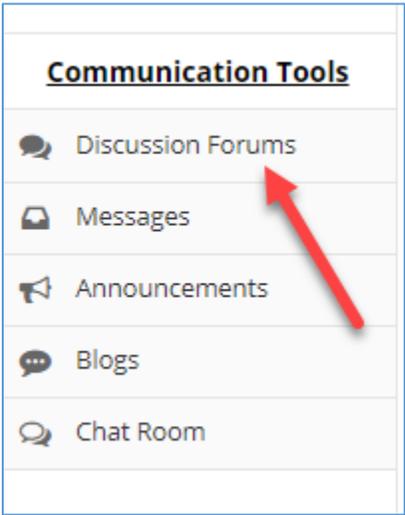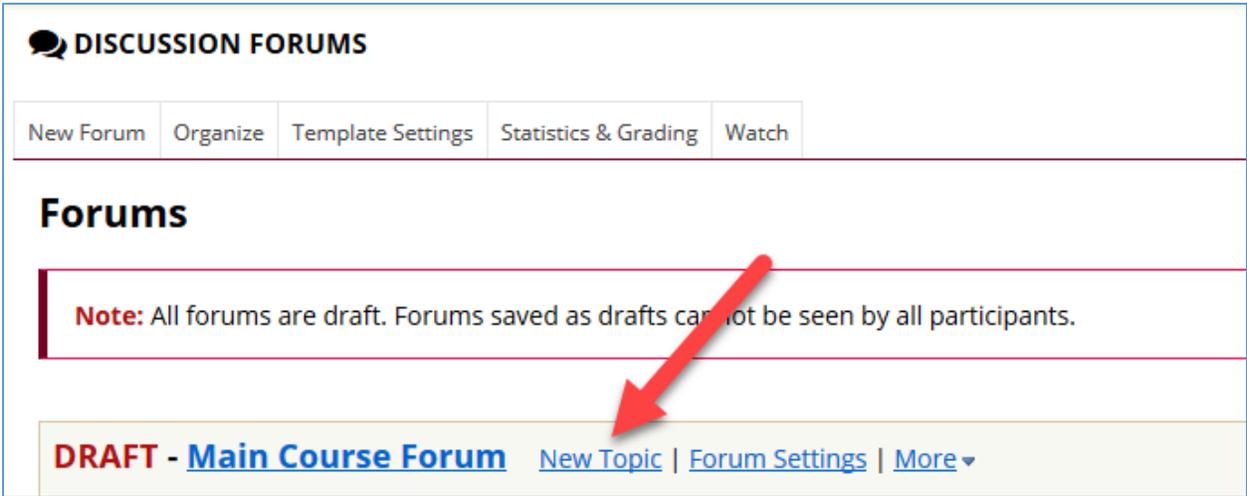# Using Discussion Forums

Create a Discussion Forum

1. Click on the Discussion Forums link located under "Communication Tools" on the left side of the page.

2. Click the New Topic link next to the Main Course Forum link.

3. Enter a Topic Title and a Description for the forum. The Description should be your directions for both the initial post as well as follow-up posts. Students are typically required to post an initial post and then comment on two posts by peers.

Tip: *When creating a discussion prompt, it is best practice to include an open-ended question for the initial prompt and then a separate prompt which asks additional open-ended questions that build off of what students will have shared in the initial prompt. See next page for examples.*

Example #1:

Based on the assigned reading, [Alexander Stephens on Slavery and the Confederate Constitution, 1861](#) write a reflection post on the following questions (minimum one paragraph; you must include specific evidence/examples from our assigned course instructional content and a specific current issue).

Initial Post: What role did slavery play in the decision of many southerns who sought to create a new separate nation? Why do you think that some people today seek to minimize slavery when remembering or commemorating the Civil War? How can learning about this time period through the words of the people who argued and fought against the United States help you to better evaluate those today who claim that slavery had little or nothing to do with the event that threatened the existence of the nation created under the 1787 constitution? (Due no later than Wednesday, _____ __, by 11:55 p.m.)

Reply Post: You must reply to at least one other student's post. Why do you agree or disagree with the comments you read? Be specific, providing examples/evidence from the assigned course instructional content and a specific similar issue that is ongoing or from the recent past. (Due no later than Sunday, _____ __, no later than 11:55 p.m.)

This assignment is worth 10 points.

Example #2:

Initial Post (Due Wednesday by 11:55pm) - Describe (with support) two potential benefits and two potential disadvantages to diagnosing someone with a mental illness (I.e., how could a diagnosis be helpful or harmful?).

Reply Post (Due Sunday by 11:55pm) - Based on your peers' responses, do you think mental health providers should provide diagnoses for their clients? (i.e., do the benefits of providing a diagnosis outweigh the potential disadvantages?)

Example #3:

Initial Post (Due Wednesday by 11:55pm) - Read case 21(Dawn D.) in your Bernheim text. In the case, Dawn receives cognitive (or cognitive-behavioral) therapy (CBT) to treat her GAD. Mindfulness is frequently used in combination with CBT to treat GAD. Do some research and describe a mindfulness exercise that might be used to help Dawn.

Reply Post (Due Sunday by 11:55pm) - If you were Dawn, would you want to receive CBT alone or Mindfulness-based CBT to treat your GAD? Why?

Grading: Your posts and replies for this forum will be graded using the standard Discussion Post [Rubric](#) provided for this course.

4. If you intend to require students to post before they can read any additional posts, check the "Require users to post before reading" box. You may want to indicate in the directions for posting that students will not see other posts until they post. Students may be confused otherwise that they don't see any other posts.

Topic Posting

☐ Lock Topic (Disable topic postings)

☐ Moderate Topic

☐ Require users to post before reading

☐ Posts are anonymous | This setting cannot be changed after topic creation.

Availability

5. If you have set up the gradebook already, select the gradebook item associated with this forum from the drop-down list. Otherwise, continue to the next step.

Grading

Gradebook item: Select a Gradebook item ▼ This will be the default when grading in this topic. (More?)

Select a Gradebook item
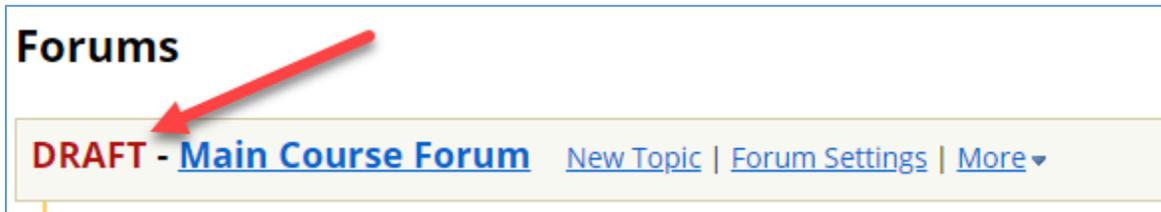
Test forum

▼ **Permissions**

6. Click the Save button.

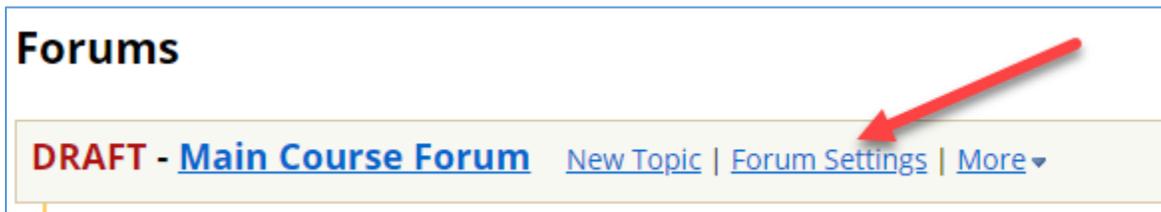Save   Save Settings & Add Topic   Save Draft   Delete Forum   Cancel

Tip: For a detailed explanation of all options when adding a discussion forum/topic, please visit the How do I create a new forum directions from the Sakai 19 User Guide.

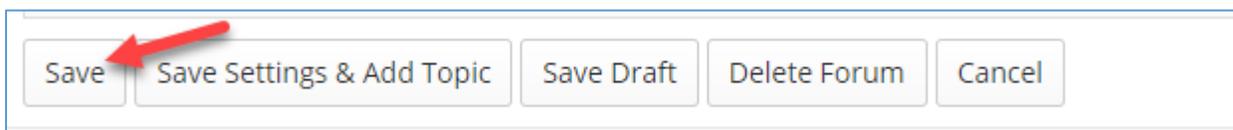## Remove DRAFT Status from a Forum or Topic

Students will not be able to view a discussion forum/topic if it is in DRAFT status (signified by the word DRAFT in red letters, as indicated in the following image).

1. Click on the settings link next to the item which is in DRAFT status. (Note: If you click on the Forum settings link, it will remove draft status for any discussion topics housed underneath it.)

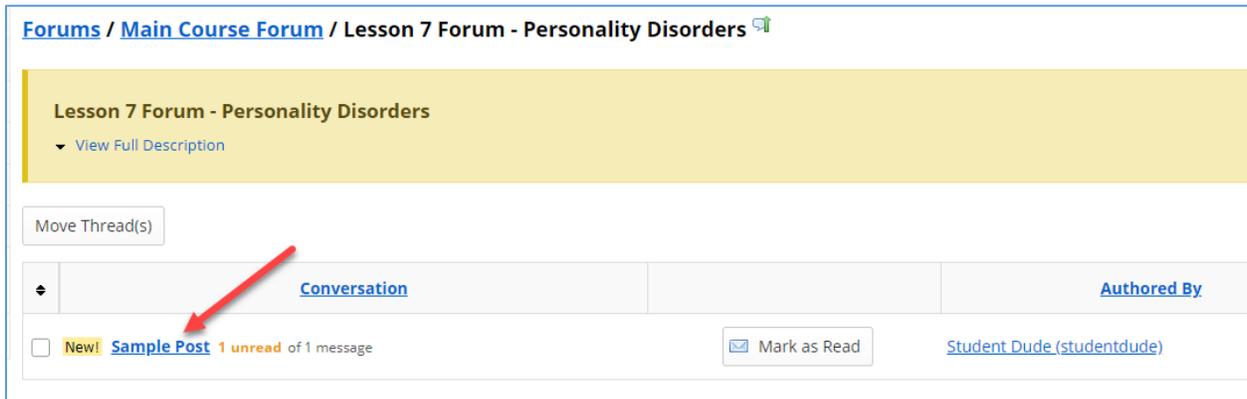2. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click the Save button.

Read Posts

When you view the list of discussion forums/topics on the Discussion Forums tool, you will see an indicator of how many unread messages you have in each discussion.

1. Click on the name of a Forum or Topic to view all messages.

2. A list of topics will display on the following screen. Click on a topic or message title to view the post.

3. You may then read the post, reply (your reply will be visible to everyone in the course), email the author of the post, etc.

Tip: For a detailed explanation of how to reply to a discussion forum/topic, please visit the How do I reply to a forum post (i.e. conversation) directions from the Sakai 19 User Guide.

You may also find the directions for How do I post to a forum topic directions from the Sakai 19 User Guide helpful.