

Discord at the Library

A Harmonious Implementation

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<https://discord.gg/nTmAderqeH>



Paul Sawyer
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Brief overview of Discord at PSPL



- Introduced in 2019
- Started as a multi-staff/multi-department project
 - Adult Services, Youth Services, Processing, and IT
- Created a specific library policy for regulation
- Includes specific roles, channels, and abilities
 - Roles for library staff, trusted patrons, and general
 - Channels for library staff and specific events/programs/topics
 - Certain abilities such as sharing images or URLs blocked to some user profiles
- Moderated daily
- Updated periodically
- Facilitated both passive and active programming

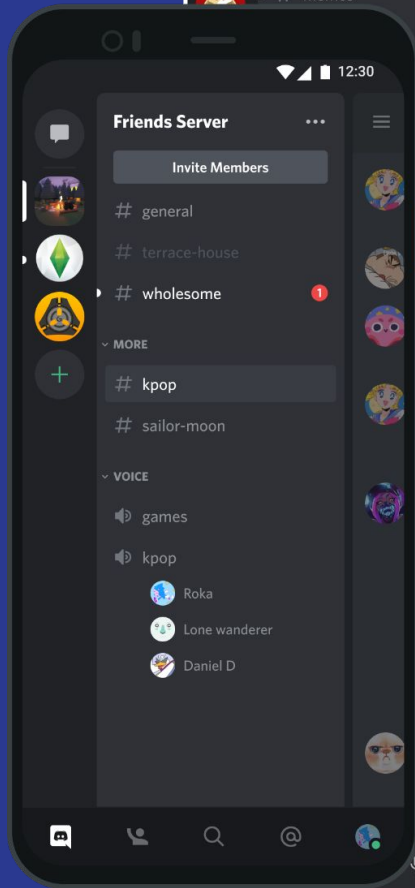
What is Discord?

“Your Place to Talk and Hang Out”

- Released 2015
- VoIP and instant messaging social platform
- Basically compatible for all operating systems
- Free with premium access
- Available for private chats or community building
- Private, locked “servers” or open, public “servers”
- Servers subdivided into “channels”



From
discord.com/safety




A screenshot of the Discord desktop application interface. The top bar shows the server name "Friends Server" and a search bar. The main chat area displays a conversation in the #general channel. The chat history shows several messages from users: Lone Wanderer, Alex, Helio, and Megan. The messages are as follows:

- Lone Wanderer: Anyone start the new season of westworld? Second episode was WILD
- Alex: Just finished that episode it was insane
- Helio: Anyone want to play anything? I'm rdy to play something
- Alex: Ohhh I could be down I'm just making a bit of dinner first
- Helio: Perhaps a building game or something? I'm down to chill
- Lone Wanderer: Ohh someone should go live so I can watch because i'm lazy and don't want to launch anything lolol I just want to hear your beautiful voices
- Helio: yes yes yes that's an even better idea
- Megan: Oh I'm down to stream actually I'll go live shortly join the voice channel in a sec
- Alex: Dope yeah I'll join when I'm done eating Are you going to play that roguelike game again?
- Helio: probs, but I'll make it a surprise
- Thanexor: Oh I'm deff watching then, this is always hilarious
- Lone Wanderer: awesome

The right sidebar shows a list of 9 members: Ana, Helio, Daniel, Lone Wanderer (Playing Vermintide 2), Alex, Thanexor, Megan (Streaming 20XX), Muffins, and Cherukiki. The bottom bar shows a text input field with the placeholder "Message #channel" and icons for emojis, GIFs, and stickers.

How we implemented it

1. Discussed it with interested staff, amassing volunteers and developing a proposal
 - Cross-departmental undertaking
 - Drew up Discord policies
 - Met several times
 - Made a “sandbox” Discord server
 2. Gained administrative buy-in
 - Sent proposal to managers and upper level administrators, answering questions and concerns
 3. Gained IT buy-in
 - Sent proposal to IT Department
 - Met in person, answering questions and concerns
 4. Created the “PSPL Gaming Group” Discord server
 - Created PSPL Administrator accounts for each staff member
 - Created multiple channels such as “managers-meeting,” “dms-text-chat,” and “general chat”
 5. Created the “PSPL Teens” Discord server – Youth Services only
 6. Made the servers live
 - Advertised on social media
 - Advertised among staff
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Troubleshooting

- IT Concerns
 - We have to set up a server?
 - No. Server = your Discord community
 - How secure is this?
 - Very secure; Discord has limited issues with being hacked or selling data
 - Do we have to change our filters? (Potentially)
- Administrative Concerns
 - Do child predators use this?
 - It has occurred, but Discord updated afterwards
 - How will we moderate/adjudicate? (Library policy)
- Staff Concerns
 - How much time will this take?
 - Who will do what?
 - How do we advertise?



Discord during the height of the pandemic

- PSPL Discord servers initiated in late 2019
 - Lockdown started March 2020
- July 2020 stats (41 Discord members, 199 messages exchanged)
- September 2022 stats (101 Discord members, 313 messages exchanged)
- Got to know our Discord community
- Learned how Discord community is different from other social media communities
 - Added more channels, more roles
- Taught staff how to use it – the work-from-home schedule allowed/necessitated increased reliance on virtual tools
 - Staff met on Discord to discuss
 - Focused more on passive programming
- PokéWalk with PSPL (Spring/Summer, 2021)
 - Participants posted their Pokémon GO player stats at the beginning of the event and compared them at the end to win a prize.

Passive programming

- Tournaments
 - Winter Food Fight
 - Samhain Slam
 - PSPL Academy Awards
 - Yuletide Brawl
- Quizzes/Discussions
 - Cryptid Keeper and Monster Match
 - Channels dedicated to board games, video games, popular media, and more
- Emoji/roles
 - Which emoji do you prefer?
 - Depending on the emoji you chose, you'd have a "role"



Active programming

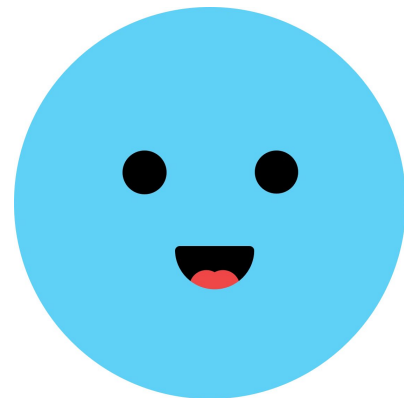
- How to use Fantasy Grounds
 - Discord member ran a virtual run-through of using Fantasy Grounds
 - Created a special temporary channel, expanded roles, and screenshared
- NaNoWriMo
 - Created hybrid programs of virtual/in-person/Discord events, heavily advertised online
 - Did weekly sprints
- Creative Gift Exchange
 - Discord members signed up to do a creative gift exchange (handmade, \$5 or less); then met up in person and swapped gifts and chatted
 - Utilized Elfster
- TTRPG Mini Swap
 - Large, in-person event heavily advertised
 - Discord/community members encouraged to bring TTRPG items for sale or swap



Helpful bots to implement

- Bots

- Welcome Bot - Welcomes new members and introduces them to important information and library staff
 - Send customizable welcome messages
 - Can automatically upload rules for new users
 - Good for moderation
- MEE6 - Used for statistics, to track engagements between server members
 - Can send an automatic “Welcome!” message to new users
 - Can give users automatic roles
 - Can track user engagement
 - Can automatically warn or kick out rules violators
- Dice Parser - Random number generator for dice rolls




The future of Discord (at PSPL)

- Increasing engagement/deepening connections within the community
 - Add non-staff moderators
 - Add moderator-specific events
 - Develop server/channel specific emoji
- Hybrid programs
 - In-person programs with online extension
 - Certain things you can *only* do online
 - Ex: Discord roleplays
- New servers/channels (PSPL Readers' Lounge)
 - Servers for families and senior citizens
 - Book talk channels
 - Program-specific channels



Further resources

- Beginner's guide to Discord
 - Discord.com
 - Support.discord.com
 - <https://support.discord.com/hc/en-us/articles/360045138571-Beginner-s-Guide-to-Discord>
 - How to use Discord
 - Tech Insider
 - Tech Insider YouTube
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OlqyPJQAgT4>
 - Discord bots: The #1 Discord bot resource
 - <https://top.gg/>
 - 22 Discord bots that will keep your server hopping (MEE6)
 - <https://influencermarketinghub.com/discord-bots/>
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<https://discord.gg/nTmAderqeH>



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**Questions?
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