Faculty: Troubleshoot a Forum

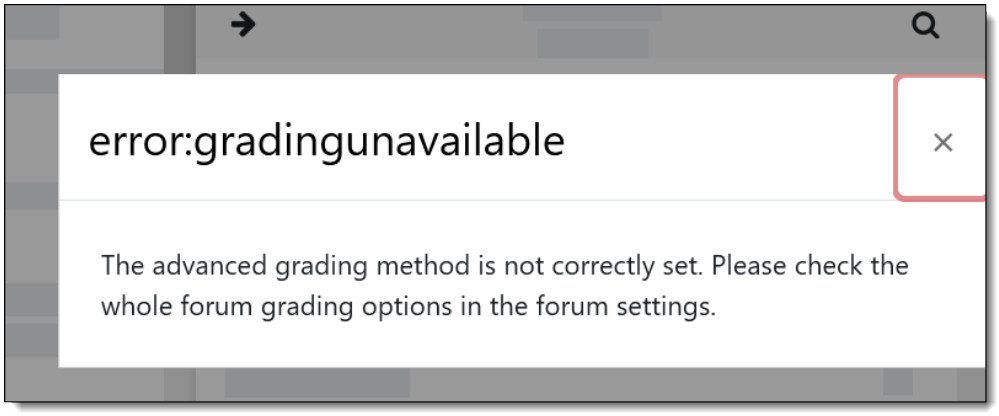
Hart Wilson - 2025-12-04 - Comments (0) - Faculty

We hear frequent questions about a few features related to forums. Is your question answered here?

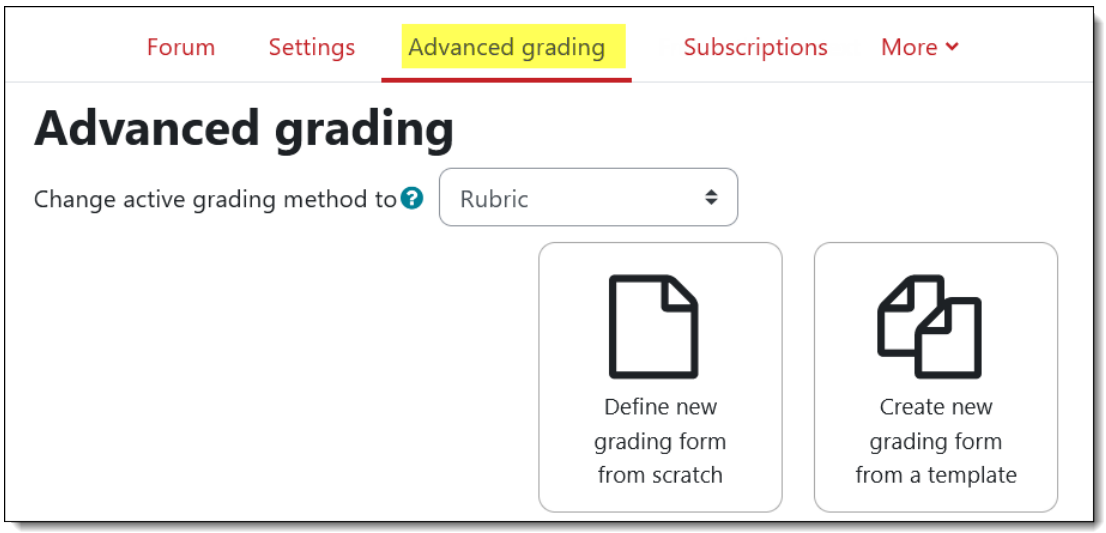
Why can't my students reply to my forum prompt?
Generally, students are unable to reply in one of three cases:

1. *Standard forum*—The forum is set up for groups and students are not enrolled in a group. Open the forum in edit mode and check the **Common module settings** for group options. OR
2. *Q&A forum*—You haven't made an initial post for your students to reply to. Unlike the other forum types, a Q&A forum needs to have a thread posted by you in addition to the overall prompt that you enter in the *Description* field. Students don't have an *Add a discussion* link in a Q&A forum; they can only reply to a thread that you initiate. OR
3. *Announcements forum*—You've updated your Announcements forum so that the *General news and announcements* description has been replaced with a discussion prompt. Students cannot reply in an Announcements forum.

Why do I get an error message when I try to grade a forum with a rubric?
You may attempt to grade a forum and see this error message:



That's a result of choosing a rubric or grading guide as an advanced grading option in the set-up page, but not following up by creating the grading tool that you selected for that forum. To fix it, open the forum from the main course page by clicking on its name, then click on the **Advanced grading** tab at the top of the page. Select the **Define new grading form** or **Create new grading form from template** as needed. Then follow these instructions for setting up a rubric from scratch or these for reusing an existing rubric. If you don't intend to use a rubric or grading guide, update the **Change active grading method** option to **Simple direct grading**.



Why don't I see unread posts on my course page?
If you don't see new forum posts highlighted in yellow on your course home page as shown in the example below, check out **these instructions** for updating your forum preferences.



How can I find out when a student posted a response?
To view the time stamp for a student's forum post, hover over the date associated with the post with your mouse and the actual time the post was made will be displayed in a pop-up window.

Why can't my students reply in the "Announcements" forum?
Although Moodle considers this feature a forum, it is not a true discussion forum—only the instructor can post messages to it and students may not reply in it. Do not attempt to use the Announcements feature as a discussion forum, as students will not be able to post replies in it.

Can I set a closing date for my forums?
Yes. See these instructions for creating and managing forums.

Can I arrange to have a guest speaker enrolled in my course to participate in a follow-up forum?
Yes. Submit a ticket to the Moodle team at support.sou.edu providing the individual's name and email address along with the CRN of the course you would like to provide access to and we'll create an account for you.