

Create Discussion Forums and Topics

Last Modified on 02/11/2022 3:58 pm CST

In D2L, discussions are a common tool used for students to engage in asynchronous communication. Discussions allow students to respond to instructor prompts and to each other's responses as they have the opportunity. This is called asynchronous.

The discussion tool is divided into two pieces - forums and topics. Forums serve as containers or "folders" for discussion topics. Without at least one forum, you can't create topics, and no one can post or reply in a forum, so you must have a topic in a forum.

To create a discussion forum:

1. Click the **Collaboration** menu on the navbar, then choose **Discussions**.
2. Click on the **New** button, then choose **New Forum**.
3. Give the forum a title, and then click **Save and Close**. You may add a description or choose options that apply to all topics within the forum. Until you have a reason to do so at the forum level, choose options and restrictions at the topic level.

NOTE: Options chosen at the forum level will apply to all the topics within the forum. You do not need to set any options at this level.

To Create a Discussion Topic:

1. Click on **Collaboration** on the navbar and choose **Discussions**.
2. Click on the **New** button and choose **New Topic**.

Properties Tab

1. Choose a forum to put the topic in.
2. If you have groups or multiple sections in your course and wish to limit student access by this criteria select the Group or section... type of discussion topic. Otherwise, leave **Open topic...** selected.
 - Open Topic: all students can access the topic and view the same posts.
 - Group or Section Topic: all students can access the topic, but can only see posts from their own group.
 - Group or Section Category: Select the group category that you would like to separate posts by if you have chosen a Group or Section Topic
3. Give the topic a title, and a description. The description will serve as the instructions for the students on the prompt for the discussion and how to participate.
4. Choose which options you'd like to implement.

- **Allowing anonymous posts** means that you will not know who posted any post that is marked as anonymous. You will not be able to grade these posts.
- **Users must start a thread...** Requiring students to post a thread before they can read and reply to other threads in a topic means that they cannot read others' posts before they compose their own.
- **A moderator must approve...** Requiring a moderator to approve all posts means that no post will be posted to any thread until you have read and approved it.
- **Rate Posts** is optional and allows students to rate their peers.

Restrictions Tab

1. Click on the **Restrictions** tab.
This tab also exists in the forum but this is the simplest place to add date restrictions so they can be different for each topic.
2. To temporarily hide a topic, check **Hide from users**.
3. To open the topic to students for only a portion of time, click on the **Has Start Date**.
4. Enter the date and time you want students to be able to post.
5. Choose which option you want to be applied.
6. Repeat for the End Date
7. If you want the start and end dates to show in the calendar, check **Display in Calendar**.

Assessment Tab

1. Click on the Assessment tab to associate this discussion with a grade item in the gradebook.
2. Choose a grade item from the dropdown list.
 - If you haven't created a grade item already, click **New Grade Item**.

Insert the Topic in a Content Module

1. Navigate to the module where you want to add your discussion.
2. Click the **Add Existing Activities** button then
3. Choose **Discussions**.

4. Choose the forum the topic is associated with.
5. Choose the topic you want to add.
6. After making your selection, the topic will appear in your module.