Course Announcements in Moodle [1]

The *Announcements* forum is a special forum that acts as an announcements tool for your Moodle course. Only instructors and TAs can post to *Announcements*, and by default, posts made to *Announcements* are emailed to class members. Students cannot leave replies to the posts; it is a one-way tool.

Note: You can easily change the name of the *Announcements* forum name: Turn editing on (green pencil icon [icon], top right) and click the **Edit title** icon ([icon]) for the forum. Type in a new name, then press Enter/Return.

Unique Behaviors of the Announcements Forum

- *Announcements* **appears by default in the top section**.
  Although you can move the Announcements forum out of the top section, we recommend you do not as this may make it more difficult for your students to find.

- **The *Latest news* block and *Announcements* are interconnected**.
  The *Latest news* block displays the titles of your most recent posts to *Announcements* and links to those posts.
- **Hide or remove *Announcements***.
  If you do not want to use *Announcements*, you can simply hide both it and the *Latest news* block. If you want to delete the forum entirely, you must also delete the Latest News block (see Delete Announcements, below).

- **Send an email copy of your posts**.
  Moodle will send an email copy of your posts to the entire class. The email includes any attachments to the post. You can choose to make subscription optional or disable it (see Edit Announcements Settings, below).
  Note: Your post will be held for 30 minutes prior to being sent. The post can be edited within that time-frame. If you are feeling very confident and would like your new post emailed immediately, check **Mail now**.
- **Archived posts**.
  While you also have the option to use Quickmail [2] to email students, *Announcements* posts have the advantage of being collected on a single page within the course. You and your students can review them any time you are logged into Moodle without having to search through your personal email inbox.

- **Access to the *Announcements* forum.**
  The instructor can extend permission to make posts to a particular class member by setting (see Assign Roles to Individuals in Your Moodle Course [3]). Comments are disabled for *Announcements*.

Edit Announcements Settings

To reconfigure some of the behaviors of the *Announcements* forum:

1. On your course page, click **Turn editing on** (green pencil icon [icon], top right). Editing icons and links will appear next to editable items.
2. Locate the *Announcements* forum, click **Edit**, then select **Edit Settings**. The *Updating Forum* page will open.
3. To rename the activity from *Announcements*, in the *Forum name* box, enter a new name.
4. To add a description, enter text in the *Description* box, and to have the description display on the course page under the *Announcements* link, select the check box for *Display description on course page.*
5. To change whether class members receive emails of posts, locate and open **Subscription and tracking** section, and from the *Subscription mode* drop-down, select a new option:

   • **Optional subscription** - Participants can choose whether to be subscribed.
   • **Forced subscription** (default) - Everyone is subscribed and cannot unsubscribe.
   • **Auto subscription** - Everyone is subscribed initially, but can choose to unsubscribe at any time.
   • **Subscription disabled** - Subscriptions are not allowed.
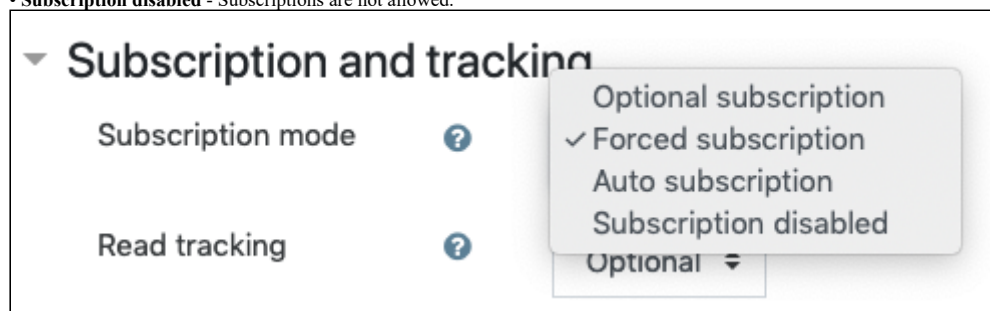
6. To change whether your course members see a highlighted message next to the forum if they have unread posts, select either **Optional** (default) or **Off** for *Read tracking*.
7. The remaining settings are common to all forums, but are not useful for *Announcements* and can be ignored.
8. To save your changes, scroll to the bottom of the screen and click **Save and return to course**.

Add a Post to Announcements

1. On your course page, click the **Announcements** link. The *Announcements page* will open, showing the description you provided when you set up the activity, and if any posts have been made, they will be listed here. If no topics or posts have been added, you'll see the message, "No announcements have been posted yet.".
2. Click **Add a new topic**. The *Your new discussion topic* page opens.
   (Alternatively, you can skip Step 1, and click the **Add a new topic** link in the *Latest news* block to open this page.)
3. Enter a *Subject* and a *Message* (both are required).
4. If subscription is set to Optional in the forum's settings, you can use the Subscription drop-down menu to choose whether or not to receive email copies of posts made to this forum. This will affect you, not your students.
5. You may choose to add an attachment.
6. Select the **Mail now** check box if you do not want the standard 30-minute delay before subscribers receive an email.

7. Select the **Pinned** check box if you want to highlight your Post to be at the top of your *Announcements* list.
8. Click **Post to forum** to post your message. You will be returned to *Announcement* page, on this page a "success" message appears. The subject line of the new post will appear as a link in the *Latest news* block.

Delete Announcements

If you want to delete the *Announcements* forum, you must first remove the *Latest news* block. If you do not, *the Announcements* link will automatically regenerate after you delete it.

1. On your course page, click **Turn editing on** (green pencil icon , top right). The page will refresh showing editing icons and links.

2. On the *Latest news* block, click the **Edit icon** (▼) and select ( ) **Delete Latest news block**. When asked if you are sure you want to delete this block, click **Yes**. The page will refresh and the block will no longer be in your course.

3. To the right of *Announcements*, click **Edit** , then select **Delete** ( ). A *Confirm* pop-up will open asking if you are sure you want to delete the forum; click **Yes**. The page will refresh and the forum will no longer be in your course.

Replace a Deleted Announcements Forum

If you ever want the *Announcements* forum back in your course, you'll find out that *Announcements* is the only Moodle activity that does not appear in the *Add an activity or resource* menu! To recover your Announcements:

1. You must first add the *Latest news* block back to your course (see Add and Remove Blocks [4]).
   Note: You may need to wait for up to an hour for the *Latest news* block to show up with all its settings in your blocks section.
2. In the *Latest news* block click **Add a new topic...** . The *Announcements* forum will automatically reappear in the top section of your course whether you click **Post to forum** or click **Cancel**.

Links
[1] https://www.umass.edu/it/support/moodle/courseannouncementsmoodle
[2] https://www.umass.edu/it/support/moodle/quickmail-block-moodle
[3] https://www.umass.edu/it/support/moodle/assign-roles-individuals-your-moodle-course
[4] https://www.umass.edu/it/support/moodle/add-remove-blocks-moodle