



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL MISSOURI
DIGITAL LEARNING AND
INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION

Brightspace Discussions

D2L
BRIGHTSPACE

What will be covered in this guide?

This guide will show you how to manage discussions in your course. Discussions allow you to give your students the ability to share knowledge and experiences with one another and to apply what they have learned in your course. They also serve as a valuable assessment tool for you as an instructor.

The Hierarchy of Discussions

- **Forum** - Think of forums as containers, or folders that provide organization to your discussion. Nothing is written at the forum level.
- **Topic** - Topics provide instructions and are where conversations occur. They can inherit settings from a forum or be set independently.
- **Threads/Replies** - Threads or replies are the actual conversations that take place. Learners create a thread based on the topic prompt, and peers interact via replies.

Create a Discussion Topic

In this example, we will create a basic icebreaker discussion topic for an American History course.

1. Log in to Brightspace with your UCM credentials
2. Select your course from the courses (Waffle) menu
3. Under **Course Tools** in the Navigation Bar, select **Course Admin**
4. Scroll to the **Communication** section and choose **Discussions**

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for a course named "Jim Pryde Sandbox". At the top left is the University of Central Missouri logo. The top navigation bar includes "Course Home", "Course Tools", "Content", "Assessment", "Grades", "JCKL", "Calendar", and "Help". The main heading is "Discussions", with "Settings" and "Help" links to the right. Below the heading are tabs for "Discussions List", "Subscriptions", "Group and Section Restrictions", and "Statistics". There are two buttons: a blue "New" button with a dropdown arrow and a grey "More Actions" button with a dropdown arrow. Below these is a filter section with "Filter by: Unread Unapproved". A large message box states: "You don't have any discussion topics available to post to. First create a forum by clicking New > Forum and then add a discussion topic to it by clicking New > Topic." A small chat icon is visible in the bottom right corner.

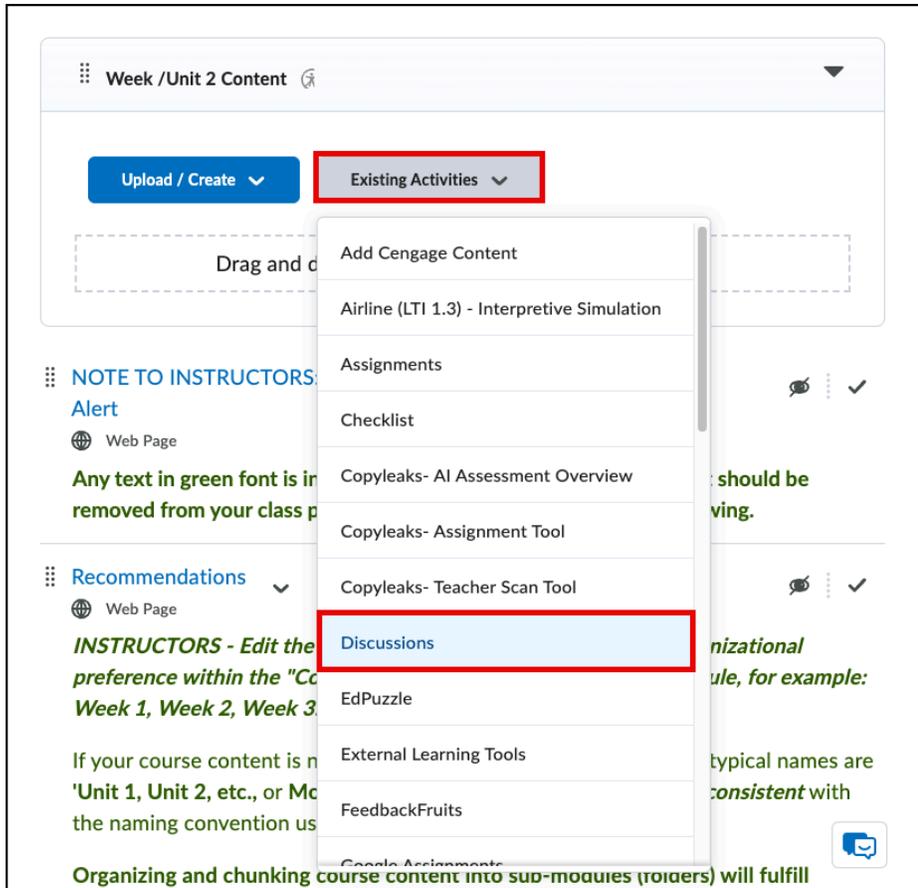
5. You can now see any discussions you created in the course. In this example, none have been created. We will create a topic (and a corresponding forum now).
6. Click the blue **New** button, and select **Topic**
7. Give your topic a **title**
8. Under the **Change forum**, select an existing forum or create a new one. In this example, we're creating a new one with the same title.
9. Assign a point total if you are grading the discussion
10. Enter a **description** for the discussion assignment
11. Select **visibility** options (This one is visible immediately)
12. Click **Save and Close**

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for a course titled "Jim Pryde Sandbox". At the top left is the University of Central Missouri logo. The top navigation bar includes "Course Home", "Course Tools", "Content", "Assessment", "Grades", "JCKL", "Calendar", and "Help". The main heading is "Discussions", with "Settings" and "Help" links to the right. Below the heading are tabs for "Discussions List", "Subscriptions", "Group and Section Restrictions", and "Statistics". There are two buttons: a blue "New" button with a dropdown arrow and a grey "More Actions" button with a dropdown arrow. Below these is a filter section with "Filter by: Unread Unapproved". A large light grey box contains the message: "You don't have any discussion topics available to post to. First create a forum by clicking New > Forum and then add a discussion topic to it by clicking New > Topic." A small chat icon is visible in the bottom right corner.

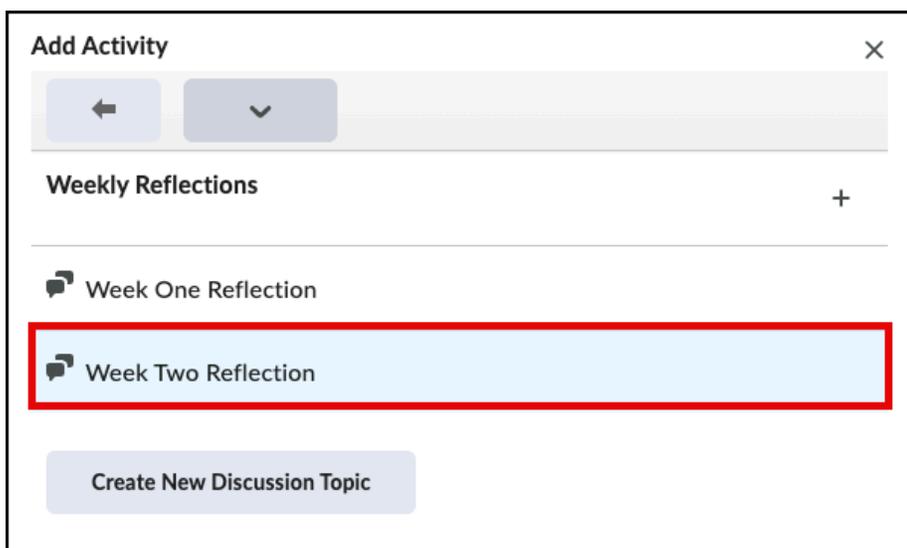
Add Discussion Topics to Content

Once you have created a discussion topic, you can add a link to it in your content module. This allows students to see it without navigating to **Assessment > Discussions**, creating clear navigation in the course.

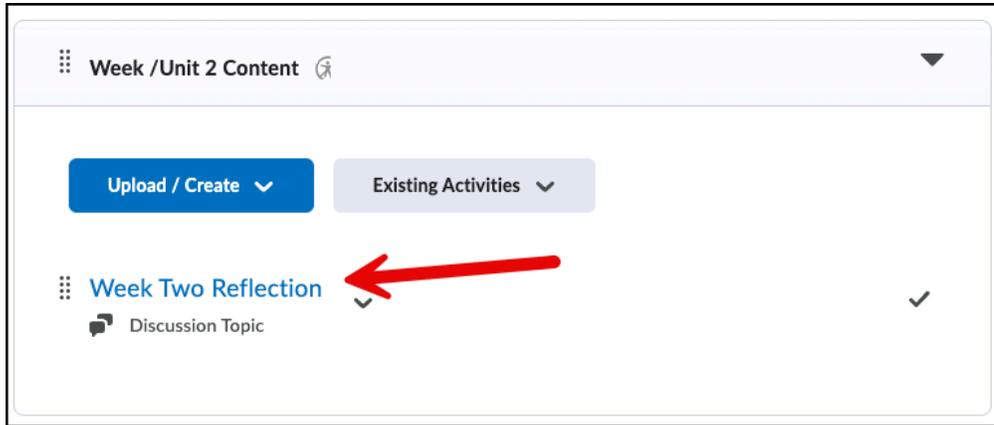
1. After you have created a Discussion Topic, navigate to the content area you want the topic to be shown. In this example, we will add the discussion topic to the Module "Week/Unit 2 Content"
2. In the desired module, select **Existing Activities > Discussions**



3. Browse the Forums and Topics you have created to select the desired discussion topic. In this example, add "Week Two Reflection" by selecting it.



4. You will now see the Discussion Topic in the content module



Advanced Discussion Settings

There are many options available to you outside of what was covered in the above example. You can see these options on the right side of the window when you have your discussion topic open. The three categories include:

- **Availability Dates & Conditions** - Allows you to set Start Dates/End Dates, assign Release Conditions, and to restrict access to groups of students (i.e. a dedicated thread for students working on a group project)
- **Post & Completion** - Set options to allow anonymous posts, whether a student must post before seeing other posts, or if you wish to moderate the thread, requiring approval to post.
- **Evaluation & Feedback** - You can create or choose an existing rubric for assessment, set alignment with learning objectives, choose to evaluate student posts individually or the topic as a whole, and to allow students to rate posts.

[Back to Manage Discussions](#)

Time Traveler's Introduction

Topic Title *

Time Traveler's Introduction

Forum: Time Traveler's Introduction [Change Forum](#)

Grade Out Of

10 points | [In Grade Book](#)

Description

Paragraph **B** *I* U ~~A~~ +

Welcome to the course, everyone! Let's kick things off with a fun and imaginative activity that connects us to the rich history of America.

Imagine you are a time traveler arriving at any period in American history. Introduce yourself to the class as if you have just stepped into that era. In your post, please include:

- Your chosen historical period in America:** Which time and place are you visiting? It could be Colonial America, the Civil War era, the Roaring Twenties, or even the Civil Rights Movement!

Save and Close

Save

Cancel

Visible

Availability Dates & Conditions

Start Date

M/D/YYYY

End Date

M/D/YYYY

Release Conditions

Users are not able to access or view the discussion topic unless they meet the release conditions.

[Add Release Condition](#)

Group and Section Restrictions

No groups or sections exist. Create groups in the Groups tool or sections in the Sections tool.

Post & Completion

- Default participation
- Allow learners to hide their name from other learners
- Learners must start a thread before they can view or reply to other threads
- Posts must be approved before they display in the topic

Evaluation & Feedback

Rubrics

[Add Rubric](#)

Learning Objectives

No learning objectives

[Manage Learning Objectives](#)

Evaluate Posts

Allow evaluation of individual posts

Allow learners to rate posts



Editing or Deleting Discussions

Need to make changes to or delete a discussion topic? This is easily done!

1. Log in to Brightspace with your UCM credentials
2. Select the desired course from the Courses (Waffle) menu
3. Navigate to Discussions from Course Admin or from the Assessments item in the Nav Bar
4. Navigate to the discussion topic you want to edit or delete
5. Click the chevron to the right of the discussion topic
6. Select edit and make changes, or select delete to delete the topic
7. Click Save and Close if you made edits

The screenshot displays the Brightspace interface for a course titled "Jim Pryde Sandbox" at the University of Central Missouri. The user is logged in as James Pryde. The navigation bar includes links for Course Home, Course Tools, Content, Assessment, Grades, JCKL, Calendar, and Help. A large banner welcomes the user to the course. Below the banner, there are several widgets: an Announcements widget showing a demo announcement, a Calendar widget showing the date Thursday, October 31, 2024, and an Activity Feed widget with a "Create a post..." button. A "Contact Widget" is also visible on the right side.

Need Further Assistance?

For further assistance, please contact DLII at dlii@ucmo.edu.