



Answering Questions

In the October newsletter we suggested ideas for generating dialogue through questions. The other side of discussion can be just as important; here are a few tips on answering students' questions:

1. Answer questions with more probing questions to help students generate their own answers, thus promoting critical thinking and problem solving skill.
2. Avoid telling students to look up the answer. This discourages students from asking further questions.
3. Promote understanding by asking, "Does that answer your question?" or, "Was that what you were asking?" If attempts to answer fail, suggest continuing the dialogue outside of class.
4. Rarely postpone answering a question. Doing so frequently may result in fewer and fewer questions from the students.
5. Admit when you do not know an answer. Find the answer to questions you do not know and report back to the entire class.
6. Discourage inappropriate questions. Some questions are meant to sidetrack the class, get attention, or embarrass the instructor. Turn down such questions abruptly, and state why it is inappropriate.
7. Do not put down students. Avoid anything which would embarrass or demean a student.

--Jerry Christopherson, Instructional Designer

WebCT Tip of the Day: Discussion Threads

The Discussions tool in WebCT is a public forum for instructors and students to post questions, answers, and comments. Such postings related to a single subject are referred as a thread.

- ☆ Inside a discussion topic each thread is marked with a green arrow. **Expand a thread** by clicking the arrow (**Figure 1**).
- ☆ Individual postings within a thread are indicated by an envelope. **Click the subject line** of a posting you want to read.
- ☆ **Reply to a posting** by clicking Reply in the message window. Each reply in a thread will appear directly below the original message, indented slightly.
- ☆ **Reveal all messages in a topic** by clicking the *All* button at the top (by default Discussions is set to show only unread messages).

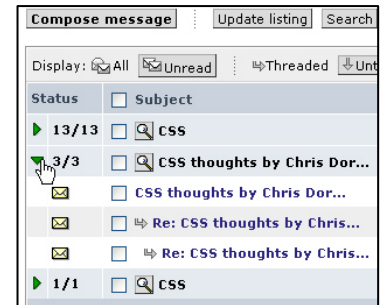


Figure 1 Click the arrow to expand or collapse a discussion thread.

For more help with this tool call Jared (x8929) or Nate (x8928).

This Month's Workshops and Trainings

Title	Date	Time	Place
WebCT Intro I & II	11/1	3-5pm	CS615B
Fostering Online Communities	11/2	12-1pm	CS615B
Presentations with PowerPoint	11/8	3-4pm	CS615B
PowerPoint Design	11/8	4-5pm	CS615B
Digital Images: Scanning	11/9	12-1pm	CS615B
Digital Images: Photoshop I	11/9	1-2pm	CS615B
WebCT Review Q&A	11/15	3-4pm	CS615B
WebCT Semester Rollover	11/15	4-5	CS615B
WebCT Semester Rollover	11/16	12-1pm	CS615B
Acrobat PDFs	11/22	3-4pm	CS615B
Zip Zip! Using ZIP Compression	11/22	4-5pm	CS615B
WebCT Easier with PowerTools	11/30	6-7pm	CS615B

To sign up for these workshops and more, visit our website:
www.uvsc.edu/disted/tetc/workshops

What's New in the TETC

We have the following new equipment available for faculty use in CS633:

- VHS – DVD duplication and digitization equipment

Did You Know?

Though simply giving an answer to a question may be the easiest thing to do, it often wastes an opportunity for students to explore and better understand the topic on their own.

On Topic...

Brain, Marshall. (1998). Answering Questions. *Emphasis on Teaching*. Retrieved October 13, 2004, from <http://www.bygpub.com/eot/eot3.htm>
Brookfield, S.D., & Preskill, S. (1999). *Discussion as a way of teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
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This newsletter was published for Distance Education by the Technology Enhanced Teaching Center at Utah Valley State College.

For more information on this newsletter or how you can contribute:

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