Discourse – Quick Guide for MA MRC Unit Leaders

Upon recommendation from the Massachusetts MRC Steering Committee, an online message board has been created to facilitate peer-to-peer communication between unit leaders. This board will provide a space for MA MRC unit leaders, community leads, and those active in MRC leadership roles to share upcoming events, best practices, ask questions of one another, and get to know each other outside of statewide and other meetings.

Creating an Account

This message board is private and only visible to message board members. To request a membership, sign-up using this link: https://forms.gle/PxbVfGK1y9gCbsWr9

After you sign up, your invitation should be emailed to you. (Check your spam folder if you do not get your invitation). If you still have not received an invitation within 2 business days from your request, please contact RVA staff at massachusettsmrc@gmail.com

Upon receiving an invitation, you will be able to set up your user account. Once your user account is set up, your account will need to be approved by a site administrator to use the message board.

Home page

Once your account has been made, when you visit the MA MRC Discourse website at https://mamrc.discourse.group/, you will see a page similar to Figure 1, the MA MRC Discourse Home Page.
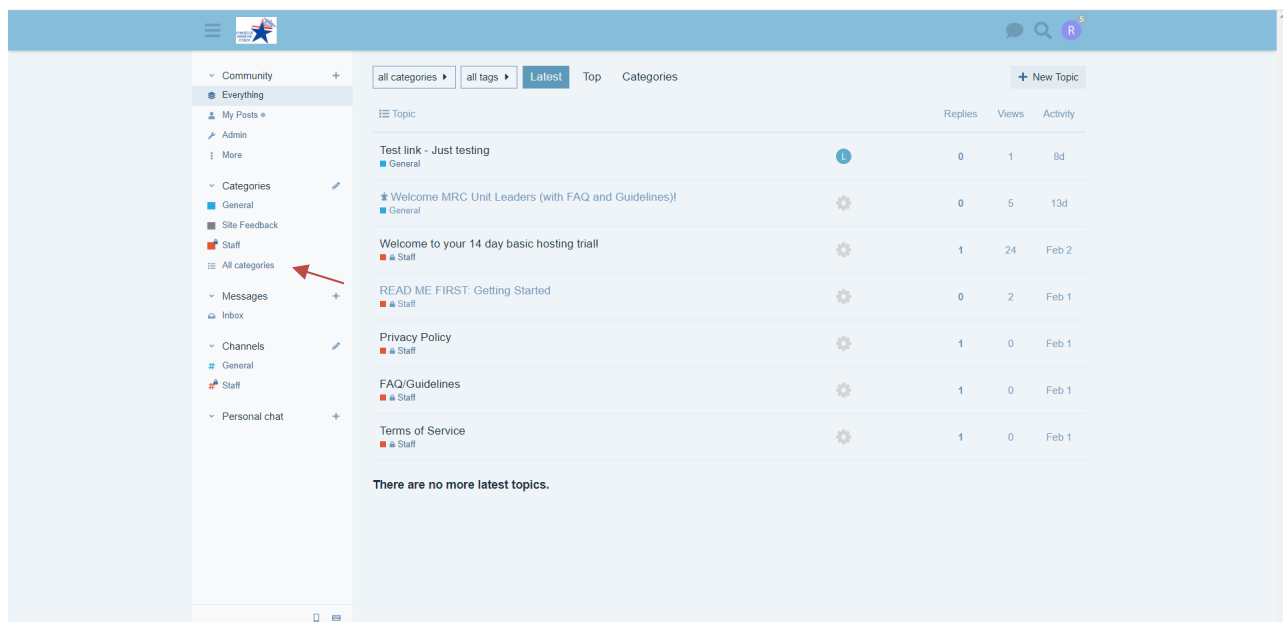

Figure 1 MA MRC Discourse Home Page

Selecting a Category

This page shows the latest activity in all categories accessible by your account. You can focus on the activity of a particular category by selecting a category in the **All Categories** drop down list on the upper left. See the arrow in Figure 1.

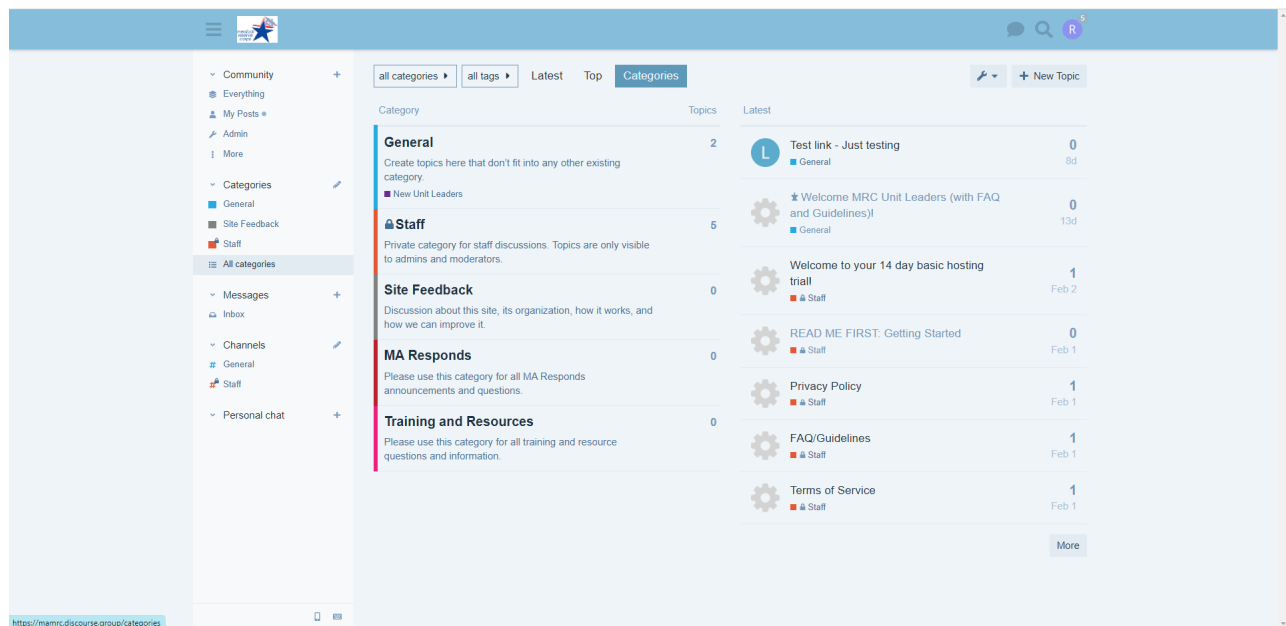If you select "All Categories," you will go to a page listing all the categories. See Figure 2.

Figure 2 All Category Page

Viewing Topics

You can select any category from that page. After that selection, you can now see posted message topics (subjects) or create a new topic in the category you selected as can be seen in Figure 3.
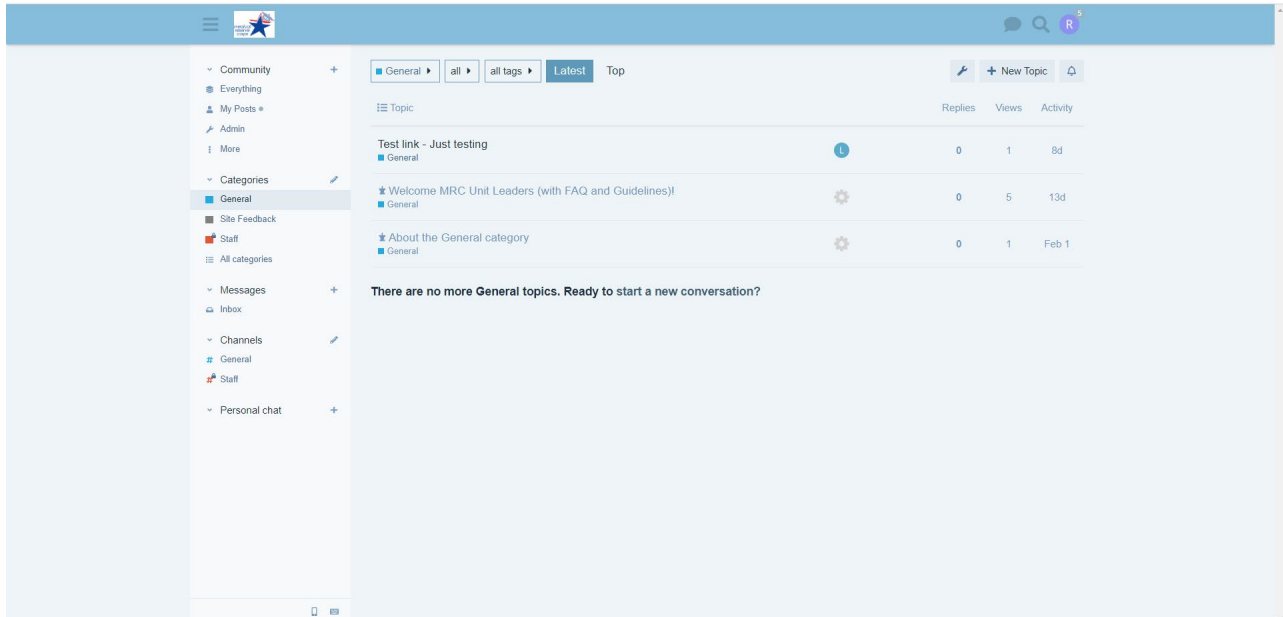
Figure 3 Messages in Selected Category

Replying to a Message

Click on a topic to see the actual message (Figure 4). You can click on Reply to reply to the message. Enter your reply in the text box on the lower left. Files and links can be included in your post. *(*Please note that the ability to edit your previous posts may expire after an extended period.)*
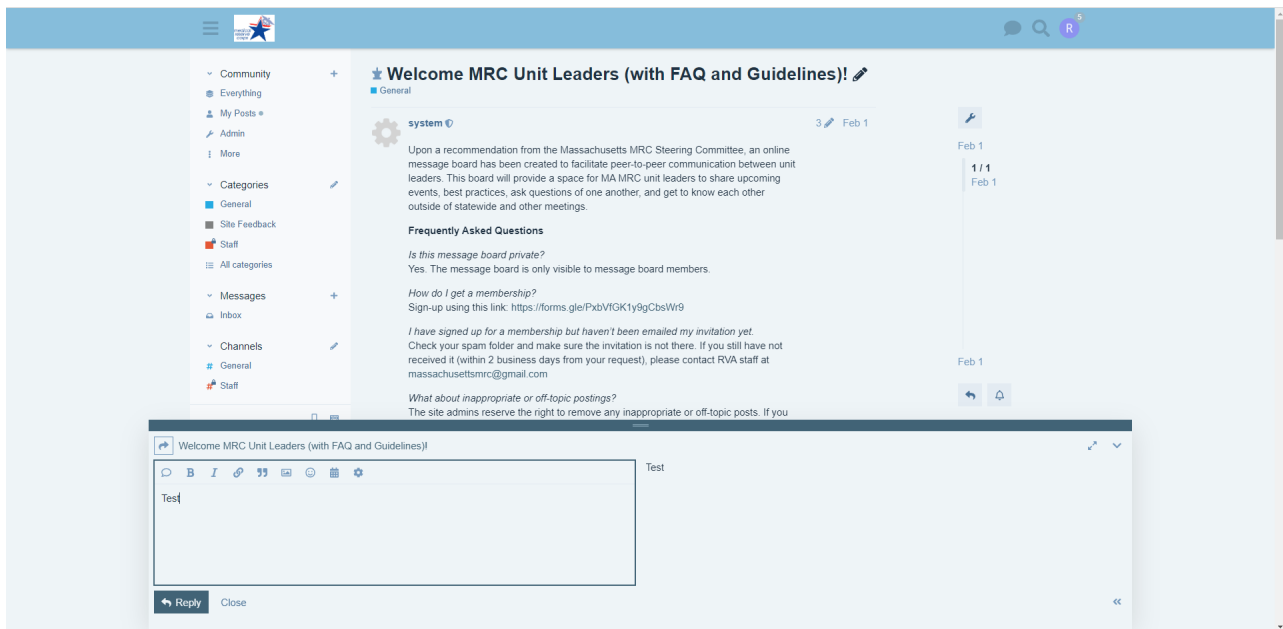

Figure 4 Topic with Message and Reply Box

To go back to the Discourse home page, click the MA MRC logo in the upper left and the home

page will redisplay.

Mentioning

To notify someone about your reply, mention their name. Type @ to begin selecting a username.

Actions

There are action buttons at the bottom of each post:

To let someone know that you enjoyed and appreciated their post, use the **like** button. Share the love!

Grab a copy-pasteable link to any reply or topic via the **link** button. Use the … button to reveal more actions. **Flag** to privately let the author, or the site staff, know about a problem. **Bookmark** to find this post later your profile page.

Notifications

When someone is **talking directly to you** - by replying to you, quoting your post, mentioning your @username, or even linking to your post, a number will immediately appear over your profile picture at the top right. Select it to access your **notifications**.

Don't worry about missing a reply – you'll be emailed any notifications that arrive when you are away.

Creating a New Message

To create a completely new message, click on the **New Topic** button on the upper right (see arrow) and the new topic text box will display (Figure 5).
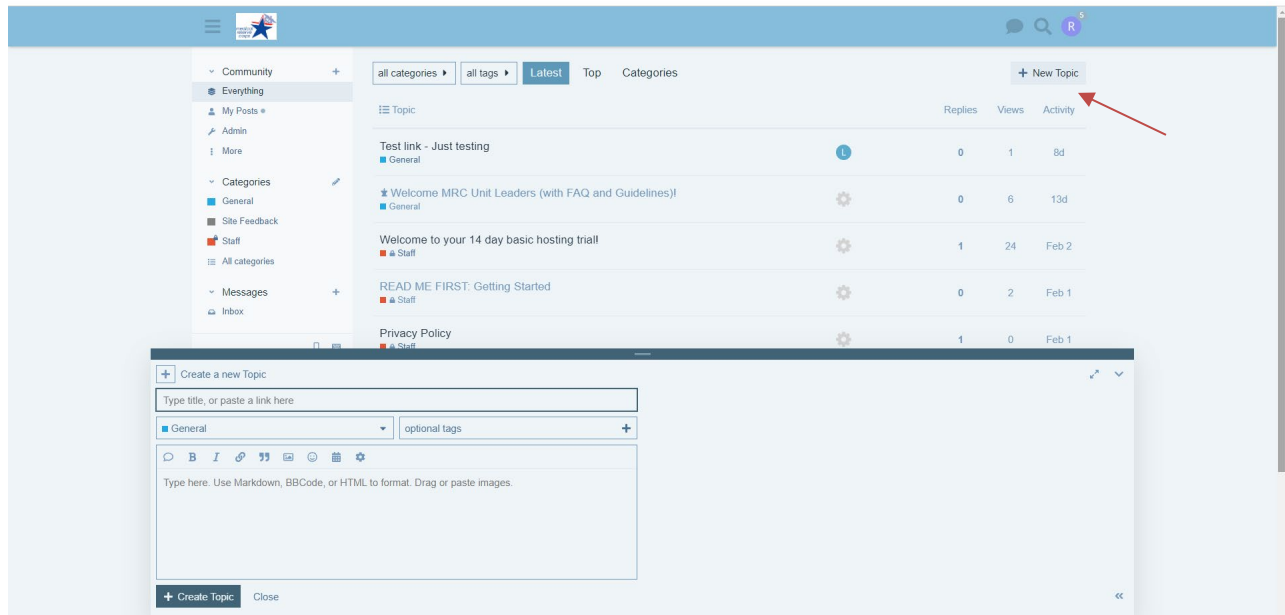
Figure 5 New Topic

Click in the **Type title or paste a link here** text box to create a topic (subject) for your message. Select which category you would like the topic to be posted under. Then click in the text box with the instruction **Type here. Use Markdown, BBCode, or HTML to format. Drag or paste images.** Enter your message. Select the **Create topic** button to send your message (Figure 6).
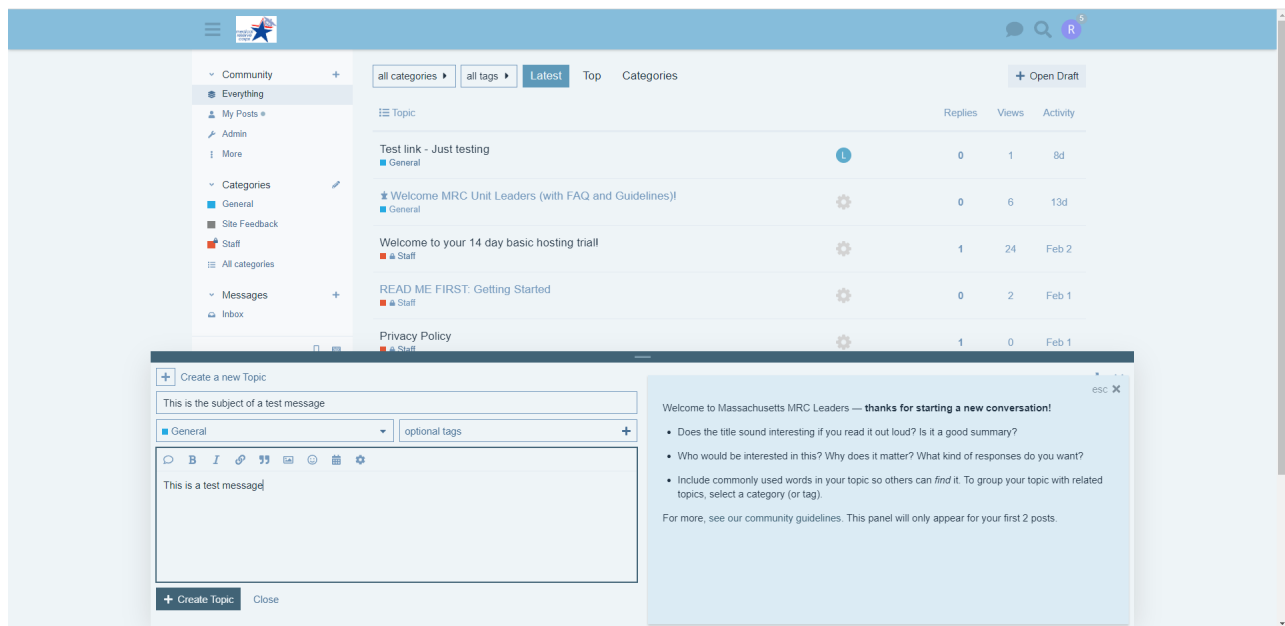

Figure 6 Test Message

The completed message will be sent via email to subscribers to the list and will be visible to web Discourse users who have access to this specific category.

Searching for a Message

To search for a message with a particular topic, select the magnifying glass icon on the upper right. A text box for entering the search terms will appear. See Figure 7.
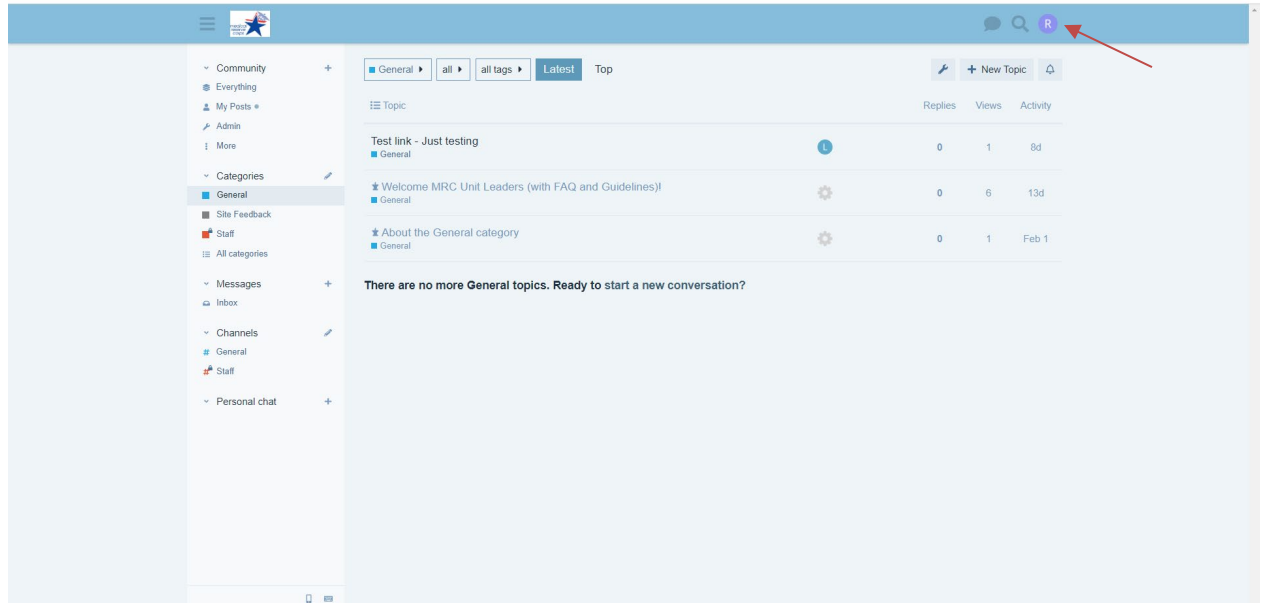

Figure 7 Search Term

Enter the search terms in the text box. Messages with those search terms will appear in a list sorted by message date. The list will include all categories accessible by your account. An **Advanced Search** set of options will also appear on the right which can be used to narrow down your search.

Mobile App

The community platform is mobile friendly and can accessed via an app. The mobile app for Discourse is DiscourseHub which is available on the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store.

Other Resources

Discourse: New User Tips and Tricks (blog post)

Discourse Forum Beginner Introduction (video)

Discourse New User Guide (webpage)

General help for Discourse is available at the official discussion site for Discourse meta.discourse.org which is also powered by Discourse.

FAQ: You can find Frequently Asked Questions and general posting guidelines linked here.