



## Assessing Topics in Discussions – D2L Tutorial

This tutorial is designed for faculty who have previous experience using D2L. For further information or assistance, go to our [Team Dynamix Support portal](#) and click the appropriate Category to submit a ticket.

### Scenario

This tutorial will cover the steps involved when you wish to create a Topic for assessment, either for grading in the Discussion Topic alone, using a Rubric, or for sending to Grades. It will also cover the steps for assessing the Topic.

### Steps for setting up a Topic for assessment

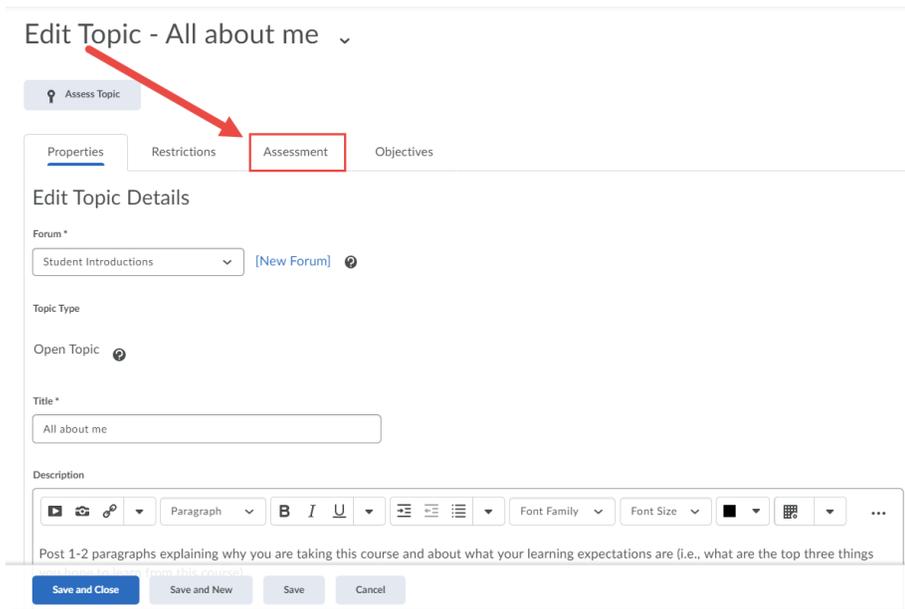
1. Go to the **Discussions** tool in your course. Either create a new Topic or edit an existing Topic.

The screenshot shows the D2L Discussions tool interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Discussions List', 'Subscriptions', 'Group and Section Restrictions', and 'Statistics'. A 'New' button is visible on the left. Below the tabs, there is a 'Filter by: Unread' section and a 'Collapse All Forums' button. The main content area shows a list of discussion topics. The first topic is 'All about me', which includes an assessment icon (a key) and the text 'Includes assessment.' Below this, there is a post preview: 'Post 1-2 paragraphs explaining why you are taking this course and about what your learning expectations are (i.e., what are the top three things you hope to learn from this course)'. To the right of the post preview, there are columns for 'Threads' (2) and 'Posts' (3). The last post is by 'Training02 Student' on 'October 5 at 4:04 PM'. A dropdown menu is open over the 'All about me' topic, showing options: 'View Topic', 'View Topic in Grid View', 'Edit Topic' (highlighted with a red box), 'Hide from Users', 'View Topic Statistics', 'Assess Topic', 'Manage Exemptions', 'Subscribe', and 'Delete'. A red arrow points from the 'Edit Topic' option to the dropdown arrow of the 'All about me' topic in the table below.

Topic	Threads	Posts	Last Post
<a href="#">All about me</a> Includes assessment. Post 1-2 paragraphs explaining why you are taking this course and about what your learning expectations are (i.e., what are the top three things you hope to learn from this course).	2	3	Training02 Student October 5 at 4:04 PM

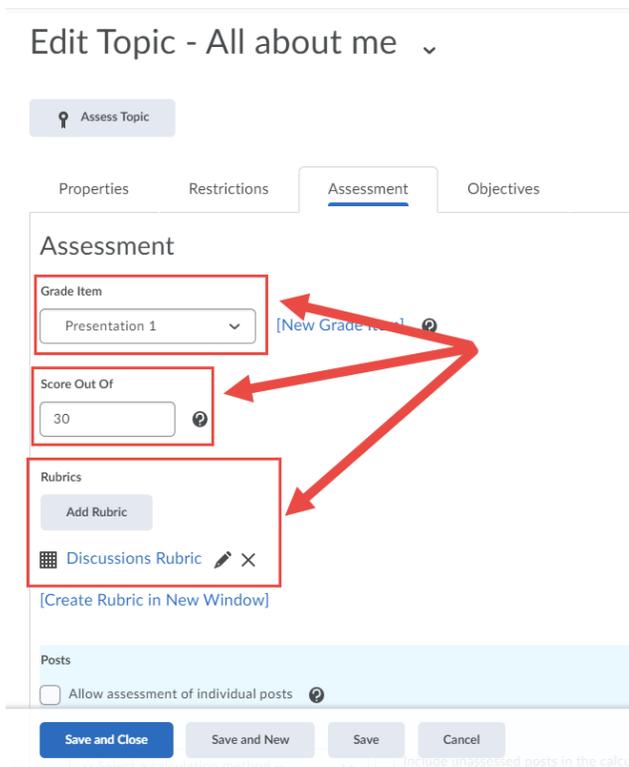


2. In the **Edit Topic** area, click the **Assessment** tab.



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Topic' interface for a topic titled 'All about me'. The 'Assessment' tab is selected and highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points from the 'Assess Topic' button to the 'Assessment' tab. The 'Edit Topic Details' section includes a 'Forum' dropdown set to 'Student Introductions', a 'Topic Type' dropdown set to 'Open Topic', and a 'Title' field containing 'All about me'. Below the title is a rich text editor for the 'Description' with a toolbar and a text area containing the placeholder text 'Post 1-2 paragraphs explaining why you are taking this course...'. At the bottom are buttons for 'Save and Close', 'Save and New', 'Save', and 'Cancel'.

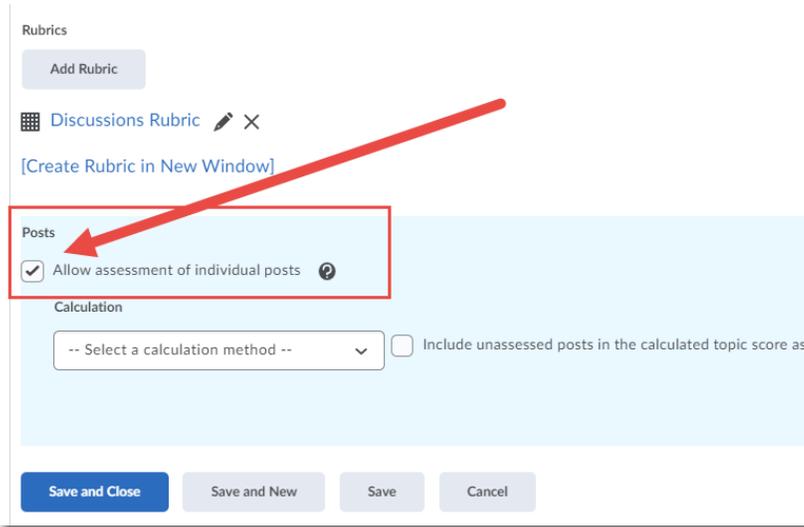
3. Add points to the **Score Out Of** box. You also can connect the Topic to a **Grade Item** or to a **Rubric** if you like.



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Topic' interface with the 'Assessment' tab selected. The 'Assessment' section is highlighted with a red box. It contains three sub-sections: 'Grade Item' with a dropdown set to 'Presentation 1', 'Score Out Of' with a text input set to '30', and 'Rubrics' with an 'Add Rubric' button and a list containing 'Discussions Rubric'. Red arrows point from the 'Assessment' tab to each of these three sub-sections. Below the rubrics is a link '[Create Rubric in New Window]'. At the bottom, there is a checkbox for 'Allow assessment of individual posts' and buttons for 'Save and Close', 'Save and New', 'Save', and 'Cancel'.

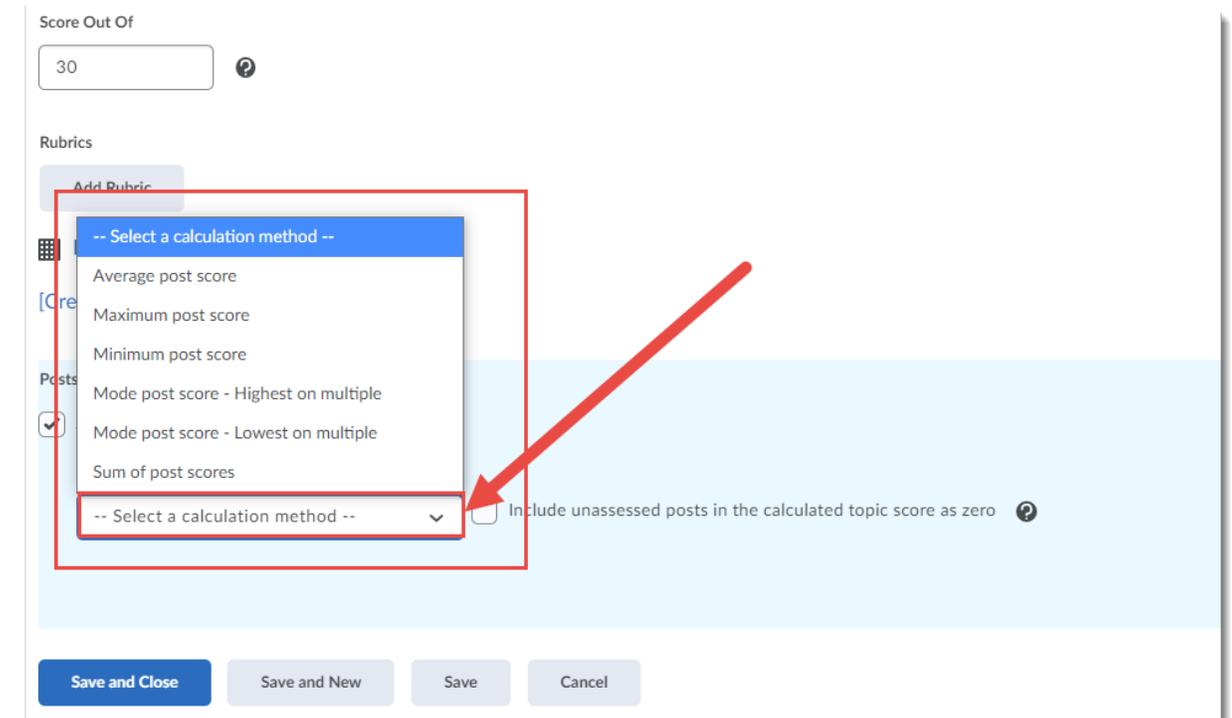


4. If you would like to assess a student's individual posts (and replies) select **Allow assessment of individual posts**.



The screenshot shows the 'Rubrics' interface. At the top, there is an 'Add Rubric' button and a section for 'Discussions Rubric' with edit and delete icons. Below this is a link '[Create Rubric in New Window]'. The 'Posts' section is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow pointing to the 'Allow assessment of individual posts' checkbox, which is checked. Below the 'Posts' section is the 'Calculation' section, which includes a dropdown menu for selecting a calculation method and a checkbox for 'Include unassessed posts in the calculated topic score as zero'. At the bottom, there are four buttons: 'Save and Close', 'Save and New', 'Save', and 'Cancel'.

5. In the **Calculation** drop-down, select the calculation method for the posts. Finish editing your **Topic** and click **Save and Close**.

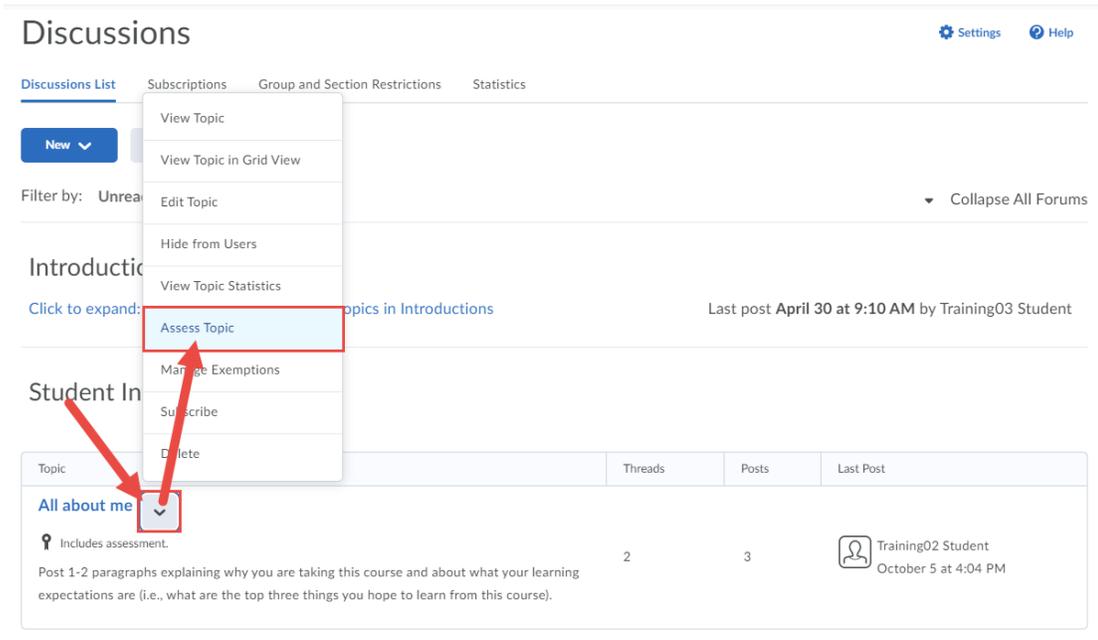


The screenshot shows the 'Rubrics' interface with the 'Calculation' dropdown menu open. The dropdown menu lists several options: '-- Select a calculation method --', 'Average post score', 'Maximum post score', 'Minimum post score', 'Mode post score - Highest on multiple', 'Mode post score - Lowest on multiple', and 'Sum of post scores'. A red box highlights the dropdown menu, and a red arrow points to the selected option '-- Select a calculation method --'. The 'Posts' section is also visible, with the 'Allow assessment of individual posts' checkbox checked. Below the 'Calculation' section is a checkbox for 'Include unassessed posts in the calculated topic score as zero'. At the bottom, there are four buttons: 'Save and Close', 'Save and New', 'Save', and 'Cancel'.



## Steps for assessing a student's posts in a Topic

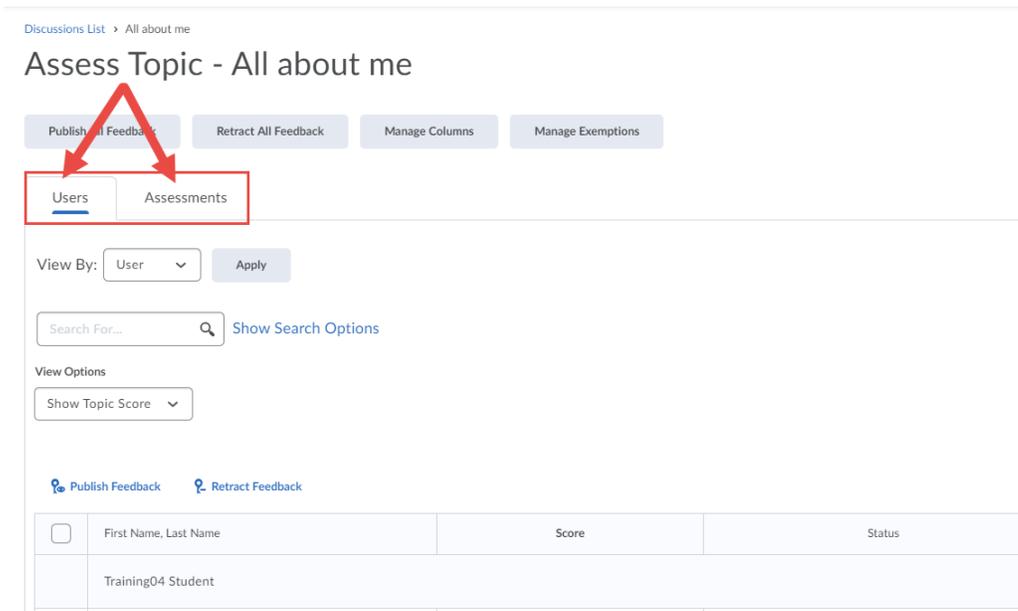
1. Go to the **Discussions** tool in your course. Topics which are set for assessment will now indicate this with an **Includes assessment** note.
2. Click the down arrow next to the Topic you want to assess and select **Assess Topic** (note that the Topic must set up for assessment as for the first part of this tutorial).



The screenshot shows the 'Discussions' tool interface. A dropdown menu is open over the 'All about me' topic, with 'Assess Topic' highlighted in blue. A red box highlights the dropdown arrow next to the topic name, and a red arrow points from this box to the 'Assess Topic' option in the menu. The topic description includes the note 'Includes assessment.' and a table with columns for 'Topic', 'Threads', 'Posts', and 'Last Post'.

Topic	Threads	Posts	Last Post
All about me Includes assessment. Post 1-2 paragraphs explaining why you are taking this course and about what your learning expectations are (i.e., what are the top three things you hope to learn from this course).	2	3	Training02 Student October 5 at 4:04 PM

3. You can assess by **User** or by **Assessments**. We will look at each in turn.



The screenshot shows the 'Assess Topic - All about me' interface. The 'Users' tab is selected and highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points from the 'Assess Topic' option in the previous screenshot to the 'Users' tab. The interface includes buttons for 'Publish All Feedback', 'Retract All Feedback', 'Manage Columns', and 'Manage Exemptions'. Below these are 'View By: User' and 'Apply' buttons, a search bar, and 'View Options' including 'Show Topic Score'. A table at the bottom shows assessment data for 'Training04 Student'.

	First Name, Last Name	Score	Status
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training04 Student		



4. Click the **Users** tab. If you are allowing for assessment by Topic Score AND a Rubric, you can change your **View Options** to view only the **Topic Score** or both the **Topic Score** and the **Rubric score (by selecting Show All Scores)**.

Assess Topic - All about me

Publish All Feedback Retract All Feedback Manage Columns Manage Exemptions

Users Assessments

View By: User Apply

Search For... Show Search Options

View Options

- Show Topic Score
- Show Topic Score
- Show All Scores

Publish Feedback Retract Feedback

	First Name, Last Name	Score	Status
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training04 Student		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic Score	- / 30 (-%)	Draft: Oct 14, 2020 4:19 PM
	Training03 Student		

Click the **Topic Score** for a student to view that student's posts and add a score.

Discussions List > All about me

Assess Topic - All about me

Publish All Feedback Retract All Feedback Manage Columns Manage Exemptions

Users Assessments

View By: User Apply

Search For... Show Search Options

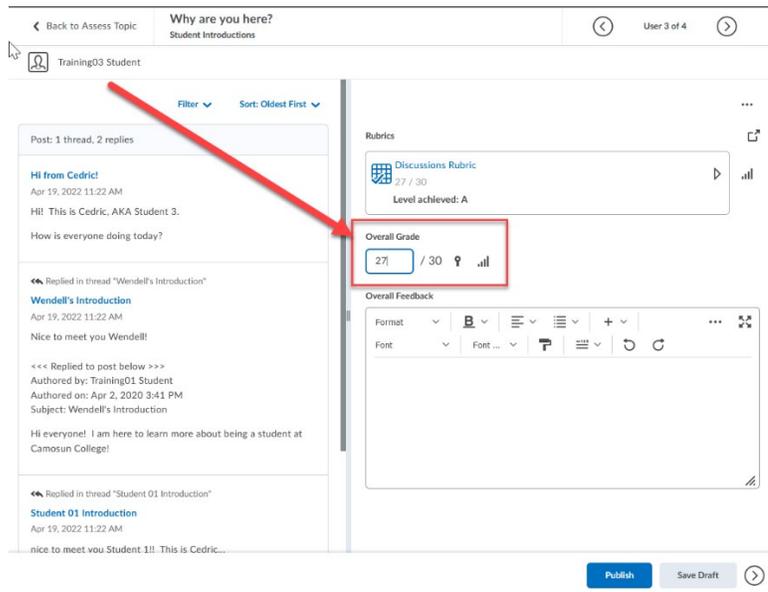
Publish Feedback Retract Feedback

	First Name, Last Name	Score	Status
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training01 Student		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic Score	- / 30 (-%)	Draft: Oct 14, 2020 4:31 PM

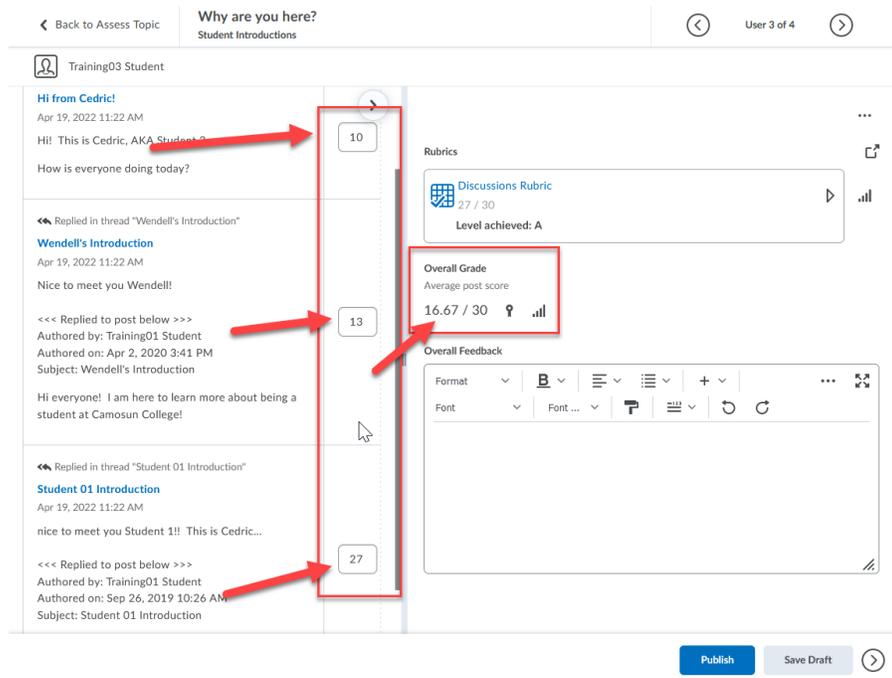


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Review the student's posts – you will see all original threads and all replies to other threads for this Topic. Add your **Topic Score** in the box at the top, right, or if you have attached a Rubric, you will use the Rubric to score the student.



If you have set the Topic to assess individual posts, you will score boxes next to the threads and replies posts. Add scores, and the Post Score at the top right will show the calculation you have chosen. If you have chosen this option, you will NOT be able to use a Rubric for scoring (only for feedback).



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Once you have added your scores, click **Save Draft** to continue assessing students, or **Publish** to release the grade to the student in the Discussion area, and in the Grades if you have linked the Topic assessment to the Grades.

The screenshot shows a discussion interface with a post on the left and a rubric/grade section on the right. The rubric section shows 'Discussions Rubric' with a score of '27 / 30' and 'Level achieved: A'. Below this, the 'Overall Grade' is displayed as '16.67 / 30' with a 'Level achieved: A' indicator. A red box highlights this overall grade section. At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'Publish' and 'Save Draft', both highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points from the overall grade section down to the 'Publish' button.

5. Click the **Assessments** tab. If you are allowing for assessment by Topic Score AND a Rubric, you can click the Assessment menu to change the assessment from **Topic Score** to **Discussions Rubric**.

The screenshot shows the 'Assess Topic - All about me' interface. The 'Assessments' tab is selected. The 'Assessment' dropdown menu is open, showing 'Topic Score' and 'Discussions Rubric' options. A red box highlights the 'Discussions Rubric' option. Below the dropdown is a table with columns for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Score', and 'Status'.

	First Name	Last Name	Score	Status
Topic Score				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training01	Student	27 / 30 (90%)	Draft: Oct 14, 2020 4:23 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training02	Student	- / 30 (0%)	Draft: Oct 14, 2020 3:38 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training03	Student	- / 30 (0%)	Not yet evaluated



Click a student's name to access the grading area for that student's posts, and follow the steps outlined above as the grading areas are the same. Once you have added your scores, or used a rubric to assess the Topic, click **Save Draft** to continue assessing students, or **Publish** to release the grade to the student in the Discussion area, and in the Grades if you have linked the Topic assessment to the Grades.

### Assess Topic - All about me

Publish All Feedback   Retract All Feedback   Manage Columns   Manage Exemptions

Users   **Assessments**

View By: User   Apply

Assessment  
Topic Score

Search For...   Show Search Options

Publish Feedback   Retract Feedback

<input type="checkbox"/>	First Name   Last Name	Score	Status
Topic Score			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Training01 Student</a>	7.5 / 30 (25%)	Draft: Oct 14, 2020 4:31 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Training02 Student</a>	- / 30 (0%)	Draft: Oct 14, 2020 3:38 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Training03 Student</a>	- / 30 (0%)	Not yet evaluated

## Things to Remember

Be aware that if you are using a Rubric AND assessing individual posts, the post scores will override the rubric score.



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