

## Using the Discussion Board

It is strongly suggested that you print these pages so you can refer back to and use it as a guide. If you do not know how or remember how to print, please see "Printing" found in Course Documents.

The Discussion Board is one of the more popular areas of any Course Management System (CMS). This is where instructors and students can participate in "threaded" discussions. Someone, either the instructor, teaching assistant, or student will start a "thread" and others can add their comments, reply to other comments, and even start their own threads.

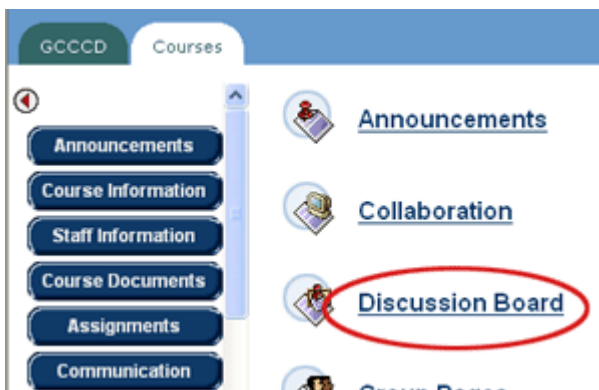
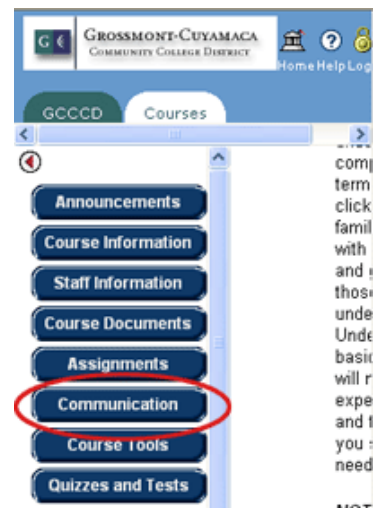
Threaded discussions are asynchronous, (the occurrence of two or more processes at different times), plainly put, participants don't have to be logged in at the same time. Threaded Discussions differ from "Chats," which are synchronous (the occurrence of two or more processes occurring at the same time), plainly put, they happen in "real time."

### ***How to navigate to the Discussion Board area:***

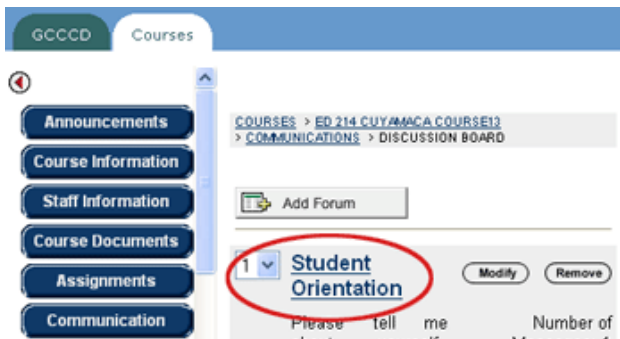
1. Click on the "**Communications**" button, located on the menu to the left.

**Note:** depending on how your instructor has designed the course, the menu buttons could be different.

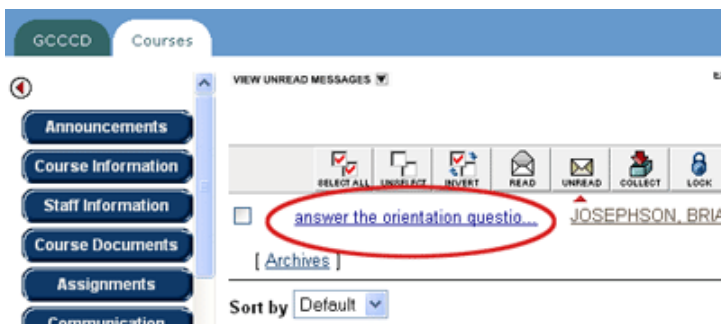
2. Click on the "**Discussion Board**" link. You will now see a list of Discussion Board Forums created by your instructor. You will notice a handy indication as to how many messages are in that forum and even the number of messages you haven't read yet.



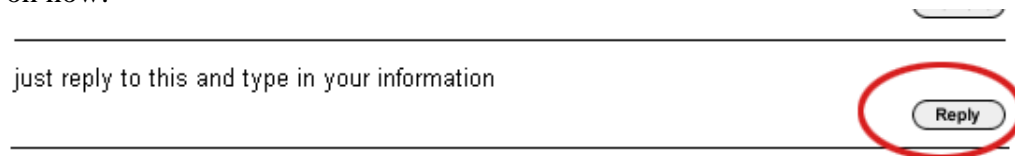
- Click on the link/thread to "**Student Orientation**". Once you have entered a Discussion Board Forum, you will see a list of threads (messages posted by other people or possibly even by you).



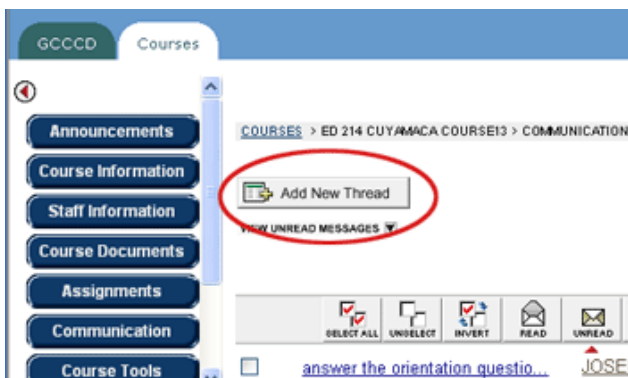
- Click on the link to "**Answer the orientation questions**" - the first Discussion thread



- Click on the "**Reply**" button, enter your reply and click "**Submit**" (bottom of that page). However, if you are not in a reply kind of mood, click the "**OK**" button on the page you are on now.



- You can start a new thread by clicking on the "**Add New Thread**" button.

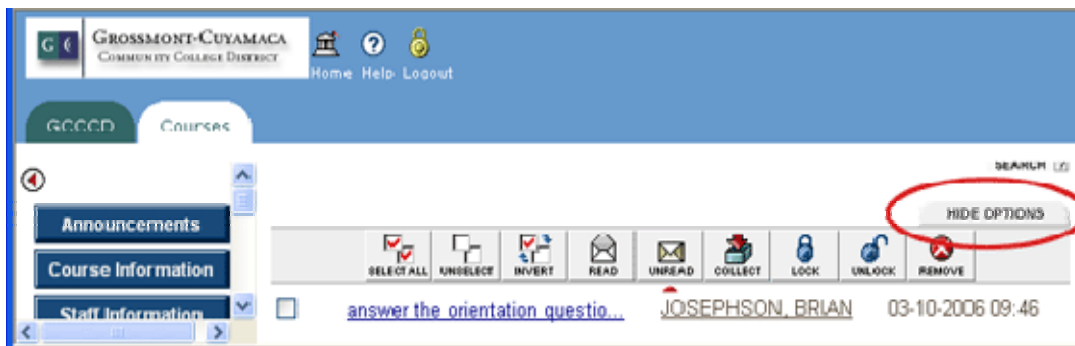


7. Type something appropriate in the Subject field and, in the Message area, tell us a bit about why you're interested in online learning and how you think it will differ from what typically happens in a traditional face-to-face class environment. Then click the “**Submit**” button.

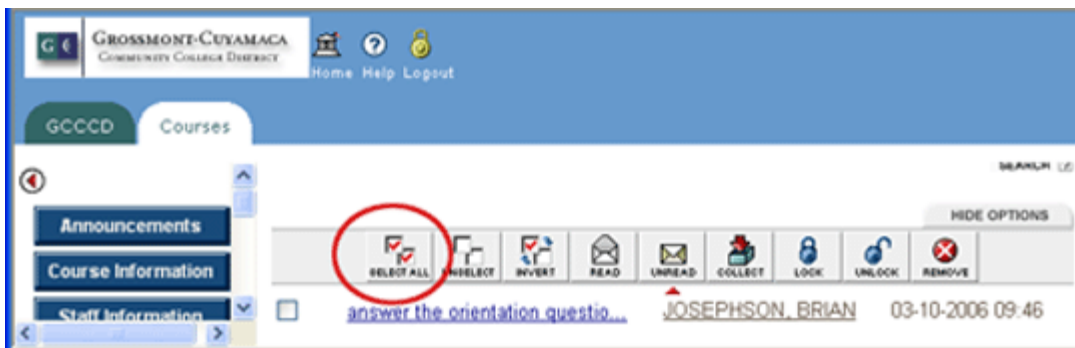
**NOTE:** To open and read a single posting, you must click on the “**Subject Line**” of the message. Clicking on the “**Name**” of the person who posted the message **will not** open the Discussion posting. Instead, your computer will try to open your e-mail program so you can send an e-mail message to the person who posted the message.

If there are several postings in the discussion, clicking on each individual message in order to read it and then close it and then open the next message, etc. .... can become a real pain. Give this a try:

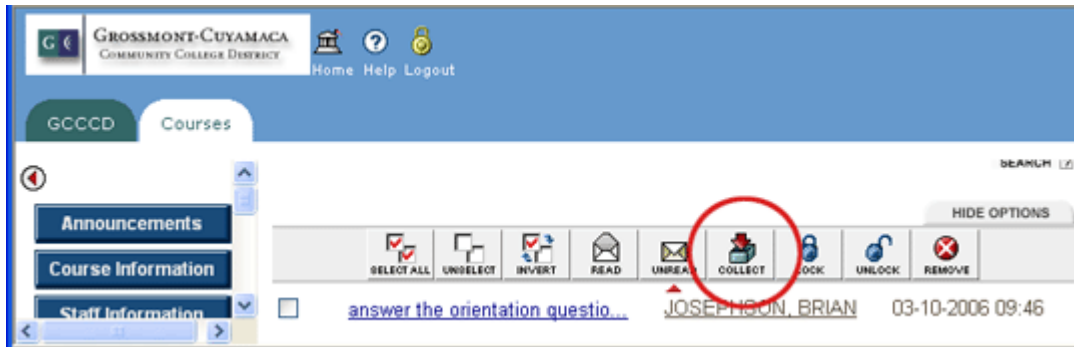
1. From within a Discussion Forum, click on the Show Options Tab to display the message board options buttons.



2. Click on the “**Select All**” button to put check marks in the selection boxes now showing to the left of each thread (and, in fact, to the left of each message).



3. Click on the “**Collect**” button. This will open all of the messages and display them on one page.



**NOTE:** Once you have collected postings in this manner, they will be mark as read even if you haven't actually read them all yet. This, of course, will make the "view unread messages" option meaningless. Also, as soon as you reply to a posting from the "collect" view, the view will revert once again to the listing view.