

How Do I Create Discussion Topics?

There are three types of discussion topics: threaded, class blog, and journal.

Changing Discussions Settings

By default, blog and journal topics and peer review functionality are disabled. If permitted by your institution, you can enable these in the course settings.

⇒ To change discussion settings:

1. Under Designer Tools, click **Manage Course**.
2. Click **Settings**.
3. Under the Tools column, click **Discussions**.
4. Set the values for the settings.

Enable Blog and Journal type topic creation *	<input checked="" type="radio"/> true / <input type="radio"/> false
Enable Peer Review option *	<input checked="" type="radio"/> true / <input type="radio"/> false

5. Click **Save Values**.

Creating Threaded, Blog, or Journal Discussion Topics

⇒ To create a discussion topic:

1. From the Discussions screen, click **Create Topic**. The Create Topic screen appears.
2. Select the type of discussion topic you would like to create.

Note: The following steps to create a topic are the same no matter the type of topic.

3. Enter a Title, Description, and select if you want to Show or Hide the topic.
4. To add a topic to a category, choose one or create one from the drop-down menu.
5. Select the desired grading option (not gradable, numeric, alphanumeric, or by Grading Form).

Grading

Allow the assignment to be graded (A column is automatically created for this assignment in Grade Book)

Grade Book column title:

Release grade to Students in *My Grades*

Numeric grade: Out of

Alphanumeric grade

Grade by Grading Form:

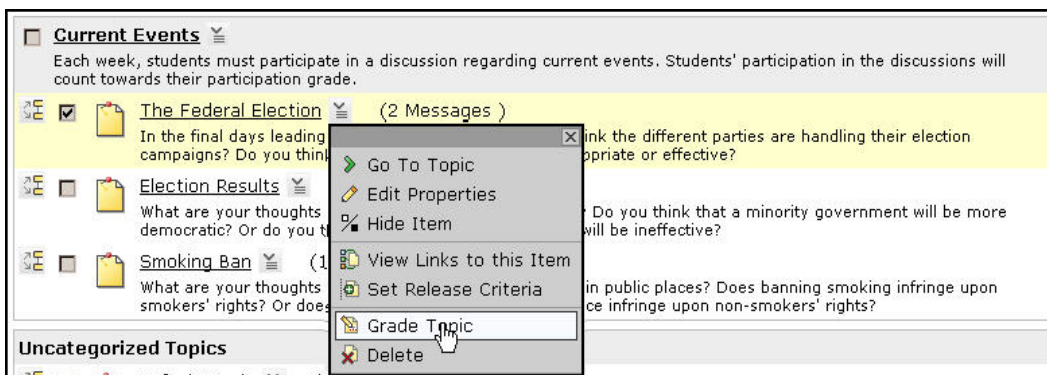
For numeric grades, you must enter the maximum grade

Note: Grading creates a column in the Grade Book, allowing you to mark students' contributions to the topic. You can choose to release the grade to students. If you make a topic gradable, you cannot revert back to non-gradable.

6. Select the options desired:
 - a. **Peer Review** – allow students to review and evaluate messages posted by their peers using a simple rating scale or grading form.
 - b. **Student Posting Rules** – define the limits of students' participation in a topic.
 - c. **Author Identification** – indicate whether posts to this topic will exclude the author's name.
 - d. **Journal Privacy** - determine if the journal entries will be shared with the entire class.
7. Click **Save**. The Discussions screen appears and the topic is created.

⇒ To grade a discussion topic:

1. From the Discussions screen, locate the topic you want to grade. From its ActionLinks menu, click **Grade Topic**.



- The Grade Discussions screen appears and each student who has posted a message to the topic is displayed along with a Discussion Activity Overview and a Student Overview.

Grade Discussions for: Election Results

Class Averages
 Average Messages Read: 3
 Average New Messages Posted: 0
 Average Replies Posted: 2

Grading Criteria:
 Grading Form out of 100

Name	Grade
Demo Student	<input type="button" value="Complete Grading Form"/>

Discussion Activity Overview

Your location: [Discussions](#) > **Discussion Activity Overview**

Election Results

Description (click to collapse)
 What are your thoughts on the new minority government? Do you think that a minority government will be more democratic? Or do you think that a minority government will be ineffective?

Topic Type: Blog
 Graded: Yes ([Discussions](#))
 Numeric out of 100.0
 Peer Review: No
 Posting Restrictions: Allow post and reply
 User Identification: User Name

To view messages posted by a Student, click the Student's name and then click View Student Posts.

Name	Messages		
	Total Messages Read	New Messages Posted	Replies Posted
Demo Student	3	0	2

- Send Mail
- View Student Posts
- View Profile
- View Performance Report

Grade Discussion Screen

- To view a student's posts, click the student's name and, from the PeopleLinks menu, click **View Student Posts**.
- The Student Discussion Posts screen appears, displaying the student's postings for the topic, along with the number of:

- new messages
- replies posted
- messages read

Discussion Student Post

Author: [Demo Student](#)
 Topic: The Federal Election
 New Messages Posted: 1 (Class Average 1)
 Replies Posted: 0 (Class Average 0)
 Messages Read: 1 (Class Average 1)

Subject: Smear campaigns **Date:** June 28, 2006 7:38 AM

I find the use of smear campaigns is simply a camouflage for having no ideas of their own. They spend their time telling you why the other candidate is not a good choice and no time telling you why they might be.

Compare with others in the thread

5. For each student, complete the grade according to the grading method you selected.
6. Click **Save Grades**.

Grade Discussions for: Election Results
Grading Criteria: Numeric out of 5

Save Grades

Name	Grade
Boroditsky Arthur	5
Kieran Kennedy	3
Demo Student 804910001	1

Indicates the maximum number of points



By assigning points to discussions, you send a clear message to students that thoughtful participation in the course is a valued part of the learning experience.