

# Module 2:

## Forums

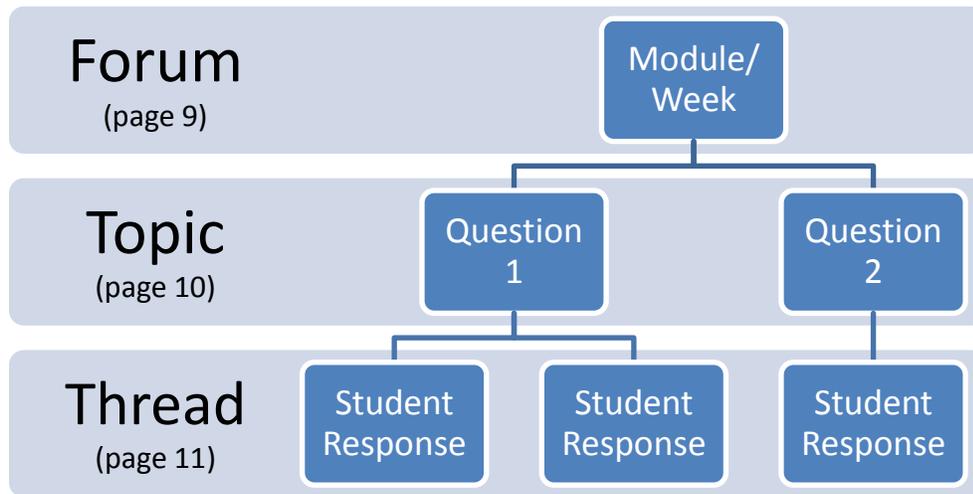


## Use Forums for Course Discussions

The Forums tool allows students and the instructor to engage in structured asynchronous communication with threaded discussions. The Forums tool will enable instructors to host discussions on course related subjects and evaluate student responses via the Gradebook.

The discussion board is divided into **Forums**. These can be modules or weeks for a course. Each Forum has any number of **Topics** within it. The topics can be questions or topics for discussion. Students respond to the topics as a threaded message.

The following is a graphical representation of how discussions are organized hierarchically.



### Customize Forum Template

Prior to creating multiple forums and topics you should consider customizing Template Settings in your Forum tool. The template settings are default settings for all new forums and topics. This will save you time when you are creating multiple forums and topics that may require similar settings.

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Click **Template Settings**.



3. Customize the template settings by adjusting the selections in Forum Postings and Permissions categories.

#### 4. Forum Postings

- a. Under Forum Postings select whether or not you would like to moderate the forum. If you choose to moderate the forum you must view and approve all student postings before they will be viewable to the entire class. ***It is recommended that you keep the default setting of "No".***

#### 5. Permissions

- a. Under Permissions you determine which functions the students and instructors will be permitted to do. There are two basic roles: **Student / Instructor**.

6. First set permissions for your students by selecting **Student**.

7. In the Permission Level pull down menu select **Contributor**. Notice that the default permissions for the contributor are New Response, Response to Response, Read and Mark as Read.

**\_ Forums**

**Default Settings Template**  
Settings from this template will apply each time a new Forum or Topic is created. You can override these settings for a specific Forum or Topic after it has been created.

**Forum Posting**

Moderate Topics in Forums  Yes  No

**Permissions**

Role :   
Instructor (Author)   
**Student (Contributor)**   
Teaching Assistant (Contributor)   
Group 1 (None)

Permission Level :   
Contributor

New Forum   
 Change Settings   
 New Topic   
 Read   
 New Response   
 Mark as Read   
 Response to Response   
 Moderate Postings   
 Post to Gradebook

Edit Postings   
 None   
 Own   
 All

Delete Postings   
 None   
 Own   
 All

8. Next set permissions for the instructor by selecting **Instructor**.

- In the Permission Level pull down menu select **Author**. Notice that the default permissions for the Author include everything except Moderate Postings because we turned it off.

- Click **Save Settings**.

## Create a Forum

At least one forum needs to be created before you can add a topic. You may want to set up a forum for each module or week. If you are working with groups, you may want to create a forum for each group. See [Set up Group Forums](#) on page 15 for more information when working with groups.

- Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
- Click **New Forum**.



3. Enter a Forum Title. You also have the option of entering a Short Description and/ or Description.



Note: If you have a separate file that you would like students to refer to you can attach it by clicking on **Add Attachment**.

4. Under Forum Posting area you could click on **Lock Forum** to prevent access to the forum by students.
5. The settings for students and instructor are automatically filled in according to the existing Template Settings (see previous section Template Settings). However you can change selected permissions here if you need to.
6. Click **Save Settings & Add Topic**.

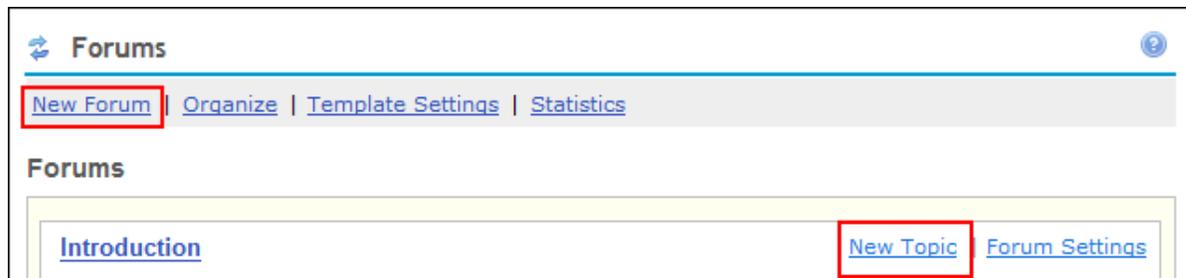


Note: Forums are not visible until a topic has been created.

### Create a Topic/Question

A topic should be a question for students to respond to.

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Navigate to the new forum that you have created.
3. Click **New Topic** link in the appropriate forum.



4. Enter a Topic Title. Forums are not visible to students until a topic has been created.

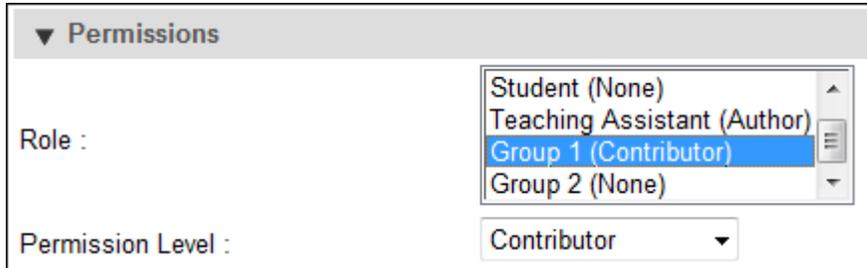


Note: If you have a separate file that you would like students to refer to you can attach it by clicking on **Add Attachment**.

5. Under Topic Posting area you could click on **Lock Topic** to prevent access to the topic by students.
6. The settings for students and instructor are automatically filled in according to the existing Template Settings (see previous section Template Settings). However you can change selected permissions here if you need to, such as when setting up group topics.
7. Click **Save Settings**.

## Set up Group Forums

1. Participation in a forum can also be limited to specific groups of students. You must already have the students grouped in the course (see Site Info. > Manage Groups). Once the groups have been established you will see them as an option within the Forums tool.
2. Set permissions for Access and all other groups to None (**Instructor remains Author**).



▼ Permissions

Role :   
 Student (None)   
 Teaching Assistant (Author)   
 Group 1 (Contributor)   
 Group 2 (None)

Permission Level : Contributor

## Expand and/or Collapse Topic Threads

For a given topic, you can view thread messages with the subject line only or with the entire message displayed.

1. From the Forums tool, click on the Topic title.
2. Click on **Display Entire Message** for an expanded view of all thread messages within a topic.



3. If the messages are expanded, a new link will appear in the tool bar. Click on **Display Subject Only** for a collapsed view of the thread messages within a topic.



## Create a Thread Message

Students will create a new thread when they are responding to the instructor's topic/question.

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Click a Forum title.
3. Click on a Topic title.

**\_ Forums**

[New Forum](#) | [Organize](#) | [Template Settings](#) | [Statistics](#)

**Forums**

[Main](#) [New Topic](#) | [Forum Settings](#)

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[Week 1](#) (0 message - 0 unread) [Topic Settings](#)

For your first week's participation, please post a 50-100 word introduction of yourself. You may also include a photo.

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[Week 2](#) (0 message - 0 unread) [Topic Settings](#)

For this week, discuss the Chapter 2 concepts of yin and yang. Your discussion should include 100-200 words. You should also respond to 2 other student responses

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[Week 3](#) (0 message - 0 unread) [Topic Settings](#)

This week please discuss Question 1 from Chapter 3. Your discussion should be 100-150 words. You should also respond to 2 other student responses.

4. Click **Post New Thread**.

**\_ Forums**

[Post New Thread](#) | [Display Entire Message](#) | 

[Forums](#) / [Introduction](#) / Please post your introduction here.

▶	Thread	Authored By
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5. Enter a title for your thread message.

 The body of the message can be formatted with similar formatting options as available in a word processor. You may choose to insert a picture or a hyperlink to the body of a Thread Message.

6. Enter your message.

**\_ Forums**

### Compose Forum Message

Group 1 - Week 1 topic

Post your response to the Discussion question in Chapter 1.

Required items marked with \*

\* Title →

#### Message

I thought the discussion question was difficult to respond to. I wasn't clear what the question was asking. Can someone clarify it for me?

Student

7. If you do not want to attach a file or resource, then click **Post Message**.

8. You may attach files or resources to the thread message by clicking on the **Add Attachment** button. You can browse for files from your computer, add a URL, or select a file from the Resources area.
  - a. Click **Browse** to add a file from your computer.
  - b. Type in the URL Web site address and click **Add** to upload a link.
  - c. Click **Attach a copy** to add a file from your Resources folder.

**Add Attachment**

Select an existing item from Resources to attach OR add a new item to a folder to be attached. Click "Continue" when done.

Items to attach	Remove?
Excise Tax Handout.pdf	<a href="#">Remove</a>
<a href="http://www.ssa.gov">http://www.ssa.gov</a>	<a href="#">Remove</a>
Sample File.doc	<a href="#">Remove</a>

**8a. Click browse to add a file from your computer.**

Upload local file

or a URL (link to website)

**8b. Type in a URL to add a Web site link.**

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**Select a resource**

Location:

Title	Actions
ACC-132-0	
Sample File.doc	<input type="button" value="Attach a copy"/>
<a href="#">Show other sites</a>	

**8c. Click Attach a copy to upload a file from your Resources folder.**

9. Click **Continue** to return to the message.
10. Click **Post Message**.

### Read a Thread Message

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Click a Forum title.

3. Click a Topic title.

The screenshot shows the 'Forums' page with a navigation bar containing 'New Forum', 'Organize', 'Template Settings', and 'Statistics'. Below the navigation bar, there are two forum entries. The first entry is 'Group 1' with a description 'Forum for Group 1 to post weekly.' and links for 'New Topic' and 'Forum Settings'. The second entry is 'Week 1 topic' with a description 'Post your response to the Discussion question in Chapter 1.' and a link for 'Topic Settings'. Red arrows point from the text 'Forum title' to 'Group 1' and from 'Topic title' to 'Week 1 topic'.

4. Click a Thread message to read it.

The screenshot shows the thread page for 'Chapter 1'. The breadcrumb trail is 'Forums / Group 1 / Week 1 topic'. Red arrows point from the text 'Forum title/Topic title' to 'Group 1' and 'Week 1 topic'. The thread message 'Chapter 1' is highlighted with a red box. The thread details table is as follows:

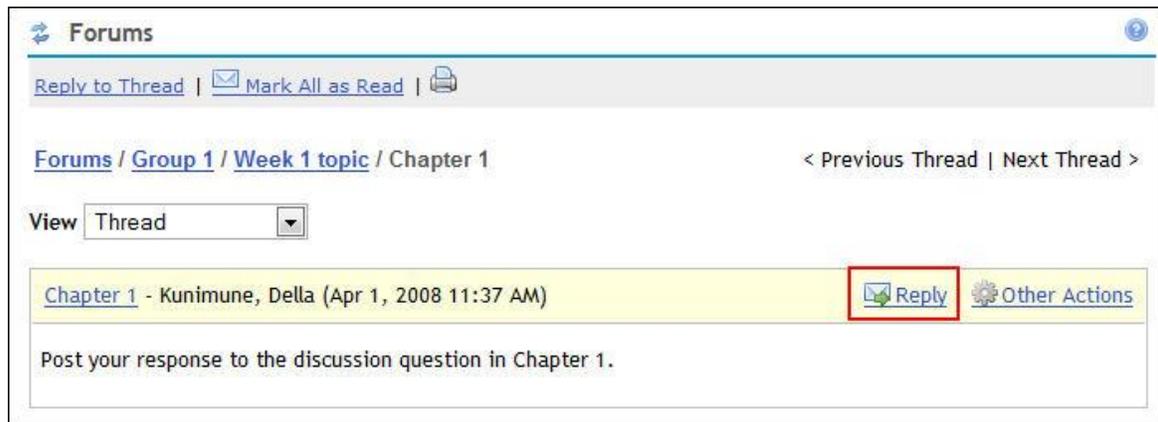
Thread	Authored By	Date
Chapter 1 ( 1 message - 0 unread )	Kunimune, Della	Apr 1, 2008 11:37 AM

### Reply to a Thread Message

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Click a Forum title.
3. Click a Topic title.
4. Click a Thread to read it.

This screenshot is identical to the previous one, showing the thread page for 'Chapter 1' with the breadcrumb trail 'Forums / Group 1 / Week 1 topic' and the thread message 'Chapter 1' highlighted. Red arrows point from the text 'Forum title/Topic title' to 'Group 1' and 'Week 1 topic'.

5. Click on the **Reply**.

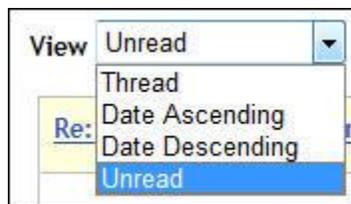


6. Click **Insert Original Text** to include the original text in the reply.
7. Click **Post Message**.

### View Thread Messages

If a thread message has multiple responses, you can select how you view the responses.

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Click a Forum title.
3. Click a Topic title.
4. Click a Thread message to open it.
5. Click the dropdown View box to select how the responses are displayed.



### Organize Forums and Topics

When creating forums and topics, you may need to modify the order to suit your purposes.

1. From the Forums tool, click **Organize**.



2. Use the dropdown boxes to change the number order of the forums and/or topics.

**1** Main

1 Week 3

2 Week 2

3 Week 1

**2** Training Forum

1 Introductions

2 Chapter 2 Discussion

**3** Week 1 - Module 1

1 Student Introductions

Save Settings Cancel

Rearrange topics by changing the number order.

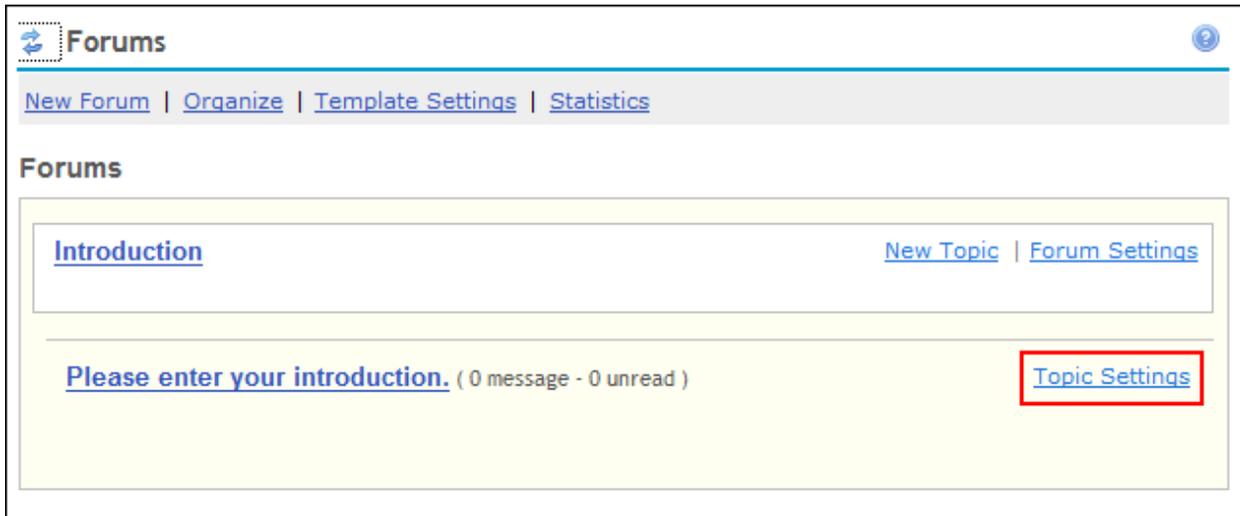
Rearrange forums by changing the forum number order.

3. Click **Save Settings** to save the changes.

### Set up for Grading

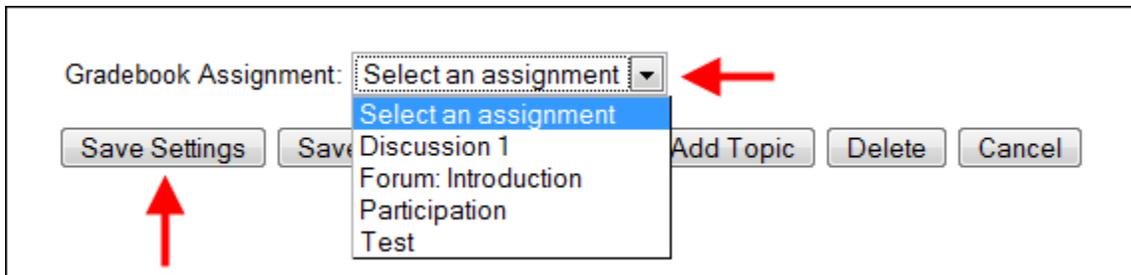
1. Navigate to the topic which you would like to evaluate.

2. Click the **Topic Settings** link.



The screenshot shows the 'Forums' section of a web application. At the top, there are navigation links: 'New Forum', 'Organize', 'Template Settings', and 'Statistics'. Below this, the 'Forums' title is displayed. A box contains the forum name 'Introduction' and links for 'New Topic' and 'Forum Settings'. Below the forum name, it says 'Please enter your introduction. ( 0 message - 0 unread )'. A red box highlights the 'Topic Settings' link on the right side of the forum entry.

3. Scroll down to the last option entitled **Gradebook Assignment**.
4. Select the Gradebook Assignment that you would like to associate the thread posting to.



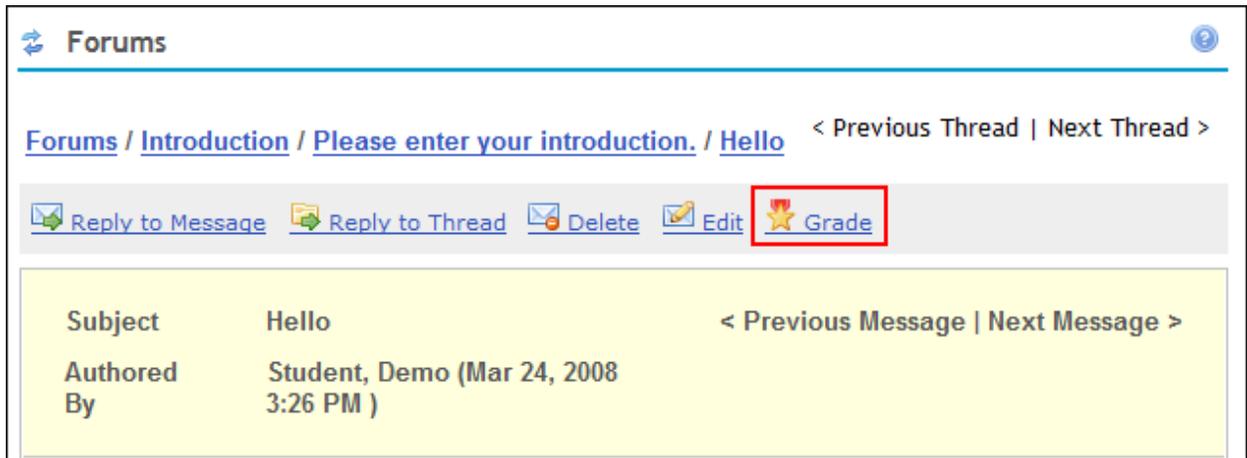
The screenshot shows a 'Gradebook Assignment' dropdown menu. The menu is open, showing options: 'Select an assignment', 'Discussion 1', 'Forum: Introduction', 'Participation', and 'Test'. A red arrow points to the 'Save Settings' button on the left, and another red arrow points to the dropdown menu on the right. Other buttons visible are 'Save', 'Add Topic', 'Delete', and 'Cancel'.

 Note: You need to have a Gradebook Assignment already created in order to be able to associate a thread score to it.

5. Click **Save Settings**.

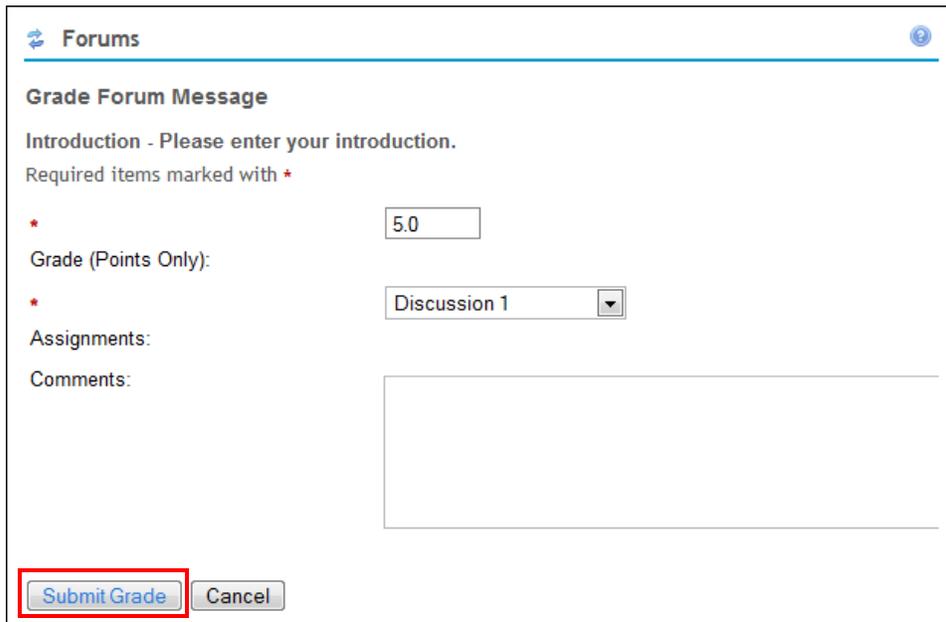
## Grade Thread Messages

1. Click the thread message to read the message.
2. Click **Grade**.



The screenshot shows the 'Forums' section of a learning management system. At the top, there are navigation links: 'Forums / Introduction / Please enter your introduction. / Hello' and '< Previous Thread | Next Thread >'. Below this is a toolbar with icons for 'Reply to Message', 'Reply to Thread', 'Delete', 'Edit', and 'Grade'. The 'Grade' button, which features a star icon, is highlighted with a red rectangular box. Below the toolbar is a message summary box with a yellow background. It contains the following information: 'Subject: Hello', 'Authored By: Student, Demo (Mar 24, 2008 3:26 PM)', and navigation links '< Previous Message | Next Message >'. A question mark icon is visible in the top right corner of the forum header.

3. Enter a Grade (Points Only).
4. Verify correct assignment listed.
5. Add comments if desired. Comments will show up in the Gradebook.
6. Click **Submit Grade**.

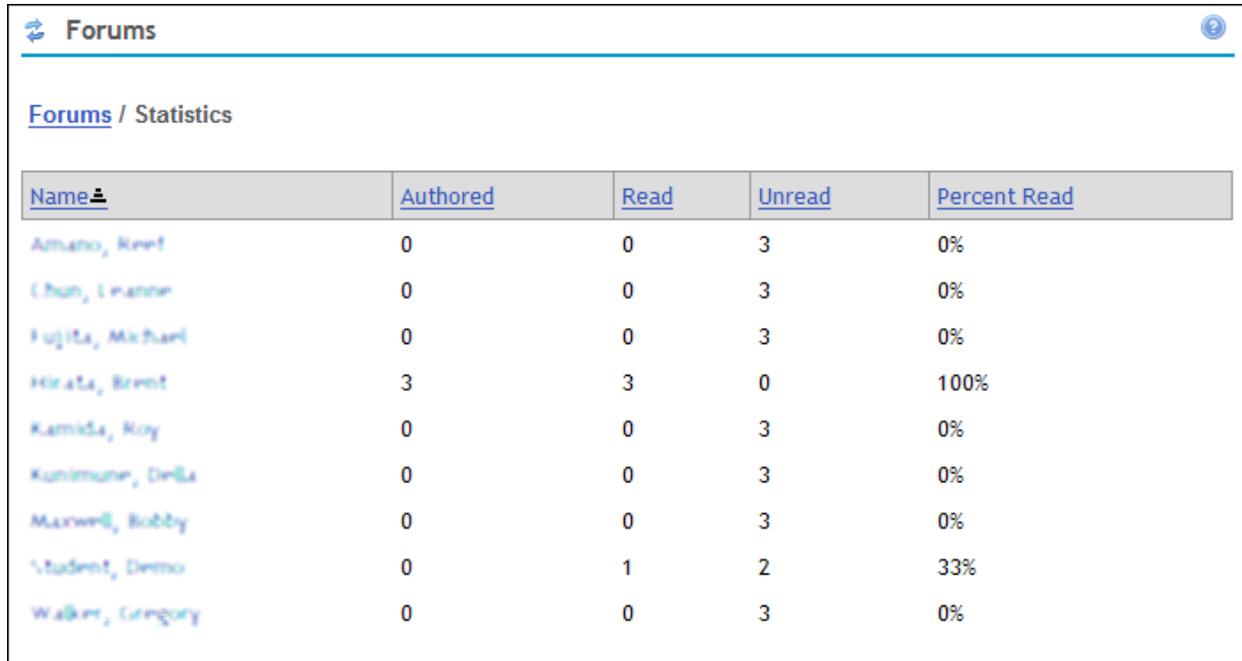


The screenshot shows the 'Grade Forum Message' form. At the top, it says 'Grade Forum Message' and 'Introduction - Please enter your introduction.' Below this, it indicates 'Required items marked with \*'. There are three required fields: 'Grade (Points Only):' with a text input field containing '5.0', 'Assignments:' with a dropdown menu showing 'Discussion 1', and 'Comments:' with a large text area. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Submit Grade' and 'Cancel'. The 'Submit Grade' button is highlighted with a red rectangular box. A question mark icon is visible in the top right corner of the forum header.

## View Statistics

Statistics are listed per individual student showing the amount of Authored, Read and Unread messages.

1. Click **Forums** from the menu along the left side of your screen.
2. Click **Statistics**.



<a href="#">Name</a>	<a href="#">Authored</a>	<a href="#">Read</a>	<a href="#">Unread</a>	<a href="#">Percent Read</a>
Atmano, Keef	0	0	3	0%
Chun, Lianne	0	0	3	0%
Fujita, Michael	0	0	3	0%
Hirata, Brent	3	3	0	100%
Kamida, Roy	0	0	3	0%
Kunimune, Della	0	0	3	0%
Maxwell, Bobby	0	0	3	0%
Student, Demo	0	1	2	33%
Walker, Gregory	0	0	3	0%