

## Using the Discussion Board for MA 15800

This semester we will be using Piazza (<https://piazza.com/>) discussion forum to facilitate the course. Please use the following information to help use the discussion forum to its fullest potential.

### Enrolling in Piazza

There is also a link to Piazza on Blackboard. If you do not already have a Piazza account, you can create one easily from the homepage. Once you click on the link in Blackboard and create an account if needed, you will automatically be enrolled in the correct course in Piazza.

### Turning Off Emails from Piazza

You will probably want to adjust your email preferences in Piazza. If you do not manually change the email settings, Piazza will email you every time a change is made to any post that you either create or follow.

In the upper right corner, you will see a cog icon next to your name. Click on that and select Account/Email Settings. In the second box down, select "Edit Email Notifications." Change the settings as to how often (if ever) you would like email notifications.

### Posting Questions

Piazza uses folders to organize posts. When posting a question, tag it in the folder under the corresponding lesson number. There are also folders for each of the midterm exams and the final exam. I am expecting two main types of questions to be posted on the discussion board. The first is questions about homework problems, and the second is about content.

When posting to questions to the discussion board, be as detailed as possible. Simply stating "How do you do #3 in HW1" does not provide any detail. Explain what the problem entails and what you have tried to do to solve the problem. The same is true about any topic in which you might need more details. For example, if some of the steps in the solution to an example in the text do not make sense, reference and give the example, as well as what step(s) you are unclear about. The more detailed the post, the faster and more explicit the response will be.

### Look Before Posting

From my experience, if one person has a question about a problem or topic, at least 10 other people have the same question. Before creating a new thread in the discussion board, look to see if someone else has posted the same question. Piazza gives you the option to mark a question as "Good Question," which indicates that other people have the same question. If your question is related but slightly different, you can add to the thread by creating a "Follow Up" below the original post. When there are multiple posts about the same question, usually only the first post gets answered.

### Answering Questions

You are highly encouraged to answer questions posted by other students. This enriches the discussion and typically questions are answered more quickly. When responding to questions, especially those about homework problems, do not simply give the answer. Try and show the steps that you used so that those reading the post can understand *how* to do the problems. This is more important than simply getting the correct answer.

### Be Respectful

We are all in this together. Be respectful in your posts.