A “How-to” Piazza Guide

Setting up Piazza

1. Go to piazza.com and make an account. When you sign up, make sure you click on “Instructors Get Started”.

2. At this point, I don’t quite remember what piazza will lead you towards, but try to find a button called “Create a new class”. This should lead you to a page like the following:
3. Make sure that the quarter is correct (the “selected term”) and then enter your class name. You should see that there are some options that appear; select the one that would match your course. If you do not see anything matching your course, then “Create a new class”, like below.

4. In any case, you should be directed to a page that looks similar to this -- some values may be filled in already if you selected something in the previous step.
5. Fill in the appropriate information and then select “Create class”. This should lead you to a page that has posts like these to the left:

... and this at the top. (of course, with the appropriate name - it may not be CS 143)

6. You will want to go into “Manage Class”, where you will see this page.
IMPORTANT: You should provide the signup link to your students. If you wish to provide an access code to enroll, you may make one by clicking “Add access code”.

Other notes: It is best to disable instructor self-signup. You don’t want students signing themselves up as instructors or TAs for the course. Also, make sure that the “Class Status” is “Active”. Once the quarter is over, you just need to turn this button to “Inactive”.

IMPORTANT: If you make any changes, then make sure to press “Save Changes”.

7. The next section is the Q&A settings.

![Q&A Settings](image)

IMPORTANT: You want to make sure that “Posting Anonymously” is **disabled**. This makes it so that students do not show up as anonymous to instructors, and is important just in case people try to do anything inappropriate in the piazza.
8. In the Configure class folders section, you are able to make “folders” for the students to ask questions in. That is, suppose that your class has 4 homework assignments, and 1 exam. From an organizational standpoint, if a student has a question about homework #1, then they can post under the folder “hw1”. This makes it easier to both search for questions, and to answer them.

![Configure Class Folders](image)

9. The next section is to enroll the instructors / TAs for the course. Just add everyone's emails here, and then click “Add instructors”
10. The next section is to add students. This step is optional -- you can either have your students enroll themselves, or you can enroll students manually. If you want to have the first option, then you do not need to do anything, except distribute the “Signup link” from step 6 (and tell your students to enroll). If you want the second option, the easiest way is to go to WebRoster to get a list of all the students’ emails (which you would copy paste into here). In the past, I have found that either option works -- the students that wish to participate in using piazza do so, and the ones that don’t, don’t… regardless of whether they are enrolled or not.

11. Everything else in the settings does not matter. You can leave it as is, or play around with it. Remember to save.

Using Piazza for Instructors

As mentioned before, piazza is a Q&A platform, which means that students can ask questions / instructors can respond.

When a student has an unanswered question, you’ll see something in red on the left, like so:

Once you click on that, you can see the entire question:
Note: the bottom right corner will show the name of the student (to instructors, this will be shown as “student-name (Anonymous Gear to classmates)” or something along those lines.

Answering Piazza Questions. Both students and instructors are allowed to answer piazza questions. Student answers will have a green S, like

![Student's answer example](image1)

while instructors will have a yellow I, like

![Instructor's answer example](image2)

As an instructor, you are able to endorse student answers by clicking “good answer!”.

![Endorse action example](image3)

(it looks like: in the corner of an “answer box”), and will show up as:

![Endorsed answer example](image4)

Follow-up discussions. In the case that a student has more questions, then they can post in the follow-up discussions area, which lies at the bottom of a page.

![Follow-up discussions example](image5)

You can answer these by typing in the “reply to this follow-up question”.

To manage the questions that you’ve looked at, and the questions that you have not, you can look at the left side:

Example 1: The red background means that there has been no student answer, no instructor answer yet.
Example 2: The yellow i means that an instructor (professor or TA) has answered the question.

Example 3: The green s means that a student has answered the question.

Example 4: The combination of yellow i and green s means that there is a student answer and an instructor answer for the question.

Example 5: If there are any follow-up questions that are not yet resolved, then you will see the red text like so:

Example 6: If a student has answered, and an instructor agrees (and clicks “good answer!”), then you will see a green s with a check mark.

There are a few more features of piazza, but for basic usage, this is fine.