

D2L Part 2: Communication Tools and Personal Tools

Center for Teaching & Learning

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Learning Objectives

After this lesson you will be able to:




- Schedule a course event
- Enter, edit, and delete a news item
- Use the pager tool
- Use the discussion tool
- Create and use assessments
- Engage the chat tool



Calendar

Adding a Course Event

Course events can be viewed by all course participants. Use course events to enter items into the Calendar, such as project due dates and exam information that are important for students and other participants.

1. On your course home page, click the  button in the **Events** widget to open the calendar tool.
2. Click the  **New Event** link. The **Add New Event** page displays.
3. Type the **Title** of your event.
4. Type a **Description** for your event, if desired..
5. To display a link to a web address in your event, type the web address in the **Link** field
6. Select a **Date** using the drop-down lists or by clicking the  **Select Date** icon beside the drop-down lists.
7. Use the **Event Access** options to decide the event's privacy levels.
 - a. **Note:** when creating an event D2L automatically creates your event as “Personal”, meaning you are the only one who can see it. Change this by selecting the course you would like to be able to see the event.
8. Click either **Save** and then click the **Calendar** link to go back to the main calendar page.
 - a. **Note:** If you teach more than one course, you cannot create an event and apply it to all courses. Events are course specific.

A screenshot of the 'Add New Event' form in D2L. The form is titled 'Events' and has a 'Today' section at the top with a calendar icon and a 'Survey: One-third Semester Survey - available' event listed at 12:00 AM. Below this is a 'Location' field. The 'Private Event' section has a checkbox for 'mark event private'. The 'Priority' is set to 'Normal'. There is an 'External Link' field with a '[Preview]' button. The 'Date and Time' section has an 'All day event' checkbox. The 'Start' and 'End' fields are set to October 1, 2010, at 9:00 AM and 10:00 AM respectively, with a calendar icon next to the start date. The 'Repeats' section has a 'None' radio button and an 'Update' button. The 'Event Access' section has a 'Personal' radio button selected, with checkboxes for 'Share with other users', 'Add Users', and 'Email a notification to users when I add them to the list'. At the bottom, there are radio buttons for 'CTL Demo Course' and 'CTL Demo Course - Group/Section Event', and a 'Group/Section' dropdown menu.

On the main calendar page, the date that you defined your event will now have the event listed.

When you return to your course home by clicking the **Course Home** link from the navigation bar, the **Events widget** on the course home page will reflect your newly added course events that are on the current day.

Searching the Calendar

To search your calendar for events, click on the **Search Events** link located within your calendar. Wildcards are supported when searching the schedule. The following chart describes supported wildcards and usage

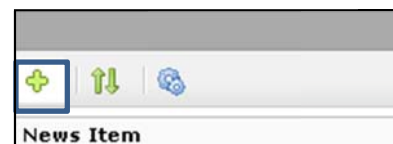


Wildcard	Description	Example
%	Any number of any character NOTE: used implicitly in every search	Search for '%day%'. Returns all events where the Title or Description contains a word with the sequence of characters day. Ex. Daydream, birthday, holidays, etc. Searching for 'day' is equivalent to searching for '%day%' or '%day' or 'day%'.
[]	Or/ranges (used with characters between brackets)	Search for [CK]ath[ae]rine. Returns all events where the Title or Description contains Catharine or Katharine or Catherine or Katherine. Search for Quiz [1-3]. Returns all events where the Title or Description contains Quiz followed by the numbers 1, 2, or 3.
^	Not (used before a single character)	Search for base [^b]. Returns all events where the Title or Description contain the sequence of characters base and that sequence is not followed by the letter b. Ex. Databases, base, basement, etc. are included in the results. Baseball, baseboard, etc. are excluded from the search results.
-	One of any character	Search for _ob. Returns all events where the Title or Description contain words with a three letter sequence ending in ob. Ex. Robert, Bob, knob, etc. are included in the results. Obstacle, obtuse, etc. would be excluded.

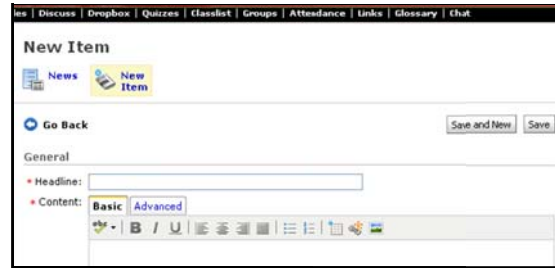
News

The News tool is a method of communicating updates, changes, and new information to your course participants. The News tool is located in the middle of the Course Home page and can be used to add interesting pictures, quotes, news stories, URLs, agendas for weekly activities, QuickLinks to various updated areas of the course, etc. News is typically the first thing a participant sees upon logging into the course, it is recommended that News be updated regularly to keep your participants engaged in your course.

1. From the **Course Home** page click on the **New News Item** button (+) in the News widget (Figure 1).
2. Enter text for the **Headline**.



3. Enter text in the **Content** box. The advanced tab can be used to customize the content.
4. Set the **Availability** dates/times (if desired), displayed below.
5. **Attach a File** (if desired), displayed below.




Adding and Deleting Release Conditions


Release conditions allow you to associate a news item with other items in the learning environment. For example, you could require that students complete an assignment before they see a news item. In the Release Conditions section, click either **Attach Existing** or **Create and Attach**.

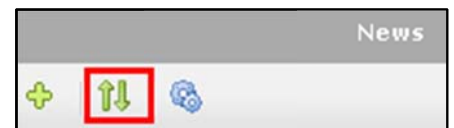
Adding and Deleting Attachments

You can add attachments to News postings while you are creating or editing it.

<i>To Add an Attachment</i>	<i>To Delete an Attachment</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the Attachments sections of the News Item or Edit Item page, click the Add a File button. 2. Locate and attach the file. 3. Click Save. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to the Edit screen of the News Item with the attachment you wish to delete. 2. Click the Delete icon () next to the attachment you wish to delete. 3. Click Save.

Editing a News Item

1. To edit a news item click on the  **Edit** button for that news item
2. Make any required changes.
3. Click **Save**.




Reorder News Items

1. Click the **Reorder** button on your News widget (Figure 3).
2. Select the new position for a news item using the Sort Order drop-down list beside it name. The positions of the other news items adjust accordingly (Figure 4).
3. Click **Save**

Grouping/News Items	Start Date	End Date	Sort Order
Welcome to D2L Training	Dec 20, 2007	-	1
Happy Holidays!	Dec 13, 2007	-	2

Deleting News Items

1. In your News widget, select the item(s) you want to delete then click the  **Trash** icon on the left side of the news item to be deleted or delete individuals by clicking the **Trash** icon on the right side..
2. Click **Delete** in the confirmation box.

Course Mail



To access Course Mail, select **Course Mail** link from the upper left navigation bar. Similar to other email programs, you have the ability to (Figure 5):

1. Compose new messages
2. Check for new messages
3. Manage folders.
4. Manage settings

Manage Mail Settings

Under **Settings**, you have the ability to change your email options, change display options, and change forwarding options.



Manage your Address Book

Add, change, or search for names from your email address book by selecting the **Address Book** from the navigation pane on the left (Figure 6).

Selecting **Address Book** will open up a list of your current contacts. You need to add contacts to your address book manually. Your class participants will not auto populate into this tool.

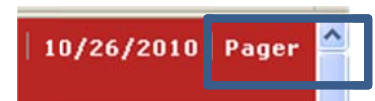


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Note: students will be automatically populated (added) into the class list.

Pager

The **pager** is an online messaging tool that you can use to send instant messages directly to other users (students, colleagues) who are currently logged into D2L. This tool allows course participants to pose questions on a one-to-one basis to fellow users and instructors. The pager is an excellent communication tool that identifies users who are online and gives users the ability to communicate efficiently from anywhere within their course.



Note: In order to use the pager, the course moderator must have it added it for use in the navigation bars.

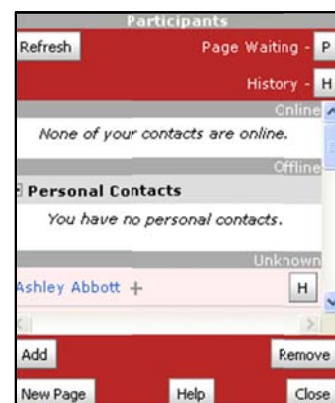
Note: Users using screen readers may want to turn the Pager notification off, as the refresh rate for the Pager causes some screen readers to start over at the beginning of the page.

Accessing the Pager

On your home page, click the **Pager** link in the navigation bar.

Adding a Contact

1. In the **Pager** pop-up (Figure 8), click **Add**. The **Add a New Contact** pop-up displays.
2. Type in the username (if known) and click **Add** –OR— select the radio button for Add Classmate(s), select the desired class, and then check the box next to the names of the classmates you wish to add and click **Add**.
3. When you are finished adding users, click **Cancel** to close the **Add A New Contact** pop-up. The participants (or users) that you just added will now be shown in the **Personal Contacts** list on the Pager pop-up.



Removing a Contact

1. In the Pager pop-up, click **Remove**. The Remove Contact pop-up displays.
2. Select the user(s) that you want to remove from your Contacts List.
3. Click **Remove** and then **Close**. The contacts will now be removed from your Personal Contacts list on the Pager pop-up.

Send a Message

1. Click the **New Page** button. In the **Send Page** pop-up, click the **To** button, select the user and click **OK**.
2. Type your message in the Message field.
3. Click **Send**.

Refresh the Pager

Use this option to check your messages at any time in between the Pager refresh cycles. In the Pager pop-up, click the Refresh button. The Pager pop-up refreshes and displays any new messages that you have received.

Just in Time Communication Tool

The pager is an excellent just-in-time communication tool for rounding up a group of course participants to meet in a chat room to discuss a group project. The pager identifies users as online and offline enabling instructors to page users easily. In addition, instructors can send multiple users a page simultaneously. Faster than email, the pager is a great way to deliver informal feedback to small groups of students or on a student-by-student basis. Everything is documented

in the pager, so if you ever want to review a conversation, simply click the **H** beside the user's name and you can review pager history.

The **Preferences** tool on the **My Home** page allows you to change your online status, font settings, paging preferences, discussion room layout, email preferences, and password. Customizing your personal settings is a great way to ensure that you are comfortable in your teaching environment.

Discussions

To access the Discussion tool, click the **Discuss** link on the navigation bar. There are three levels to the Discussion tool: Forums, Topics, and messages.


Forums are used to organize your discussion topics.

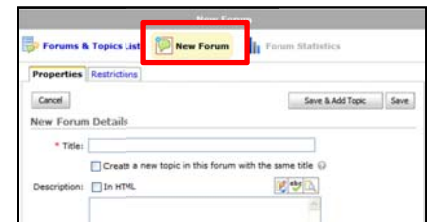
Topics are the actual place where discussions take place.

Messages are the discussions themselves.

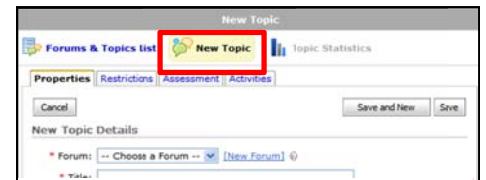
Creating a New Forum

Forums are used to organize your topics. Discussions take place inside a topic, and each topic must belong to a forum to be visible to your students. Any settings that you apply to a forum are also applied to all of the forum's topics.

1. On the main discussion page, click  **New Forum** on the top of the tool menu.
2. Enter a **Title**
3. Enter a **Description**
4. Set any **Forum Options**: Availability, and locking options
 - **Note**: Check **Anonymous** or **Approval** if you'd like your forum to allow either of these.
5. Click **Save** – or – **Save & Add Topic** to save the forum and create a new topic within it.



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Creating a Topic

TO	DO THIS
Automatically create a topic	Select Create a new topic in this forum with the same name
Enable participants to post messages anonymously	Select Allow anonymous messages . This setting applies to all topics within the forum, regardless of topic-level settings. Note that anonymous messages cannot be evaluated.
Require messages to be approved	Select Messages must be approved before being displayed . This setting applies to all topics within the forum, regardless of topic-level settings.
Hide the forum	If the options in the Availability section are not visible, click Show forum visibility options , then do one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To hide the forum when it is created, select Hide this forum. It will remain hidden until Forum is always visible is selected again.• To make the forum visible within a date range, select Forum is visible for a specific date range and specify a Start Date when the forum will become visible and/or an End Date when it will be hidden again.
Lock the forum	If the options in the Locking options section are not visible, click Show locking options , then do one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To hide the forum when it is created, select Lock forum. It will remain locked until Locked forum is selected again.• To open the forum within a date range, select Unlock forum for a specific date range and specify a Start Date when the forum will be unlocked and/or an End Date when it will be locked again.

Topics are where discussions actually take place. Your course can include as many topics as you like, organized into forums. Each topic normally includes a description that defines the purpose of the topic and guides the conversation.

1. Do one of the following:

- a. On the main discussion page, click  **New Topic** on the top tool menu.
- b. If you have just created a forum, on the New Forum page click the **Save and Add Topic** button.

- c. On the main discussion page, click the  **New Topic** icon for the forum in which you want to create the topic.

1. In the **Forum** drop-down list, select the forum in which you want to create the topic.
2. Enter a **Title** for the topic.
3. Enter a **Description**
4. Set the topic options you want.

TO	DO THIS
Enable anonymous message posting	Select Allow anonymous messages . Note that anonymous messages cannot be evaluated.
Require messages to be approved	Select Messages must be approved before being displayed .
Hide the topic	<p>If the options in the Availability section are not visible, click Show topic visibility options, then do one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hide the topic when it is created, select Hide this Topic. It will remain hidden until Topic is always visible is selected again. • To make the topic visible within a date range, select Topic is visible for a specific date range and specify a Start Date when the topic will become visible and/or an End Date when it will be hidden again.
Lock the topic	<p>If the options in the Locking options section are not visible, click Show locking options, then do one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To lock the topic when it is created, select Lock topic. It will remain locked until Unlock topic is selected again. <p>To open the topic within a date range, select Unlock topic for a specific date range and specify a Start Date when the topic will be unlocked and/or an End Date when it will be locked again.</p>


5. Click **Save** or **Save & New** to add a second topic in the same forum.

Creating groups

1. Click **Edit course** in the upper right navigation bar
2. To create a new group **Click** on “Groups” under the administration category
3. **Click** on **New Category**
4. **Name** your group in the “Category Name” section. (ex. Chapter 1)
 - a. **Note:** You have the option of giving a description
5. **Select** the “Enrollement Type” you prefer.
 - a. Enrollment types
 - 1.# of Groups – The professor enrolls students
 - 2.Group of # - computer enrolls students
 - 3.# of Groups – computer enrolls students
 - Most often selected is the “number of groups”
 4. Group of # - Students self enroll
 - 5.# of Groups – Students self enroll
6. Type in how many groups you would like in “Number of Groups”
7. “Advanced properties” gives you the options to “Auto-Enroll New Users” and randomize the group.
 - a. **Note:** Advanced properties will only appear if you select # of group above.
8. Under “Additional Options”, **Select** where you would like to create your workspace.
 - a. Most often groups are used within discussions.
 - b. **Click** on the desired work space and **click Create**.
9. **Select** the forum you would like the groups to appear in and then **click** “Create and Next. You will get a screen summary and click “Done”.
 - a. **Note:** If the forum has not been created yet you can click on “New Forum” and create a new discussion for the topic.



Note: When you go back to the “Discussions” tab, you should see the created groups
Tip: After you have added groups in the discussion areas, go to the discussion tab and click on “Group Restrictions”. This allows you to limit which group sees what postings.

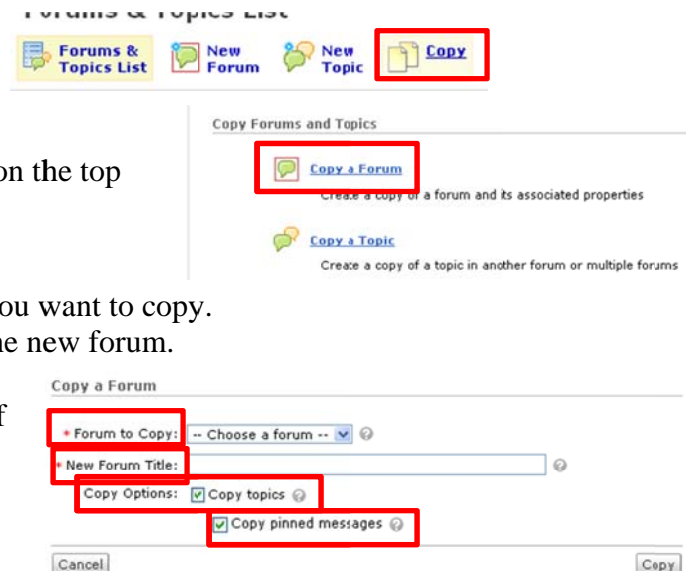
Editing a Forum or Topic

1. On the **main discussions** page, click the  **Edit** icon for the forum / topic you want to edit.
2. Select the tab containing the information you want to edit. **Note:** Switching between tabs automatically saves any changes made on the current tab.
3. Make your changes.
4. Click **Save** if applicable.

Copying a Forum



Copying a forum creates a new forum with the same properties as the original. You can choose to copy the forum's topics as well as any pinned messages within those topics. Copying a forum does not copy any normal, unpinned messages inside the forum's topics; however you can copy or move individual messages from existing topics once the new topics are created

1. On the **main discussions page**, click  **Copy** on the top tool menu.
2. Click  **Copy a Forum**.
3. From the **Forum to Copy** list, select the forum you want to copy.
4. In the **New Forum Title field**, type a name for the new forum.
5. Select the options you want:
 - a. **Copy topics** - Select this option to copy all of the topics inside the forum; new topics are created with the same titles and properties as the existing ones.
 - b. **Copy pinned messages** - If you choose to copy topics, select this option to copy any pinned messages within those topics. If you use pinned messages to post information about a topic (rules, evaluation criteria, etc.) you may want to copy these messages along with the topics.
6. Click **Copy**.




Copying a Topic

Copying a topic creates a new topic with the same properties as the original. Links to grade items or competency activities are not copied. You can choose to copy pinned messages along with the topic. Copying a topic does not copy any normal, unpinned messages inside the topic, however you can copy or move individual messages from inside the existing topic once the new topic is created. If you want to move a topic from one forum to another, edit the topic and select a new forum from the Forum drop-down list on the Properties tab.

1. On the main discussions page, click  **Copy** on the top tool menu.
2. Click  **Copy a Topic**.
3. From the **Forum to Copy** list, select the forum containing the topic you want to copy.
4. From the **Topic to Copy** list, select the topic you want to copy.
5. In the **New Topic Title** field, type a name for the new topic.
6. From the **Copy Destination** list, select the forum you want to copy the topic to. If you select multiple forums, multiple copies of the topic are created.
7. Select **Copy pinned messages** if you want pinned messages to be copied into the new topic.
 - **Note:** If you use pinned messages to post information about the topic, you may want to copy these messages.
8. Click **Copy**.

Reordering Forums and Topics

If you want to move a topic from one forum to another, edit the topic and select a new forum from the **Forum** drop-down list on the **Properties** tab.

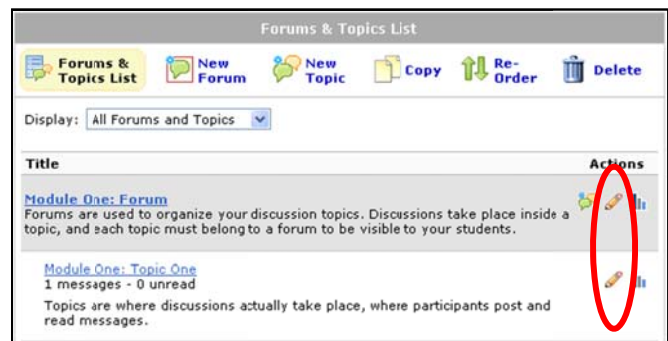
1. On the main discussions page, click  **Re-Order** on the top tool menu.
2. From the drop-down list in the **Sort Order** column, select the position in the list where you want each forum or topic to appear. Forums are ordered relative to each other; topics are ordered within each forum.
If the topics in a forum are not visible, click the **+Expand** icon next to the forum, or click **Expand All** at the top of the list.
3. Click **Save**.

Hiding a Forum or Topic

Hidden topics are not displayed on the main discussions page (except for users with permission to see hidden forums and topics or to manage discussions). By hiding topics, you can control which topics students can access at different times throughout the course. For example, you could create weekly discussion topics for students to reflect on the material covered in each week of the course and make each topic available for one week only.

You can specify start and end dates for when a forum or topic is visible so you can set up visibility ahead of time to match your course's schedule.

Tip: Instead of scheduling a topic to disappear as soon as you want the discussion to end, consider locking the topic at that point and keeping it visible for another few days. This allows students to review the discussion after it has closed so that they don't miss the last messages added.




1. On the main discussions page, click the **Edit** icon for the forum or topic you want to hide (Figure 15).
 - a. **Note:** You can also set visibility options when creating a new forum or topic.
2. If the options in the **Availability** section are not visible, click **Show forum visibility options** or **Show topic visibility options**.
3. Select the options you want (Figure 16):
 - a. To hide the forum or topic immediately, select **Hide this forum** or **Hide this topic**. The forum or topic will remain hidden until you select **Forum is always visible** or **Topic is always visible** again.
 - b. To hide the forum or topic until a certain date or



after a certain date, select **Forum is visible for a specific date range** or **Topic is visible for a specific date range**, then select **Has Start Date** or **Has End Date** and specify the dates.

4. Click **Save**.

Locking a Forum or Topic


1. On the main discussions page, click the  **Edit** icon for the forum or topic you want to lock. You can also set locking options when creating a new forum or topic (Figure 17)
2. If the options in the **Locking options** section are not visible, click **Show locking options**.
3. Select the options you want:
 - a. To lock the forum or topic immediately, select **Lock forum** or **Lock topic**. The forum or topic will remain locked until you select **Unlock forum** or **Unlock topic** again.
 - b. To open the forum or topic within a date range, select **Unlock forum for a specific date range** or **Unlock topic for a specific date range**, then select **Has Start Date** or **Has End Date** and specify the dates.
4. Click **Save**.



Setting Release Conditions


Release conditions allow you to specify requirements that students must satisfy before they can access a discussion forum or topic. For example, you might require that students view a content topic or submit an assignment to a dropbox folder before accessing a discussion topic. Or you might create an extra-help discussion topic for students who fail a particular quiz.

Add or Release Conditions to a Forum or Topic

1. On the main discussions page, click the  **Edit** icon for the forum or topic you want to add release conditions to; or, if you are creating a new forum or topic, you can add release conditions after clicking **Save**.
2. Click the **Restrictions** tab.
3. If the controls in the **Release Conditions** section are not visible, click **Show Forum Release Conditions** or **Show Topic Release Conditions**.
4. Do one of the following:
 - If you have already created a release condition elsewhere and want to attach it to this forum or topic, click **Attach Existing**. Select the condition(s) you want to add, and then click **Attach**.
 - If you want to add a new release condition that does not already exist, click **Create and Attach**. Enter the details for the new release condition, and then click **Create**.
5. Click **Save**.



Remove Release Conditions from a Forum or Topic

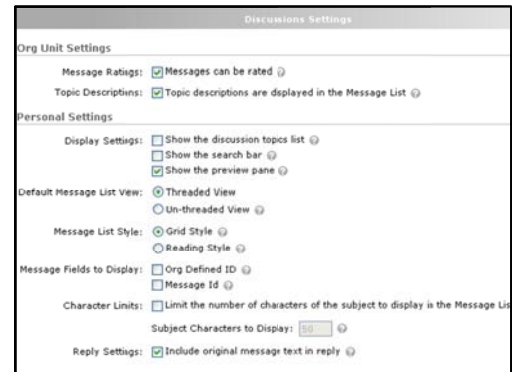
1. On the main discussions page, click the  **Edit** icon for the forum or topic you want to remove release conditions from.
2. Click the **Restrictions** tab.
3. If the controls in the Release Conditions section are not visible, click **Show Forum Release Conditions** or **Show Topic Release Conditions**.
4. Click the **Remove Condition** icon next to each condition you want to remove. Or, to remove all conditions, click the **Remove All Conditions** icon at the top of the list of conditions.
5. Click **Save**.



Deleting a Forum or Topic

1. On the main discussions page, click **Delete** on the top tool menu.
2. **Select** the forums and topics you want to delete.
3. Click the **Delete Selected** button.

Note: If you select to delete a forum, it will also delete the topics within that forum.



Changing Settings and Preferences

On the main discussions page, click  **Settings** on the left tool menu. See Figure 18 to preview the **Settings** page.

Tip: You can also modify some of your personal display settings from **My Preferences** on the My Home page

Org Unit Settings

Org unit settings apply to all users and all forums and topics in your course (Figure 18).

Org Unit Setting	Description
Message Ratings	Turns the message ratings control on or off for all topics within the course offering.
Topic Descriptions	Controls whether topic descriptions are displayed in the message list. You may want to turn off this feature to save space for users with small screens.

Personal Settings

Personal settings control the way you view messages inside a topic. These settings apply to all course offerings wherever you access discussions but do not affect other users.

Personal Settings	Description
Display Settings	<p>Show the discussion topics list: The discussion topics list appears at the left of the message list and provides quick navigation between topics.</p> <p>Show the search bar: allows you to search for messages. You can also show or hide the search bar by clicking Show Search or Hide Search on the action bar inside a topic.</p> <p>Show the preview pane: If you are using the Grid Style message list, you can choose to open messages in a preview pane at the bottom of the screen or in a pop-up window. Select this option to use the preview pane, clear it to use a pop-up window.</p>
Default Message List View	<p>Controls whether messages are displayed in threaded or unthreaded view when you enter a topic. In threaded view, messages are grouped together with their replies, allowing you to follow the thread of a conversation. In unthreaded view, messages can be sorted by author, date, subject, message ID, or average rating.</p>
Message List Styles	<p>Grid Style: resembles a traditional email reader where each message's subject, author, and date appear in a list without the full text of the message. To read a message, you click the subject; the full text is displayed in a separate area.</p> <p>Reading Style: shows the full text of all messages in a single view. You read messages simply by scrolling through the page, without having to select messages and read them one at a time in a dedicated reading pane or a popup window.</p>
Message Fields to Display	<p>Org Defined ID: Displays the Org Defined ID for the message author in the Message List view.</p> <p>Message ID: Displays the Message Id for messages in the Message List view.</p>
Character Limits	<p>If you are using the Grid Style message list, you can choose to display only the first few characters of each message's subject to save screen space. Select the checkbox and enter the maximum number of characters of each message's subject you would like to see.</p>
Reply Settings	<p>Select this option to automatically include the text of any message you reply to when composing a reply.</p>



Adding Activities to a Topic

You can associate a discussion topic with a competency activity to tie the topic's assessment to a set of learning objectives and a competency you want your students to master. You will also be able to evaluate the topic using a rubric. You can add the activity by locating the topic you wish to add it to and **Edit** it then click the **Activities Tab**.

Note: For information about activities, competencies, and rubrics, see the Competencies and Rubrics User and Reference Guide.

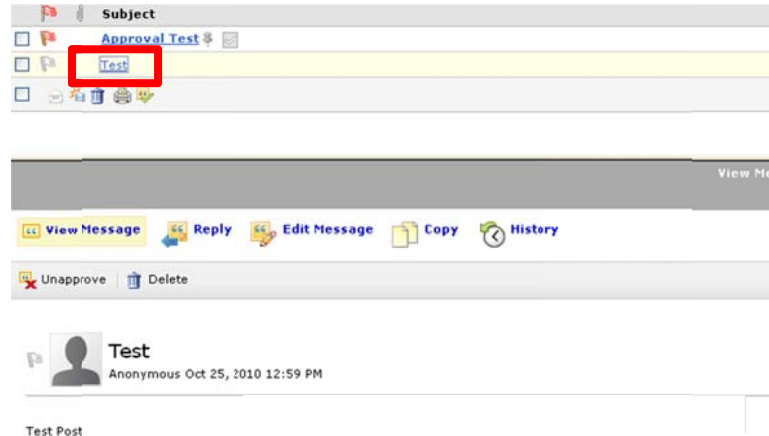
Note: For information regarding setting up and using student assessments, please refer to **D2L 4: Assessment Tools**.

Viewing Statistics

- To view statistics for a specific forum or topic, click the  **View Statistics** icon for that forum or topic.
- To view statistics for the entire course, click  **Statistics** on the left tool menu on the main discussions page. **Tip:** You can sort statistics by clicking on any column heading.

Opening a Message

If you are using the Grid Style message list, click on the subject of any message to view that message. The message is displayed either in a **preview pane** at the bottom of the window or in a separate window, depending on whether you have selected the option.



Finding New Messages

To help you keep up with new messages added to your course's discussions, the Learning Environment identifies unread messages in a number of places:

- If you use the **Updates** widget on your course homepage, the widget displays the total number of unread messages for all discussion topics in your course.
- On the main discussions page, the number of unread messages appears beneath each topic (Figure 9).



Posting a Message

- Join the topic where you want to post a message.
- Click **Compose** on the action bar.
- Enter a Subject.
- Enter the Message
 - Note:** Advanced allows you to further edit your text
 - Tip:** Click the HTML Editor icon if you want to format your message.
- Set any options you want:

TO	DO THIS
Pin your message to the top of the topic	Select the Pin Message checkbox.
Make your message anonymous	Select the Author anonymously checkbox. This checkbox is only available if the topic or the topic's forum allows anonymous messages.

Attach a file

Post your message to multiple topics

Click the **Add a File** button and select the files you want to attach.


1. If the **Add Topics** button is not visible in the **Message Posting Options** section, click **Show the message posting options**.
2. Click the **Add Topics** button.
3. Select the topics you want to post the message to.
4. Click **Insert**.

6. Click **Post** to complete and display the message now, or **Save Draft** to save the message without posting it.

Draft Messages

When composing a new message, you can save the message as a draft (click **Save Draft**) to continue working on it later. This is useful if you are composing a long or complex message and want time to review it before you post it for others to read. *Note: You can only save new messages as drafts. You cannot save a draft when replying to another message.*

Open a Draft Message

1. Join the topic where you created the message.
2. In the **View** drop-down at the top right of the page, select **Drafts** then apply.
3. Do one of the following:
 - a. If you are using the Grid Style message list, click the message's subject to open the message and then click  **Edit Message** on the top tool menu.
 - b. If you are using the Reading Style message list, click the **Edit** link beneath the message header.



Pinned Messages

Pinned messages always appear at the top of the message list, regardless of how the list is sorted or displayed. You can pin a message by selecting **Pin Message** when creating or editing a post. In threaded view, the thread following a pinned message appears as the first thread in the list. You can use pinned messages to post announcements, rules of conduct, discussion summaries, or any other important information you want to display at the top of a message list. Pinned messages can also be copied along with the topic they belong to; normal messages cannot. **Note:** *You cannot pin a message if it is a reply to another message.*

Replying to a Message

You must be viewing a message before you can reply to that message.

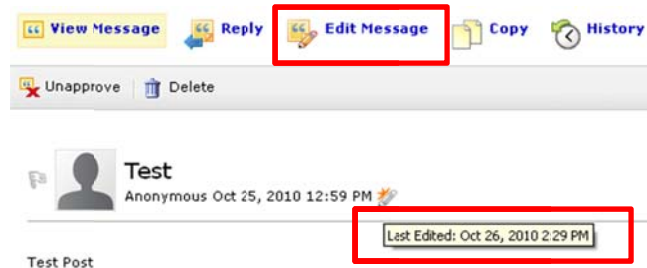
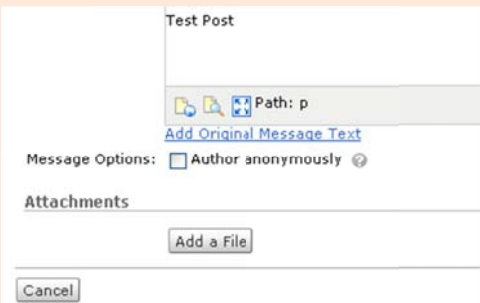
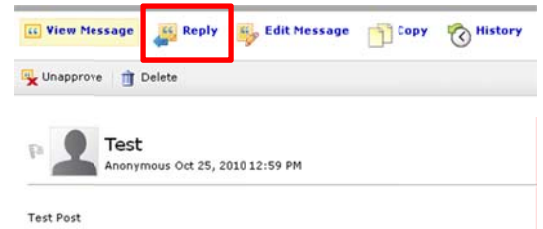
1. Do one of the following:
 - a. If you are using a Grid Style message list, click the subject of the message you want to reply to, and then click **Reply** on the top tool menu.
 - b. If you are using the Reading Style message list, click the **Reply** link below the message header.
2. Enter your reply text in the **Message** field.
3. If you want to include the original message text in your reply, click the **Add Original Message Text** link.
4. Set any options you want:

TO	DO THIS
Message Options	Select the Author anonymously checkbox. This checkbox is only available if the topic or the topic's forum allows anonymous messages.
Attach a file	Click the Add a File button and select the files you want to attach.

5. Click **Post**.



Editing a Message

Editing a message allows you to change the subject or message text, add or remove attachments, or change whether the message is pinned. Users can only edit their own messages.



Edited messages are indicated by the  **Last Edited** icon in the message header.


1. Do one of the following:



- If you are using the Grid Style message list, open the message and click  **Edit Message** on the top tool menu.
- If you are using the Reading Style message list, click the **More Actions** link below the message header, then click  **Edit** on the action bar at the top of the message.


2. Make the changes you want.

3. Click **Save**.

Viewing a Message's History

If a message has been edited, the message history records all previous versions of the message, who edited it, and when it was approved (Figure 10). Edited messages are indicated by the  **Last Edited** icon in the message header.

- If you are using the Grid Style message list, open the message and click  **History** on the top tool menu.
- If you are using the Reading Style message list, click the **More Actions** link below the message header, then click  **History** on the action bar at the top of the message.



Message History	
Message Changes	
Jennifer Keating	
Test Posting 1	
Test posting.	
Jennifer Keating	
Test Posting 1	
Test posting.	


Finding Messages that Require Approval

If when creating your topic you clicked “messages must be approved before being display”



You can find unapproved messages in the following ways:

- On the main discussions page, the number of unapproved messages is displayed beneath the topic's name. To see only topics that contain unapproved messages, select “Topics with Unapproved” from the **Display** drop-down list at the top of the page.
- Inside a topic, if you have the **Discussions List** turned on, the number of unapproved messages is the second number displayed in parentheses beside each topic. E.g. a topic that read “First Test Questions (5) (3)” would have three unapproved messages.

In the message list inside a topic, unapproved messages are indicated by the  **Message Requires Approval** icon. To see only messages that require approval, select “**Unapproved Only**” from the **View** drop-down list at the top left of the page.



Approving Messages

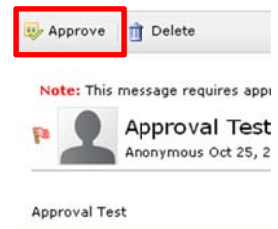
If a topic requires message approval, when messages are posted they are only visible to instructors or other users with permission to approve messages. To make these messages visible to all users, you must manually approve them. Note: Messages posted by users with permission to approve messages are automatically approved

You can turn message approval on or off from the **Properties** tab when creating or editing a Forum or Topic.

Note: If a message is not appropriate for the topic and you do not want to approve it, you can do any of the following: Leave the message unapproved, edit the message before approving it, or delete the message.



If you are using the Grid Style message list, do one of the following:

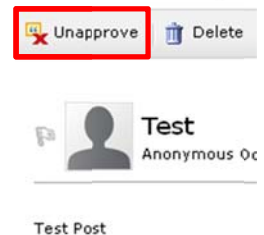
- Open the message and click  **Approve** on the action bar.
- Select one or more messages from the message list and click the  **Approve** icon at the top or bottom of the list.



If you are using the Reading Style message list, click the **Approve** link below the message header.


Unapprove a Message

- In the Grid Style message list, open the message and click  **Unapprove** on the action bar.
- In the Reading Style message list, click the **More Actions** link below the message header, then click  **Unapprove** on the action bar above the message.



Searching For Messages



You can search for messages containing a specific word, written by a specific author, posted within a date range, flagged or unflagged, read or unread, and so on.

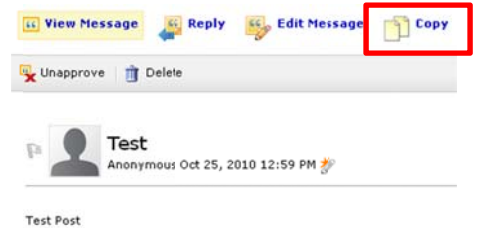
1. Join the topic you want to search.
2. If the **Search For** field is not visible at the top of the message list, click  **Show Search** on the top tool menu.
3. Enter the word you want to find in the **Search For** field and click **Search**.

The message list displays the messages that match your search. To see all messages again, click **Clear Search** at the top of the list of messages.

Copying or Moving a Message

Messages don't have to stay in the topics they are initially posted to. If you think a message belongs in a different topic, you can move it by copying it and choosing the option to delete the original message. If a message is applicable to more than one topic, you can copy it into as many other topics as you want.



1. Do one of the following:
 - a. If you are using the Grid Style message list, open the message and click  **Copy** on the top tool menu (you must be viewing the topic to copy it).
 - b. If you are using the Reading Style message list, click **More actions** beneath the message header, then click  **Copy** on the action bar above the message.
2. Select the forum and topic you want to copy the message into.
3. Select any additional options you want:
 - a. To copy any replies made to the message, select **Copy message replies**.
 - b. To move the message from the current topic into the selected one, select **Delete original message after copy completes**.
 - c. **Caution:** If you choose to delete the original message and do not copy the replies, any replies made to the message are deleted.
4. Click **Copy**.

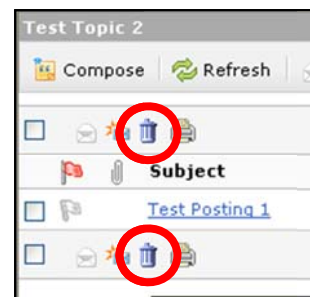



Deleting a Message

You can delete a message to remove it from a topic. Caution: Deleting a message also deletes any replies to that message.

If you are using the Grid Style message list, do one of the following:

- Select the messages you want to delete in the message list and then click the  **Delete Selected Messages** icon at the top or bottom of the list.
 - Or
- Open the message you want to delete and click  **Delete** on the top tool menu.



If you are using the Reading Style message list, click the **More actions** link below the message header and then click  **Delete** on the action bar above the message.

Rating Messages

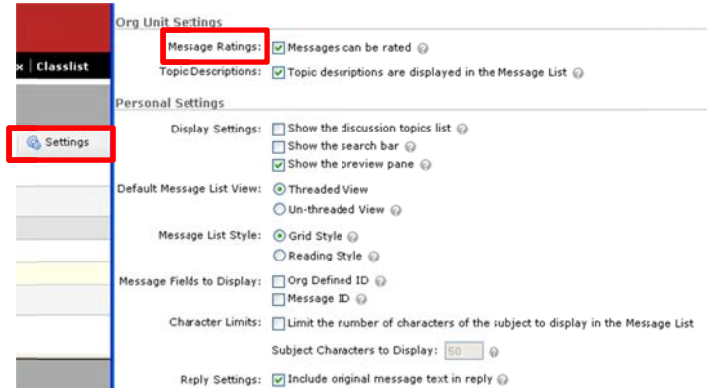
If you turn on message rating for your course, under the settings icon, students can anonymously rate each message posted to any discussion topic. The resulting average is displayed above each message and you can search for messages based on their average rating, which makes it easy to locate the best or most insightful messages posted to a topic.



Turning on message rating can also serve as a participation incentive for students. To rate a message (ratings must be enabled), click one of the orange stars in the message rating control located at the top right of the message (Figure 12).



Enable Rating Messages

1. On the main discussions page, click **Settings** on the left tool menu.
2. In the **Org Unit Settings** section, select **Messages can be rated**.
3. Click **Save**.



Flagging a Message




You can use message flags to mark a message you want to review later, monitor for replies, or follow-up on. In a topic's message list, you can search for flagged messages or use the **View** drop-down to view flagged messages only. Your message flags are visible only to you; other users cannot see them.

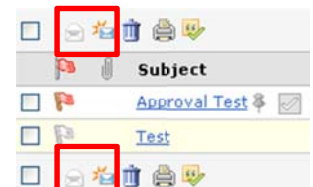
Click the  (**Not Flagged**) to flag an item or the  (**Flagged**) to unflag a message located on the left side of the message subject.

Marking a Message Read or Unread

If you are using the Grid Style message list, messages are automatically marked as read when you open them (depending on your site's configuration), but if you are using the Reading Style message list or you print messages to read them you will need to manually mark messages as read to indicate to the Learning Environment that the message is no longer new.

In some cases you may also want to manually mark a message as unread—for example, if you open the message from the Grid Style message list but do not finish reading it.

- In the Grid Style message list, select one or more messages from the list and click the  **Mark Read** or  **Mark Unread** icon at the top of the list.
- In the Reading Style message list, click the **Mark Read** or **Mark Unread** link below the message header.
- In either view, mark all messages in the topic 'read' by clicking  **Mark All Read**



Printing Messages

If you prefer reading from paper, you can print messages from the Grid Style message list. You cannot print messages from the Reading Style message list.

1. In the Grid Style message list, select the messages you want to print.
2. Click the **View Selected Messages as Printable** icon at the top or bottom of the list.
3. Click the **Print** button.



Exporting Statistics to a CSV file

Back on the “discussions” tab

1. Go to the page displaying the statistics you want to export.
2. Click **Export to CSV File** on the action bar.
3. Once the file has finished processing, click the file name to download the file.