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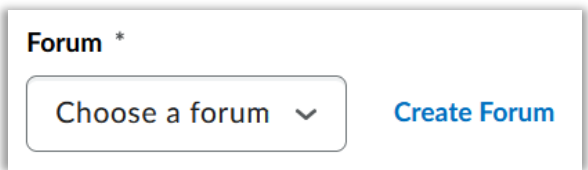
### Startup Support

LSC-Online will be providing **extended hours** on:  
 Saturday, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>  
 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
 via a [virtual open lab](#) and [ticket support](#).

## New Discussion Experience

We're pleased to share that after an eight-month "preview," the New Discussion Create/Edit Experience is now the only experience in D2L.

This update is a step towards streamlining the teaching experience by aligning the discussion creation process with Quizzes and Assignments. In addition to the new, two-paneled layout, there is also a new forum selection prompt when creating a topic for discussions. This enhancement aims to provide you with more control and flexibility in organizing and managing your course discussion forums and topics.



For detailed guidance on the updated interface, please refer to the articles [Edit Discussion Topic – Properties](#) and [Edit Discussion Topic – Right Panel](#). These resources provide step-by-step assistance to help you navigate the changes seamlessly.

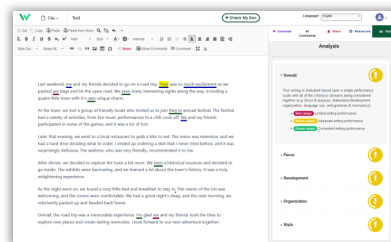
Your adaptability to these updates is valued. Should you have any questions or require support with the New Discussion Create/Edit Experience, please contact our [VTAC Support](#) team for further assistance.

## IntelliWriter in D2L

IntelliWriter is a virtual writing coach designed to help students improve their writing in real-time across multiple disciplines and languages. Powered by artificial intelligence, [IntelliWriter](#) provides immediate feedback and adaptive revision directives. This application replaces Grammarly and is available now to all Lone Star College faculty, students, and staff.

Features of IntelliWriter include:

- Live collaboration
- A Writer's Guide, which is a library of cross-curricular writing instructional documents



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## Video Newsletter



Want to see some of these topics in action? Then watch [The Online Update](#), our video newsletter. Topics include the new discussion experience, announcement updates, negative grading, IntelliWriter, and more.

## Semester Start Reminders

Welcome to the Spring 2024 Semester at Lone Star College! Here are some links to help you prepare your course:

Faculty Assistance .....	<a href="#">Virtual Teaching Assistance Center (VTAC)</a>
Student Assistance .....	<a href="#">Virtual Learning Assistance Center (VLAC)</a>
Prep Your Course .....	<a href="#">Semester Start Checklist</a> ( <a href="#">Video Series</a> )
Rosters not matching? .....	<a href="#">Reconcile D2L and iStar Rosters</a>
Not sure what to include in your course? .....	<a href="#">Design Checklist and Syllabus Template</a>
Need help designing your course? .....	<a href="#">Meet Your Instructional Designers</a>
Need some technology help? .....	<a href="#">Meet Your Campus Representatives</a>
Want some training on D2L? .....	<a href="#">VTAC Upcoming Events</a> and <a href="#">Training Library</a>

## SoftChalk Migration

Lone Star College has successfully transitioned SoftChalk Cloud to a new enterprise environment, incorporating Single Sign-On (SSO) and providing us with unlimited licenses. The migration, which completed on December 19th, brings both convenience and changes for faculty members.

The introduction of SSO means faculty now only need to log in to SoftChalk Cloud once through D2L, after which SoftChalk will remember your login from then on. However, it's crucial to note that **all existing links** to SoftChalk lessons in your D2L courses **must be updated**, as the old links no longer work.

SoftChalk Cloud hyperlinks can be updated by editing the hyperlink to use the new URL for SoftChalk Cloud. To update LTI (integration) links, faculty must delete the old LTI link, as well as any associated Grade Items, and add a new LTI link which points to the new environment.

For instructions on both these processes, please refer to the [Add a SoftChalk Cloud Lesson to Your D2L Course](#) article in VTAC.



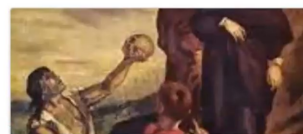
## Creator+ is Coming

In what may prove to be a tremendous leap forward in content creation, D2L has included its Creator+ package in our recently renewed contract. Creator+ allows anyone to deliver courses which will wow students by using these features:

- **Interactive elements** which bring a professional web experience to your pages with no coding skills required.

Preview

Select each item to learn more.



Hamlet

The ghost of the King of Denmark tells his son Hamlet to avenge his murder by killing the new king, Hamlet's uncle. Hamlet feigns madness, contemplates life and death, and seeks revenge. His uncle, fearing for his life, also devises plots to kill Hamlet. The play ends with a duel, during which the King, Queen, Hamlet's opponent and Hamlet himself are all killed.

[Flip](#)

- Ready-made **content templates**, designed to be easy-to-use and impactful.

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## Enhancing Face-to-Face Teaching with D2L

The integration of technology has become increasingly pivotal in creating enriched learning experiences. While traditionally associated with fully online courses, professors teaching face-to-face classes can utilize D2L to enhance engagement and support their students' learning.

### Centralized Resource Hub:

D2L serves as a centralized hub for course materials, enabling you to upload lecture notes, presentations, videos, links and additional resources in one location. This facilitates easy access for students both during and after face-to-face sessions, promoting a continuous learning experience.

### Discussions:

The discussion forums feature on D2L allows you to extend classroom discussions beyond physical meeting times. You can post reflective questions, share additional materials, or encourage peer-to-peer interaction. This provides an opportunity for shy or reserved students to contribute to discussions in a more comfortable setting.

### Assessments:

You can use the assessment tools on D2L to create quizzes, assignments, and surveys. This functionality supports ongoing assessment and allows you to provide prompt feedback, a more responsive teaching approach.

### Announcements and Notifications:

Keeping students informed is crucial for engagement. D2L's announcement and notification features allow you to communicate important updates, reminders, or changes to the course schedule instantly. This ensures that students stay well-informed and engaged in the course.

### Third-party Integrations:

This feature enables you to integrate the online resources associated with your text for students, providing a seamless transition to an online learning environment when appropriate.

These are just a few ways to integrate D2L into face-to-face teaching. The platform's user-friendly design and diverse features empower educators to create a more engaging, accessible, and adaptive learning environment.

For assistance in setting up these or other ideas, [contact an Instructional Designer](#).

## Learn from LSC Experts

An upcoming nationwide **Online Teaching & Learning Summit**, put on by LSC-Online, will take place April 11 and 12, 2024 and feature engaging keynotes and "can't miss" sessions under three different learning tracks.

[More information is available here](#) and registration information will be coming your way in early 2024, now that we have returned from the winter break with renewed focus, ready to come together and tackle those resolutions of being the most successful team, improving students' lives, and making dreams come true the Lone Star way!



## Upcoming Events and Trainings on VTAC

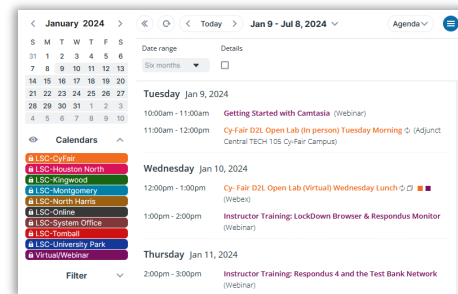
Would you like to learn how to use D2L, YuJa Video, or one of the other LSC-supported technologies? Or maybe you just need a small refresher course on Respondus LockDown Browser?

LSC-Online lists upcoming trainings, webinars, and open labs on the [VTAC Upcoming Events](#) page, available in the News section of the VTAC website. Many of the offerings are hosted by our own LSC-Online team members or faculty you may know. Other sessions are provided by our supported third-party vendors. It is easy to join a webinar by clicking on the event title and using the registration or session link.

Here are a few [upcoming sessions](#) that might interest you:

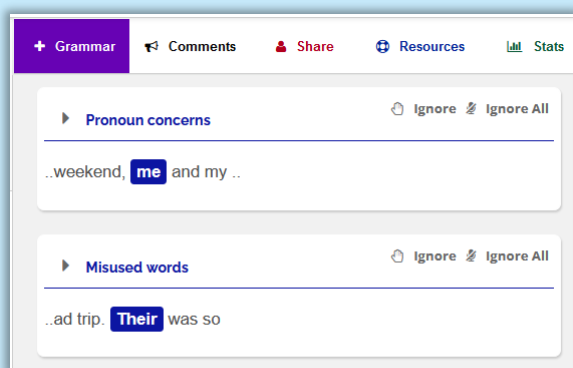
- LockDown Browser & Monitor – Jan. 10
- Respondus 4 and the Test Bank Network – Jan. 11
- IntelliWriter Faculty Training – Jan. 12

If you were unable to attend a previous webinar, don't worry. We have many of our past training sessions available in the [VTAC Webinar Trainings Library](#).



## IntelliWriter cont.

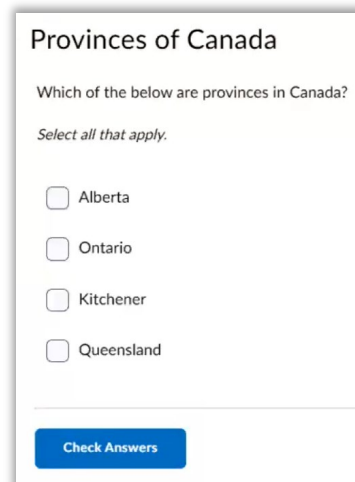
- Cite.ai, an AI-powered plagiarism checker
- Lexipedia, a vocabulary builder capable of visually displaying the relationship between synonyms and antonyms
- Iseek.ai, an AI-powered open educational resource search engine



Intelliwriter is accessed through D2L, which will log you in automatically. Faculty will have to add a link in their course, similar to how Connect and SIMnet are added. For more information, visit the [IntelliWriter page in VTAC](#) or attend one of the [training sessions](#).

## Creator+ cont.

- A **Practices tool** for creating practice exercises and activities similar to SoftChalk.



- **Consistent design**, which allows for uniform styles across a collection of courses, or the entire institution.

Be on the lookout for announcements in D2L and new VTAC articles as Creator+ features get turned on and documented throughout the semester.