Course Discussions and Grading

Introduction
Discussions are the best way to interact with other Digication users. The most obvious way to use discussions are to lead the equivalent of a classroom discussion without being in the classroom. However, discussions are also used to assign and grade student work, distribute course materials, make announcements or send important messages to students by email.

Creating a Discussion

**Step 1:** Starting from your course or community page, select the **Discussions** tab.

![Discussions tab](image)

**Step 2:** Click the **New Discussion** button.

![New Discussion button](image)

**Step 2:** On the New Discussion page, Click the **Choose categories** button.

![Choose categories button](image)

**Step 3:** You can select any number of **categories** to be associated with the Discussion. Later you can use these categories for organization.

1. Categories

- Announcement
- Assignment
- Discussion
- Fall 2010 midterm
- Handout
- Resource
- Syllabus

New: [Add]

*In this example we added “Fall 2010 midterm” as a custom category.*
Step 4: Select which **students** or **groups** will participate in the discussion.

2. Who can see this?

- Faculty, TAs, Admins
- Student Groups:
  - All Students
  - Monday 10:00
  - Tuesday 3:00

Step 5: Select whether or not students can reply and add to the discussion (you might not want students to reply if you are using this discussion as an announcement or to post course materials).

3. Who can reply to this?

- Faculty, TAs, Admins
- Students

Step 6: You can also create a time sensitive window for students to reply to the discussion (An assignment due-date perhaps).

If student can reply to this and you want to limit replies to a specific time, specify:

After:
- mm/dd/yyyy
- hh:mm am

Before:
- mm/dd/yyyy
- hh:mm am

Step 7: Now select the grading options for your discussion. This is the only way to create gradable assignments in Digication.

- Students can see others’ replies
- Yes, this is gradable, add to gradesbook
- I want students to view their own grades

Maximum Points:
- 100

Relative Weight:
- 10
Step 8: Click the Back button at the bottom of the page to return to the “New Discussion” window.

Step 9: From this point the rest of the process is as simple as sending email. Fill in a title, body, and add attachments the same way you would with email.

You can also notify students in the course of this new discussion by email.

Step 10: To complete the process and begin the discussion, click Save.

Grading

Now that we have a discussion, we can make use of Digication’s grading tools.

Step 1: From your course, click the settings button.

Step 2: Click the Gradebook button

Step 3: This is the Gradebook for your Digication course. From this page you can monitor student progress, apply grades to specific assignments and adjust settings for how your course will be graded.
In the gradebook below, you will see that **students** are listed in rows on the left, while **gradable discussions** are listed in columns along the top. Because the categories in the gradebook correspond to discussions, to add more columns to the chart you must create additional gradable “discussions”.

**Step 4:** To change a student’s score for an assignment, **enter** a number or letter grade in the corresponding box. And click **Save**.

By default the averages are only calculated from the completed assignments. Also note that this list can be printed or exported as an excel spreadsheet.

**Step 5:** Below the Gradebook you will find the **Assignment Details** and **View Settings**. Here you can review and adjust the way assignments are graded.

**Conclusion**

We hope this guide was helpful in getting started with courses.

For more information about your e-Portfolio, please visit the Digication website at [http://www.digication.com](http://www.digication.com) or use the Help section within the program.