

GETTING STARTED WITH CANVAS FOR INSTRUCTORS

The Getting Started document ensures your course is ready for student access at the start of a new course term at The University of Oklahoma!

To get started, log into Canvas at <https://canvas.ou.edu> with your OU credentials. If you need help at any time with Canvas, click HELP inside Canvas and utilize one of the support options available, including signing up for a one-on-one consultation to get help with a specific tool or setting.

PERSONAL PROFILE & ACCOUNT BEST PRACTICES

Set Up Account Notifications

To ensure you receive communication from Canvas, set up your [Notification Preferences](#) and contact method in your Canvas Account.

→ You must have all 3 **Conversation** options selected to ensure delivery of messages to your OU email where you can simply reply to the student instead of going back into Canvas to respond.

Set a Profile Pic

[Set a profile picture](#) that represents yourself in your Canvas Account. Students will be able to see the image displayed in the Inbox, Announcements, Discussions, and People tab.

→ You may want to choose a professional headshot to model appropriate photos for students

Add Your Personal Pronouns to Your Canvas Profile

You can update your Canvas profile to include your [personal pronouns](#). Once you do, they will appear next to your name in a variety of locations throughout Canvas.

Select Favorite Courses

Customize which course cards are displayed on the Dashboard by "[Favoriting](#)" or "[Moving](#)" courses based on preference, current term, quarter, semester, etc.

→ Once courses are displayed, you can also give the course a "[Nickname](#)" visible only to you

→ If missing a course on your Dashboard, click Courses > All Courses to locate all the courses you're assigned. Favorite or unfavorite to add/remove from Dashboard.

Download the Canvas for Teacher Mobile App

Canvas Teacher App (iOS 10.0+, Android 5.0+). This app allows you to manage course content and grade student submissions on the go. Syncs with SpeedGrader and the Gradebook. View [Canvas Teacher mobile features](#) by version and device.

COURSE ESSENTIAL BEST PRACTICES

Import Content (If Applicable)

You may need to manually [copy course content](#) from another Canvas course such as a previous semester.

→ *Make sure to check "include completed courses" to copy from previous terms*

Choose Home Page

The Home Page is the first impression of a course. Select the [Home Page](#) option that best fits the needs of your course.

→ *If you want to keep it simple, select Modules.*

Adjust Navigation

It is best to [adjust the course navigation](#) to something simpler, removing tools that the students will not use OR should not access such as FILES and PAGES.

Suggested navigation items and order: HOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, MODULES, ASSIGNMENTS, LOCKDOWN BROWSER (instructor's eyes only), GRADES, PEOPLE.

→ *All the other tools you will have access to, but the students will not. Place all course content into Modules and using the Assignment Index page instead of displaying Quizzes, Discussions as it is where the gradebook is built and is more easily organized.*

Add Course Syllabus to Modules

Add the current syllabus in PDF or Word format to your course in [Modules](#). Adding your syllabus document in Modules enables an easier view for the students and a quick way to download it.

→ *You can break up the components of your syllabus into different [Pages](#) you can link in a module.*

Add Course Content to Modules

Add all course content in [Modules](#) including Canvas assignments, quizzes, and discussions! Structure course content by day, week, unit, or topic. Modules help simplify student navigation through a course and ensure a sequential flow of content.

→ [Tips for how to build a course using Modules from Canvas](#)

→ [How do I add course content as module items?](#)

Create/Update Assignments

Verify that [discussions](#), [assignments](#), and [quizzes](#) are appropriately created. This builds the gradebook in your Canvas course. Once the Assignments are built, link them in Modules.

→ *Verify the submission deadlines and availability dates are updated in assignment for copied or new assignments.*

→ *If you use weighted grading categories for your final grade calculations, you will want to add Assignment Groups to the Assignments Index Page and [assign weights to each Group](#).*

Set up Respondus LockDown Browser

If you are using Respondus LDB/Monitor on quizzes, you will need to add the Dashboard tool (LockDown Browser is the tool name) to your course navigation to use it in quizzes.

→ **If using a D2L-to-Canvas migrated quiz that contains the title "Lockdown Browser (+ Monitor) Required"** That quiz is NOT set up for LDB, it simply has the title. You will need to activate the quiz in the LDB Dashboard.

Set Up Assignment Groups (If Applicable)

If you use weighted grading categories for your final grade calculations, you will want to [add Assignment Groups](#) to the Assignments Index Page and [assign weights](#) to each Group.

→ You can add "drop rules" to each Assignment Group

Review Grades Set Up

Verify the Gradebook is [arranged](#) according to your grading policy and your syllabus.

→ If you have a [specific grading scheme](#) you wish to use, you will set that up under Settings

→ You can [move the "Total" column](#) from the far-right position to the far-left position next to the student list

→ You can change your Total column to display as Points, if needed. TOTAL is the current total points the student has earned and does not count any missing assignments.

→ You can set [Late Submission](#) or [Missing Submission](#) policies

→ **You need to mark missing assignments with a zero to have a true grade for the student once the class gets going.**

Adjust Course Settings

Visit the course [Settings](#) to check your Course Details, Sections, and More Options.

→ Under the "Course Details" tab, scroll to the bottom and select "More Options" to access many more settings options.

→ We recommend removing options that "Let Students" edit/create/organize. We recommend to "Show recent Announcements on homepage" option and "disable comments on announcements"

→ Teaching multiple sections of the same course or cross-listed sections? You can [cross-list \(or combine\) your own courses](#) under the "Sections" tab

→ Adding a [course card image](#) is a great visual cue for quickly identifying courses

Verify Students in the People Link

Select [People](#) to verify your Canvas roster (teacher, student, TA, etc.) for accuracy.

→ All enrollments including automatic instructor assignments come from PeopleSoft. Instructors are not able to manually enroll students into courses.

Review Course in Student View

Review your course content from [Student View](#) to experience your course from a student perspective.

→ *Student View adds a test student to Grades. After participating in Student View, enter your Gradebook as a teacher to view any Test Student entries*

→ *You may want to select [Validate Links](#) in your Course Settings to ensure there are no broken links*

Publish Course and Content

Check the visibility of individual items and Modules as a whole. **Don't forget to [publish your course](#).**

→ *If a Module is not published but items inside are, students will not be able to see them. Module must be published as well as included items*

Add a Welcome Announcement

After you have checked all the course settings and your course has been published, you can use the [Announcements feature](#) in Canvas to post a welcome announcement. This orients your students about your course and reminds them of the materials they need to obtain prior to the first day of class.

For more Canvas Instructor Guide articles, visit:

<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/tkb-p/Instructor>