

Similar to email, Conversations is also sometimes called Messages or the Inbox. With this communication tool, you can send direct messages to individuals or a custom group of people.

To open Conversations, **click the Inbox link** in Global Navigation.

In your Inbox you will see a list of conversations on the left. If you have a specific conversation selected, a history of all communication with the user(s) will appear on the right. **Click the All Courses drop-down menu** to view messages by course or group. **Click the Inbox drop-down menu** to filter your conversations to only view messages that are unread, starred, sent, archived, or submission comments. When a conversation is selected, you will see the reply, reply all, archive, and delete buttons.

**Click the compose icon** to start a new message. Choose the course where you'd like to send the message. Type one or more names in the To: field or click the address book icon to search a course, section, or group to find the users you would like to message. Then, enter a topic in the Subject: box. To send your message to every recipient separately, check the Send individual messages box. Then type your message in the Message: box. You can also add an attachment to your message or add a video or audio comment. **Then click Send.**

By clicking the Settings icon in the Conversations toolbar, you have the option to Mark as unread, Forward, or Star the message. To keep your inbox clean we recommend archiving messages instead of deleting them. Remember you can always retrieve your Archived messages by clicking the Inbox drop-down menu.

**Search:** Find messages from a specific user, course, or group by typing in the Search field, or you can click the address book to search for recipients within a given class, group, section, or user.