# Create Discussions

## Create a New Discussion Forum

* From the Communication group select Discussions.
* Click on the Actions arrow for the New button and select Forum.
* Enter the forum title and type a description, if desired.
* Check Visibility options if you want to make the discussion invisible to other users either always or for specific dates. You can later release the topic.
* Select Locking options if you want to make the discussion visible but not open for postings. Choose specific dates if desired.
* Click Save.

NOTE: A forum must have one topic for it to become visible to users. A hidden or locked forum hides and locks all topics below it.

## Create a New Discussion Topic

* From the Communication group select Discussions.
* Click on the Actions arrow for the New button and select Topic.
* Choose the Forum under which it will display.
* Type a topic title and type a description, if desired.
* Choose Availability and Locking options.
* Click Save.

## Set Evaluation Options for a Topic

If you plan to evaluate discussions and record scores in the grade book, here are a few tips:

1. Topics, not forums, can be evaluated.
2. To allow discussion topics to be graded,
   * From the Actions menu for the topic to be assessed, select Edit.
   * Click the Assessment tab.
   * Choose a grade item or add a grade item to transfer the grade to the grade book.
   * Enter the number of points for the topic.
   * If you leave "Messages" unchecked, you will be able to view all postings for a student and enter a total score for all postings. If you check "Messages," you will then need to choose one of the calculation types. You will grade each posted message in the topic and have the system report the average, maximum, minimum, highest on multiple, or lowest on multiple. Also check whether or not you want to include unassessed messages as zero. NOTE: You may want to leave "Messages" unchecked the first time you evaluate a topic and make a decision after seeing how the system manages the grading.