

# D2L's Brightspace: Participating In and Grading Discussions

## Quick Summary

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This document is part four in the series on discussions. It includes a review of terminology and explains how to join your students by participating in Discussions and how to grade student responses.

### Additional Discussion Resources:

[Getting Started](#) | [Creating Discussions](#) | [Editing Discussions](#)

## Video

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If you prefer to watch a video, select the link: [Brightspace Discussions Part 4: Participation and Grading](#)

## Terminology & Structure

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Brightspace uses unique terminology for discussion, organizing them into the following structures:

### Forum

A container to organize your discussions.

### Topic

The prompt to which your students will reply. Topics live inside of Forums to help keep them organized.

### Thread

Students and/or instructors create threads to respond to topics.

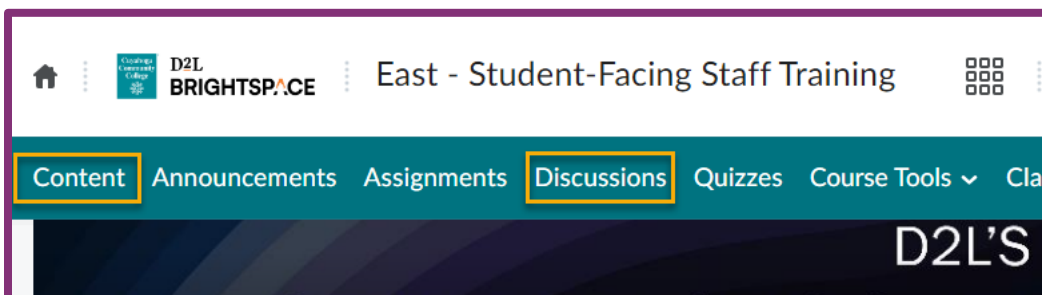
## Participating in Discussions

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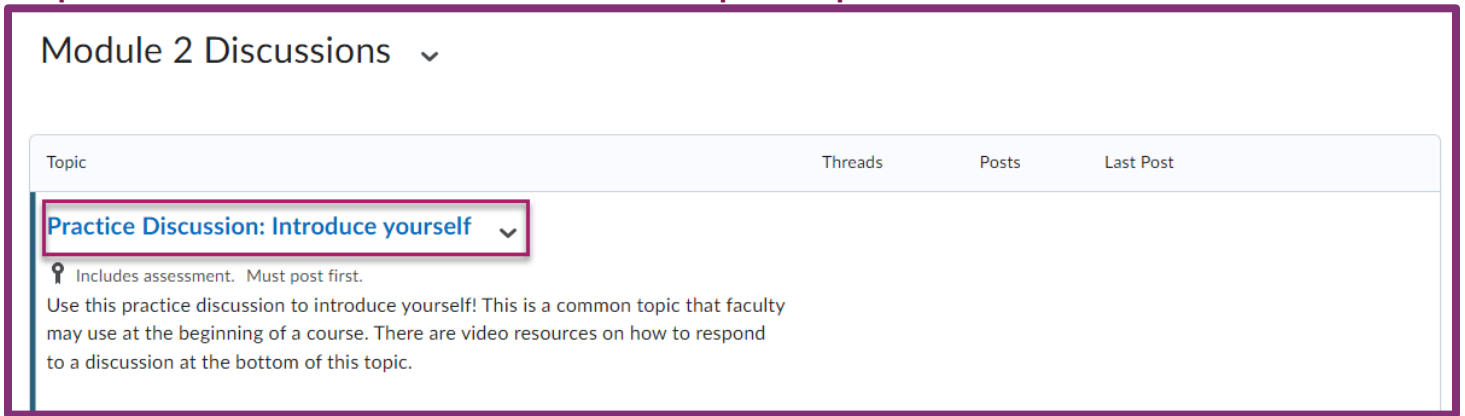
As your students are contributing responses, you will most likely want to join in to provide encouragement, give constructive feedback, and keep the conversation moving through asking follow-up questions.

### Step 1: Navigate to the Discussion

- **Option 1:** Select the Discussions link in the Teal Navigation Bar.
- **Option 2:** Locate the Discussion inside your Content modules.

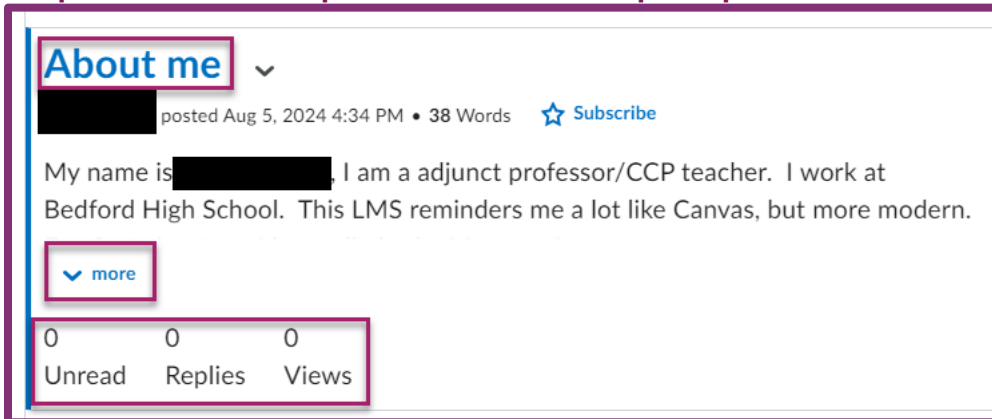


## Step 2: Select the name of the Discussion Topic to open it.



The screenshot shows a dropdown menu titled "Module 2 Discussions" with a downward arrow. Below it is a table with columns for "Topic", "Threads", "Posts", and "Last Post". The first row in the table has a dropdown menu for "Practice Discussion: Introduce yourself" with a downward arrow. Below the table, there is a key icon and the text "Includes assessment. Must post first." followed by a paragraph: "Use this practice discussion to introduce yourself! This is a common topic that faculty may use at the beginning of a course. There are video resources on how to respond to a discussion at the bottom of this topic."

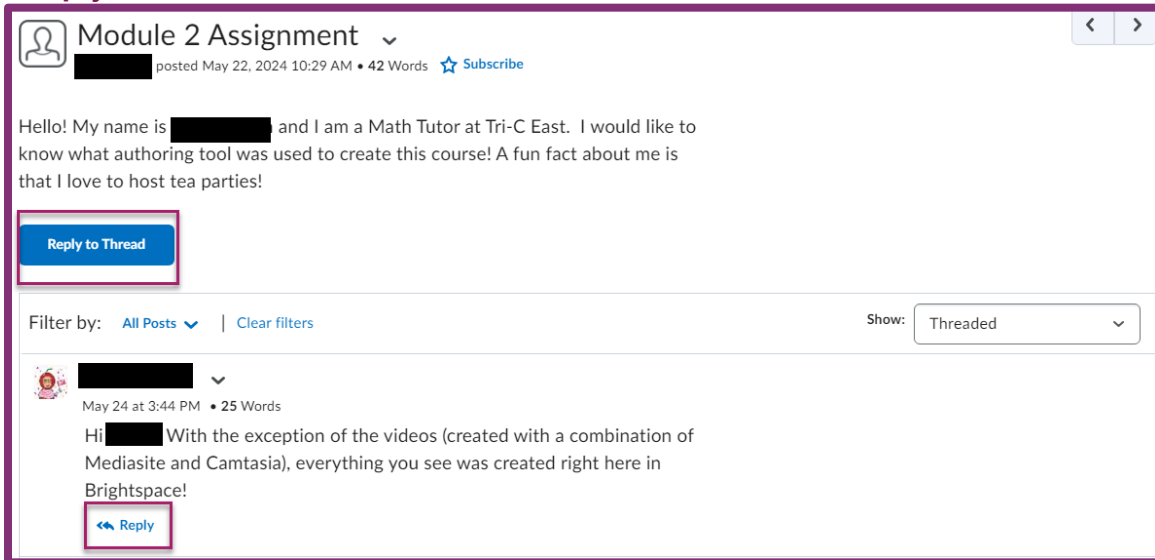
## Step 3: Scroll down past the discussion prompt to see student Threads.



The screenshot shows a student thread post titled "About me" with a downward arrow. The post is by a user whose name is redacted, posted on Aug 5, 2024 at 4:34 PM, with 38 words and a "Subscribe" button. The text of the post is: "My name is [redacted]. I am a adjunct professor/CCP teacher. I work at Bedford High School. This LMS reminds me a lot like Canvas, but more modern." Below the text is a "more" button with a downward arrow. At the bottom, there are three statistics: "0 Unread", "0 Replies", and "0 Views".

- Select the title of the Thread (student’s post) to open it. (This is where you can view replies and reply yourself.)
- Select “More” if you just want to read the student’s whole post without replying or viewing replies.
- You can also view statistics for the Thread:
  - **Unread:** How many replies are in this thread that you have not seen yet.
  - **Replies:** Total number of replies in the Thread.
  - **Views:** How many times that Thread has been viewed by others (typically, this is a rough representation of the number of students who have viewed the thread.)

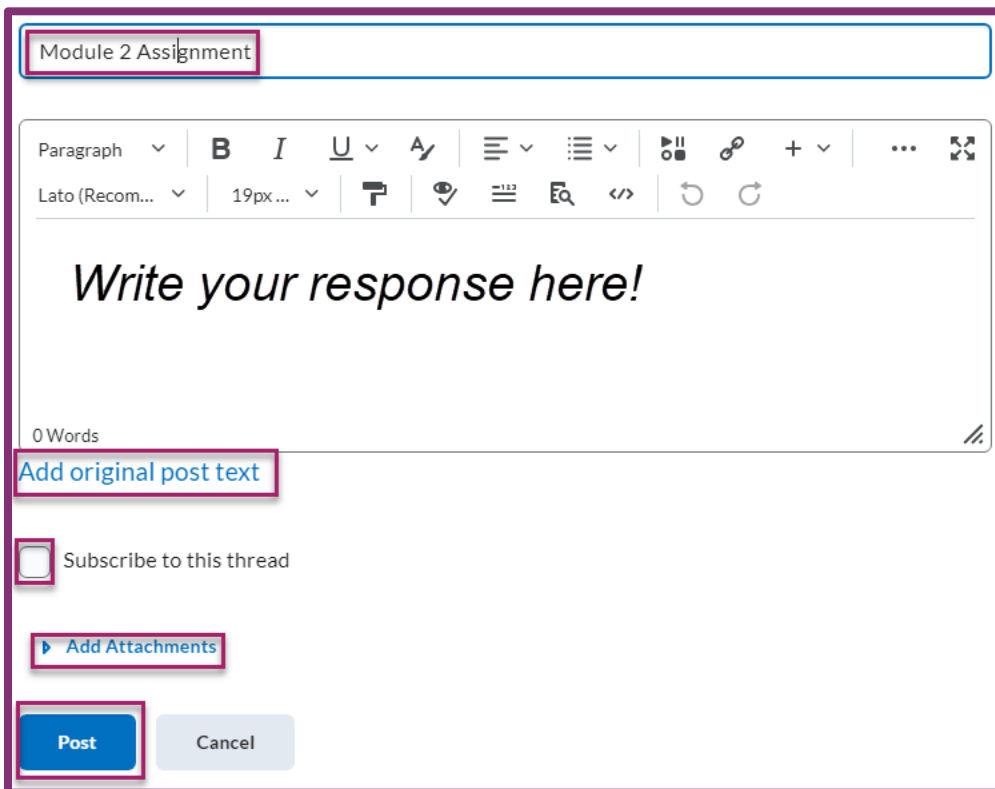
**Step 4: To reply, select the title of an individual Thread (see above) and select the button, “Reply to Thread.”**



The screenshot shows a forum thread titled "Module 2 Assignment" posted by a user on May 22, 2024. The thread content is: "Hello! My name is [redacted] and I am a Math Tutor at Tri-C East. I would like to know what authoring tool was used to create this course! A fun fact about me is that I love to host tea parties!". Below the thread, there is a "Reply to Thread" button highlighted with a red box. Below the thread, there are filter options: "Filter by: All Posts" and "Show: Threaded". Below the thread, there is a reply from another user on May 24 at 3:44 PM: "Hi [redacted] With the exception of the videos (created with a combination of Mediasite and Camtasia), everything you see was created right here in Brightspace!". Below this reply, there is a "Reply" button highlighted with a red box.

- You can also comment on another student’s response to the Thread by selecting “Reply” under the comment.

**Step 5: Type your response and select “Post.”**



The screenshot shows the text input field for replying to a thread. The thread title "Module 2 Assignment" is visible at the top. The text input field contains the placeholder text "Write your response here!". Below the text input field, there is a "Post" button highlighted with a red box. Other buttons visible include "Add original post text", "Add Attachments", "Subscribe to this thread", and "Cancel".

## Additional Options:

- Change the title (uncommon)
- Select “Add original post text” to quote the student’s Thread in your reply.
- Select the box “Subscribe to this thread” if you want to receive notifications of future replies.
  - Helpful if you have asked a follow up question and want to know when you get a reply.
- Select “Add Attachments” if you want to attach a file.

## Navigation Tips:

1. When you are reading a Thread, you can use the “Next” and “Previous” buttons to navigate from one Thread to the next.
2. You can use the breadcrumb trail at the top left of the screen to navigate back to the Topic.

## Grading Discussions

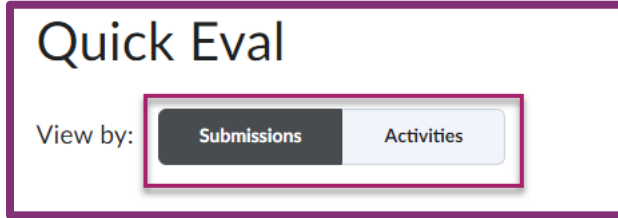
There are three ways you can access grading to give feedback on your students’ submissions. Regardless of the method you choose, you will see both the student’s initial Thread in addition to any comments they have made on other’s Threads.

### How to Grade with Quick Eval

#### Method 1: Access Quick Eval Directly

From anywhere in the course, select “Course Tools” and then “Quick Eval.”

This defaults to “**Submissions**” view, which shows you all topics that need graded (quizzes, assignments, discussions, etc.). You can switch to “**Activities**” view to quickly find only submissions for the discussion you want to grade.



### Submissions View

Select the name of the student whose submission you want to grade.

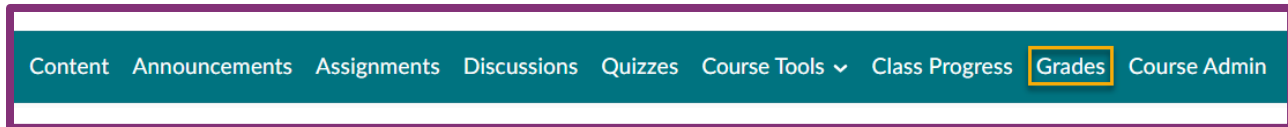
### Activities View

When you hover over the “Completed” icon, it will say “Evaluate All.” Select this to begin grading.

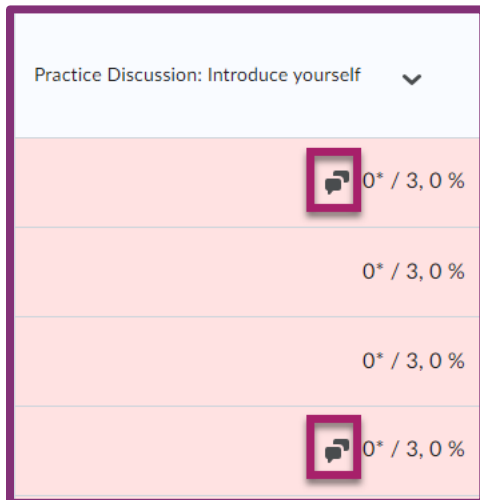


### Method 2: Access from Grades

Select the “Grades” tab in the Teal Navigation Bar.

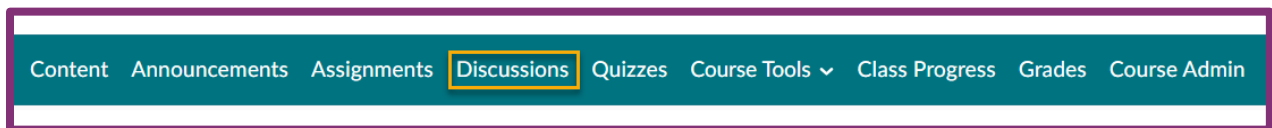


Locate the gradebook column for the Discussion you want to grade. You will see a speech bubble icon that represents a submission. Select it to begin grading.

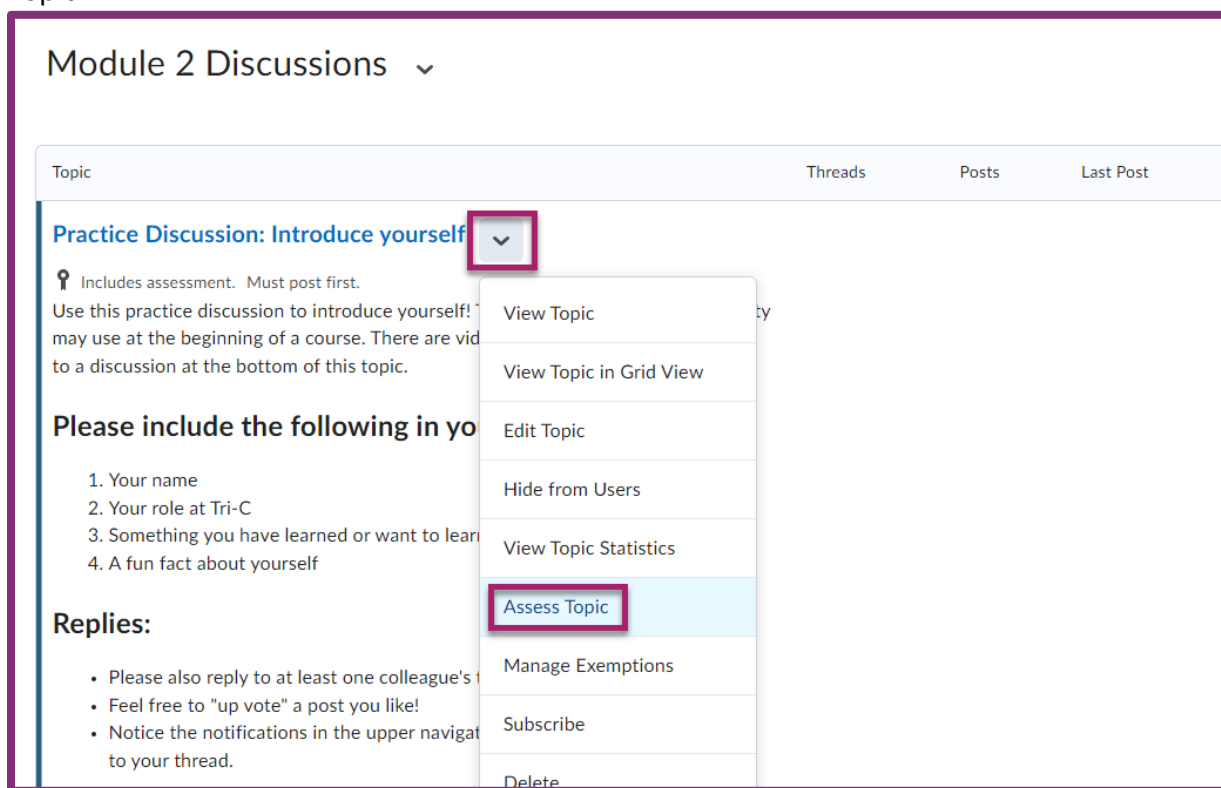


### Method 3: Access from the Discussion Topic

From the Teal Navigation Bar, select “Discussions.”



Locate the Discussion Topic you want to grade. Select the dropdown arrow and select “Assess Topic.”



The screenshot shows a discussion topic titled "Practice Discussion: Introduce yourself" under the heading "Module 2 Discussions". The topic includes a key icon indicating it has an assessment and a list of instructions for participants. A dropdown menu is open over the topic title, with the "Assess Topic" option highlighted in blue and a red box around it. Other menu options include "View Topic", "View Topic in Grid View", "Edit Topic", "Hide from Users", "View Topic Statistics", "Manage Exemptions", "Subscribe", and "Delete".

## Need Help?

- For help migrating or creating your discussions, please contact the [Help Desk](#).
- For help creating engaging discussion prompts, organizing discussions into your course design, or selecting appropriate settings for your discussions, please make an appointment with the Instructional Design Team.
  - [Book a Virtual Appointment](#)
  - [Email Us](#) to meet in-person