Discussions

Use the **Discussions** tool in your course to encourage users to share thoughts on course material with their peers. You can set up forums and topics for users to ask questions, discuss course content and assignments, and work together in assigned groups and sections.

Online discussions provide one of the best ways to promote engagement and collaboration in an online class. Forums are used to organize discussion topics into categories. At least one forum must be created before creating topics.

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# Getting Started with Discussions

Create a Discussion Forum (category)

Use forums to organize your discussion topics into categories. Your course can have multiple forums and topics, but **you must create a forum before you can create a topic**.

1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu**.**
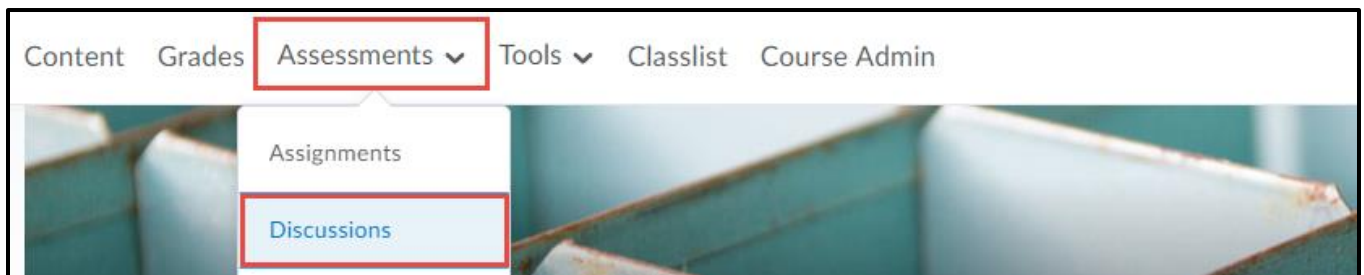
2. On the **Discussions List** page, from the **New** button drop-down menu, click **New Forum**.
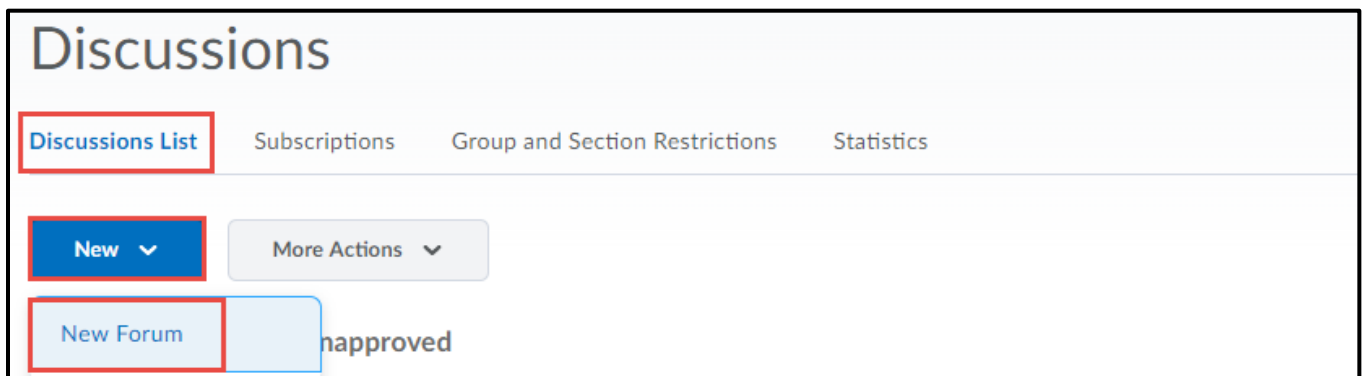
3. Enter a **Title** (required) and **Description** (optional) for your new forum.

4. In the **Options** section, select any of the following check boxes:

5. In the **Restrictions** section, you can apply start and end dates for your discussions. There are various Visibility options that will apply with the dates.
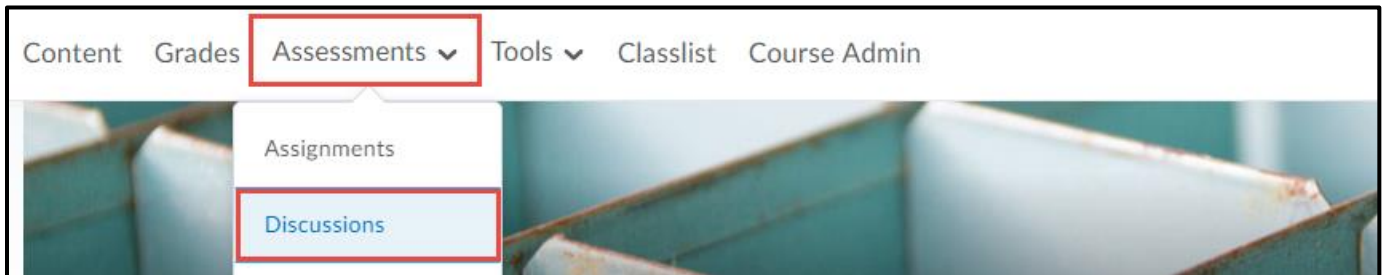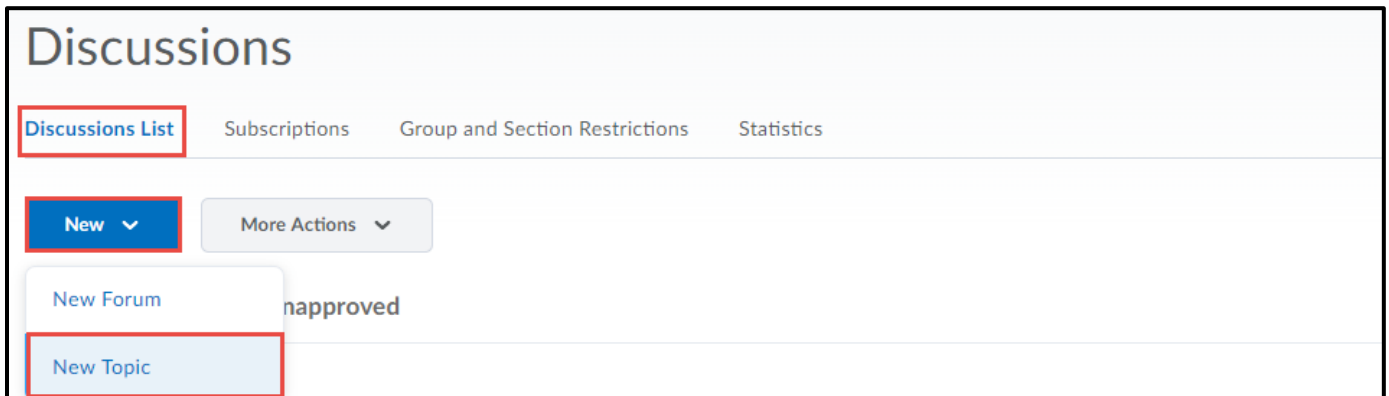
6. Click **Save and Close**.

Create a Discussion Topic

Your course can have multiple forums and topics, but **you must create a forum before you can create a topic** since all topics belong to forums.
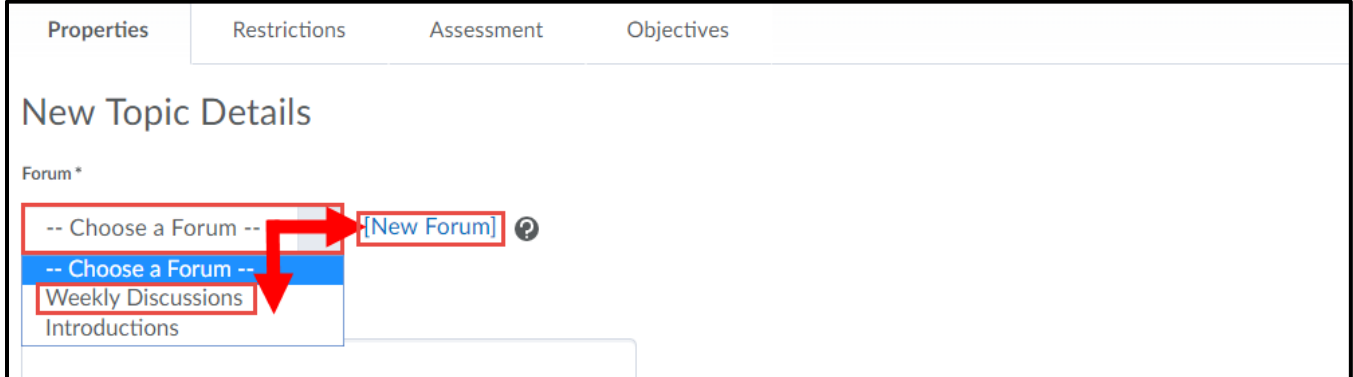
1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu.

On the **Discussions List** page, from the **New** button, click **New Topic**.
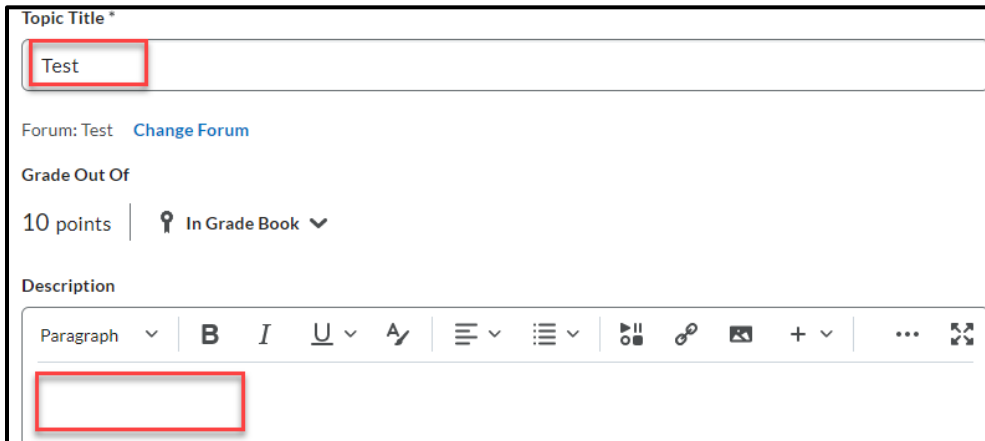
2. From the forum drop-down list, select the forum you want to place your topic in. If you want to create a new forum for your topic, click **New Forum**.

Properties	Restrictions	Assessment	Objectives

New Topic Details

Forum *

-- Choose a Forum -- → [New Forum] ?

-- Choose a Forum --
Weekly Discussions
Introductions

3. Enter the topic **Title** (required) and **Description** (optional).

Topic Title *

Test

Forum: Test **Change Forum**

Grade Out Of

10 points | In Grade Book ∨

Description

Paragraph ∨ | **B** *I* U ∨ A∕ | ≡ ∨ ≣ ∨ | ▶‖ ⌀ ◼ + ∨ | ⋯ ⤢

4. Select **Availability Dates & Conditions** allows you to apply Start and End dates, release conditions and group/section restrictions.

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.

5. **Post & Completion** gives options for how the students will interact with the discussion board.

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

6. **Evaluation & Feedback** provides a place to add a rubric, learning objectives, and some additional evaluation options.

Create a Discussion Thread (Post)

1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu.
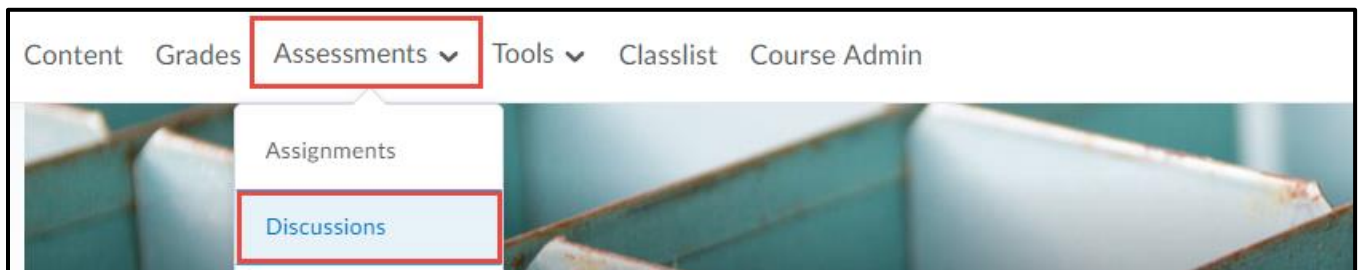
2. Click the topic where you want to create a thread.

3. Click **Start a New Thread**.

4. Enter a subject and then create your post.

5. Set any of the following preferences (optional):
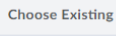   a. To keep the thread at the top of the list, select **Pin Thread**.
   b. To receive updates on the thread using your selected notification method, select **Subscribe to this thread.**
   c. To attach a file, in the **Attachments** area.
   d. To post your thread to more than one topic, click **Post to other topics**. Click **Add Topics.** Select the topics that you want your thread to appear in.

6. Click **Post**.

Reply to a Discussion Thread

1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu**.**
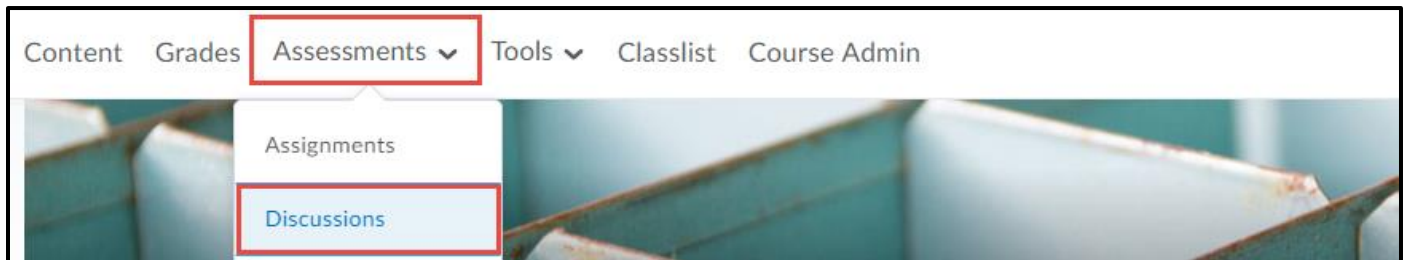
2. From the **Discussions List**, click on the discussion topic containing the thread you want to reply to.

3. Click on the thread title, click **Reply to Thread**.
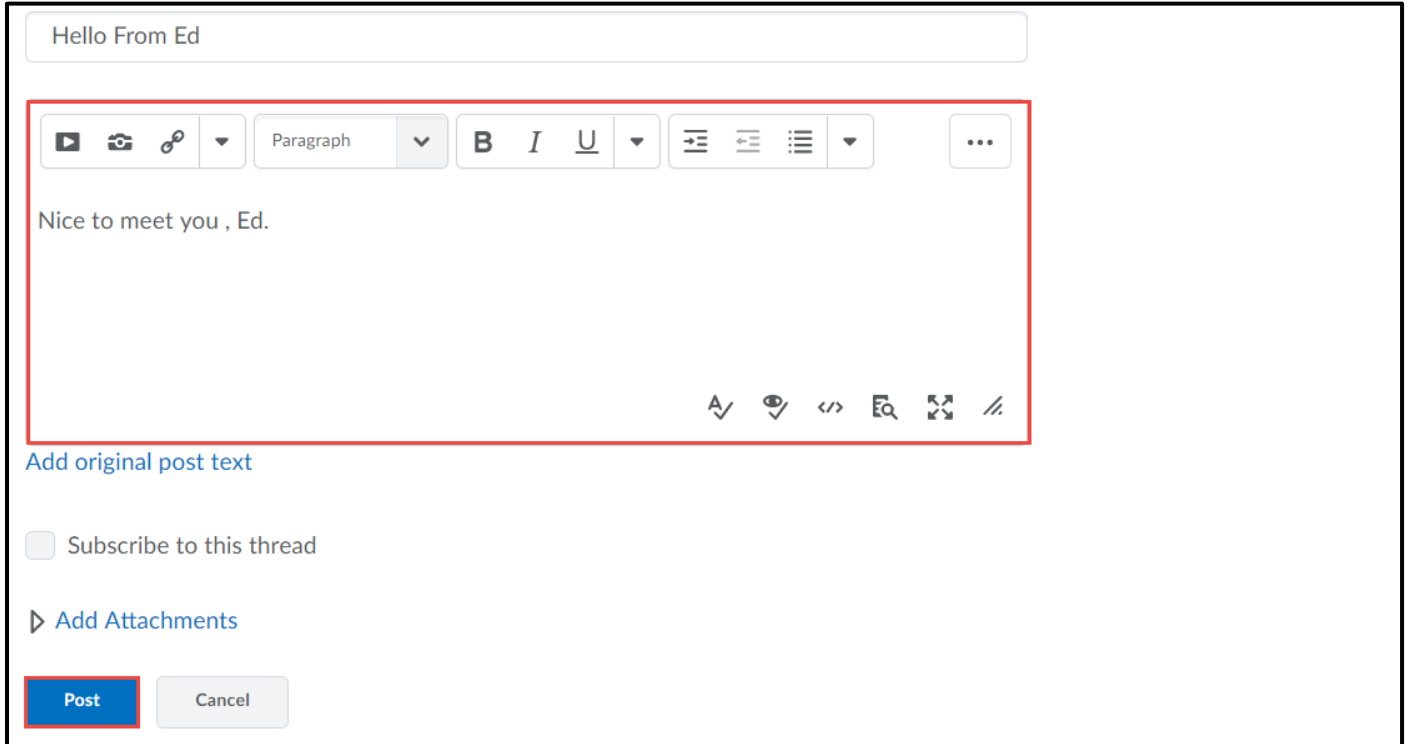
4. Enter your reply in the HTML Editor. To include the original post's text in your reply, click the **Add original post text** link. Click **Post**.

Assessing Discussions

Configure a Topic for Assessment

1. From the drop-down menu of the topic you want to configure for assessment, click **Edit Topic**.

2. In the editor, there is a section to set the amount of points for the discussion board. Enter the amount of points in the **Grade Out Of** sect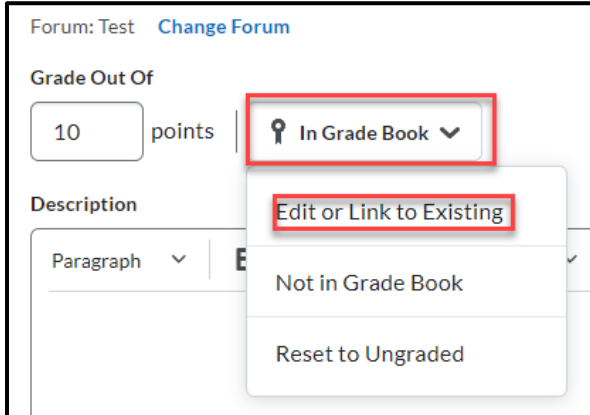ion, then click the **In Grade Book** drop down to connect the discussion board to the grade book. Choose **Edit or Link to Existing**

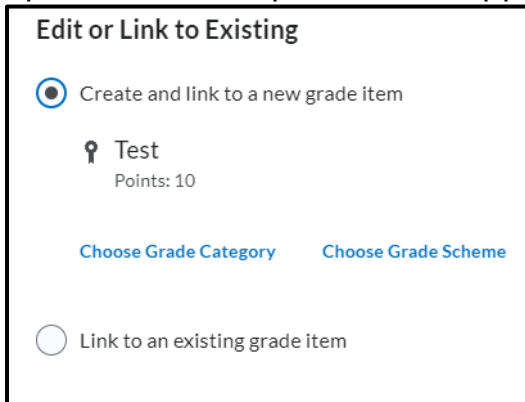Forum: Test   Change Forum

Grade Out Of

| 10 | points | 🔑 In Grade Book ∨ |

Edit or Link to Existing

Description

Paragraph ∨   E

Not in Grade Book

Reset to Ungraded

3. The first option will create a grade item for the discussion board if you have not already done so. Choose the grade category you want the new grade item to be in. If you have already created a grade item, choose the **Link to an existing grade item** option and a drop down will appear for you to choose the grade item.

Edit or Link to Existing

🔘 Create and link to a new grade item

🔑 Test
   Points: 10

Choose Grade Category   **Choose Grade Scheme**

⚪ Link to an existing grade item

4. Click **Save and Close**. In the **Discussions List**, a topic with an assessment will state **Includes Assessment.**
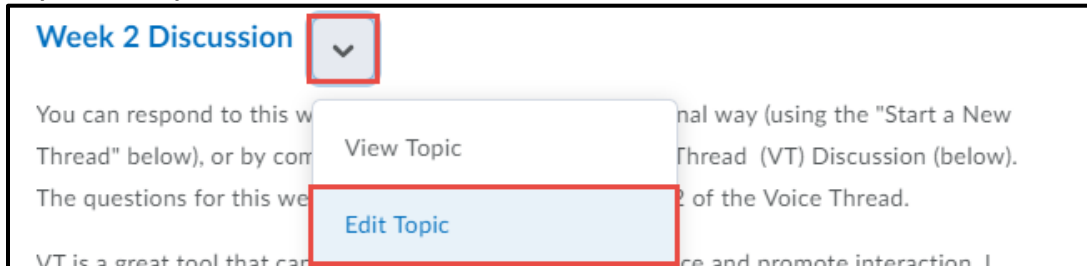
Introductions ∨   2
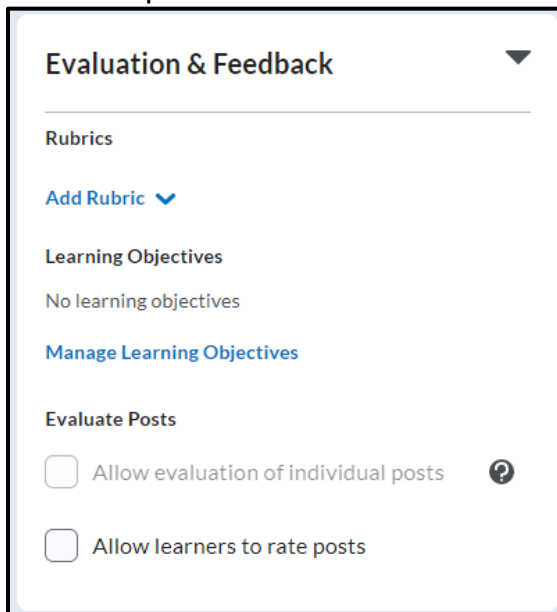
🔑 Includes assessment.

Please tell the class a little about yourself.

Add a Rubric to a Discussion Topic

1. Navigate to the topic where you want to add a rubric and select **Edit Topic** from the topic's drop down menu.

2. In the **Evaluation & Feedback** section, select **Add Rubric** to add an existing rubric to the topic or create one.

3. Select the rubric you want to use. Click **Add Selected**.

4. The rubric will display in the **Evaluation & Feedback** section. Click **Save and Close**.

Assign Scores to Users from the Assess Topic Page

You can assess users from inside a discussion topic. When assessing users from the **Assess Topic** page, you can see topic scores for all users and view all of a user's posts together on one screen.
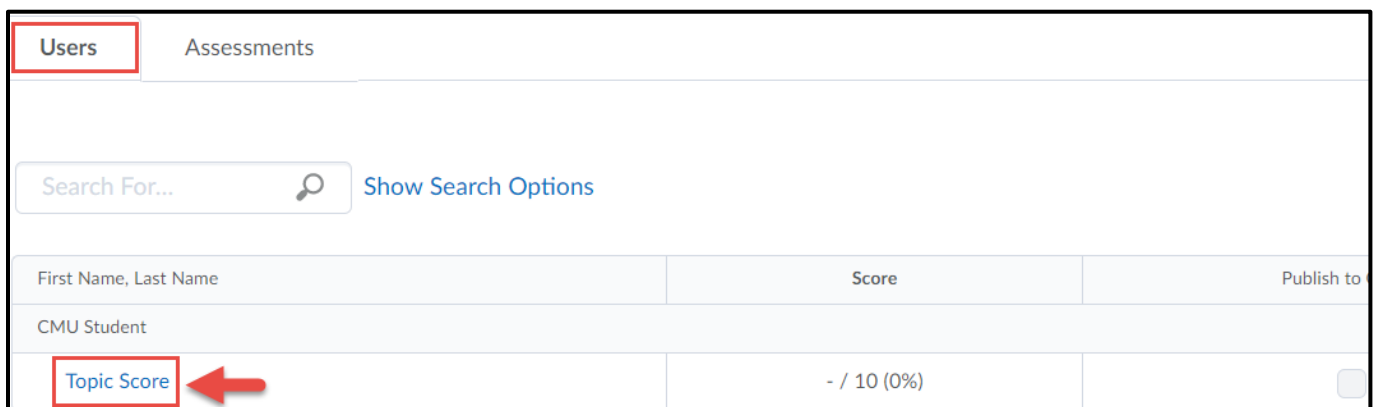
1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu.
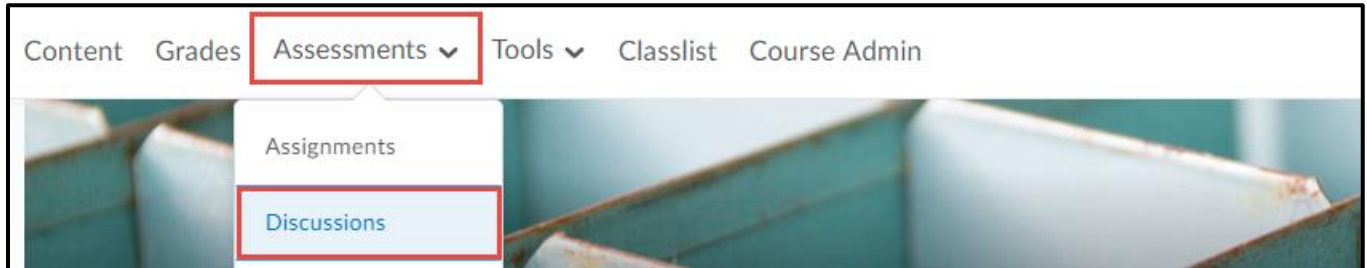
2. From the drop-down menu of the topic you want to assess, click **Assess Topic**.
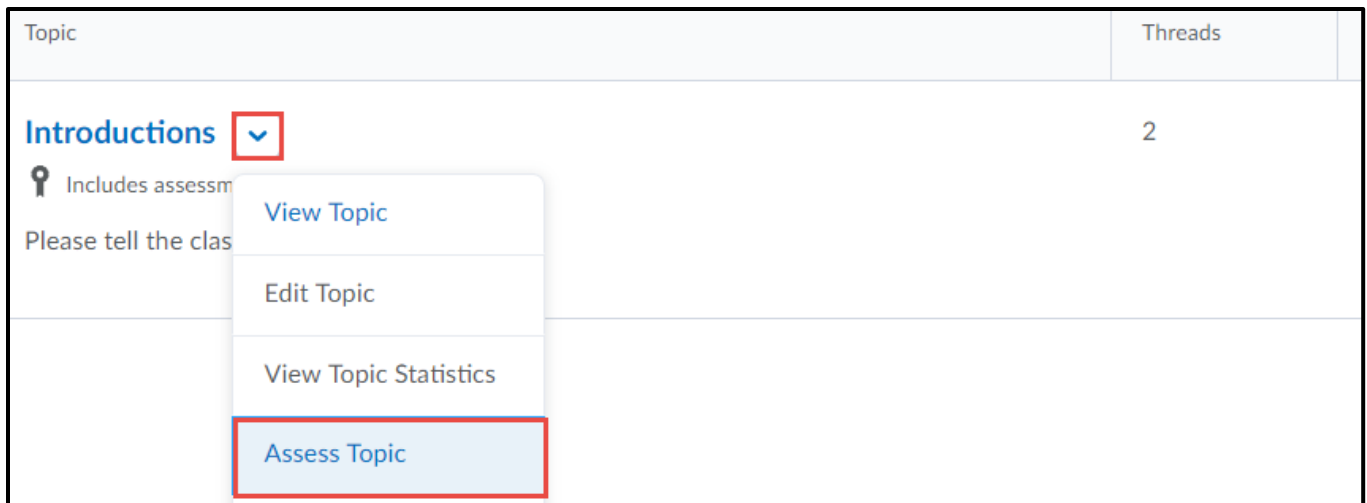
3. In the **Users** tab, click **Topic Score** for the name of the user you want to assess.

4. In the **Topic Score Details** window you can see all posts made by the student. Click on the **Topic Score** to enter a score for the topic. Select the **Publish score on save** check box. When this check box is selected, the Topic Score and General Feedback are sent to Grades.

Assess Topic - Other Topics > Introductions

Demo Student
1 thread, 0 replies

Topic Score: -- / 10

✓ Publish score on save

5. In the **General Feedback** field, enter any comments that you have. Click **Save and Close.**

General Feedback

Paragraph   **B** *I* U

I really enjoyed reading your posts. Keep up the good work!

Save and Close   Save   Cancel

6. View all topic scores on the **Assess Topic** page. To publish scores for all users, click **Publish All Scores to Grades**.

Publish All Scores to Grades	Retract All Scores	Manage Columns	
Users	Assessments		

Search For... 🔍 Show Search Options

First Name, Last Name	Score	
Faculty Test		
Topic Score	- / 10 (0%)	
Demo Student		
Topic Score	9 / 10 (90%)	

Managing Discussions

Edit an Existing Forum or Topic

1. On the **Discussions List** page, click the drop down arrow beside the name of the forum or topic you want to edit, and select **Edit Forum** or **Edit Topic**.

Weekly Discussions ⌄

Post weekly to each discussion t ~~~~ rubric for grading criteria.

Add Topic

Hide Topics

Topic	Edit Forum	Threads	Posts

Topic	Threads	Po

Week 1 Discussion ⌄   1   1

🕐 Available: Friday, January ...ay, February 2, 2020 6:16 PM MST.

🔑 Includes assessment.   View Topic

Read chapter 1 and post y...   Edit Topic

2. After making changes, click **Save and Close.**

Subscribe or Unsubscribe to a Discussion

Remain up to date on discussions by subscribing to forums, topics, or threads.

1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu**.**
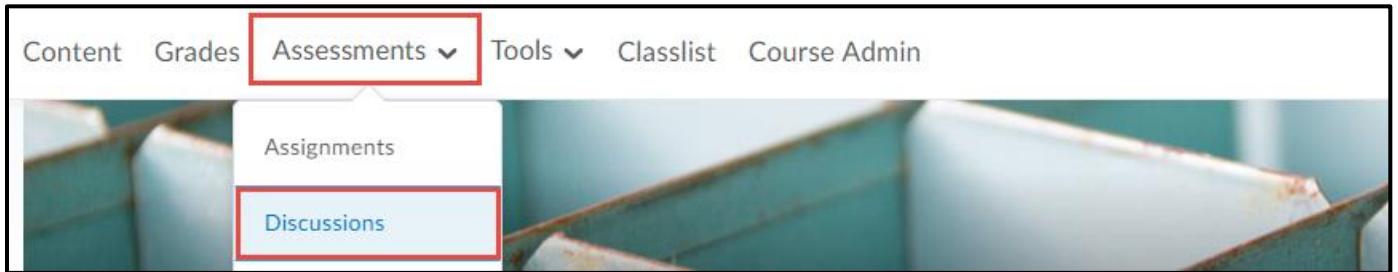
2. On the **Discussions List** page, from the drop down menu of the forum or topic you want to receive notifications of new posts for, click **Subscribe**.
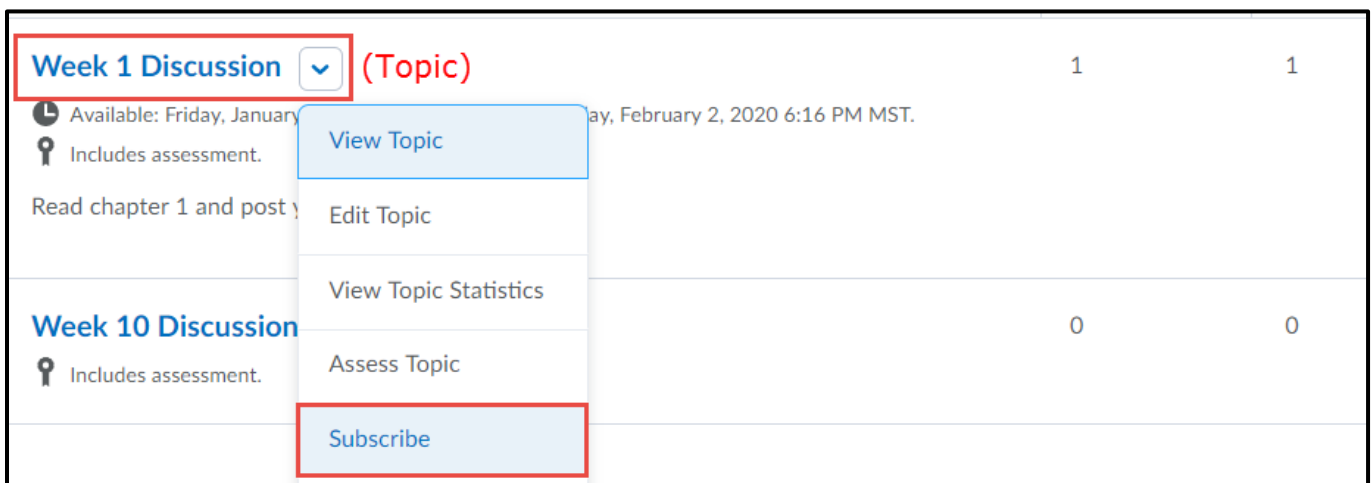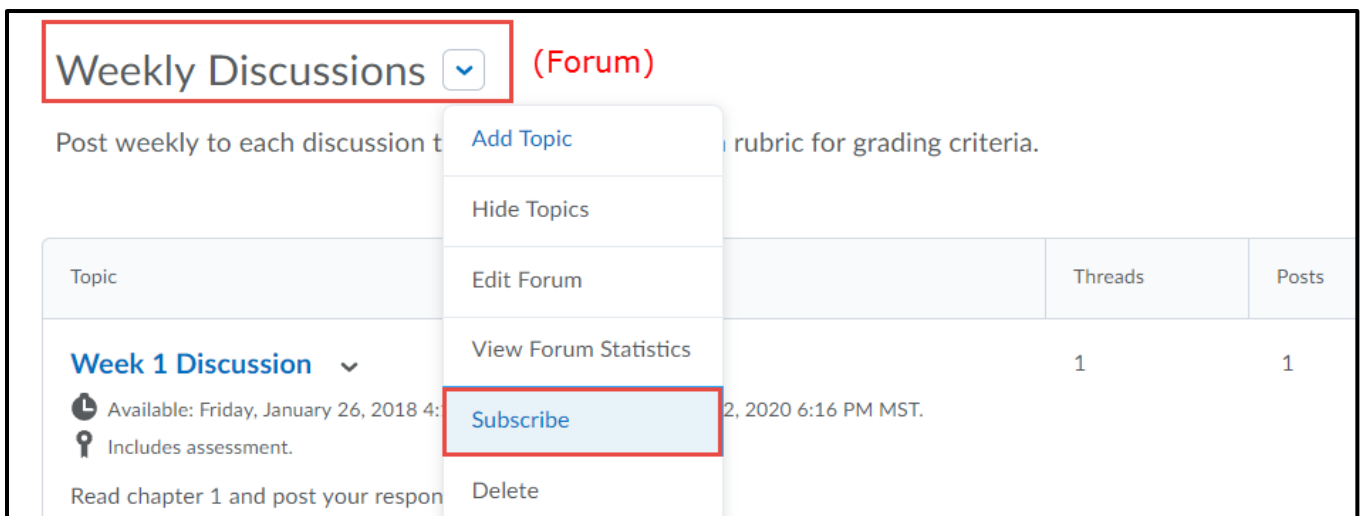
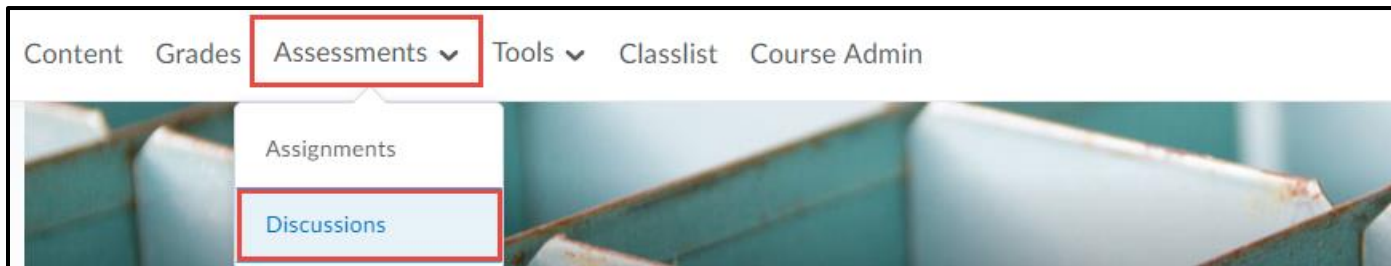3. In the **Customize Notifications** pop-up window, select your **Notification Method**. Click **Subscribe**.

4. To unsubscribe, from the drop-down menu of the **forum** or **topic** you want to receive notifications of new posts for, click **Unsubscribe**. Click **Yes** in the pop-up window.
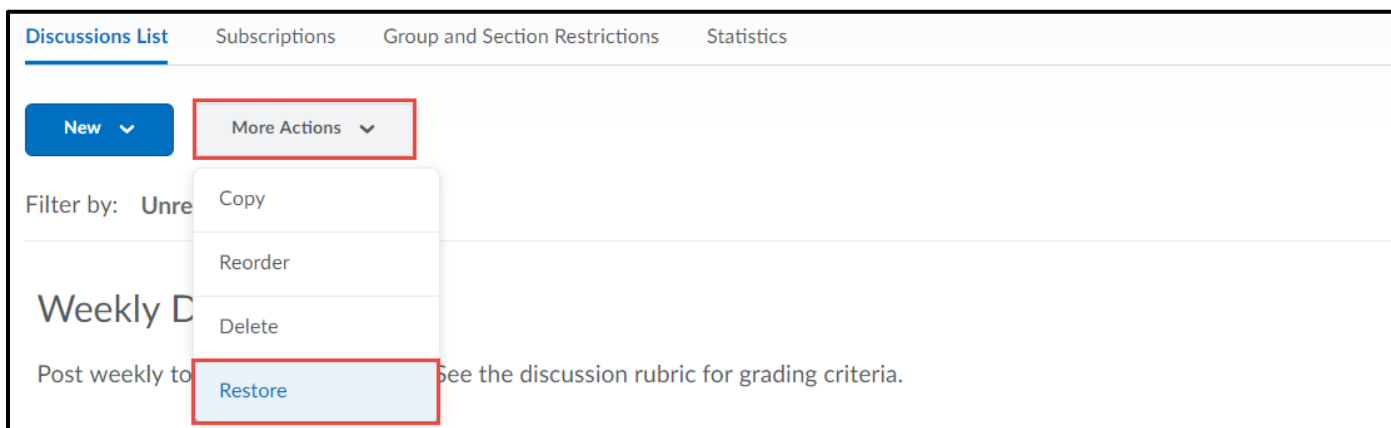
Restore Deleted Discussions

1. On the navbar, click **Discussions** from the **Assessments** drop-down menu**.**

2. On the **Discussions List** page, from the **More Actions** button, click **Restore**.

3. Click **Restore** beside the forum or topic you want to restore.