

# Enhancing your Discussion and Student Interaction using Harmonize

**Eric Fredericksen, EdD**

Associate Vice President for Online Learning  
Professor in Educational Leadership

**Lisa Brown, EdD**

Assistant Director

University IT & URMC Institute for Innovative Education



# Learning Objectives

## Participants will be able to...

- Explain why discussion is useful in a course
- Describe some unique features of Harmonize
- Add and Setup a Harmonize board in their course



# WHY DISCUSSION?



Student-Teacher  
interaction

Formative  
assessment

Application  
of learning

Student-Student  
interaction

Summative  
assessment



# Ways to Use a Discussion Board

Debate

Role play

Reflection

Ice breakers

Discussion

Help forum

Synthesis

Social forum

Peer Review



# Faculty Participation in Online Discussions

- Be careful...
- Choose specific discussions to participate in
- Respond to key discussion posts from learners and weave major themes, redirect, or expand thinking
- Interact with different learners in different discussions
- Assign learners to moderate discussions



# Interactions to Encourage Knowledge Construction and Critical Thinking

Prompts

Elaboration

Clarification

Weaving

Perspectives

Inferences  
and  
Assumptions

Implications

Summary



# Student Leadership roles in Discussion

- Student Moderator
  - Develop prompts
  - Probing questions
  - Encouraging integration
- Student summarizer
  - Summarize 2-3 times per week
  - Identify and discuss major themes
- Faculty
  - Communication with moderator / summarizer
  - Weekly response



# WHY HARMONIZE?



# Discussion Tools at UR



## Blackboard Discussion

- Formal Discussion
- Written language skills



## Voicethread

- Conversational Discussion
- Spoken language skills



## Harmonize

- Written and spoken discussions
- Multiple milestones



# Harmonize Features

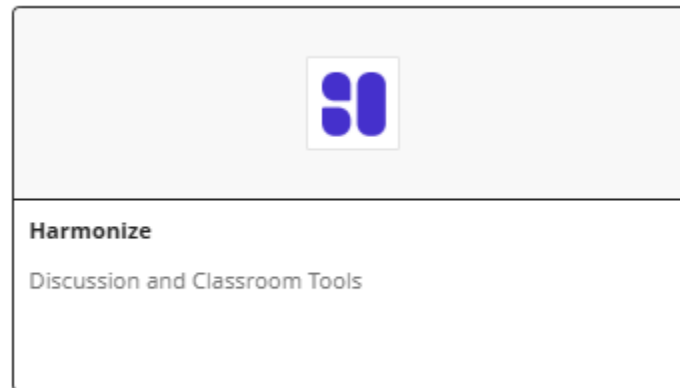
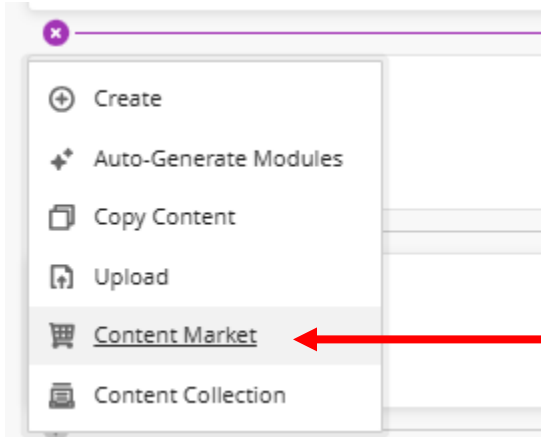
- Excellent for combining textual summaries AND audio/video posting
- Allows for multiple due dates
- Allows for auto-grading
- Anonymous posting can be graded
- **Limitation on size of video recording/upload**




# USING HARMONIZE IN BLACKBOARD



# Add to your Course



# Harmonize Options

 Which component would you like to add?

 Discussion

Encourage open-ended peer to peer conversations with course topic discussions.

 Assignment

Facilitate individual exploration and demonstration of understanding through in-depth, independent work on course topics.

 PDF Annotation

Drive conversation around a PDF document, allowing students to annotate specific passages and content for discussion.

 Poll

Poll students to gather insight into course content and learning.

 Topic Q&A

Encourage topic-specific questions with a Topic Q&A board that is separate from the Course Q&A board.

 Course Q&A

Inspire everyone to ask questions and answer others through the course Q&A board.

 Communication Center

Provide a single location to access Harmonize settings, discussions, course Q&A, and more.

Full-featured Discussion

Peer Review Activity

Comparable to Perusall

Simple poll

Q&A – non-graded



# Choose Discussion



## Which component would you like to add?

### Discussion

Encourage open-ended peer to peer conversations with course topic discussions.

### Assignment

Facilitate individual exploration and demonstration of understanding through in-depth, independent work on course topics.

### PDF Annotation

Drive conversation around a PDF document, allowing students to annotate specific passages and content for discussion.

### Poll

Poll students to gather insight into course content and learning.

### Topic Q&A

Encourage topic-specific questions with a Topic Q&A board that is separate from the Course Q&A board.


### Course Q&A

Inspire everyone to ask questions and answer others through the course Q&A board.

### Communication Center

Provide a single location to access Harmonize settings, discussions, course Q&A, and more.



 Discussion

Encourage open-ended peer to peer conversations with course topic discussions.

Select Existing

Create New

  
Create Discussion

What is the title of the discussion?\*

Name – Will appear in Blackboard

Is this discussion a graded assignment?

Not Graded

Graded

Points\*

100.0

Points within Harmonize

< Back

Create Discussion



# Edit in Bb to Add Due Date

Name of Discussion Board  
Visible to students  
No due date

- Edit
- Student Progress
- Delete

Face Off: All about Hockey

Name of Discus...

Visible to students

Open in new window

Allow class conversations

**Due date**

Date  Time

Grade using Points

Maximum points 100

Grade category

Select Category



Can also  
Set Category  
Set Points in Blackboard  
Add Brief Description

# Click the Link to Setup Board



Use the Wizard

Or

Set Manually

A screenshot of the "Create Discussion" wizard. The title is "Create Discussion". Below the title is a purple bar with the text "Name of Discussion Board" and a "Configure Manually" button. There are four steps in a progress bar: 1. Requirements (active), 2. Instructions, 3. Rubric & AI Coach, and 4. Publish. The main content area contains instructions: "Enable the common features below to encourage timely, authentic participation. For assignments, you can also turn on auto-grading based on participation, if desired. Be sure to read the linked help articles if this is your first time using these features!". Below this is a link: "New to Harmonize? Watch This!". There are three input fields: 1. "Due date is currently set to: 08/15/2025 11:59 PM" with a link "How do I change the due date?". 2. "Encourage student participation by requiring 1 post(s) 3 days before the due date and 1 comment(s) on the due date" with a checked checkbox and a link "How do milestones impact grading?". 3. "Automatically calculate and send individual grades to the gradebook based on each student's on-time completion of the listed participation requirements above." with an unchecked checkbox and a link "How and when are grades calculated?". A "Write Instructions" button is at the bottom right.

# Requirements

 Create Discussion

Name of Discussion Board

[Configure Manually](#)

1 Requirements

2 Instructions

3 Rubric & AI Coach

4 Publish

Enable the common features below to encourage timely, authentic participation. For assignments, you can also turn on auto-grading based on participation, if desired. **Be sure to read the linked help articles if this is your first time using these features!**

New to Harmonize? [Watch This!](#)

Due date is currently set to: **08/15/2025 11:59 PM**

[How do I change the due date?](#)

Encourage student participation by requiring  post(s)  days before the due date and  comment(s) on the due date

[How do milestones impact grading?](#)

Automatically calculate and send individual grades to the gradebook based on each student's on-time completion of the listed participation requirements above.

[How and when are grades calculated?](#)

[Write Instructions](#)



# Instructions

Name of Discussion Board Configure Manually

✓ Requirements **2 Instructions** 3 Rubric & AI Coach 4 Publish

Let AI suggest a starter activity or click "Write My Own Instructions" if you don't want to use AI.

[Learn more about Harmonize Brainstorm](#)

**My students are ready to...**

Apply Their Knowledge (Complexity Level 3) ⓘ [Change](#)

**What should the AI include in your activity?\*** ⓘ

Begin with a clear question or statement on your topic. You can suggest response types (text, video, images) and encourage connecting it to personal experiences, current events, or course material. Formatting and grammar do not matter. Have fun with this, get creative! Minimum 25 characters.

**Learning Objectives (Optional)**

Describe what students are expected to achieve as a result of instruction

[Add Another Learning Objective](#)

[Write My Own Instructions](#) [Generate Instructions](#)



# Setup Rubric and Coaching

Name of Discussion Board

Configure Manually

✓ Requirements

✓ Instructions

3 Rubric & AI Coach

4 Publish

The focus areas are set based on your earlier prompt, but it's essential they are detailed and reflect exactly what you want from your students. If a focus area is labeled "Not Coachable," you can either disable [AI Student Coaching](#) or proceed with coaching enabled for the other focus areas. Add, edit and delete as needed.

AI Student Coaching: On

Focus Areas

Regenerate Focus Areas

Clarity and Organization

Examine the clarity and organization of the student's submission. This includes logical flow of ideas, clear expression, proper grammar, and adherence to any specified format guidelines.



Content and Comprehension

Measure the depth of understanding and the relevance of the content provided in relation to the prompt. This includes how well the



# Publish

Name of Discussion Board

[Configure Manually](#)



Requirements



Instructions



Rubric & AI Coach

4

**Publish**

---

Congratulations on completing your topic! Additional settings are available if you'd like to explore options for video durations, student grouping, word count limitations on milestones, student facilitation, and more.

[Configure Additional Settings](#)

**Publish!**



# MANUAL SETUP OR EDIT



# How to Edit / Update

The screenshot shows a Blackboard course interface. On the left, under 'Requirements', there are two items: '1 Post' due Tue, Aug 12 11:59 PM (50 pts) and '1 Comment' due Fri, Aug 15 11:59 PM (50 pts). Below these is a 'Hide Instructions' button. In the center, there is a 'Watch Topic' toggle switch. On the right, under 'Activity', there are '0 Posts' and '0 Comments' buttons. At the bottom right, there are three buttons: 'Grades & Activity', 'Edit', and a share icon. A red arrow points to the 'Edit' button.

Edit to Change / Review Settings



# Discussion Instructions


Name of Discussion Board


Due Date





08/15/2025 11:59 PM ⓘ

[Instructions](#) [Post Settings](#) [Milestone Due Dates & Auto-Grading](#) [Student Facilitators](#)

Let AI help write your discussion prompt

 Generate Prompt

 Add Text 

Format  Alignment  A  

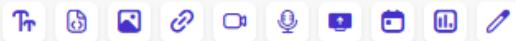
Write instructions

Instructions go here

*Press Alt+Fn+F10 (Option+Fn+F10 on macOS) for toolbar.*

 Add Media and Files

+ Drop files or click to browse



# Settings

Due Date

08/15/2025 11:59 PM ⓘ

[Instructions](#) [Post Settings](#) [Milestone Due Dates & Auto-Grading](#) [Student Facilitators](#)

Post First option

## Post Settings

Hide all posts and comments from students who have NOT posted yet. ⓘ



## Reaction Settings

Allow students to react to posts and comments.



## Insights Settings

Monitor activity and warn about students at risk of low participation ⓘ



## Anonymous Settings

Posts and comments always show user's identity ⓘ



All student posts and comments are anonymous ⓘ



Anonymous Posting option



# Type of Board – All vs Group

## Visibility Settings

Visible to Everyone

Students in Same Group

Private Between Student & Instructors

All posts and comments are visible to everyone.

## Default Layout

**Grid Layout** is ideal for studio courses, or courses with lots of images and attachments in posts.



## Default CC Language

Set the default language to be used for automatic closed captions on video and audio uploads and recordings

English

## Video & Audio Duration Limit\*

Set the maximum number of minutes of video and/or audio recordings and uploads per student post (60 minutes maximum)

Minutes

5



## Screen Capture Duration Limit\*

Set the maximum number of minutes of screen capture recording per student post (60 minutes maximum)

Minutes

15



## Video Playback Quality

Allow student-uploaded videos to be played back at higher quality.



# Milestones

Name of Discussion Board

Due Date  
08/15/2025 11:59 PM ⓘ

Instructions Post Settings **Milestone Due Dates & Auto-Grading** Student Facilitators

**Milestone Date**  
Selecting a date to set milestone *Complete by* dates relative to allows you to more easily shift dates when making schedule changes or copying the course.  
When you adjust the date value for this date the milestone *Complete by* dates will update accordingly.

Set Milestone *Complete by* Dates Relative to  
Due Date - Fri. Aug 15, 2025, 11:59 PM ▾

**Turn on Participation Auto-Grading**  
Students automatically receive participation points by completing the milestone requirements.  
Their participation grade is then submitted after the final due date.  
Enter the participation points for completing each milestone below.

Auto-grading on

**Give Credit for Late Participation**  
Students can continue to earn participation points after the milestone due dates you set, up to full credit.

Late participation does not earn points

**Minimum Word Count for Posts**  
Enter the minimum number of words a post must contain to count toward completing a milestone. Leave at 0 if there is no minimum.



Words

Also for Comments




# Set up Milestones

**Milestone**


Points   

**Complete By**



\* at 11:59 PM



- 3 Days Before Due Date +

**Requirements** 


Posts - 1 +

Comments - 0 +

**Milestone**


Points   

**Complete By**



\* at 11:59 PM

- Due On Due Date +

**Requirements** 

Posts - 0 +

Comments - 1 +

[+ Add Milestone](#)

Total Points **100**

Points will be converted to a percentage when the grade is submitted.

**Total Requirements**

These requirements must be met before a student's assignment will be submitted for grading.

Posts	1
Comments	1
Reactions	0



# Facilitation Options

## Name of Discussion Board

### Due Date

08/15/2025 11:59 PM ⓘ

[Instructions](#) [Post Settings](#) [Milestone Due Dates & Auto-Grading](#) [Student Facilitators](#)

Use student facilitators to help monitor the topic and encourage meaningful discussions.  
[Learn how student facilitators can enhance your online discussions.](#)

Turn on Student Facilitation

Facilitation Off

Discard Draft

Save Draft

Publish



# Be sure to Publish

Discard Draft

Save Draft



Publish





# DISCUSSION FEATURES





# Grid View of Posts

View by:  

Sort By: Oldest 


Search Posts & Comments 



10 min  
**Lisa Brown** 

test


0 Comments    0 Teacher



8 min  
**Anonymous Leopard**

test


0 Comments    0 Teacher




6 min  
**Anonymous Loris**

adsfa

0 Comments    0 Teacher






2 min  
**Lisa Brown** 



imge test

2 Comments    0 Teacher



# List View of Posts

View by:   Sort By: Oldest  


 **Lisa Brown**  10 min 1 Total Words



test

test

[Reply](#)

Comments

 Only viewable by you, draft saved 3 min ago [Delete](#) [Continue Editing](#)


 **Anonymous Leopard** New  9 min 1 Total Words

test

test

[React](#) [Reply](#)

Comments

 Add Comment



# Requirements for Posting

The screenshot displays a Blackboard discussion board interface. At the top, the title "Name of Discussion Board" is visible. Below the title, a notification states "0 students have completed the assignment. Visit Activity for details." The "Requirements" section is highlighted with a red arrow pointing to the "1 Post" requirement, which is due on Tuesday, August 12, 11:59 PM, and is worth 50 points. Another red arrow points to the "1 Comment" requirement, which is due on Friday, August 15, 11:59 PM, and is also worth 50 points. The "Activity" section is also visible, showing "0 Posts" and "0 Comments". Below the requirements, there are buttons for "Hide Instructions", "Watch Topic", "Grades & Activity", "Edit", and a share icon. The "Activity" section contains the following text: "Teaching styles are a significant aspect of educational experiences, impacting both how information is delivered and how students engage with content. Reflecting on your experiences as a learner, you may recall a variety of teaching styles that have either inspired or challenged you. In this activity, you will explore different teaching methodologies and consider their applications, modifications, and implications in diverse educational settings. Please answer **three** of the following questions, ensuring you fully explain your logic and provide any necessary evidence or facts to support your answers: 1. How would you make use of adaptive teaching strategies in a diverse classroom to enhance learning outcomes for all students? 2. What approach would you use to integrate technology into a traditional teaching style to improve student engagement and motivation? 3. Can you group different teaching styles by characteristics such as flexibility, creativity, and structure, and illustrate how these characteristics might

## Instructions for Discussion



What Does Success Look Like?

# Rubric Criteria

[View Full Rubric](#)

## Clarity and Organization

Examine the clarity and organization of the student's submission. This includes logical flow of ideas, clear expression, proper grammar, and adherence to any specified format guidelines.

## Content and Comprehension

Measure the depth of understanding and the relevance of the content provided in relation to the prompt. This includes how well the student answers the prompt with accurate and complete information.

## Original Thinking

Evaluate the originality and insightfulness of the student's ideas and arguments. This includes how well the student presents a unique perspective and offers creative solutions or thoughts on the topic.

## Use of Evidence and Support

Assess the quality and relevance of evidence used to support statements and arguments. This includes the correct use of citations and incorporation of readings or external sources to strengthen responses.



+ Create new post



View by:



Sort By:

Oldest



Search Posts & Comments



# Multimedia Posting options

The screenshot shows a user interface for creating a post. At the top, the user's name "Lisa Brown" and a "Create Post" button are visible. Below this is a "Subject (required)" field containing the word "Subject". A "Tag Classmates" dropdown menu is also present. The main content area is a rich text editor with a toolbar and the word "Text" in the center. Below the editor is a "Record audio/video/screen" section with a "Drop files or click to browse" button. At the bottom, there is a "code" button, a "media" button, a "link" button, and an "annotate" button. A "Post Anonymously" toggle switch is also visible. The "Delete", "Preview", and "Publish" buttons are at the bottom right. Red arrows point from the labels "code", "media", "link", and "annotate" to their respective buttons in the interface.

code

media

link

annotate

Record audio/video/screen

Subject

Text

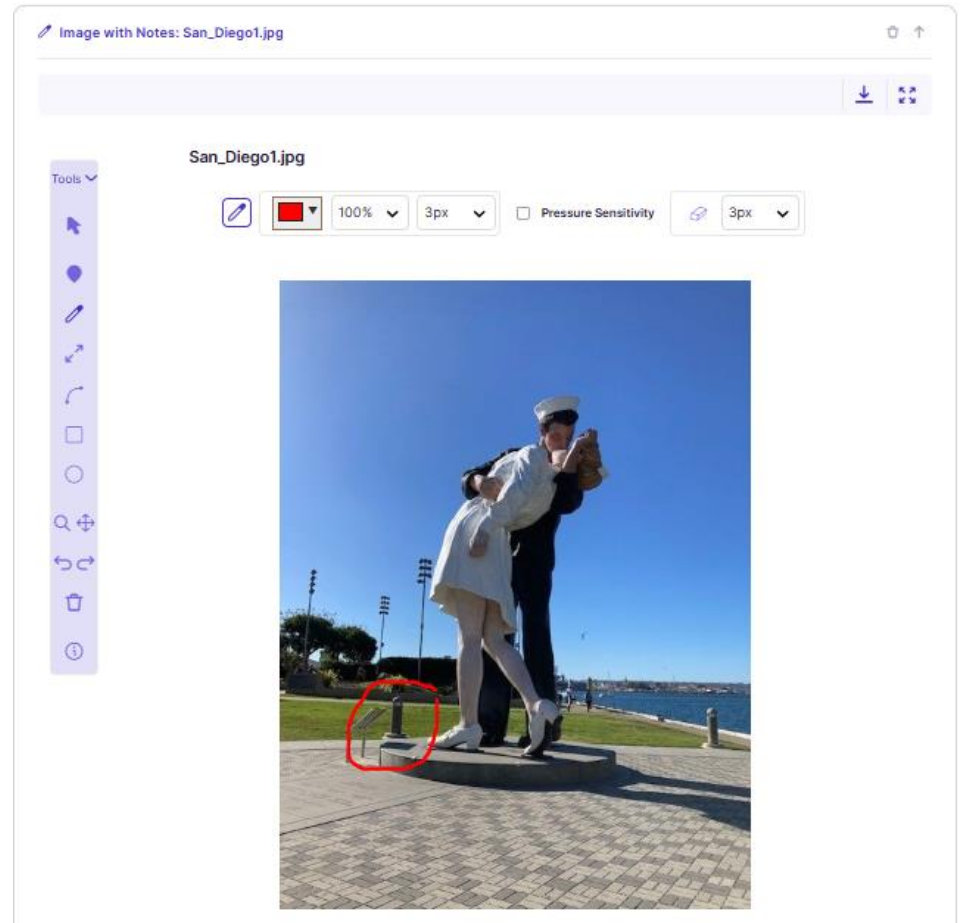
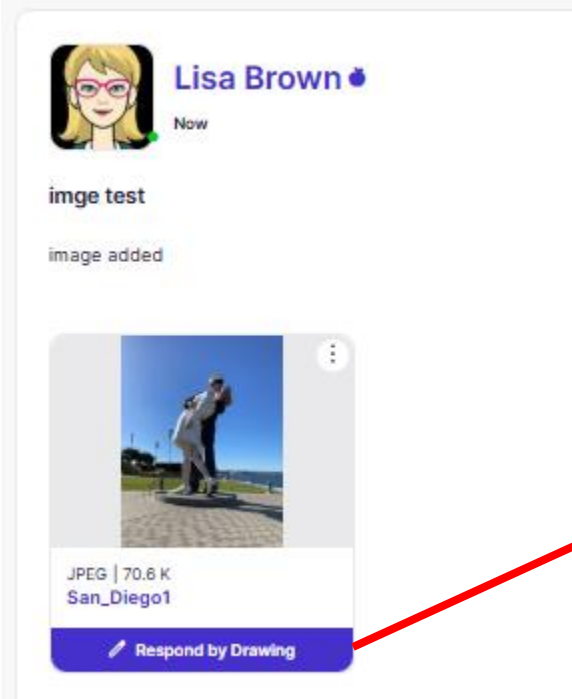
0 Total Words

Post Anonymously

Delete Preview Publish



# Annotation

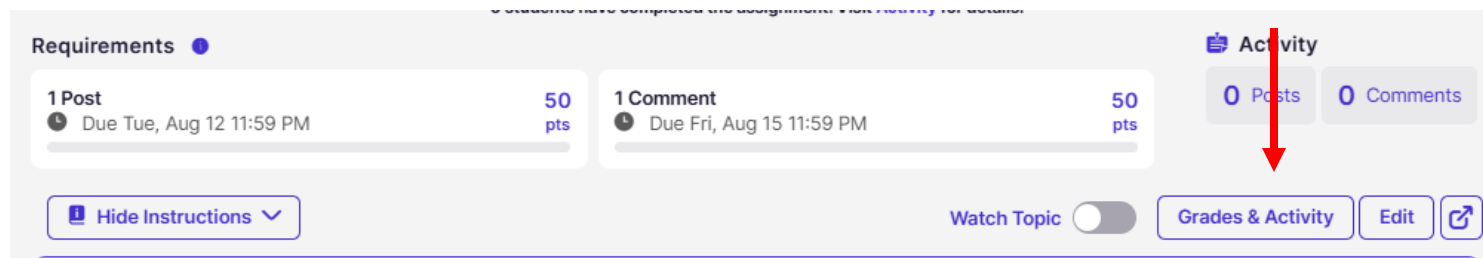


# GRADING IN HARMONIZE



# Grading

Grades & Activity to see contributions by Student



The screenshot displays a Canvas LMS interface for a topic. On the left, under the heading "Requirements", there are two items: "1 Post" due on Tuesday, August 12, 11:59 PM, worth 50 points, and "1 Comment" due on Friday, August 15, 11:59 PM, also worth 50 points. Each item has a progress bar below it. On the right, under the heading "Activity", there are two buttons: "0 Posts" and "0 Comments". A red arrow points down from the "Activity" heading to the "Grades & Activity" button. At the bottom of the interface, there is a "Hide Instructions" button with a dropdown arrow, a "Watch Topic" toggle switch, and buttons for "Grades & Activity", "Edit", and a share icon.



# Auto-Grading

On first milestone date system will award points to student that met milestone criteria

On second milestone date, system will award points to students that met milestone criteria

The screenshot displays a course management interface with two milestones. Each milestone card includes a 'Points' field, a 'Requirements' section, and a 'Complete By' date. The first milestone is due on 06/20/2025 at 11:59 PM, with 2 points awarded. The second milestone is due on 06/30/2025 at 11:59 PM, with 2 points awarded. A red box highlights the 'Points' field in both milestones. At the bottom right, the total points are shown as 4, with a note: 'Points will be converted to a percentage when the grade is submitted.'




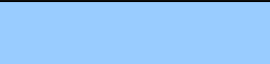

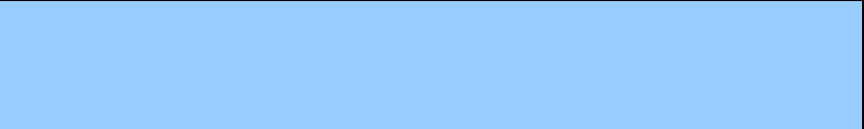
Milestone	Complete By	Points	Posts	Comments
1	06/20/2025 at 11:59 PM	2	1	0
2	06/30/2025 at 11:59 PM	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>		



## Public Topic Activity

Display 0 Deleted Items



User	Posts	Comments	
 	1	3	<a href="#">Hide Activity</a>
<b>Posts</b>			
 			
	Feb 20		180 Total Words
<b>Scenario 3</b>			
			
<p>...ming course. At first, it might seem ...ents use what they know to produce ...quires organizing ideas, explaining ...onomy emphasizes the stage of</p>			

## Milestones (Public)

### ✔ 1 Post

🕒 Due Thu, Feb 20 11:59 PM

Completed 02/20/25 12:05 PM

### ✔ 1 Comment

🕒 Due Sun, Feb 23 11:59 PM

Completed 02/22/25 12:12 PM

## Public Activity Totals

### 4 Posts & Comments

- 1 Post
- 3 Comments



# Regular Grading

Instructor will come into system after due date and award points based on student participation

The screenshot displays two milestone cards from a learning management system. Each card has a 'Milestone' title, a 'Complete By' date and time, and a 'Requirements' table.

**Milestone 1:**

- Complete By:** 02/20/2025 at 11:59 PM
- Requirements:**

Requirement	Count
Posts	1
Comments	0

**Milestone 2:**


- Complete By:** 02/23/2025 at 11:59 PM
- Requirements:**

Requirement	Count
Posts	0
Comments	1




# Review by Student





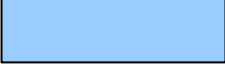







Showing Activity for

All Students 

## Discussion Activity by Student

Students with incomplete submissions



Student Name	Posts	Comments	Reactions	Milestone Progress	Submitted Grade	Last Interaction	Final Due Date
 	1	1	0	 Complete	2/2	03/01/25 2:26 PM	03/02/25 11:59 PM
 	1	1	0	 Complete	2/2	03/01/25 4:45 PM	03/02/25 11:59 PM
 	1	1	0	 Complete	2/2	03/02/25 2:58 PM	03/02/25 11:59 PM
 	1	2	0	 Complete	2/2	03/02/25 1:15 AM	03/02/25 11:59 PM



# Individual Contribution

Assignment  
Create an Assessment (M6) Activity

Course Topic Activity

Showing Activity for [User]

← Previous person 1 of 6 Next person →

Show Instructions >

Fauzi Abdillah has work available for review.

Public Topic Activity Display 0 Deleted Items

User	Posts	Comments	
[User]	1	1	Hide Activity

Posts

[User] Feb 27 86 Total Words

Milestones (Public)

- 1 Post  
Due Thu, Feb 27 11:59 PM  
Completed 02/27/25 12:27 PM
- 1 Comment  
Due Sun, Mar 2 11:59 PM  
Completed 03/01/25 2:26 PM

Overall Feedback

Grade 2.0 / 2

Gradebook Comment

Written Feedback


Submit & Next



# OTHER HARMONIZE TOOLS



# Harmonize Options

 Which component would you like to add?

 Discussion

Encourage open-ended peer to peer conversations with course topic discussions.

 Assignment

Facilitate individual exploration and demonstration of understanding through in-depth, independent work on course topics.

 PDF Annotation

Drive conversation around a PDF document, allowing students to annotate specific passages and content for discussion.

 Poll

Poll students to gather insight into course content and learning.

 Topic Q&A

Encourage topic-specific questions with a Topic Q&A board that is separate from the Course Q&A board.

 Course Q&A

Inspire everyone to ask questions and answer others through the course Q&A board.

 Communication Center

Provide a single location to access Harmonize settings, discussions, course Q&A, and more.

Full-featured Discussion

Peer Review Activity


Comparable to Perusall

Simple poll

Q&A – non-graded



# Create a New Poll

 armonize  
Create Poll

What is the title of the poll?\*

Is this poll a graded assignment?

Not Graded  Graded

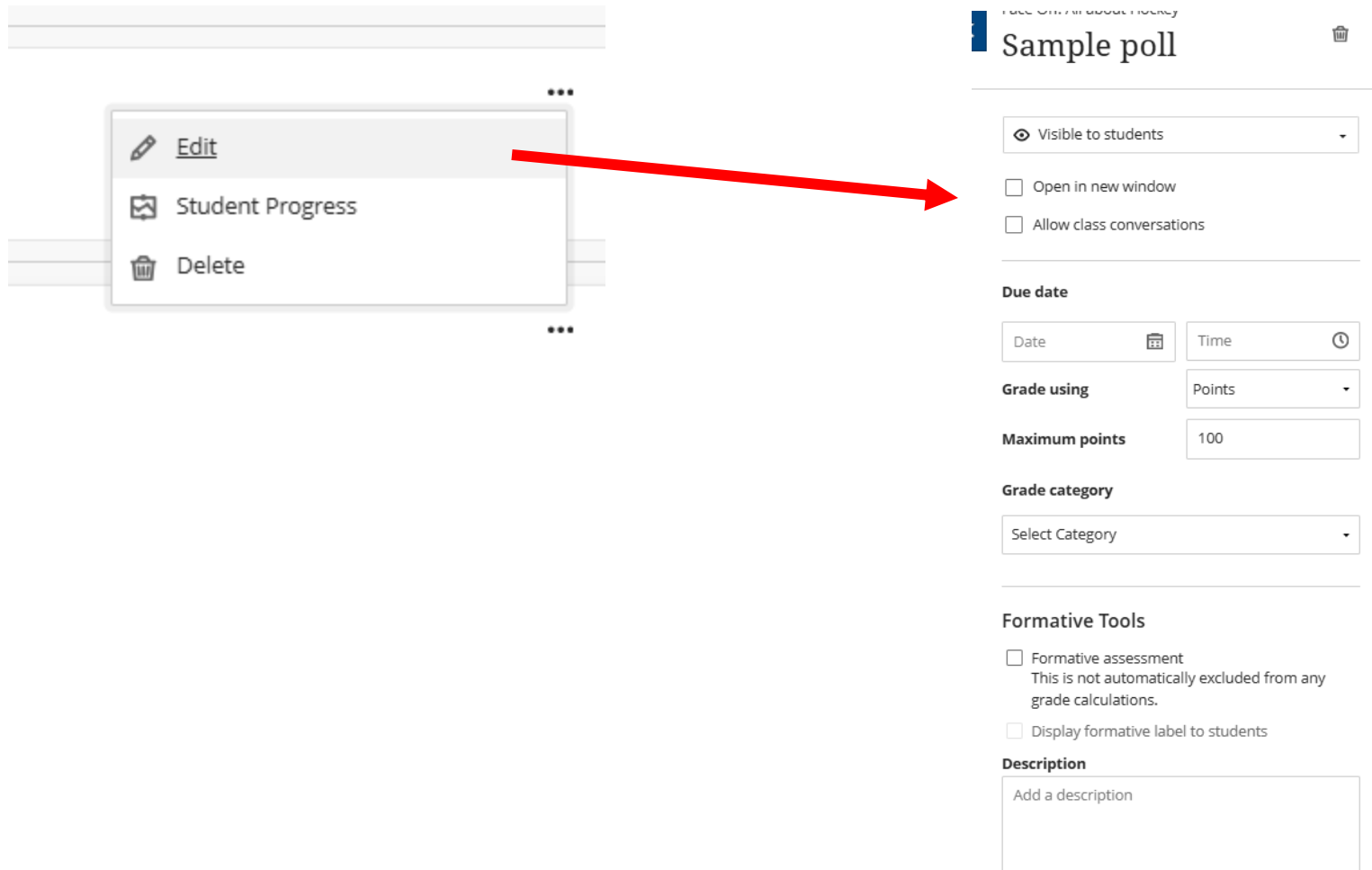
Points\*

[< Back](#) [Create Poll](#)



# Edit the course item



The image shows a user interface for editing a course item. On the left, a context menu is open, listing three options: 'Edit' (with a pencil icon), 'Student Progress' (with a document icon), and 'Delete' (with a trash icon). A red arrow points from the 'Edit' option to the right-hand side of the image, which displays the 'Sample poll' edit form. The form includes a title 'Sample poll', a trash icon, and several settings: 'Visible to students' (checked), 'Open in new window' (unchecked), and 'Allow class conversations' (unchecked). Below these are sections for 'Due date' (with 'Date' and 'Time' pickers), 'Grade using' (set to 'Points'), 'Maximum points' (set to '100'), and 'Grade category' (set to 'Select Category'). The 'Formative Tools' section has 'Formative assessment' (unchecked) and 'Display formative label to students' (unchecked). At the bottom is a 'Description' text area with the placeholder 'Add a description'.





# Poll Creation

**Poll Title\***

Sample poll

You may add more than one poll per assignment. Students will be graded on the percent of polls completed.

 **Add Poll** 

Each participant can select only one answer and their answer cannot be changed. The poll cannot be edited after responses are received, however you may delete the poll at any time.

**Poll Prompt\***

**Set Poll Options**

Please add one or more options.

[+ Add Option](#)

**Show Results to Others**

You will always be able to see the results and close the poll at any time.

**Select settings**



# Poll View

**Poll:** Who do you think will win tonights baseball game?

You may only respond to this poll one time.

Yankess

Mets

[Skip voting and go to results](#)

0 participants responded.


The poll is open. Results will be available to each participant after voting and to others after the poll is closed.

[Close Poll](#)

[Download Poll Results](#)



# Course / Topic Q&A

 Harmonize  
Create Topic Q&A

What is the title of the topic Q&A?\*

[← Back](#)

[Create Topic Q&A](#)



# Q&A Post Settings

Anonymous settings

Audio/Video duration limits

Screen capture duration limits

Video quality settings

Best Answer

Title\*

Module 1 Topic

Instructions [Post Settings](#)

**Anonymous Settings**

Always show user's identity

Allow anonymous questions and responses

All student questions and responses are anonymous

**Default CC Language**

Set the default language to be used for automatic closed captions on video and audio uploads and recordings

English

**Video & Audio Duration Limit\***

Set the maximum number of minutes of video and/or audio recordings and uploads per student post (60 minutes maximum)

Minutes

5

**Screen Capture Duration Limit\***

Set the maximum number of minutes of screen capture recording per student post (60 minutes maximum)

Minutes

15

**Video Playback Quality**

Allow student-uploaded videos to be played back at higher quality.

**Best Answer**

Selected by Instructor Only Selected by the Question Author or Instructor No Best Answer

The question author and instructors can select and edit which response is the best answer for a question, but only one best answer can be selected per question.



# PDF ANNOTATION PEER REVIEW



# PDF Annotation

- Recommend using Perusall for detailed annotation, auto-grading
- This tool is useful if you want a simple tool where you can review students' comments and you are already using Harmonize in other ways



# Generate Assignment



Create PDF Annotation

What is the title of the PDF Annotation?\*

Annotate assignment

Upload a single PDF for Annotation:\*

+ Click here or drag and drop to add a PDF.

Is this PDF Annotation a graded assignment?

Not Graded

Graded

Points\*

100.0

< Back

Create PDF Annotation



# Settings

## Annotate assignment

PDF

StudentsPerspectiveValuableInsights\_Whitepaper\_US\_Ed\_v1.pdf

Instructions [Annotation Settings](#)

### Visibility Settings

Visible to Everyone

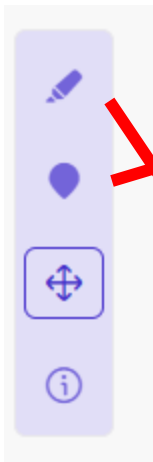
Students in Same Group

Private Between Student & Instructors

All annotations and replies are visible to everyone.



# Annotation Tools



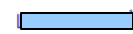
it is also to support their family or to take advantage of broader employment opportunities. Overall, as seen with the motivation to enroll, the large majority of students are motivated to complete their degree because of the benefits be gained from earning the degree.

This further supports using outcomes-based information in communication with prospective students by highlighting this type of content on the website, with a focus on earning potential, broader employment and preparation for a career. This could help draw more students to the university as students work in alignment with their expectations.

## Students Continue to Face Challenges

Students face a variety of challenges during their university career. By being aware of these challenges, university leadership will be better able to identify opportunities to support students and, in so doing, help

### Annotations



2 min

This is interesting

Reply



Commented on

Now

@Lisa Brown I like this comment

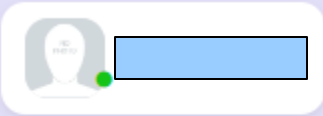
Reply



# Students - Your Activity

Your Activity

Annotations



Summary

2 Annotations

1 Replies



4 of 4 Annotations Viewed



# Instructor - Grades

Grades & Activity

Edit

	<a href="#">Dennis Students</a>	0	0		
	<a href="#">Dennis Young</a>	2	1	Ready To Grade	08/06/25 4:10 PM








# Grading View

← Previous person 10 of 10 Next person →




**Annotations**

Only show Dennis Tesla's activity

    8 min 

This is interesting

[← Reply](#)

  **New** 5 min 

@Lisa Brownl like this comment

[← Reply](#)

**Overall Feedback**

Grade / 100

Gradebook Comment

Add general feedback for this assignment

[Submit & Next](#)




# Peer Review



















- This was just released.
- Create an opportunity for your students to collaborate and share their individual views and knowledge with their classmates regarding papers or projects. This feedback benefits the student author and the student reviewer and can be a great addition beyond the feedback from the professor.



# Peer Review


Harmonize

 Which component would you like to add?

-  **Discussion**  
Encourage peer conversations with support for text, imagery, video, screenshare and more. Multiple Due Dates with auto-grading, AI instructions, rubric building, and coaching also available. 
-  **Peer Review**  
Easier to setup, manage and grade in addition to better support for late submissions. Critique tools for documents, video, image & screenshare. AI instructions, rubric building and coaching also available. 
-  **PDF Annotation**  
Move the discussion to within a PDF by allowing highlighting and conversation to happen in the text. Encourages reading comprehension. 
-  **Individual Assignment**  
Individual assignments that don't include peer-to-peer discussion. Includes support for documents, videos, images, screen sharing and critique tools for the instructor. AI instructions, rubric building and coaching are also available. 
-  **Poll**  
Poll students to gather insight into course content and learning. 
-  **Topic Q&A**  
A separate pool of questions and answers from the course Q&A that are only accessible from where you add it. Useful to isolate module specific questions within a module. 
-  **Course Q&A**  
A course-wide pool of questions and answers that are available throughout the duration of the course and from everywhere you add a Course Q&A item. 
-  **Communication Center**  
Provide a single location to access Harmonize settings, discussions, course Q&A, and more. 
-  **Chat**  
Help students collaborate and connect with others through private messages and group conversations. 



# Create a New Peer Review

  
Create Peer Review

What is the title of the peer review?\*

Is this a graded peer review?

Not Graded  Graded

Points\*

[< Back](#) [Create Peer Review](#)



# Generating the Requirements

 Create Peer Review

Peer Review assignment

[Configure Manually](#)

1 Requirements

2 Instructions

3 Rubric & AI Coach

4 Publish

Enable the common features below to encourage timely, authentic participation. For graded items, you can also turn on auto-grading based on participation, if desired. **Be sure to read the linked help articles if this is your first time using these features!**

New to Harmonize? [Watch This!](#)

Due date is currently set to: **08/29/2025 11:59 PM**

[How do I change the due date?](#)

Students' 1 assignment post will be due  days before the due date and  peer review(s) on the due date

[How do milestones impact grading?](#)

Automatically calculate and send individual grades to the gradebook based on each student's on-time completion of the listed participation requirements above.

[How and when are grades calculated?](#)

[Write Instructions](#)



# Generating the Instructions

 Create Peer Review

Peer Review assignment

[Configure Manually](#)

 Requirements

**2** Instructions

**3** Rubric & AI Coach

**4** Publish


Let AI suggest a starter activity or click "Write My Own Instructions" if you don't want to use AI.

**Please note:** Don't enter any instructions about peer reviews here, just instructions around the assignment post students will create. Peer review instructions are covered in a different section.

[Learn more about Harmonize Brainstorm](#)

My students are ready to...

Apply Their Knowledge (Complexity Level 3)  [Change](#)

What should the AI include in your activity?\* 

Begin with a clear question or statement on your topic. You can suggest response types (text, video, images) and encourage connecting it to personal experiences, current events, or course material. Formatting and grammar do not matter. Have fun with this, get creative! Minimum 25 characters.

Learning Objectives (Optional)

Describe what students are expected to achieve as a result of instruction 

[Add Another Learning Objective](#)

[Write My Own Instructions](#)

[Generate Instructions](#)




# Generating the Topic Areas

 Create Peer Review

Peer Review assignment

[Configure Manually](#)

 Requirements

 Instructions

**3** Rubric & AI Coach

**4** Publish

The focus areas are set based on your earlier prompt, but it's essential they are detailed and reflect exactly what you want from your students. If a focus area is labeled "Not Coachable," you can either disable [AI Student Coaching](#) or proceed with coaching enabled for the other focus areas. Add, edit and delete as needed.

AI Student Coaching: On

Focus Areas

[Regenerate Focus Areas](#)

Adherence to Guidelines

Criteria that focus on adherence to assignment guidelines, proper citations, and meeting the word count requirements.



Clarity and Organization

Assesses the organization of ideas and clarity of expression, including coherence, logical flow, and effective communication.



Content and Understanding



# AI Generated Rubric

Eric's Peer Review 1

[Configure Manually](#)

Requirements

Instructions

**3** Rubric & AI Coach

**4** Publish

Use the pencil icons below to edit the content, headings, or point totals. If the descriptions seem off, return to the previous screen to edit the focus areas.

[↔ Reverse Rating Order](#)

Total Points: 100

Focus Area	Poor/Missing	Developing	Proficient	Excellent
<b>Comprehension and Clarity</b>	9 pts Fails to convey the main ideas and central themes of the original content. Demonstrates a lack of understanding, with major inaccuracies or omissions.	17 pts Partially conveys the main ideas and central themes but with noticeable inaccuracies or omissions. Demonstrates a basic understanding but lacks clarity in some areas.	26 pts Mostly conveys the main ideas and central themes accurately and effectively. Minor inaccuracies or omissions may be present but do not significantly detract from clarity or understanding.	34 pts Clearly conveys the main ideas and central themes of the original content with high accuracy and precision. Demonstrates a thorough and nuanced understanding.
<b>Creativity and Insight</b>	9 pts The submission lacks creativity and does not provide any additional insights into the original content's theme. There is little to no engagement with the material beyond basic translation, offering no new perspective.	17 pts The submission shows minimal creativity or insight. There might be minor attempts to enhance the original theme, but they are underdeveloped and do not significantly add to the comprehension.	25 pts The submission includes creative elements and offers some insightful perspectives that enhance the original content's theme. There is clear engagement with the material, though further depth could be achieved.	33 pts The submission is highly creative, offering deep insights and a fresh perspective on the original content's theme. The student has gone beyond basic requirements to enhance understanding and engagement with the material.
<b>Peer Engagement</b>	9 pts Failed to submit the assignment on time and did not provide any feedback to peers. Shows no engagement with the peer review process.	17 pts Submitted the assignment late or provided only one piece of feedback to peers, with little adherence to peer review guidelines.	25 pts Submitted the assignment on time and provided feedback to peers, but the feedback lacked depth or missed some peer review guidelines.	33 pts Submitted the assignment on time and provided two well-considered, constructive feedback to peers, fully adhering to peer review guidelines.

[Update Focus Areas](#)

[Save Rubric](#)



# Publish the Peer Review



Create Peer Review

Full rubric successfully saved



Peer Review assignment

Configure Manually



Requirements



Instructions



Rubric & AI Coach



Publish

Configure additional settings:

- Peer Review Instructions (Default set provided)
- Anonymity Settings (Reviewers are anonymous by default)
- Word Count Minimums (200 words is the default for each review)
- Additional Auto-Grading Options
- Video/Audio Duration Limits

Configure Additional Settings

Publish!





# Generating the Peer Review Guidelines

## Peer Review Instructions

These instructions will display by default during the peer review phase of the assignment, but will still be accessible during the initial phase.

[Add Text](#)

Format - Alignment - A -  

### Peer Review Guidelines

When reviewing your peer's work, focus on the following key areas:

#### Specificity & Detail

- Reference specific sections, moments, or concepts when giving feedback.
- Instead of saying, "This part is unclear," say, "The argument in paragraph three could be clearer if you explain how X connects to Y."
- Use examples and, if possible, suggest alternative possibilities.

#### Alignment with the Assignment Instructions, Rubric, and Grading Criteria

- Make sure your feedback directly relates to the assignment instructions, especially the rubric or grading criteria (if present).
- If the assignment instructions emphasize photograph composition, for example, focus on that rather than the subject of the photograph.
- Use language from the assignment instructions where possible, drawing especially from the rubric or grading criteria (if present). For example, "Your presentation is strong, but you need to make eye contact with the camera, as noted under 'Audience Engagement.'"

#### Constructive Suggestions for Improvement

- Don't just point out strengths or weaknesses - offer concrete suggestions.
- Instead of just saying, "Your lab report didn't have the right sections," try a suggestion: "Consider adding a methods section that concisely explains what you did."
- Even if something is strong, suggest ways to enhance it further.

#### Tone, Positivity, and Professionalism

- Be respectful and supportive - avoid harsh or dismissive criticism.
- Use a constructive, solution-focused approach.
- Avoid phrases like, "This part didn't work" and instead say, "This part could be better if you explain/do/change X."
- A great review encourages your peer while still pointing out areas for growth.

By following these guidelines, you'll contribute to a more meaningful peer review process that helps both you and your classmates improve.

Press Alt+Fn+F10 (Option+Fn+F10 on macOS) for toolbar.



# Assignment Settings

Instructions [Assignment Settings](#) Peer Review Milestone Due Dates & Auto-Grading

## Anonymous Settings

Posts and comments always show user's identity

All student posts and comments are anonymous

## Default CC Language

Set the default language to be used for automatic closed captions on video and audio uploads and recordings

English ▾

## Video & Audio Duration Limit\*

Set the maximum number of minutes of video and/or audio recordings and uploads per student post (60 minutes maximum)

Minutes

5

## Screen Capture Duration Limit\*

Set the maximum number of minutes of screen capture recording per student post (60 minutes maximum)

Minutes

15

## Video Playback Quality

Allow student-uploaded videos to be played back at higher quality.



Discard Draft

Save Draft

Publish



# Peer Review Settings

## Peer Review Anonymous Settings

Control whether all peer reviews will be anonymous or not. Please note that peer reviews must be anonymous if the assignment allows or requires anonymity.

Peer Reviews always show user's identity

All peer reviews are anonymous

## Peer Review Assigning

Harmonize assigns peer reviews as each student starts a new review to increase the likelihood that all students receive an equal amount of feedback. You can choose how large a pool of peers Harmonize can choose from based on the options below. Please note that as pools of students get smaller, there's a higher risk that students may run out of peers to review.

Any Participating Student

Students in Same Group

Peer reviews can be assigned to any participating student

## Number of Peer Reviews

Each student will be required to complete the number of peer reviews set here.

Reviews\*





2



# Peer Review Settings (using groups)

Content Calendar Announcements Discussions Gradebook Messages Analytics **Groups** Achievements Student Preview

**Manage Groups** Import Group Set New Group Set

Group Set ▾	Members ▾
 <b>Thinking Partners</b>   2 Groups  Hidden from students ▾	5/5 <span>⋮</span> <span>^</span>
 <b>Group 1</b> <a href="#">Show Members</a>	2/5 (max)
 <b>Group 2</b> <a href="#">Show Members</a>	3/5 (max)

## Peer Review Assigning

Harmonize assigns peer reviews as each student starts a new review to increase the likelihood that all students receive an equal amount of feedback. You can choose how large a pool of peers Harmonize can choose from based on the options below. Please note that as pools of students get smaller, there's a higher risk that students may run out of peers to review.

Any Participating Student

Students in Same Group

Peer reviews can only be assigned between students in the same group within the selected group set:

Group Set Thinking Partners ▾

Time since last sync: Now Refresh



# Milestone Due Dates and Auto-Grading Settings

Instructions Assignment Settings Peer Review **Milestone Due Dates & Auto-Grading**

## Milestone Date

Selecting a date to set milestone *Complete by* dates relative to allows you to more easily shift dates when making schedule changes or copying the course.  
When you adjust the date value for this date the milestone *Complete by* dates will update accordingly.

Set Milestone *Complete by* Dates Relative to

Due Date - Fri. Aug 29, 2025, 11:59 PM ▾

## Turn on Participation Auto-Grading

Students automatically receive participation points by completing the milestone requirements. Their participation grade is then submitted after the final due date.

Enter the participation points for completing each milestone below.

Auto-grading on

## Give Credit for Late Participation

Students can continue to earn participation points after the milestone due dates you set, up to full credit.

Late participation does not earn points

## Minimum Word Count for Posts

Enter the minimum number of words a post must contain to count toward completing a milestone. Leave at 0 if there is no minimum.

Words

0

## Minimum Word Count for Peer Reviews

Enter the minimum number of words a peer review must contain to count toward completing a milestone. Leave at 0 if there is no minimum.

Words

200



# Milestone Due Dates and Auto-Grading Settings

## Milestone

### Complete By

08/25/2025



\* at 11:59 PM



4 Days Before  
Due Date



Points 50

### Requirements

Posts



1



Peer Reviews



0



*Controlled by Peer Review Settings*

## Milestone

### Complete By

08/29/2025



\* at 11:59 PM



Due On  
Due Date



Points 50

### Requirements

Posts



0



Peer Reviews



2



*Controlled by Peer Review Settings*

Total Points 10

Points will be converted to a percentage when the grade is submitted

### Total Requirements

These requirements must be met before a student's assignment will be submitted for grading.

Posts









1

Peer Reviews

2



# Publishing your Peer Review Assignment

 Peer Review assignment       

0 students have completed the assignment. Visit [Activity](#) for details.

**Requirements** ●

<b>1 Post</b> Due Mon, Aug 25 11:59 PM 50 pts	<b>2 Peer Reviews</b> Due Fri, Aug 29 11:59 PM 50 pts
---	---

**Activity**  
0 Reviews 0 Replies

[Hide Instructions](#)  Watch Assignment  [Grades & Activity](#) [Edit](#) [Share](#)

**All Instructions** [How does Peer Review work?](#)

- [Assignment Post Instructions](#)
- [Peer Review Instructions](#)



# Getting Help

## Online Documentation

<https://tech.rochester.edu/services/learning-management-system/>

## Additional Workshops

<https://tech.rochester.edu/blackboard-ultra-training/>

Saving Faculty Time – August 14

Ultra Workshops – ~~August 7~~, 12, 14



# Reach Out!

**Blackboard Support**  
**Digital Instructional Design Support**

[UnivITHelp@Rochester.edu](mailto:UnivITHelp@Rochester.edu)

275-2000



**THANK YOU  
QUESTIONS?**

