Desire2Learn: Discussion Basics

Navigation: the Discussions Tool

In Desire2Learn, Discussions take place within “Forums” and “Topics.” Topics correspond to Topics within Modules in the Content tool.

Left: This shows the main Discussions List screen. Here, two Forums (HIS 124: Weeks 1 to 4, and HIS 124: Weeks 5 to 10) each contain one Topic. The two Topics, “Welcome to HIS 124” and “The New Deal” each have two discussions or “Threads.”

Click on a Topic to see the Topic View:

This Topic (The New Deal) has a question posed by the instructor, and two response posts by students. Each of the student responses here started a Thread.
Within the thread view, class members can post replies.

With the ability to organize discussions within Forums, Topics, and Threads, instructors have a flexible system to conduct class discussions organized by lessons, subjects, or groups of students.

Discussions: the Content Tool
If accessed via a Topic in the Content tool, Discussions look a little different, but most essential viewing, posting, and editing features are there, too.
Create a Discussion Topic via the Content Tab

Within the module, click the blue “New” button. Select “New Discussion” from the dropdown menu.

Enter a title, and description for the Discussion Topic. The description area (labeled “Instructions” when beginning a discussion in the Content tool) can include text, links, video, or other content.

Left: This Discussion will begin by asking students to consider and comment on a historic piece of video, available via YouTube.
Click “Publish” or “Save as Draft.” Instructors can then edit the Discussion’s title, description, or other attributes as a Topic in either the Content or Discussions tools.

Be sure to explore advanced features of the Discussions tool, including:

- **assessment**: grade users’ discussion posts, with grades entered into the D2L course gradebook.
- **moderation**: student posts require instructor approval before being published (visible) to class.
- **Group restrictions**: limit discussions to groups of students, for small-group collaboration.