

# Discussions in Canvas

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## Overview

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This page introduces you to discussions in Canvas, and also includes ideas about how to use your discussions page in Canvas to increase student participation and engagement with one another. This is especially important for blended and online courses, when students have less opportunity to discuss in person, but can be used as compliments to in-class activities for traditional courses as well. These ideas are meant to simply be starting places, as the possibilities for using discussions are much greater than those listed here.

## Discussions Overview

This video, from the Canvas guides explains the basics of setting up and using discussions.

[516a - Discussions Overview](#) from [Canvas LMS](#) on [Vimeo](#).

## Introductions

Discussions can be a great place to do student introductions at the beginning of the quarter. A teacher can create a discussion with their own introduction as the description and then encourage students to create their own. This can be taken a step further as you can encourage students to attach images or a short video of themselves answering get to know you questions to their posts.

## Debate

Discussions can be graded and used as a means to discuss or debate current issues related to the course. Encourage students to thoroughly research the subject and then open the discussion topic up, allowing them to share their findings with one another. To incentivize student participation, it may be helpful to ask students to post or comment on other's posts a certain number of times. It may be helpful to assign groups of students to one side of the debate or another.

## Open Discussion

You can create a discussion with no due date and an availability window that spans your entire course as a place for students to engage with the professor and one another. This can be a place for students to ask questions that they feel would benefit their classmates, to post comments or helpful links and resources for one another. This creates a unintimidating and collaborative environment for students, encouraging them to participate in this and other discussions.

## Additional Resources

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- [Canvas Groups](#)
- [Canvas Profile Pictures](#)
- [Canvas Quiz Logs](#)
- [Collaborations in Canvas](#)
- [Contact Students through Canvas](#)
- [Discussions in Canvas](#)
- [Enrolling Users in a Course](#)
- [File Locations in Canvas](#)
- [Importing Content from Courses You didn't Previously Teach](#)
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