

# Discussions in Canvas: *A How-To Guide for Faculty*

Created by the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL)

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Discussions in Canvas provide a forum for communication between participants in a course. They can be used for general discussion or Q&A over the course of a term, or can be structured as graded assignments in response to particular prompts.

For an overview of Discussions, check out the [Discussions Overview Video](#).

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## Creating a Discussion

- To create a new Discussion, click the **Discussions** link in the Course Navigation menu
  - ❖ Select the **Add Discussion** button, then give your Discussion a title and add content using the Rich Content Editor and/or links to other course content using the Content Selector
    - The Rich Content Editor is the box where you enter and format text, videos, images, and links
- Control Discussion Options below the Rich Content Editor
  - ❖ By default, Discussions allow two levels of participation: new posts and replies to existing posts. You can create a threaded discussion with the option for nested replies in Options
  - ❖ One useful option is the ability to prevent students from seeing other replies until after they have made their own post
  - ❖ In the Options section, you can choose to make the Discussion a graded assignment
- Be sure to save your work!
  - ❖ To save and publish your Discussion, making it visible to course participants, use the **Save & Publish** button

For a walk-through with step-by-step screenshots, see the [How do I create a discussion as an instructor? Guide](#).

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## Creating a Graded Discussion

- Discussions can be used as graded assignments in a course
  - ❖ Make a Discussion graded in the **Options** section when you add it to your course

- Once you select the graded option you'll be able to add details like possible points, who the Discussion is assigned to, and the due date
  - Graded Discussions can be assigned to individual students or groups if you have set them up in your course

For a walk-through with step-by-step screenshots, see the [How do I assign a graded discussion to everyone in a course? Guide](#).

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## Using Multimedia in Discussions

- Canvas Discussions have the same capabilities as VoiceThread
  - ❖ Using the Rich Content Editor, students and instructors can upload already-recorded audio and video files into Discussion posts
    - You can also record directly into the Rich Content Editor if your computer has a microphone and/or webcam
  - ❖ We recommend that students and instructors consider using [Canvas Studio](#) to record and upload multimedia files because files created and stored in Studio do not contribute to a course's file storage limit

For a walk-through with step-by-step screenshots, see the [How do I record audio using the Rich Content Editor as an instructor?](#) (These instructions are comparable to recording video, and also show where a pre-recorded video could be uploaded.)

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## Canvas Help

- Call the Canvas Help Desk: (267) 666-6253
- Chat live with Canvas support: [cases.canvaslms.com/liveagentchat](https://cases.canvaslms.com/liveagentchat)
- Visit Jefferson's Canvas website: [canvas.jefferson.edu](https://canvas.jefferson.edu)
- Reach out to campus-specific support
  - ❖ Center City: Contact the CTL's Educational Technologies team at [EdTech.Support@lists.jefferson.edu](mailto:EdTech.Support@lists.jefferson.edu) or call (215) 503-2830
  - ❖ East Falls: Contact the East Falls Help Desk at [HelpDesk@philau.edu](mailto:HelpDesk@philau.edu) or call (215) 951-4648