



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

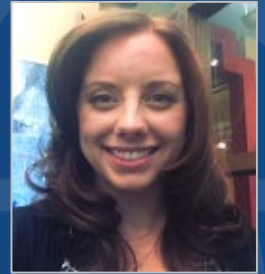
Collaborative and Communication Tools

Part One: CoursePlus Discussion Forum



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Learning Objectives



- ▶ Overview the Discussion Forum Tool
- ▶ Identify benefits and best strategies
- ▶ Examine best practices within a JHSPH course example

The CoursePlus Discussion Forum Tool

- ▶ Key-words
- ▶ Where to find it
- ▶ How to set it up
- ▶ How to use it

Key-words

▶ Category Group



▶ Category



▶ Topics



▶ Posts



LiveTalks - Remember, you need to post questions each of the LiveTalks here at least 24 hours before

- LiveTalk 1

+ Add Topic



Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data Collection in Clinical Settings

Comments for Live Talk 1

Cross-Cultural and Conflict-Oriented Applications of SOGI

Where to Find It

Quick Jump

Faculty Tools Quick Jump

Add TAs/Editors/Guests
Discussion Forum
Course Groups
Drop Boxes
Email
Evaluations/Surveys
Gradebook
Online Library
Page Builder
Section ID Lookup
Quiz Generator
Schedule Builder
Syllabus Builder
Wikis



Communication Menu

Content Communication ▾

- Discussion Forum
- LiveTalk
- Roster
- Wiki
- Class Email
- Class Email Archive
- Course Groups
- Text Chat
- Announcements

Faculty Tools

Communication Tools

- Discussion Forum
- Class Email Tool 
- Course Groups
- Surveys 
- Announcements
- Wikis

How to Set It Up

 My Discussion Forum  Bookmarks  Search  View/Subscribe Options  Admin

Discussion Forum Home



 Admin

Discussion Forum Home Page

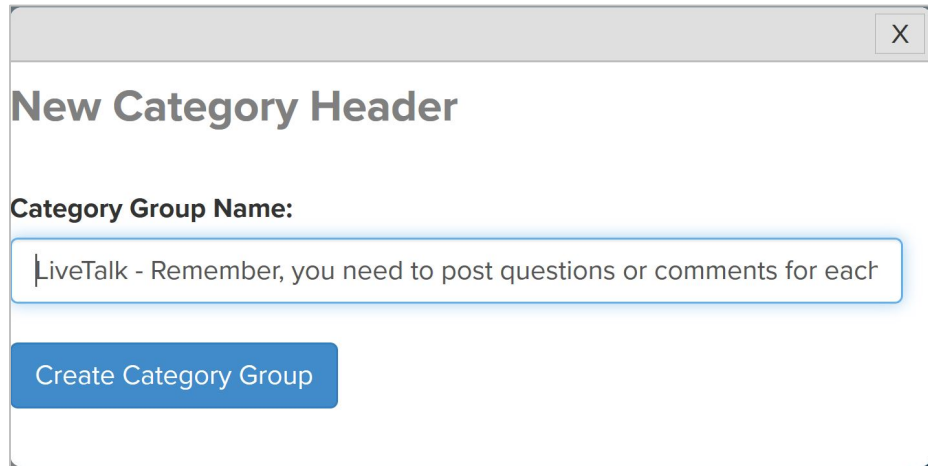
- ▶ In the Discussion Forum admin page we can create:
 - ▶ New Category Group
 - ▶ New Category

+ New Category Group

+ New Category

Create a Category Group

- ▶ Enter the Category Group Name
 - ▶ Introductions
 - ▶ Lectures
 - ▶ LiveTalks
 - ▶ Assignments
- ▶ Create the Category Group



New Category Header

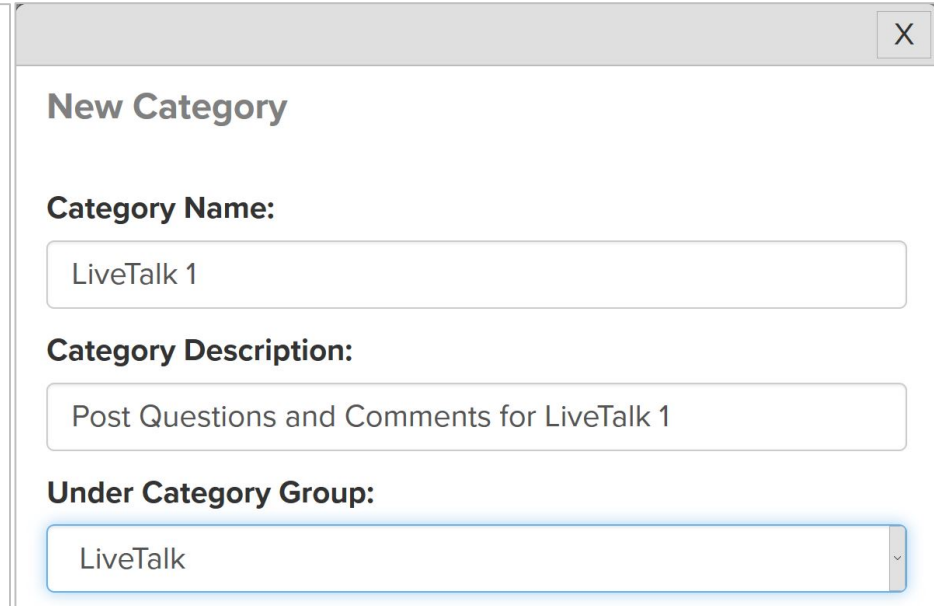
Category Group Name:

LiveTalk - Remember, you need to post questions or comments for each

Create Category Group

Create a Category

- ▶ Give it a name
- ▶ Add a description
- ▶ Select a Category Group



The screenshot shows a window titled "New Category" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The form contains three sections:

- Category Name:** A text input field containing "LiveTalk 1".
- Category Description:** A text input field containing "Post Questions and Comments for LiveTalk 1".
- Under Category Group:** A dropdown menu with "LiveTalk" selected.

Create a Category – Settings

- ▶ Settings for all the Topics in the Category
- ▶ Some of the settings:
 - ▶ Who can read and post
 - ▶ Who can start a new topic
 - ▶ Post Before Viewing
 - ▶ Link to Lecture/Activity Page
- ▶ Create Category

Topic Options:

The following settings apply to all the topics that belong in this category.

Topic Status:

Everyone can read and post.

Only faculty, TAs, and staff can start new topics in this category

Make topics read-only on 

Students cannot view topics in this category until they add a topic.

Students only have 15 minutes after they post a message in a topic to edit or delete that message

Link to Pages:

Lecture 1: Oddball Lecture

Category Group with 3 Categories

LiveTalk

LiveTalk 1

Post Questions and Comments for LiveTalk 1

[+ Add Topic](#)

LiveTalk 2

Share your Comments for LiveTalk 2

[+ Add Topic](#)

LiveTalk 3

[+ Add Topic](#)

Create a Topic

LiveTalk 1

Post Questions and Comments for LiveTalk 1

+ Add Topic

LiveTalk 2

Share your Comments for LiveTalk 2

+ Add Topic

LiveTalk 3

+ Add Topic

New Topic

The category of this topic: LiveTalk 1 has the following permissions set:

- Status: Read/Write


Topic Title:

Category:

(LiveTalk - Remember, you need to post questions or comments for each of the LiveTalks here at least 24 h

Status:

Everyone can read and post. 

- Make this topic read-only on  
- Students cannot see any posts until they post in the topic 
- Students only have 15 minutes after they post a message in this topic to edit or delete that message 
- This topic is sticky (Displays at top of category) 
- This topic can be marked as having a correct answer  by you, course faculty or TAs.

How to Use It

- ▶ View/Subscribe Options
- ▶ My Discussion Forum
- ▶ Discussion Forum Reports
- ▶ Grading the Discussion Forum

View/Subscribe Options

Discussion Forum Home

 My Discussion Forum

 Bookmarks

 Search

 View/Subscribe Options

 Admin



 View/Subscribe Options

Subscription Delivery Options

- ▶ Delivery Options
 - ▶ Daily Digest Email
 - ▶ 1 Post – 1 Email

- ▶ Subscription to Specific Category

- ▶ Update

Subscription Delivery Options

Send a digest email of posts added to categories and topics once per day.

Send individual emails as posts are added.

[Update](#)

Subscriptions

Category Subscriptions


<input type="checkbox"/>	General > Gen Topics
<input type="checkbox"/>	General > General

My Discussion Forum

Discussion Forum Home

 My Discussion Forum  Bookmarks  Search  View/Subscribe Options  Admin



 My Discussion Forum

My Discussion Forums Tabs

- ▶ New posts since my last visit
- ▶ New replies to me
- ▶ My posts

My Discussion Forum

✓ Mark all new posts as "Read"

New Since Last Visit ² New Replies to Me ⁰ My Posts ³

All New Posts Since My Last Visit

The screenshot shows a user interface for a discussion forum. At the top, there's a title 'My Discussion Forum'. Below it is a checkbox with a checkmark and the text 'Mark all new posts as "Read"'. There are three tabs: 'New Since Last Visit' with a notification bubble containing the number '2', 'New Replies to Me' with a notification bubble containing '0', and 'My Posts' with a notification bubble containing '3'. The 'New Since Last Visit' tab is currently selected, and the content below it reads 'All New Posts Since My Last Visit'.

Discussion Forum Reports

Where

- ▶ Faculty Tools page
- ▶ Administrative Tools box
- ▶ Student Activity Reports
 - ▶ Discussion Forum

Discussion Forum Reports

- ▶ Activity by each student
- ▶ Who responded to each category
- ▶ Number of visits by each student

Activity by Each Student

- ▶ Total postings
- ▶ Total size of postings
- ▶ Topic started
- ▶ Posts reacted to

Grading Discussion Forum

- ▶ Discussion Forum Category is a graded item in the Gradebook
 - ▶ Same grade for all posts across all topics made by a student in a Discussion Forum Category
- ▶ Enter grade in:
 - ▶ Gradebook
 - ▶ Single post in Discussion Forum

Grading in the Discussion Forum

Grade:

2 / 3

Comments:

Thanks for your comment on this framework, but the LiveTalk comments were meant to refer to the Cahill readings. (this comment is in reference to your first post on Wise et al.)

Save

Grade:

2 / 3

Comments:

Grade: 2/3; -1; 1st and 2nd (and subsequent) posts submitted late.--> 1/3

Save

Grade:

3 / 3

Comments:

Thanks for your comment. What might that patient education look like, specifically?

Save

You know, you've given us more personal feedback than I've received in many of my other classes. It's been much appreciated.

What are the benefits of using discussion?

Research says...



- ▶ Adds interest and diverse viewpoints (Weimer, 2011)
- ▶ Increases engagement (Weimer, 2011; Xin & Feenberg, 2006)
- ▶ Promotes preparation (Weimer, 2011)
- ▶ Develops communication skills and discipline-specific language (Timm & Stead, 1996; Weimer, 2011)
- ▶ Community, socialization, and connection with peers (Al-Shalchi, 2009)
- ▶ Instructor presence and feedback (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Weimer, 2011)

How do you implement an engaging discussion forum?

Best Practices



- ▶ Start with the Syllabus
 - ▶ Align with Learning Objectives
 - ▶ Methods of Assessment Details
 - ▶ Communication Expectations
- ▶ Student Introductions
 - ▶ Low-stakes practice
 - ▶ Building a community
- ▶ Prompt the discussion
 - ▶ Analysis and further investigation (open-ended)
 - ▶ Relate to students' real-life experiences
- ▶ Grading and Reporting
 - ▶ Follow expectations set in syllabus
 - ▶ Transparent rubric

Please welcome Dr. Hannah Lantos

Course Example: Methods of Assessment

Methods of Assessment

Five graded group assignments (50%), participation and peer evaluation (25%), online lecture quizzes (25%)

Methods of Assessment Details

There are three writing assignments, 14 short quizzes (that you get credit for if you take them), and comments that are due on the discussion board six times throughout the course (three can be anytime and three need to be before each livetalk). Finally, we will assign five points based on participation if you listen to the lectures.

The total points in this course add up to 100. There are 3 written assignments - one on statistics, one on gender justice, and a third blog post. Each of these assignments is worth 21 points. Second, there are quizzes on many of the readings. As long as you TAKE the quiz you will get full credit. These are each worth 1 point for a total of 14. Third, the TA and I ask that you put comments on the discussion board at least 24 hours before the livetalk. These comments are worth 3 points each for a total of 9 points. Fourth, we ask that you post either a response to the reading or a response to other people's comments on the discussion board at least three times throughout the course. This can be something you found interesting in the readings or something you found interesting in someone else's comments. These are also each worth 3 points for a total of 9 points. Finally, participation (based on listening to the lectures and attending livetalks) is worth 5 points.

*“There are three writing assignments, 14 short quizzes (that you get credit for if you take them), and **comments that are due on the discussion board six times throughout the course (three can be anytime and three need to be before each livetalk).** Finally, we will assign five points based on participation if you listen to the lectures...the TA and I ask that **you put comments on the discussion board at least 24 hours before the livetalk. These comments are worth 3 points each for a total of 9 points.** Fourth, we ask that **you post either a response to the reading or a response to other people’s comments on the discussion board at least three times throughout the course. This can be something you found interesting in the readings or something you found interesting in someone else’s comments. These are also each worth 3 points for a total of 9 points.”***

Course Example: Definition of Participation and Modes of Communication

Definition of Participation

Attendance of live chats, participation in live chats or discussion board, and review of all recorded lectures. In online courses the bulk of participation will include listening to the lectures and participating in the discussion board or livetalks if there are questions on confusion.

Modes of Communication (email, discussion forums, etc)

In this course we are encouraging ALL non-personal questions to be asked on the discussion board first. The course faculty and TA will attempt to answer all questions publicly so that all students can benefit from the answers. Please allow us 24 hours before emailing as answers will be posted approximately once per day. For questions of a personal nature, email is appropriate. Please always start your subject line with "WHP" so that course faculty and the TA can easily find emails and respond promptly.

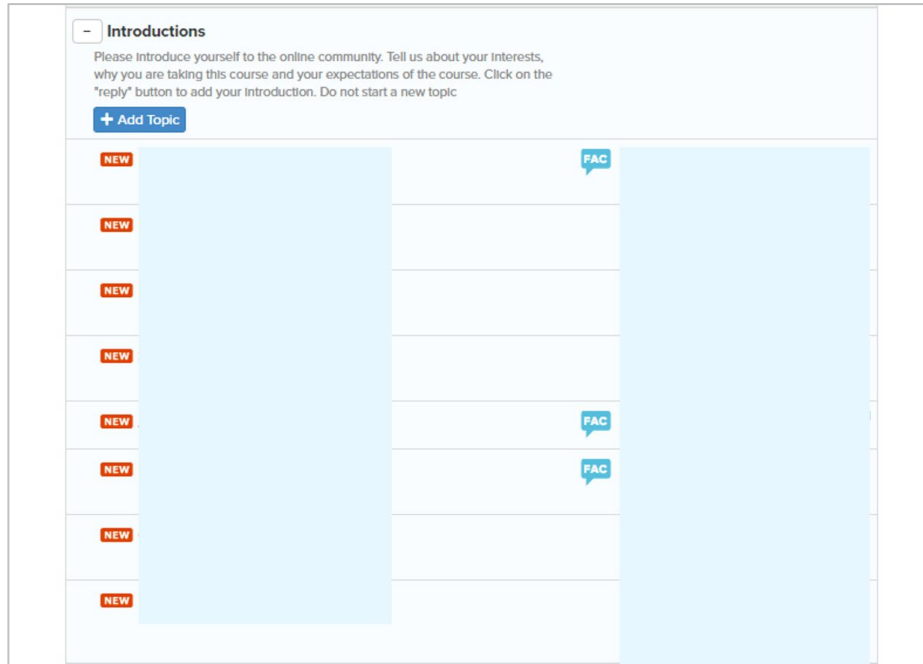
- ▶ *“Attendance of live chats, **participation in live chats or discussion board**, and review of all recorded lectures. In online courses **the bulk of participation will include** listening to the lectures and **participating in the discussion board** or livetalks if there are questions on confusion.”*
- ▶ *“In this course we are encouraging **ALL non-personal questions to be asked on the discussion board first**. The course faculty and TA will attempt to answer all questions publicly so that all students can benefit from the answers. **Please allow us 24 hours before emailing as answers will be posted approximately once per day**. For questions of a personal nature, email is appropriate. Please always start your subject line with "WHP" so that course faculty and the TA can easily find emails and respond promptly.”*

Course Example: Set up

- ▶ Set up pages for:
 - ▶ Introductions
 - ▶ Each lecture
 - ▶ Each livetalk
 - ▶ Each assignment

- ▶ Students could add their own pages under each of those sections or set up new ones.

Course Example: Student Introductions



- Introductions
Please introduce yourself to the online community. Tell us about your interests, why you are taking this course and your expectations of the course. Click on the "reply" button to add your introduction. Do not start a new topic

[+ Add Topic](#)

- NEW
- NEW
- NEW
- NEW
- NEW
- NEW
- NEW
- NEW

FAC

FAC

FAC

- ▶ *“Please introduce yourself to the online community. Tell us about your **interests**, why you are taking this course and your **expectations** of the course. Click on the "reply" button to add your introduction. **Do not start a new topic.**”*

Course Example: Student LiveTalk (LT) Comments

The screenshot shows the CoursePlus interface. At the top, the CoursePlus logo is on the left and the course ID '380.768.81' is on the right. Below this is a blue header bar with the text 'LiveTalks - Remember, you need to post questions or comments'. Underneath, there is a section for 'LiveTalk 1' with a minus sign icon and a '+ Add Topic' button. A list of 12 items follows, each with a red 'NEW' label and a blue link text:

- NEW Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data Collection in Clinical Settings
- NEW Comments for Live Talk 1
- NEW Cross-Cultural and Conflict-Oriented Applications of SOGI
- NEW Maia's comments on Cahill et. al readings
- NEW SOGI by 2020?
- NEW Role of Federal Government & Data Concerns
- NEW SOGI data collection transitioning from theory to practice
- NEW Cahill, data collection in EHR
- NEW Livetalk 1
- NEW Livetalk 1
- NEW Cahill, Do ask, do tell
- NEW comments on readings for LiveTalk1

- ▶ This is a screenshot of comments from the first livetalk. You can see how there is “new” label next to ones that have been posted since I last checked (I read most of these on my phone so they still look “new” on my computer!).
- ▶ Some people posted new comments while others responded to something someone else had posted.
- ▶ Made LTs more engaging and easier for me to prepare.

Course Example: Grading Rubric

- ▶ I made a very easy grading rubric for both the general comments and the LT comments because they were challenging to grade:
 - ▶ 0: you didn't post
 - ▶ 1: you posted but it wasn't connected to the readings or it was factually inaccurate (based on the course - something they brought in could have been incorrect but then I tried to jump in).
 - ▶ 2: Generally a good comment (or a 3 quality but late if it was for the LT. I took off 0.5 for comments on LTs posted less than 24 hours before and -1 for comments posted AFTER the LT).
 - ▶ 3: Particularly insightful, responding to someone else in an interesting way, got a number of responses, really interesting or new idea.

Course Example: Student Response

- ▶ Some students seemed to lose track of the number of postings that were needed
- ▶ Other students commented that it was very engaging and there was more discussion in the class than in others they take.
- ▶ LiveTalks had fairly low attendance.
 - ▶ This could be different time zones and also medical professionals with different schedules.
 - ▶ Next year, I hope to use the discussion board for them to respond to the LT so that if you miss the LT you have to comment another time but this may be hard to keep track of.

A few things to be aware of...

- ▶ It takes a fair amount of time.
 - ▶ I set up an email notification for each posting in the assignment threads and the “general” thread in order to stay on top of key questions.
 - ▶ Otherwise I checked daily or everything other day (had a calendar reminder!) for regular comments that I could respond to.
 - ▶ The day before each LT, I set aside a few hours to read through comments.
- ▶ Can take time to get people to ask course questions on the discussion board but we warned them about how we would respond.
- ▶ Can be challenging to keep track of comments and link to grade book – my TA helped immensely.

Lessons Learned

- ▶ The three “free” comments need to have deadlines (otherwise you get lots of comments at the end of the course).
- ▶ You need to respond to comments consistently at the beginning to get people engaged. It took some time but then started to take off.
- ▶ The comments before the livetalk were REALLY helpful to get discussion going and for me to identify what topics or concepts people didn't understand.
- ▶ Referring to specific comments that people made also seemed to make them more engaged.

Questions?

Upcoming Events: <https://ctl.jhsph.edu/events>

- ▶ **Don't Forget:** Sign-up Sheet and Events Calendar Postcard
- ▶ **Every Week:** One-on-One Instructional Design drop-in consultations around campus
- ▶ **Upcoming Toolkit Sessions**
 - ▶ **November 15th:** Teaching Toolkit Workshop: The Quiz Generator Tool in CoursePlus
 - ▶ **December 13th:** Teaching Toolkit Workshop: Credit Hours and Course Alignment



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