

Creating Forums in an Existing Portlet

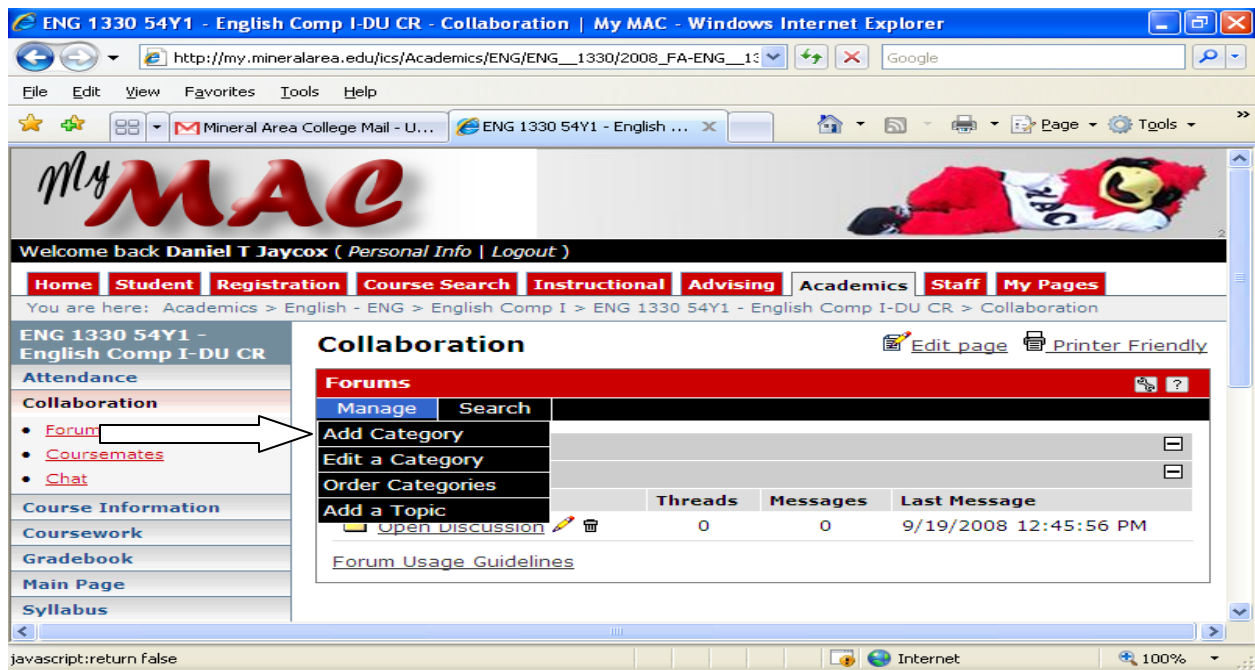
One forum portlet is available in the blank course set up. To access the existing forum portlet in MyMAC click on one of your course links. Once you are in the course you want to work with, click on the collaboration link on the left side of the page.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL http://my.mineralarea.edu/ics/Academics/ENG/ENG__1330/2008_FA-ENG__13. The page title is "ENG 1330 54Y1 - English Comp I-DU CR - Main Page | My MAC - Windows Internet Explorer". The user is logged in as Daniel T Jaycox. The navigation menu includes Home, Student, Registration, Course Search, Instructional, Advising, Academics, Staff, and My Pages. The left sidebar shows a list of portlets: Attendance, Collaboration (highlighted with a white arrow), Course Information, Coursework, Gradebook, and Main Page. The main content area has a red header "ENG 1330 54Y1 - English Comp I-DU CR" and a message: "There is no content in this portlet. You can add content in the following way(s): Create Content". A calendar for October 2008 is visible on the right.

You can then click on either *Forums* in the left pane or the link at the top of the portlet to customize the portlet.

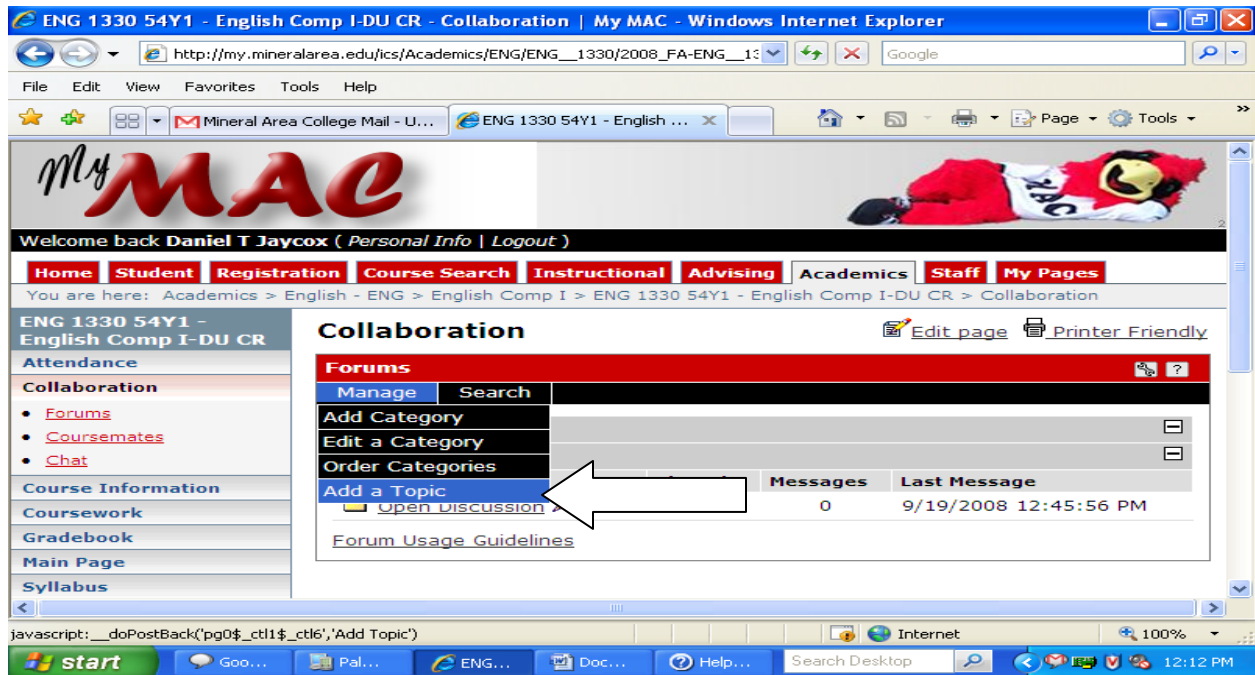
The screenshot shows the same web browser window, but the URL is http://my.mineralarea.edu/ics/Academics/ENG/ENG__1330/2008_FA-ENG__13 and the page title is "ENG 1330 54Y1 - English Comp I-DU CR - Collaboration | My MAC - Windows Internet Explorer". The user is still logged in as Daniel T Jaycox. The navigation menu is the same. The left sidebar shows a list of portlets: Attendance, Collaboration (highlighted with a white arrow), Course Information, Coursework, Gradebook, Main Page, and Syllabus. The main content area has a red header "Collaboration" and a sub-header "Forums" (highlighted with a white arrow). Below the sub-header is a table with columns for Name, Threads, Messages, and Last Message. The table contains one entry: "Open Discussion" with 0 threads and 0 messages, and a last message of "9/19/2008 12:45:56 PM". A "Forum Usage Guidelines" link is also visible. A "Chat - Chat" portlet is visible on the right, with a message: "The chat server is unavailable at this time. Our chat rooms open in a pop-up window. You must turn off your browser's pop-up blocker (or set it to accept pop-ups from this site) to use our chat rooms."

You now have a variety of options for proceeding. For a well organized forum, you should probably create categories that will provide students with a structure that they can get used to. These categories will work as section dividers for the topics that your students will respond to over the course of the semester. To create categories, place your cursor over the word *Manage*, and a drop down list of options will appear. Choose *Add Category*.

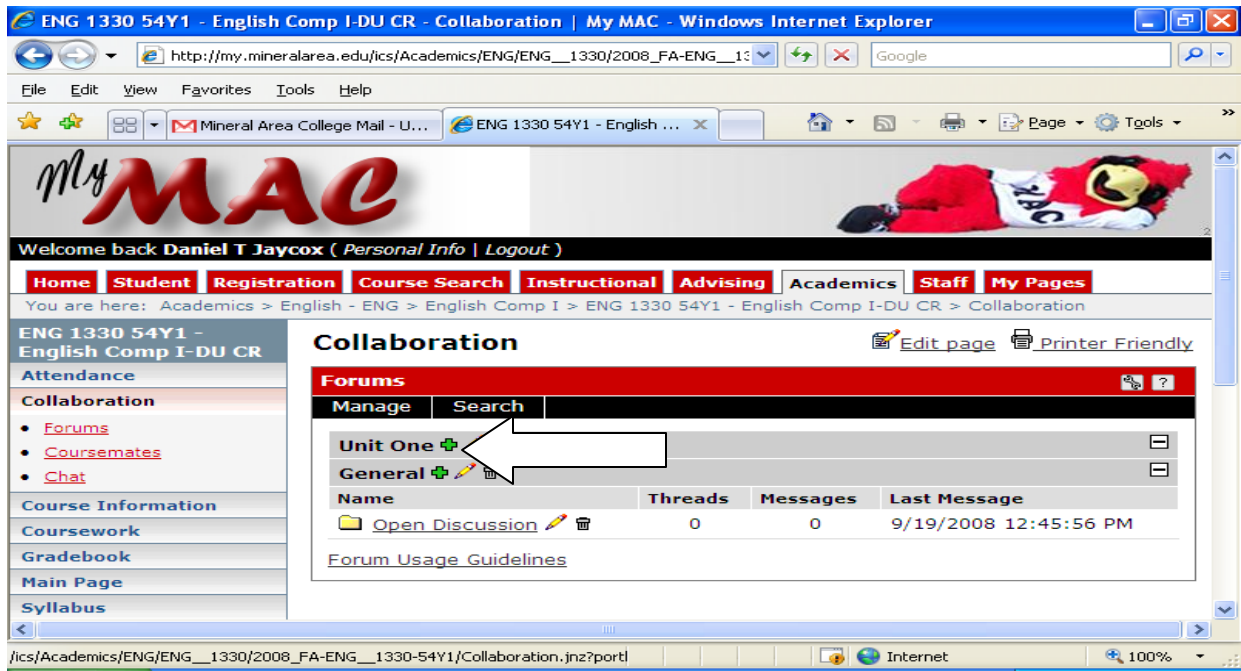


Clicking on **Add Category** will take you to a page that asks for specific information that you would like to include. You only have to fill out the box next to **Label**. After providing the information, click **Save**, and your category will be created. It can be edited by clicking the small pencil to the right of the category label. You can delete the topic by clicking the trash can.

You must now create topics for your students to respond to within your categories. Again, place your cursor over the word **Manage**. This time, choose **Add a Topic**.



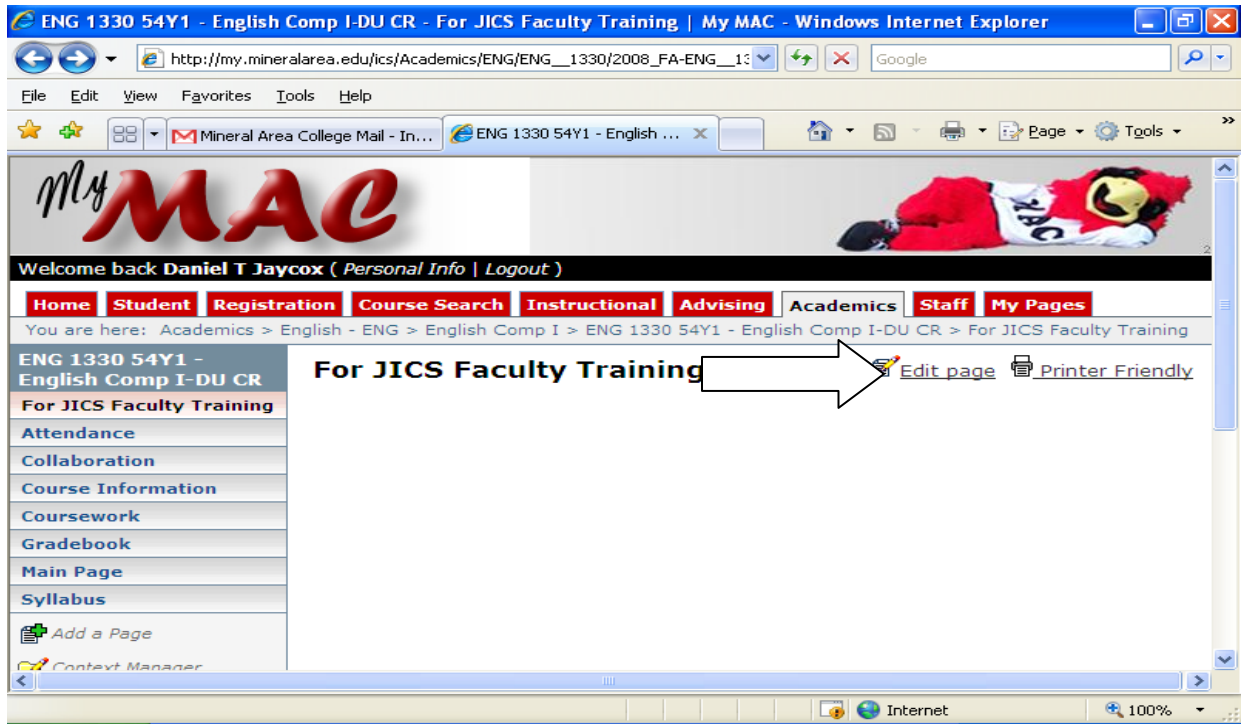
Or if you would like you can click the green plus sign next to your category label. Either method will give you the same result.



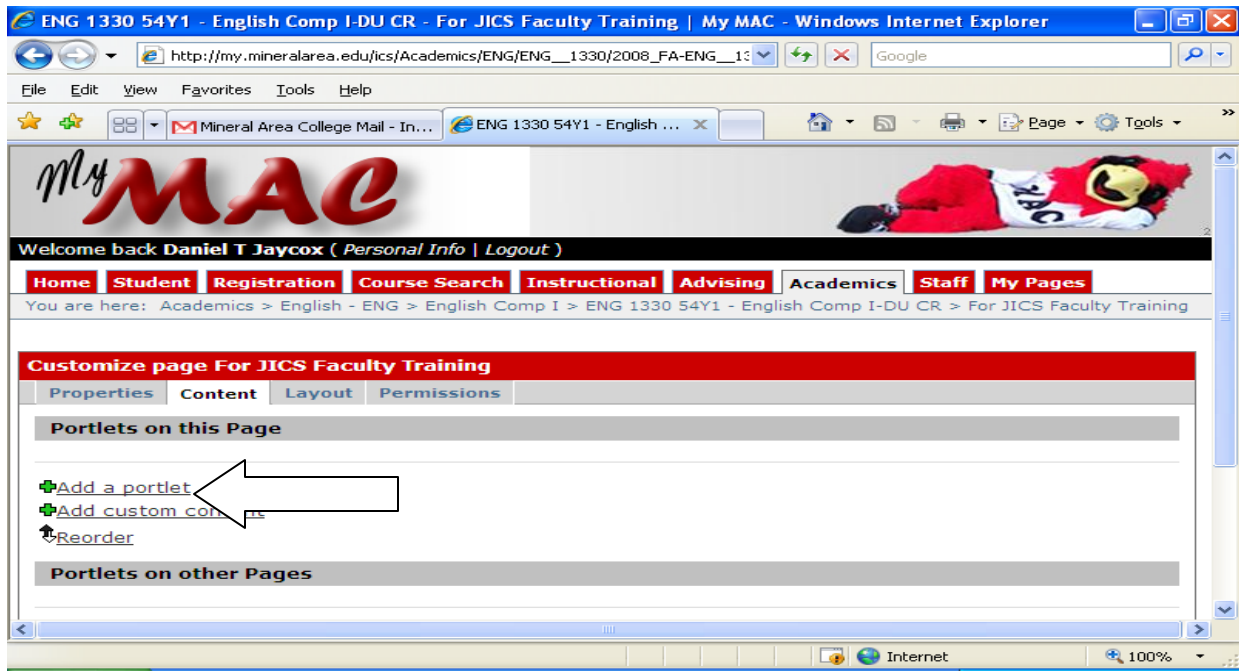
You will now be taken to a page with a lot of different options. Choose according to your needs and click *Save*. Your new topic will now appear underneath the corresponding category. It can be edited by clicking the small pencil to the right of the topic. You can delete the topic by clicking the trash can. The topic is now ready for students to discuss based on the specific requirements you have provided for them.

Adding a Forums Portlet to a Page

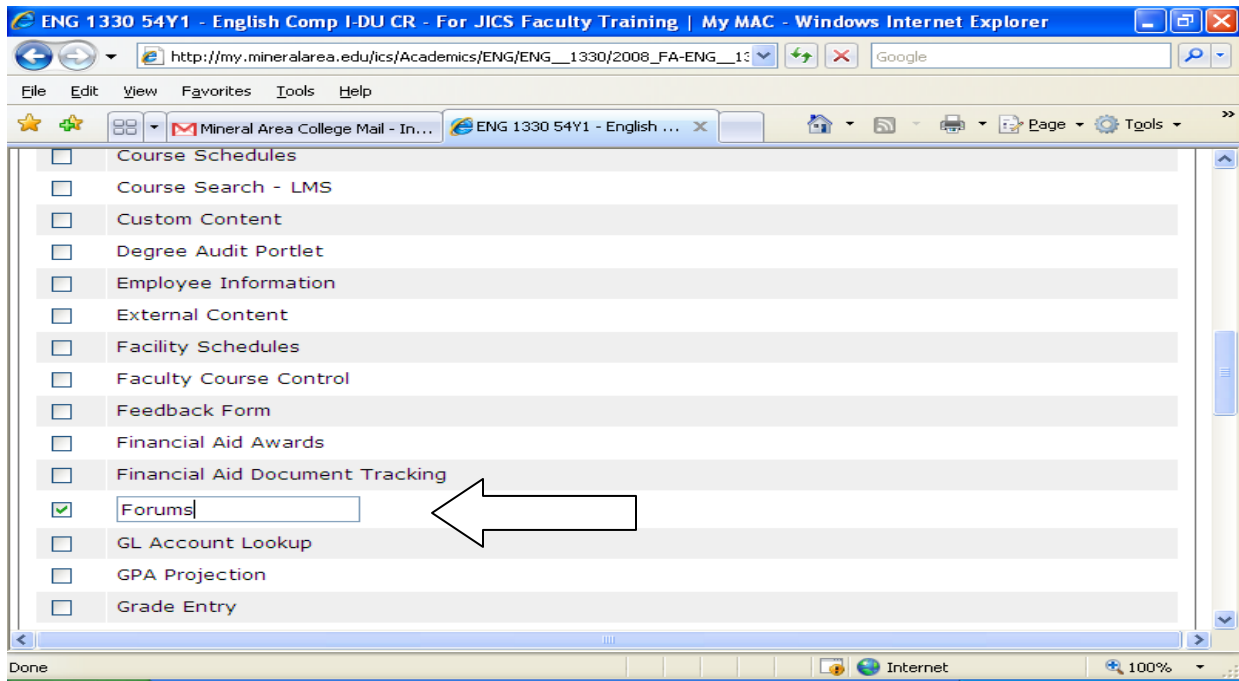
Navigate to the page that you would like to add a Forums portlet. Click *Edit Page*.



Now click on the *Content* tab, and choose *Add a Portlet*.



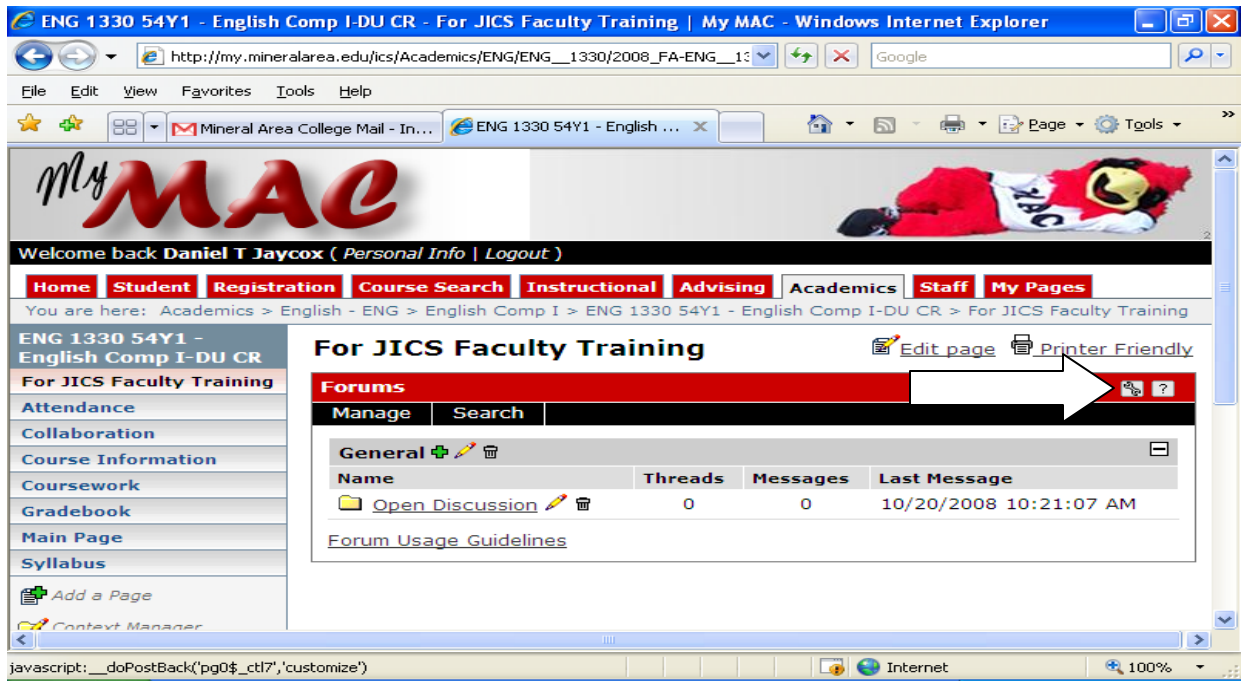
Check the box by **Forums** in the list of portlets. Clicking on the word **Forums** after checking the box will provide you with a cursor and the opportunity to rename the portlet (it will still function like any other forums portlet would, but you probably want to avoid having multiple portlets in the course with the same name).



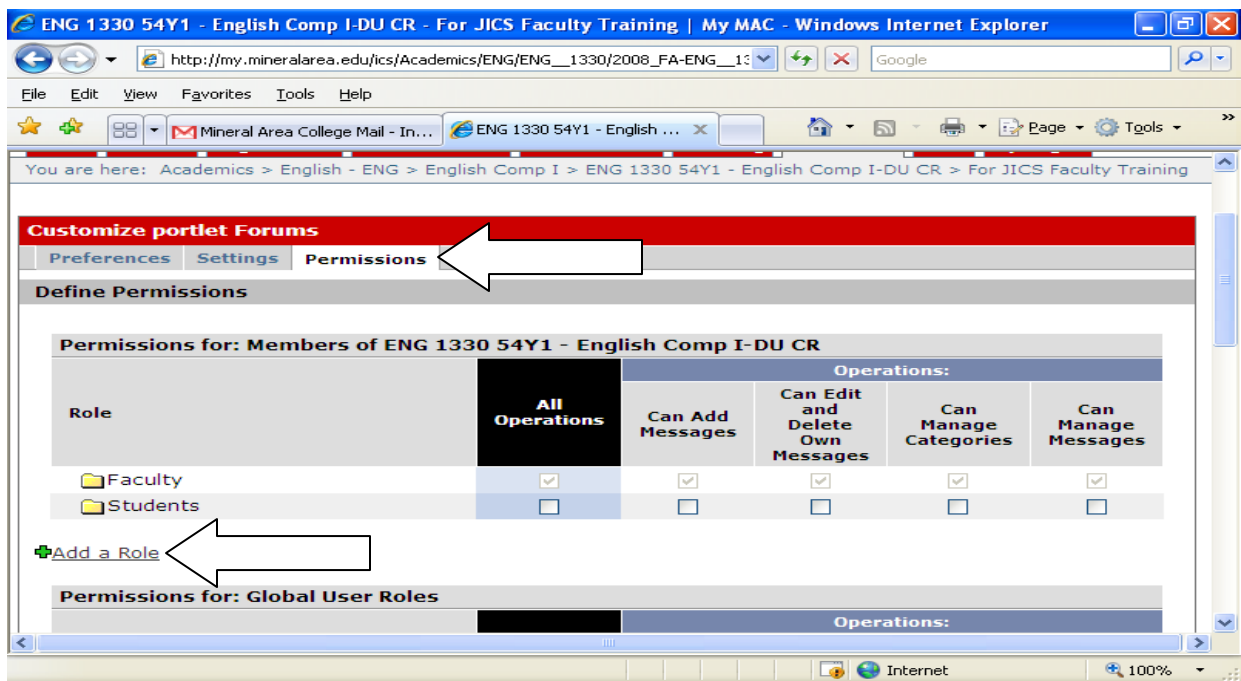
Now click the button at the bottom of the page, **Add portlets to page**. The portlet is now present on the page and can be modified to fit your needs.

Adjusting Permission Rights for a Forum Portlet

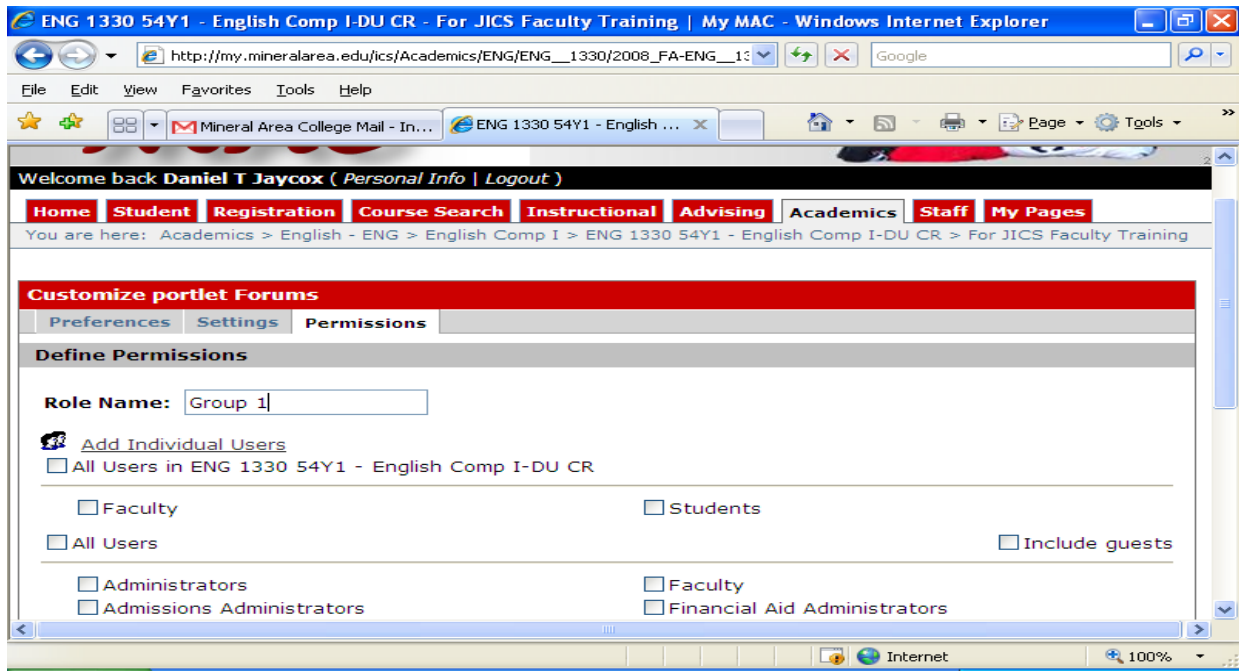
Certain circumstances could arise that would make it necessary to only allow access to a forum to specific users in a class. To limit access you must adjust the permissions. This can be done on a page by page basis, but it can also be done with specific portlets. The following procedure applies to multiple types of portlets, but the process is especially pertinent to limiting discussion group size in forum portlets. To edit permissions, Begin by clicking on the wrench button in the top, left corner of the portlet.



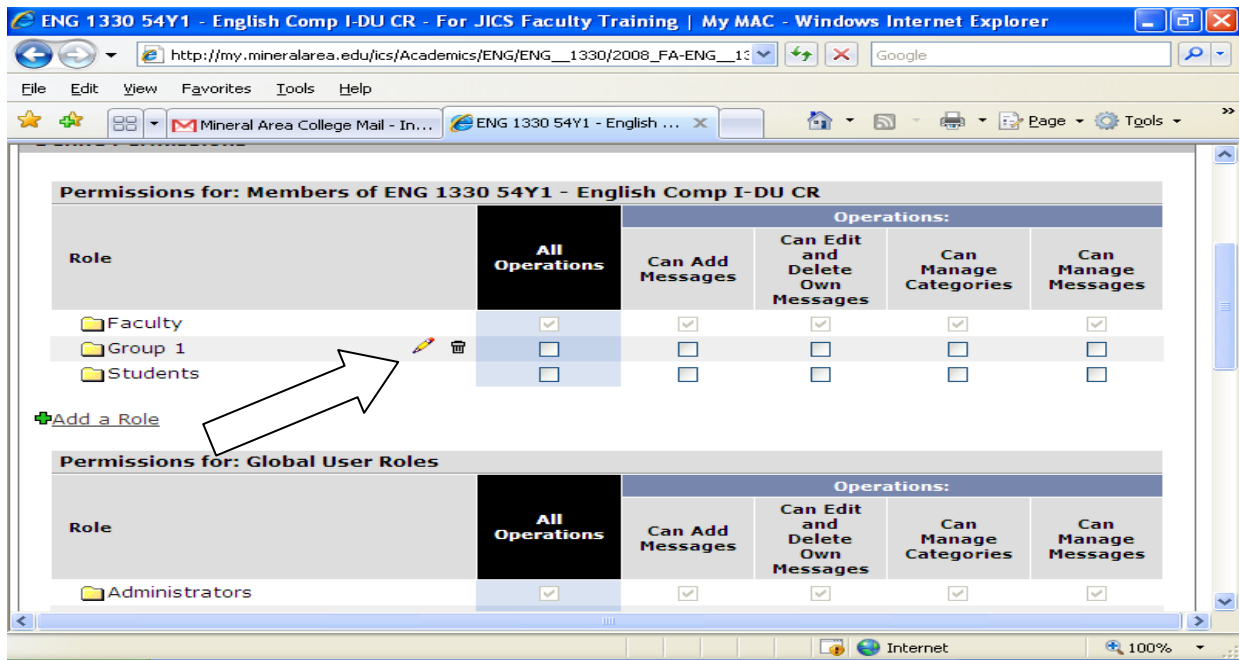
Next, click on the *Permissions* tab and then choose *Add a Role*.



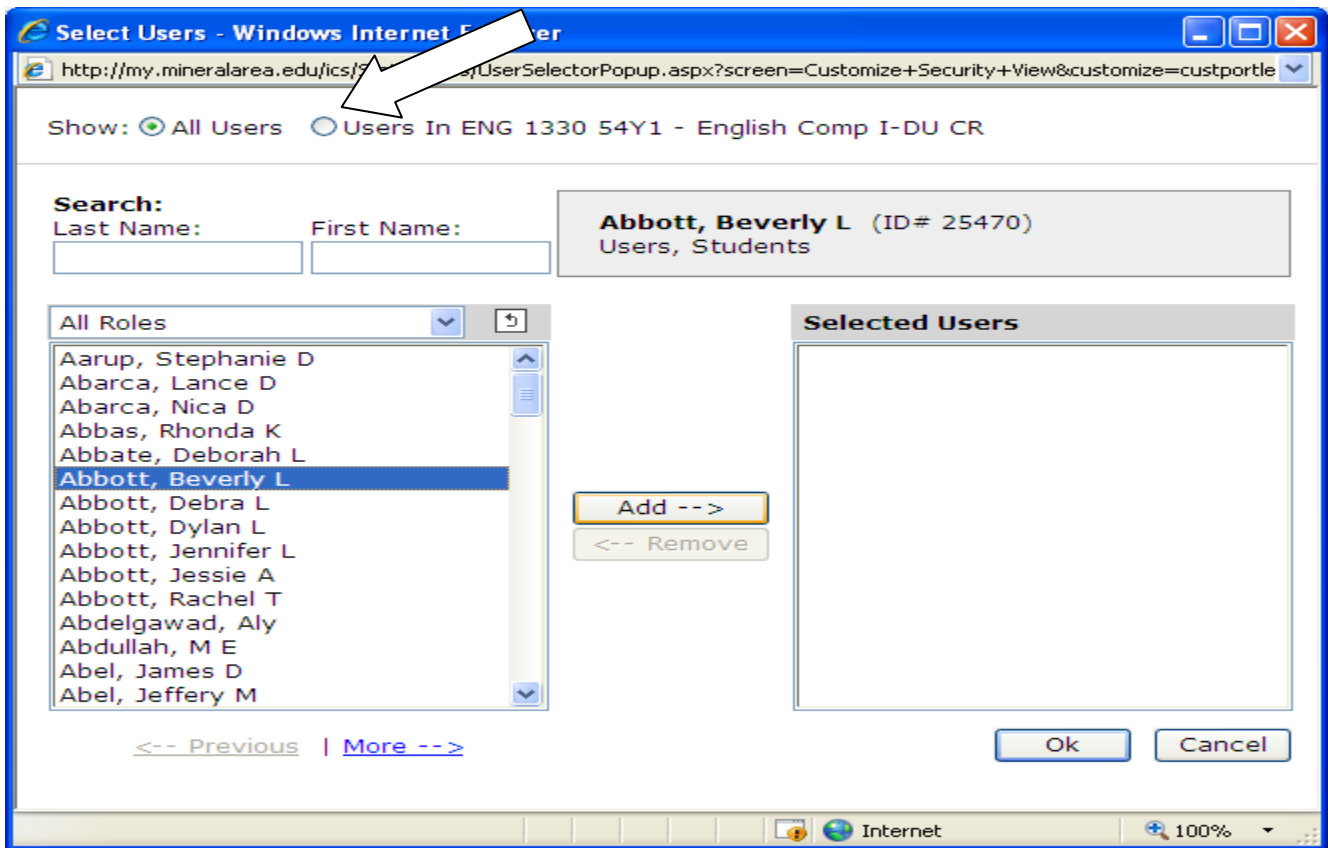
Click in the box to the right of Role Name and type in an easily identifiable name.



Click **Save** at the bottom of the page. Then click the pencil to the right of Group 1 to edit the members of that group.



Click **Add Individual Users**. A pop-up window will appear that will guide you through the process of adding individual students to the group. You may want to have a roster handy though because the window will provide you with a searchable list of all MAC students, not just students enrolled in your course. However, by selecting the button at the top of the page you can choose to search only those students who are members of your specific course.



Highlight the name of a student you would like to add and then click the **Add** button. When you have selected all members for your group, click **Ok**. In your original window click **Save**. This ends the process of creating one individual group, and you can then repeat the steps for each additional group. After you have created all of the groups, you must then give them permissions on your portlet. Again click on the **Permissions** tab. For those roles that you want to have access to the portal, click on the boxes in the columns labeled **Can Add Messages and Can Edit and Delete Own Messages**. Make sure that none of the boxes to the right of the role **Students** are checked (otherwise all students will have access). Click **Save** and then **Exit**.

