Nashville State Community College

NS ONLINE DISCUSSION
Become familiar with navigating, creating, restricting, and grading discussion board assignments.
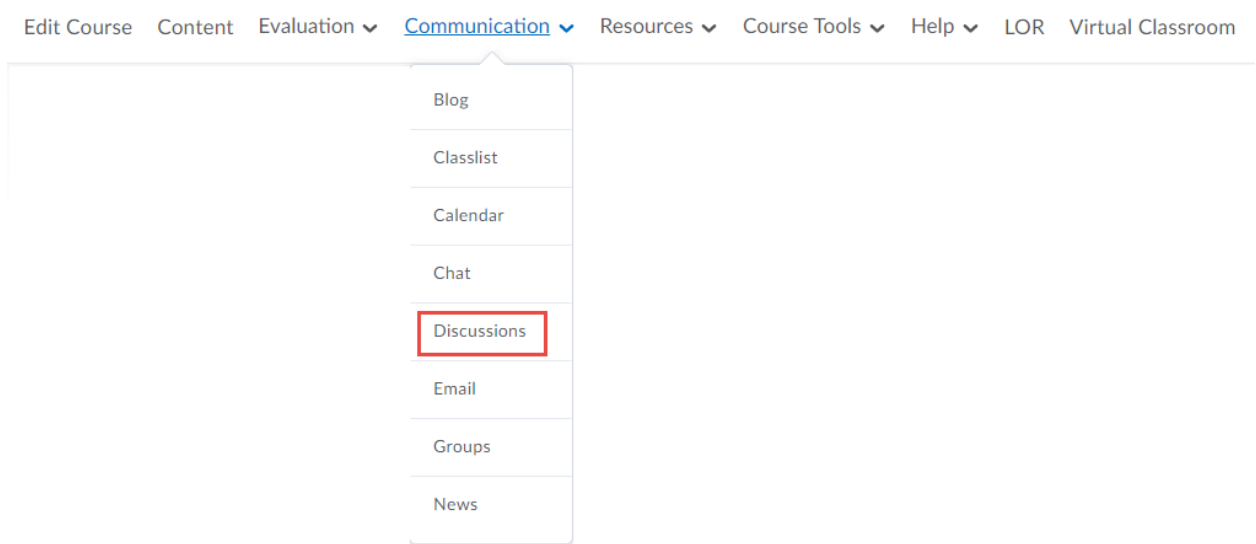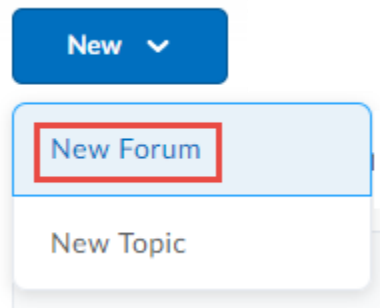
Office of Online Learning

Contents

Create a New Discussion Forum

1. From the Communication group select Discussions:
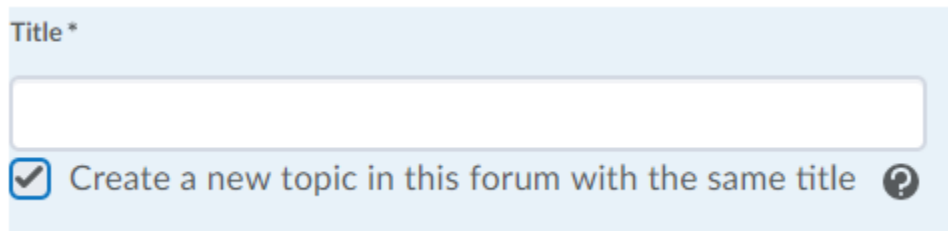
2. Click on the Actions arrow for the New button and select New Forum:

Properties

1. In the Properties tab, enter the forum title, and type a description, if desired. Because forums are hidden from the student view until they contain at least one topic, you may want to check the "Create a new topic in this form with the same title" box:

2.
3. Use the "Description" box to leave instructions or prompts for students to respond to.

4. Select desired options:

Options

☐ Allow anonymous posts ⊘

☐ A moderator must approve individual posts before they display in the forum ⊘

☐ Users must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads in each topic ⊘

☐ Display forum description in topics ⊘

5. Click "Show forum visibility options" in the Availability section if you want to make the discussion invisible to users either always or for specific dates. You can later release the topic:

Availability

▷ Show forum visibility options

Note that availability should be used only when you want to hide the Discussion Topic or Forum from participants outside of specified dates and times.

6. Click "Show locking options" in the Locking Options section if you want to make the discussion visible but not open for postings. Choose specific dates if desired:

Locking Options

▷ Show locking options

Note that Locking Options should be used when you want to allow participants to retain visibility of the Forum or Topic, but block them from being able to post a message outside of the restricted dates.

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.

Restrictions

1. In the Restrictions tab, set any desired Release Conditions by clicking the "Attach Existing" or "Create and Attach" buttons in the "Additional Release Conditions" section.

Hide Forum Release Conditions

Attach Existing   Create and Attach   🗑 **Remove All Conditions**

There are no conditions attached to this item.

2. Set any Group or Section Restrictions by checking the "Restrict this forum to the following groups and sections" box, and then clicking the "Add Groups and Sections" button. Note that groups or sections must be set up using the Groups tool:

Hide Forum Group and Section Restrictions

☐ Restrict this forum to the following groups and sections ❓

Add Groups and Sections

There are no group or section restrictions attached to this item.

3. Click "Save and Close" or return to the main discussion page, or click "Save and Add Topic" to create a topic within your forum.
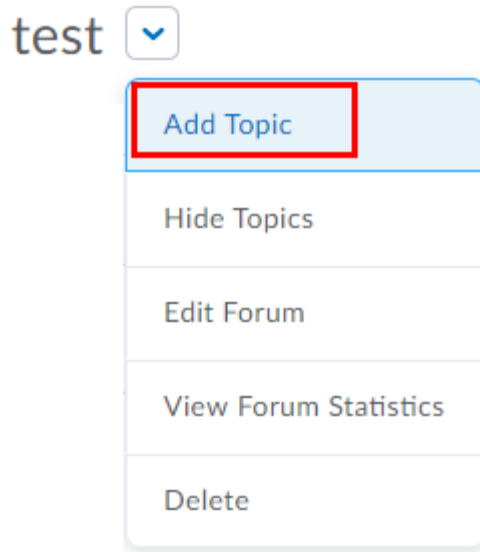
Create a New Discussion Topic

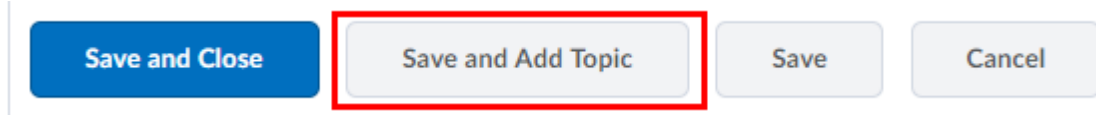There are three ways to create a new discussion topic within an existing forum:

1. From the Discussions page, click on the "New" button and select "New Topic" from the dropdown menu:

New ∨   More

New Forum

New Topic
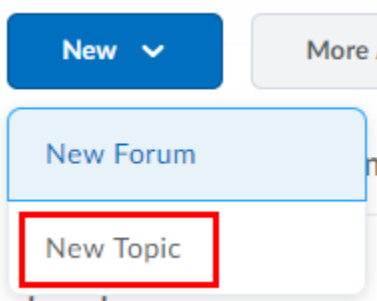
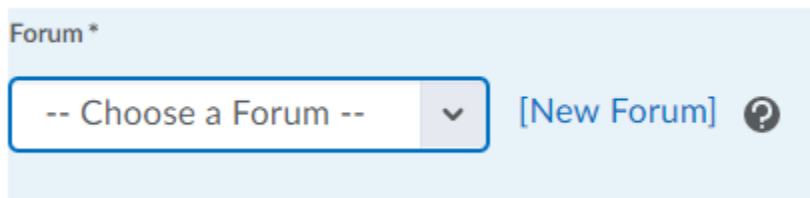2. Click on the action arrow for a forum and select Add Topic:

3. From the "Edit Forum" page, click "Save and Add Topic":

Properties

1. Choose the Forum from the dropdown menu under which it will display or click the "[New Forum]" link:

1. Type a topic title, and type a description, if desired.
2. Select the desired options:
   - Allow anonymous posts
   - A moderator must approve individual posts before they display in the topic
   - Users must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads.

2. Choose a post rating system from the dropdown menu, if desired:

   - No Ratings: all ratings controls are disabled

- Five-Star Rating Scheme: students can assign each post a score from zero to five
- Up Vote/Down Vote Rating Scheme: students can vote to increase or decrease a post's rating
- Up Vote Only Rating Scheme: students can vote to increase a post's rating (but they cannot vote to decrease it); similar to "liking" on social media

3. Choose Availability options by clicking "Show topic visibility options" and then adding start or end dates, if desired:

Visibility

○ Topic is always visible
○ Hide this topic
○ Topic is visible for a specific date range

☐ Has Start Date

| 2/19/2018 | 1:35 PM | Now |

United States - Chicago

☐ Has End Date

| 2/26/2018 | 7:35 PM | Now |

United States - Chicago

☐ Display in Calendar

NOTE: "Topic is always visible" is the default option.

3. Choose Locking Options by clicking "Show locking options" and then adding start or end dates, if desired:

Locking Options

- ● Unlock topic
- ○ Lock topic
- ○ Unlock topic for a specific date range
  - ☐ Has Start Date
    - 2/19/2018   1:35 PM   Now
    - *United States - Chicago*
  - ☐ Has End Date
    - 2/26/2018   7:35 PM   Now
    - *United States - Chicago*
  - ☐ Display in Calendar

NOTE: "Unlock topic" is the default option.

4. Click "Save and Close" to save the topic and return to the main Discussions page, click "Save and New" to save and create a new topic within the same forum, click "Save" to save and continue working:

Restrictions

1. Set any desired Release Conditions by clicking the "Attach Existing" or "Create and Attach" buttons in the "Additional Release Conditions" section.

There are no conditions attached to this item.

2. Set any Group or Section Restrictions by checking the "Restrict this forum to the following groups and sections" box, and then clicking the "Add Groups and Sections" button. Note that groups or sections must be set up using the Groups tool:

▼ Hide Topic Group and Section Restrictions

☐ Restrict this topic to the following groups and sections ❓

Add Groups and Sections

There are no group or section restrictions
attached to this item.

,

3. Click "Save and Close" to save the topic and return to the main Discussions page, click "Save and New" to save and create a new topic within the same forum, click "Save" to save and continue working:

Save and Close   Save and New   Save   Cancel

Assessment

If you would like to assign a grade for students' postings within a specific topic, select the "Assessment" tab.

1. Select a Grade Item from the dropdown menu if you have already created this item in your gradebook, or add a [New Grade Item] to transfer the grade to the grade book:

Grade Item

-- Choose a grade item --   ⌄   [New Grade Item] ❓

2. Enter the number of possible points for the topic in the "Score Out Of" textbox:

Score Out Of

[   ] ❓

NOTE: this "Score out of" should match the maximum score of the grade item in the gradebook.

3. If desired, click the "Add Rubric" button or the "[Create Rubric in New Window] link" to associate a rubric for post assessment:
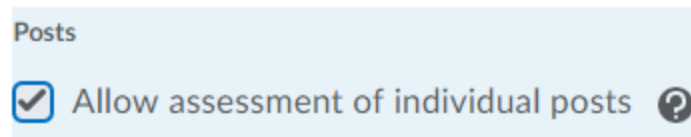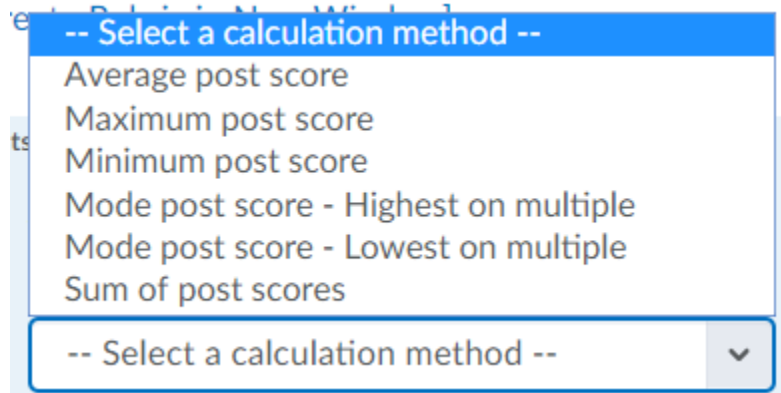
Rubrics

Add Rubric

No rubrics selected.

[Create Rubric in New Window]

4. By default, you will give each student one score for the whole Topic. If you would instead prefer to assess individual posts within the topic, Under "Posts," check the option to "Allow assessment of individual posts."

Posts

☑ Allow assessment of individual posts ❓

If you enable this setting, you must choose a calculation method from the dropdown menu:

-- Select a calculation method --
Average post score
Maximum post score
Minimum post score
Mode post score - Highest on multiple
Mode post score - Lowest on multiple
Sum of post scores

-- Select a calculation method -- ⌄

5. Click "Save and Close" to save the topic and return to the main Discussions page, click "Save and New" to save and create a new topic within the same forum, click "Save" to save and continue working:

Save and Close   Save and New   Save   Cancel
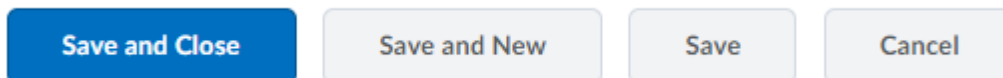
Objectives

If desired, associate learning objectives by clicking the "Associate Learning Objectives" button.

Click "Save and Close" to save the topic and return to the main Discussions page, click "Save and New" to save and create a new topic within the same forum, click "Save" to save and continue working:
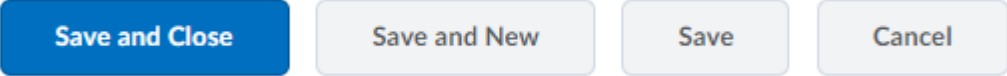
Evaluate Student Discussion Postings

To evaluate a discussion,

1. From the Actions menu for the topic to be assessed, select Assess Topic:

2. Click on "Topic score" for the student you want to assess. All posted messages will be listed:

First Name, Last Name	Score	Publish to Grades
Student Name		
Topic Score	- / 10 (0%)	☐

3. Enter a topic score in the top right corner of the dialog box.
4. Check the "Publish score on save" box in the top right corner of the dialog box if you want the score to immediately go to the grade book.
5. Enter feedback, if desired.

6. Click Save or Save and Close:

Manage Discussions

Post a Discussion Thread and Reply

To compose and post a discussion message,

1. From the Communication group, select Discussions.
2. Click on the name of the topic.
3. Click on the Start a New Thread button:

4. Type the subject.
5. Type the message.
6. Click on Add Attachments to add a file or record audio, if desired.
7. Click on Post to post the message or Save Draft to save the content and post the message later.

To reply to a discussion message,

1. Click on the message title.
2. Click on the Reply to Thread button:
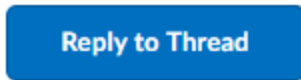
3. Type the message.
4. Click on Add Attachments to add a file or record audio, if desired
5. Click on Post.

To include an attachment,

1. Follow the steps to add or reply to a thread above.
2. Click on Add Attachments to expand the options.
3. Click on Upload.
4. Locate and select the desired file.
5. Click on Open then click on Upload.
6. Click on Post.

Delete a Thread

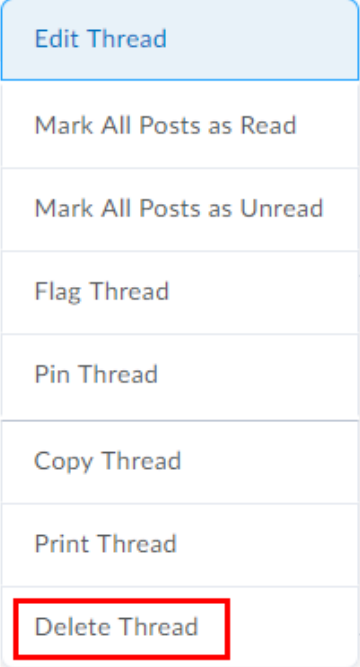The option to delete messages is available only to faculty; students cannot delete messages.
To delete a message,

1. Click on the name of the topic.
2. Click on the action arrow for the thread.

3. Click on Delete Thread:
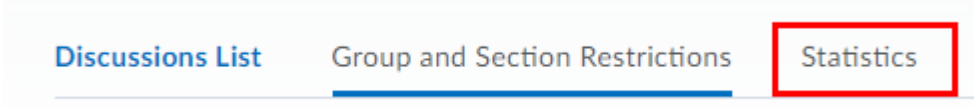
4. Click on Yes to confirm.

NOTE: Deleting a thread will also delete all replies to a message.

View Discussion Statistics

1. From the Communication group, select Discussions.
2. Navigate to the Statistics tab:

The number of messages authored, read, unapproved, and scored for each student is reported.

FAQ Discussion Board

It is considered best practice to create a discussion topic at the start of the semester dedicated to answering student questions. This topic is an area where (1) individual students can post questions about the course and receive answers and (2) you can post questions that you have received via email along with the answers to those questions. By moving student questions and concerns about the course or course content from individual emails to a public forum, all students enrolled in the course can benefit from having access to this information and additional clarification.