

# D2L Discussions: Creating Forums and Topics in the Discussions Area

Hello, in this video I will explain to you how to create and organize discussion topics in the Discussions Area in D2L.

We have another video that's quicker, and shows the very basics of creating discussions in the content area. But this video focuses on the discussions area, which is often important in courses where there are more than one or two discussion topics. Professors that regularly using online discussions in their courses should watch this and our other tutorial videos to familiarize themselves with how D2L organizes asynchronous discussions, and what features are available.

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From the course home screen, I click "Discussions" on the Navbar to see the Discussions Area. Discussion topics are where discussions actually happen, but they need to be installed in one or more forum. Forums are organizational headings within the Discussions Area, that can be helpful for organizing discussion topics, especially if there are many discussions within a class. But many courses only need one forum for the entire course. See our video on Discussion Organization for more detail on forums and topics in D2L.

For the sake of this demonstration, I will be making my forum for the first unit of my class.

So I am going to hit the Blue new button. This will give me a dropdown and I will choose New Forum. Remember: you can't make a topic or thread without a forum. I am now going to title my forum 'Unit One.' In the next textbox I have the choice to describe what this Unit will be pertaining to.

Then as I scroll down you will see that I have some options. These control all of the topics I might create in this forum. Later, when I create a topic, I'll see the same options governing only that topic. For a description of each option just click on the question mark, or see our other tutorial videos. I am going to leave these unchecked and keep scrolling.

Next we have two choices to save. I can either click save and close, which will just save the forum we have just made. Or, if I know what I want to put in this forum, I can go right ahead and click save and add topic. This will save our forum and send us right to creating our first topic within the forum.

But since most of us are new to this, I'm going to click save and close.

Now we can see our forum, Unit One.

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To create a discussion topic in Unit One, I'm going to click on the dropdown carat next to where it says 'Unit One.' Next I'm going to click 'Add Topic.' Here, I will type in the Discussion Topic's title in the first text box. My Discussion Topic will be titled something simple such as: 'Let's Get to Know One Another.' Once I have that, I'm going to type in the question or questions to my students. Here I am asking them to write a brief response about themselves.

If we scroll down we'll see the same options as we did when creating our forum. These will apply only to this specific discussion topic. Again, I will leave these as they are and you can reference our other tutorials to learn more about availability and locking options.

I do, however, want to briefly discuss the visibility options. If you choose 'Topic is always visible' students will always be able to see this discussion - given that they have access to the forum. But if you're not quite ready to release this discussion, you can choose the 'hide this topic' option. Then at a later date, when you're ready for students to start discussing, you can go back and make it visible to them. This is a great feature because as a professor you can make discussions ahead of time without your students seeing them and thinking they have to participate.

To finish creating this discussion topic, I simply click save and close. Or, if I want to move right on to creating another topic within this forum, I can click save and new.

This is how you make Forums and Topics in the Discussions Area. To learn more about threads, see our other videos.