**T-561: Monday, November 7, 2016: Online Learning Communities**

The National Science Teacher Association’s (NSTA) Learning Center (LC) Community Forums are a popular destination for users of the professional learning portal.  As of Friday, October 28, 2016, there are 7,429 unique users that have posted within the NSTA LC Community Forums and there are over 8,200 discussion threads and 76,648 posts.  The rate of discussion posts has increased significantly over the past six months since the addition of a “notifications” feature, allowing users to read and respond to posts from their own email client.

As you might imagine, the current challenge is that there is so much content in the forums that it is it hard to navigate and “glean” the best discussions across the forums.  NSTA wants your help in solving this dilemma.

**Your challenge to answer in groups: How would you design the forums to provide users with an enhanced experience, so that they are able to easily navigate through the individual topics, allowing them to quickly identify relevant discussions and like-minded individuals with whom to connect (private message or follow) for the purpose of future collaborations?**

Your Tasks in Class on November 7:

1. As a team, brainstorm solutions to NSTA’s challenge.
2. Based on your ideas, develop a two-minute pitch (this can take any form and use any type of media) to share with NSTA’s Al Byers and Flavio Mendez.
3. Deliver your presentation to Al Byers and Flavio Mendez.
4. Receive feedback and learn from your colleagues’ presentations.

NSTA Learning Center: <http://learningcenter.nsta.org/>

* You can review the community forums without creating an account at ([http://learningcenter.nsta.org/discuss](http://learningcenter.nsta.org/discuss%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)). There are 14 public forums.
* If you want to create a topic(s) or make a post(s) to experience the process and participate with others in discussion, you will need to create a free account at the URL below (or login to the portal if they already have an account).
* Create a free account: [http://learningcenter.nsta.org/my\_learning\_center/register.aspx](http://learningcenter.nsta.org/my_learning_center/register.aspx%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)
* Login to an existing account: [http://learningcenter.nsta.org/login/](http://learningcenter.nsta.org/login/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

The median number of posts per individual user is 3. The mean number of posts per individual user is 10.3.