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Janet L. Braunstein* (janet.braunstein@usma.edu), United States Military Academy at West Point, Department of Mathematical Sciences, Thayer Hall, West Point, NY 10996. *Promoting Responsibility and Cooperation Through the Use of Discussion Boards.*

At the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, we stress the importance of assuming responsibility for one's own learning. Students read the material to be covered in the next day's lesson and attempt related problems the night before. Most students' high school math classes do not follow this model, so the transition is often difficult. To aid in the process, we introduced the use of the Discussion Board feature in Blackboard in a first-semester multivariable calculus course for students in the Advanced Mathematics Program, a two-semester sequence for approximately the top 175 math students in each incoming freshman class.

Students can contribute to forums on a daily basis by posing questions about what they are reading, answering questions others have asked, or organizing study sessions. Such a system has promoted responsibility, cooperation, and pride among the students and has translated into a more positive classroom environment. The instructor can more easily judge where the students stand, and discussions arising in the forums can be continued in class. We will discuss pros and cons thus far, with suggestions for improvement next semester, and include screenshots of the actual forums. (Received September 15, 2008)