



iLearn: Creating Discussions

Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning

This document outlines the structure of how to create documentation for the CITL.

Creating Discussions

iLearn/D2L uses specific terminology to define different sections within the Discussions area:

- **Forums** (required): Used to house similar discussion topics. For example, a forum might be titled “Module Discussions” and contain several topics.
- **Topics** (required): The space where discussions occur. Students post threads within topics in response to discussion prompts.
- **Threads**: Initial posts made within a discussion topic
- **Replies**: Responses to discussion threads.

Create a Discussion Forum

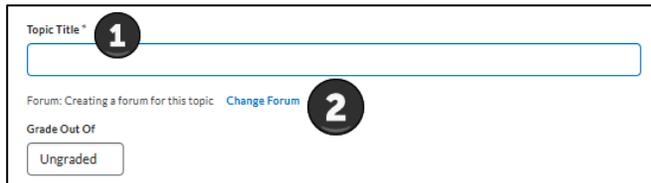
1. Click **Discussions** in the course navigation bar.
2. Click **New**.
3. Select **New Forum** from the dropdown menu.
4. Enter a title [1].
5. (Optional) Click the checkbox next to “Create a new topic in this forum with the same title.” This is useful for one-time forums that will not contain several topics.
6. (Optional) Enter a description [2].
7. Click **Save and Close** or **Save and Add Topic** [3].

The screenshot shows the 'New Forum Details' form. At the top, there is a 'Title *' field with a callout '1' next to it. Below the title field is a checkbox labeled 'Create a new topic in this forum with the same title'. Underneath is a 'Description' section with a rich text editor toolbar and a text area with a callout '2'. At the bottom, there is an 'Options' section with four checkboxes: 'Allow anonymous posts', 'Users must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads in each topic', 'A moderator must approve individual posts before they display in the forum', and 'Display forum description in topics'. At the very bottom, there are four buttons: 'Save and Close' (with callout '3'), 'Save and Add Topic', 'Save', and 'Cancel'.

Figure: Create Discussion Forum

Create a Discussion Topic

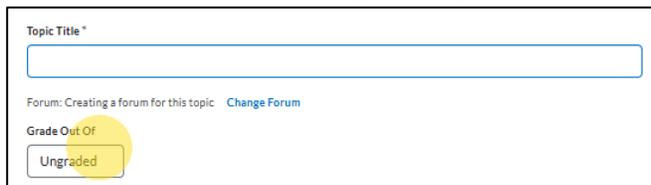
1. Click **Discussions** in the course navigation bar.
2. Click **New**.
3. Select **New Topic** from the dropdown menu.
4. Enter a title [1]. (If a title is not entered, the topic will be listed as “Untitled.”)
5. Topics *must* be housed in forums. Either automatically create a forum for the topic by doing nothing or click **Change Forum** to link to an existing forum.



The screenshot shows a form for creating a discussion topic. At the top, there is a text input field labeled "Topic Title *". Below this is a section for forum selection, with the text "Forum: Creating a forum for this topic" and a "Change Forum" link. At the bottom, there is a "Grade Out Of" dropdown menu currently set to "Ungraded".

Figure: Title your topic and create or link to an existing forum.

6. The “Grade out of field” is Ungraded by default. Click **Ungraded** to change this.



This screenshot is similar to the previous one, but the "Ungraded" button in the "Grade Out Of" dropdown menu is highlighted with a red circle, indicating it should be clicked to add the topic to the gradebook.

Figure: Click Ungraded to add to Gradebook

7. Enter in a point value. (This will add the discussion to the gradebook.)
8. If you would like to change the grade item or how it is listed in the gradebook, click **In Grade Book** and choose from the following options using the dropdown menu that opens:
 - **Edit or Link to Existing:** Link the discussion to an existing or new item in Grades.
 - If the grade item was not created, select the option **Create and link to a new grade item**. Choose the type of grade item to create and the grade scheme to use. If using categories, select a category. When finished, click **OK**.
 - If the grade item was already created, select the option to **Link to an existing grade item**. Choose the item from the dropdown list, and then click **OK**.
 - **Not in Grade Book:** Attach a score to the discussion that will not be included in Grades.
 - **Reset to Ungraded:** Resets the score to the default setting of "Ungraded."
9. (Optional) Enter a description for the discussion topic.
10. (Optional) Select additional options for topics using the right-hand toolbar.
 - **Availability Dates & Conditions** [1]: Limit access to the folder by setting Start/End Dates [2], adding Release Conditions [3], or using Manage Restrictions to create group discussions [4].

Creating Discussions

The screenshot shows the 'Availability Dates & Conditions' settings panel on the right side of a discussion creation form. The form includes a 'Topic Title' field with 'Module 1 Discussion', a 'Forum' dropdown, a 'Grade Out Of' field set to '10 points', and a 'Description' text area with a rich text editor. The settings panel is divided into four numbered sections: 1. 'Availability Dates & Conditions' (header), 2. 'Start Date' and 'End Date' (calendar pickers), 3. 'Release Conditions' (text and 'Add Release Condition' button), and 4. 'Group and Section Restrictions' (text and 'Manage Restrictions' button).

Figure: Availability Dates & Conditions settings in Discussions

- **Post & Completion** [2]: Adjust settings for student visibility on the discussion board, including whether names are displayed (not recommended), whether students must post before viewing others' posts (recommended), and whether posts require instructor approval.
- **Evaluation & Feedback** [3]: Add a rubric, adjust how points are distributed for student posts, and enable peer rating.

The screenshot shows the 'Post & Completion' and 'Evaluation & Feedback' settings panels on the right side of the discussion creation form. The 'Post & Completion' panel (1) includes options for 'Default participation' (selected), 'Allow learners to hide their name from other learners', 'Learners must start a thread before they can view or reply to other threads', and 'Posts must be approved before they display in the topic'. The 'Evaluation & Feedback' panel (2) includes 'Rubrics' with an 'Add Rubric' button, 'Learning Objectives' with 'No learning objectives' selected and a 'Manage Learning Objectives' button, and 'Evaluate Posts' with options for 'Allow evaluation of individual posts' and 'Allow learners to rate posts'.

Figure: Post & Completion and Evaluation & Feedback settings in Discussions

11. Click **Save and Close**.

Restore a Discussion

1. Click **Discussions** in the course navigation bar.
2. Click **More Actions**.
3. Select **Restore**.

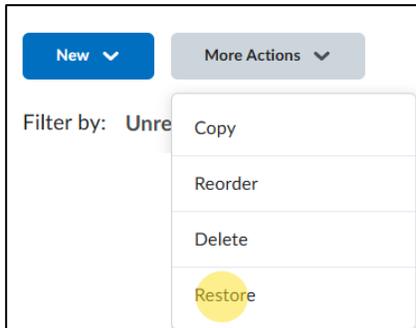


Figure: Under More Actions, choose Restore

4. A list of deleted discussions will display. Next to the discussion to restore, select **Restore**.