

Webmail -- Public Folders

Participating in an Online Discussion

There are two different ways to post a new message in a public folder:

- As a reply to a message in an existing conversation
- As a new message that begins a new conversation

You should be careful to use the appropriate method when you are participating in a discussion.

- *If you have something to contribute to an existing conversation, then enter the message as a reply.*
- *Enter a new message ONLY if you are starting a new conversation that is unrelated to the others that are going on.*

This may seem picky, but it is the only way to ensure that the online discussion is effective. If you have a comment that is relevant to an existing discussion but start a new conversation, others may not even look at what you have to say. Even worse, your professor may not look at it either so that you won't get credit for what you have said.

If, on the other hand, you want to talk about something else it is only polite not to clutter the other conversation up with a second unrelated discussion.

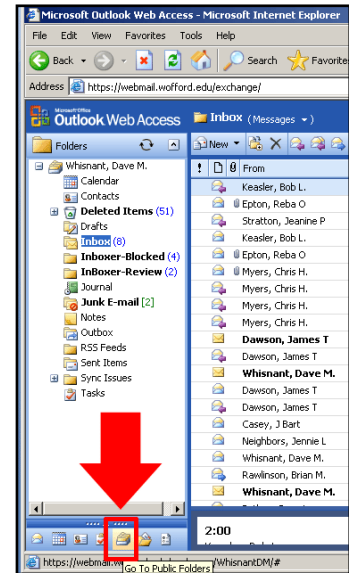
This is not too different from the way we talk with each other. If a group of several people are talking about a common topic, they generally stay together. If you want to add to the discussion, it won't work very well if you go into another room to say something. On the other hand, if two members of the group get interested in another topic, they might step away from the original group so that they can talk without interrupting or being interrupted.

All this is common sense, but easy to forget until you become accustomed to participating in online discussions.

Logging On

Log on to webmail (<http://webmail.wofford.edu/exchange/>).

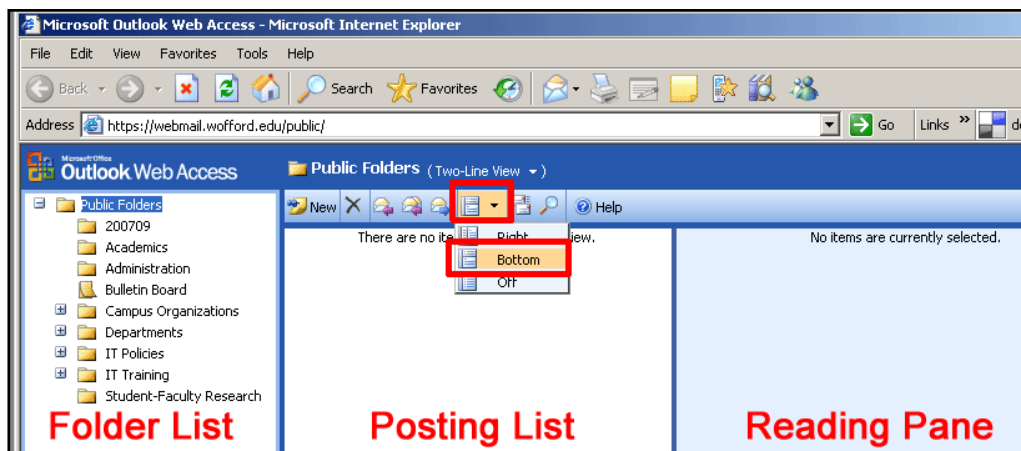
Click on the **Public Folders** icon at the bottom of the webmail window.



Moving the Reading Pane




The Public Folders screen probably will have three columns:


- **Folder List:** The list of public folders available
- **Posting List:** The list of postings in the public folder you are viewing
- **Reading Pane:** A short portion of the text in the posting you are viewing

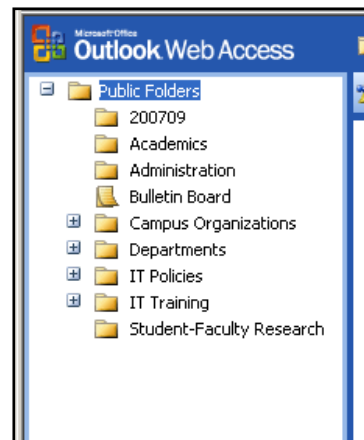


I find it convenient to have the reading pane on the bottom of the screen. If you would like the reading pane to be positioned there, click on the **Reading Pane** icon and select **Bottom**.

Viewing Public Folders

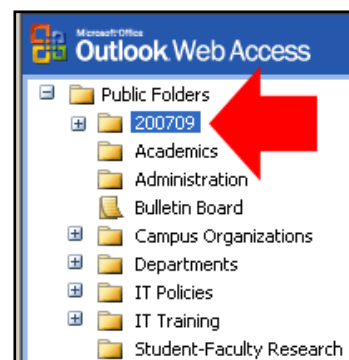
In the tree display of the list of folders, a  box indicates that a folder contains a set of subfolders. Clicking on the  box will expand the tree to show the subfolders. A  box indicates that the set of subfolders can be collapsed to display only the parent folder.

If the list of public folders is not expanded, click on the  box.

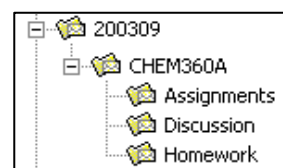


Course Public Folders

The public folders that probably will be of most use to you are the folders that have been created for a course you are taking. The **course public folders** are grouped under a cryptic name that will look something like “200709” (which stands for “September, 2007” – the date a term begins.)



Course public folders only are visible to users with permission to see the folder, usually just the professor and students in the class. Each course public folder contains three other folders.

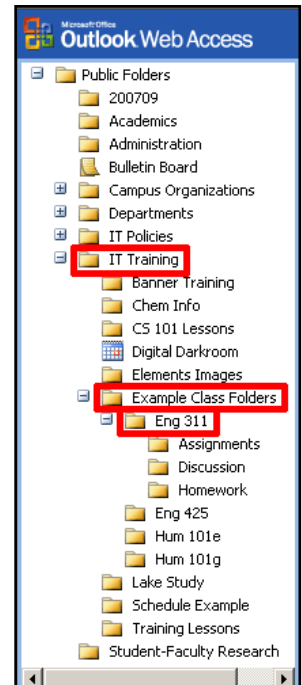
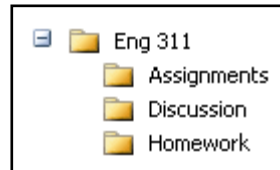


We will focus on the **Discussion** folder in this lesson. This folder can be used for online discussions.

For this lesson, we will use the **IT Training** public folder. Within this folder choose **Example Class Folders** and then **Eng 311**.

We will use these folders, which are examples of actual class public folders, in these lessons.

The English 311 example public folder is set up with the three types of subfolders that you will see in the actual class folders.

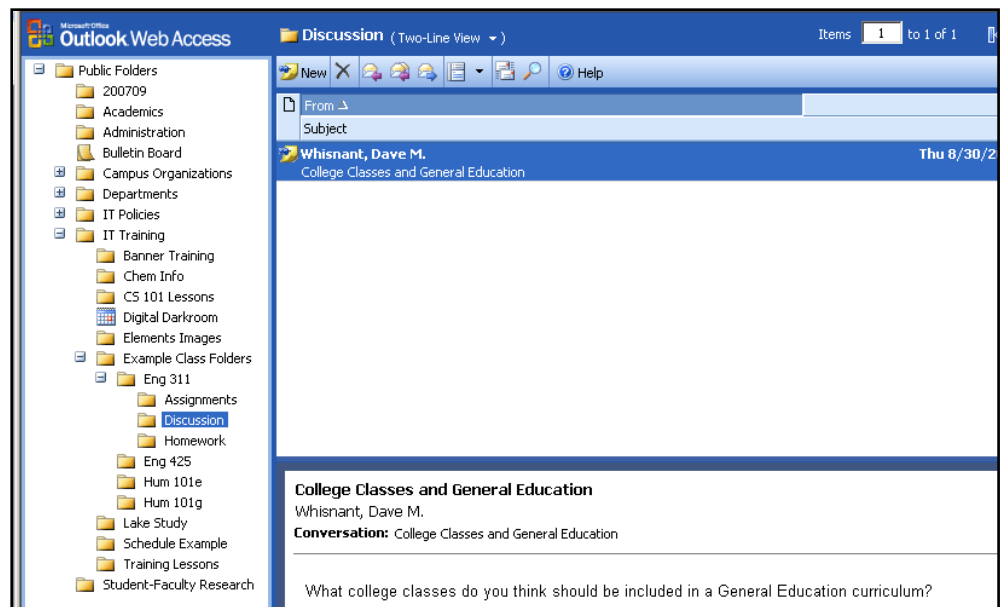


The Discussion Folder

Click on the **Discussions** folder within the Eng 311 example class folder.

You should see a message with the subject “College Classes and General Education” that was posted by David Whisnant.

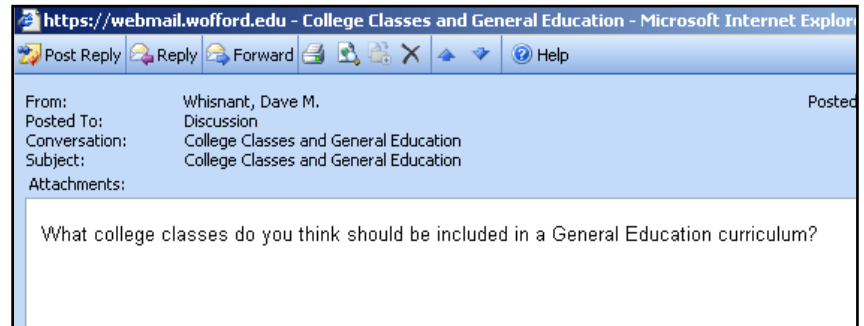
(Because this folder is being used by several people, you may see other folders as well, which you may ignore.)



Note that the reading pane shows the first part of the text in the message – in this case the entire contents of the message because it is a short one. It is important to remember that **the Reading Pane is not the message**. If the message is a long one, not all of its contents will appear in the reading pane.

Reading a Posted Message

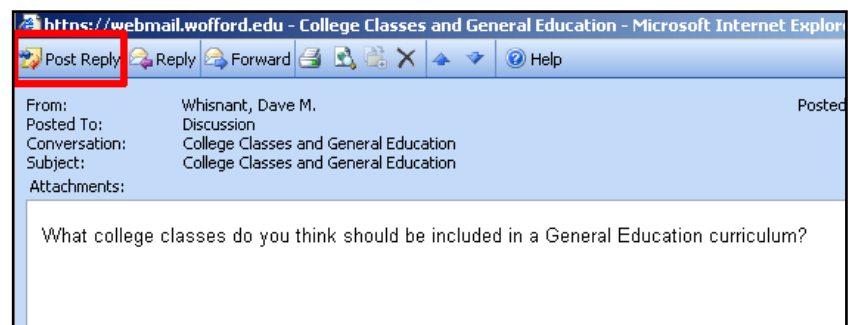
To read a posted message, double-click on the message in the list. In particular, for this lesson, double-click on the “College Classes and General Education” message posted by David Whisnant to read it. A separate message window will appear



Posting a Reply in the Public Folder

Click on the **Post Reply** icon in the upper left of the message window to respond to the message.

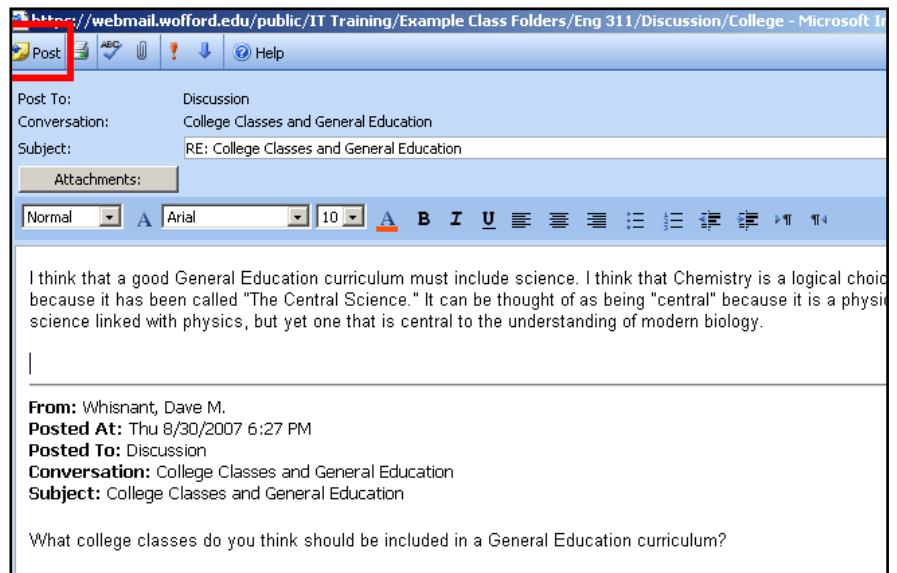
Do NOT click on “Reply,” by the way. This would send your reply by email rather than posting it in the public folder.



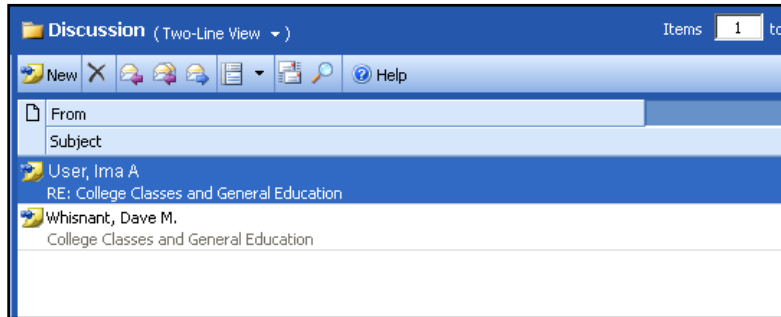
A reply window will appear.

Enter your response in the white section above the original message.

Click on **Post** when you have entered your reply.

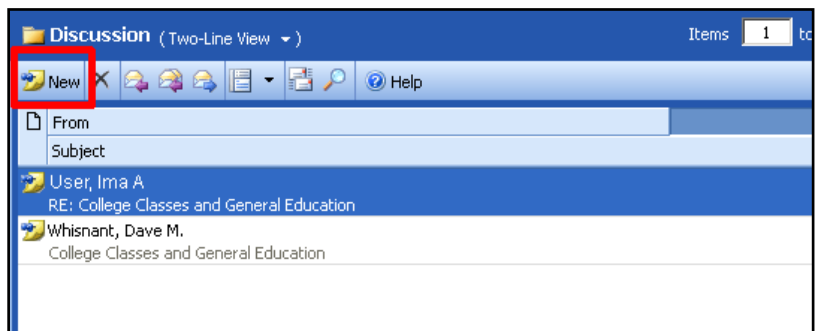


You now should see your reply in the list of messages. The reply will be indicated by “RE:” in the Subject.



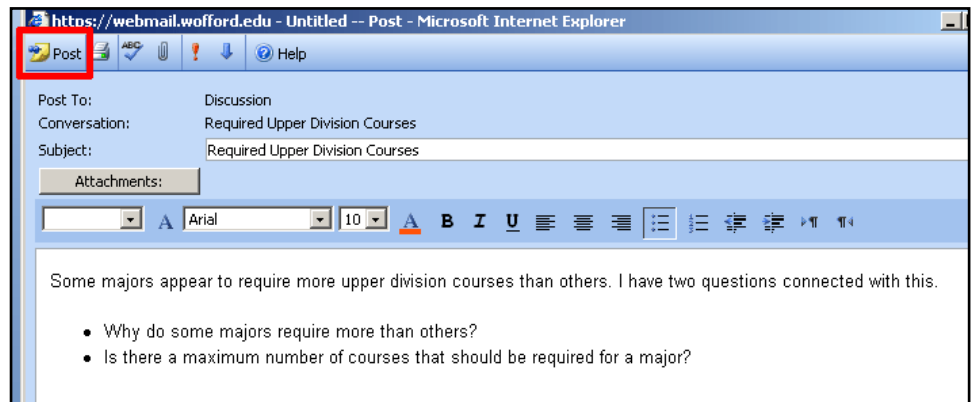
Initiating a New Discussion

If you want to start a new discussion on another topic, click on the **New** icon.

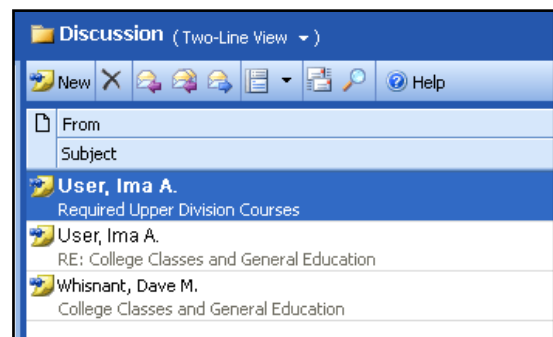


In the window that opens up, enter the **Subject** of the conversation. Then type in the message that will be posted to begin the conversation.

When you have entered your message, click on the **Post** icon in the upper left of the window.



When the new message has been posted, you should see it in the list.



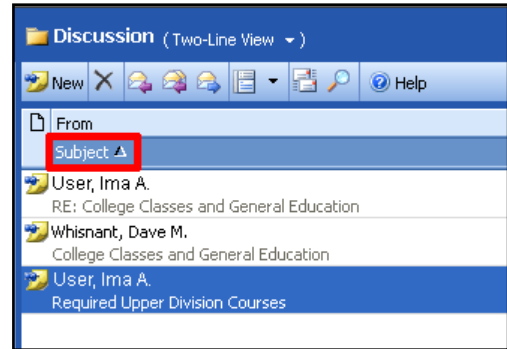
Sorting Message Lists

Public folder messages can be sorted in several different ways (e.g., **From**, **Subject**, **Received**) just like email messages.

For example, in this illustration the messages are sorted by the date and time when they were received. The downward-pointing Sort arrow indicates that the more recent messages are on top.



Try clicking on the **Subject** heading so that the Sort arrow is pointing up. You will see that the messages have been sorted alphabetically by subject.

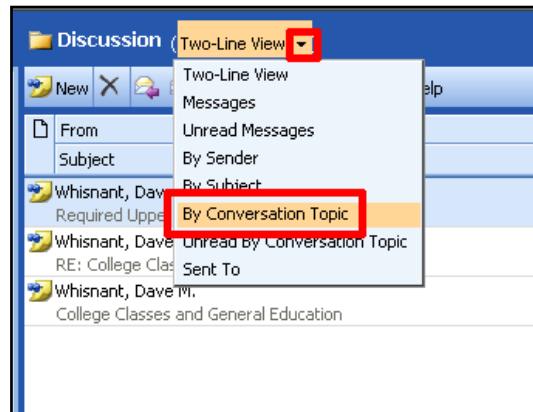


Viewing by Discussion Topic

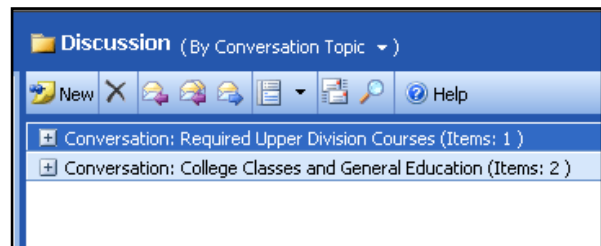
If there are several online discussions taking place at once, it is convenient to group messages by discussion topic.


Click on the **View menu arrow** by the word “Discussion” in the heading.

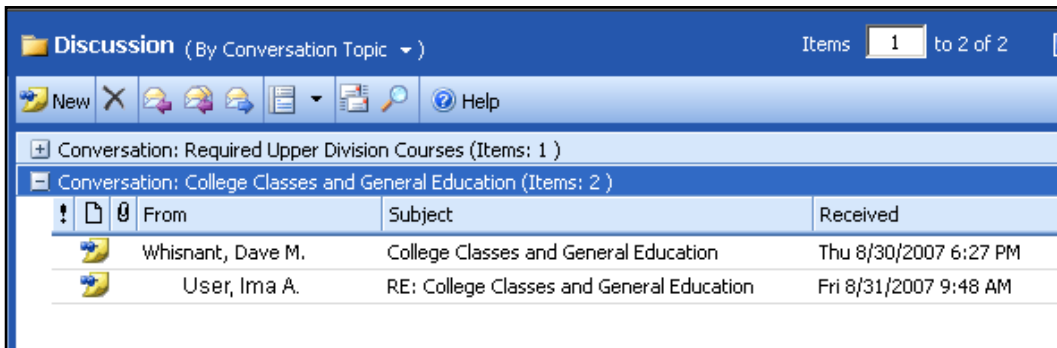
Choose **By Conversation Topic** from the View menu.



You now should see a “Conversation” heading for each discussion,

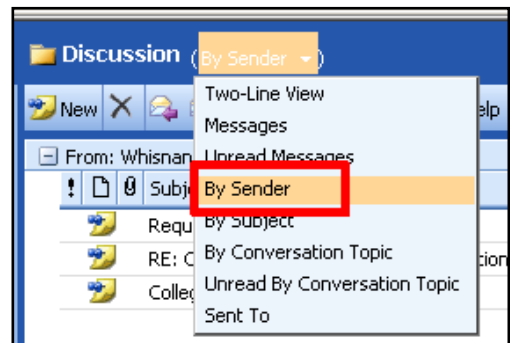


Clicking on the  icon before the word “Conversation” will expand the conversation to show the list of messages involved in this conversation. The messages are displayed with reply postings indented.



Viewing by Sender

It may be useful for a professor to group the messages by Sender so he or she can see how many messages each individual student has sent. If this is the case choose **By Sender** from the View menu.



This will display each user’s messages together

