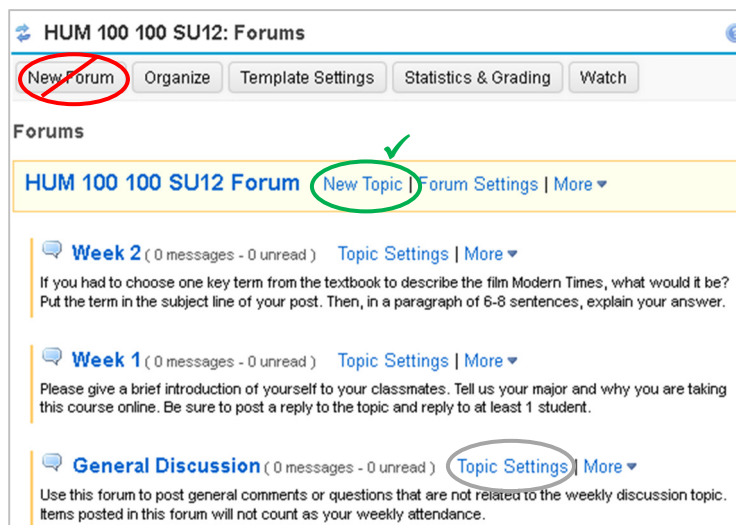


## Sakai Forums vs. Blackboard Discussion Boards

In Blackboard, many instructors (especially those who teach online) are accustomed to creating a new "Forum" for each week of the course. To accomplish this in Sakai, we recommend that you create a new **"TOPIC"** for each week instead.

Another difference between Sakai and Blackboard involves grading discussions. To use the grading feature in Sakai's Forums tool, you have to go to the Gradebook and add an item for each discussion you'll be grading. Then you will be able to associate your weekly "Topics" with those Gradebook items (under **"Topic Settings"**).



### More tips for using the Forums tool in Sakai:

- To enable the Forums tool:  
Go to Site Info > Edit Tools, select the Forums tool, click Continue, then Finish
- On the main course menu, click the Forums button to go into the Forums area.
- In the Forums area, you'll see that Sakai has created an initial course forum based on your course name (such as *"ENG 111 190 SU12 Forum"*).
- The initial course forum already has one **TOPIC** in it called General Discussion. This is a place for students to ask general questions about the course or engage in discussion not related to specific course content. Instructors can delete or hide the General Discussion topic if you don't want students to use it.
- Within the initial course forum, we recommend that you add a new **TOPIC** for each week (or for each major class discussion).
- When you go into a **TOPIC**, you'll see a button that says "Start a new conversation." This is the equivalent of "Add new thread" in Blackboard.

Blackboard	Sakai
Discussion Board	Forum
Instructor had to add a Forum	Forum provided (Ex: <i>ENG 111 190 SU12 Forum</i> ) Topic provided: General Discussion Instructors add <b>topics</b> for each major discussion
Users added <b>threads</b> within forums	Users add <b>conversations</b> within topics
Users reply to threads	Users reply to conversations
Users can reply to replies	Users can reply to replies