University of Minnesota

Self-Help Guide

Canvas: Get Started with Canvas

This self-help guide is a starting point for faculty and staff who need to develop a course in Canvas. It orients you to the tool, gives you important design information to consider, and points you to the resources you will need to build your course sites.

Understand Canvas

Find Your Way Around Canvas

Orient Yourself

Canvas Overview (video; 5:47)
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Video-Guide/Canvas-Overview-Instructors/ta-p...
Canvas Glossary
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Admin-Group/Canvas-Glossary/ba-p/250899
Use the Global Navigation Menu
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Global-Nav...
Use the Course Navigation Menu
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Course-Nav...
Use the Dashboard
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Dashboard-...
Use the To Do List and Sidebar in the Dashboard
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-To-Do-list...

Recording of Canvas Basics Webinar (video; 1:30)
https://mediaspace.umn.edu/media/t/0_w98vmqxi
Watch this faculty-centered introduction to Canvas distributed by Academic Technology Support Services (ATSS).

Set Up Your Profile

Edit My Profile in My User Account
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-edit-my-profile-in...
Add a profile picture, edit your bio, add contact methods, and more.
Add Your Personal Pronouns to Your Canvas Profile
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-add-your-personal-pronouns-your
Set Your Preferred Name in Your Canvas Profile
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-set-your-preferred-name-in-your
Set My Canvas Notification Preferences as an Instructor
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-set-my-Canvas-noti...

Learn About Canvas Components

Understand Communication Tools

Use the Inbox
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Inbox-as-a...
Use the Announcements Index Page
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Announceme...
What is the Calendar?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-is-the-Calendar/ta-...
Host a Zoom Meeting within Canvas
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-host-zoom-meeting-within-canvas
Communicate with Students
/services-technologies/self-help-guides/canvas-communicate-students
This self-help guide is an in-depth look at these communication tools.

Understand Ways to Deliver Course Content

What are Pages?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-Pages/ta-p/5
Library Course Page integration
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LLIZs2zK8NQTF2E_wn_RyM7xHVvaqLU8CkWK2yTLuW0
Understand Modules (video; 4:05)
https://youtu.be/RkdEXEfXy64
Add Kaltura Course Tools to Canvas
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-add-move-or-remove-media-gallery

Understand Assessment Tools

What are Assignments?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-Assignments/ta-…
Assignments Overview
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Video-Guide/Assignments-Overview-Instructors…
What Are Quizzes?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-Quizzes/ta-p/68
Understand Quiz Types
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/What-quiz-types-can-I-creat…
What Are Discussions?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-Discussions/ta-…
Understand Discussions
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Video-Guide/Discussions-Overview-Instructors…

Understand Teaching with Sections in Canvas

Understand Course Sections
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-understand-course-sections
Manually Create a Section and Add Students
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-manually-create-section-add
Delete a Course Section
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-delete-a-course-se…

Get Help

Get Help with Canvas

Find your University of Minnesota Canvas Contact
/services-technologies/resources/academic-technology-contacts
Get Help with Canvas
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-get-help-with-Canv...
Canvas Instructor Guide - Table of Contents
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/tkb-p/Instructor
IT@UMN Resources
https://it.umn.edu/services-technologies/resources/69116/all

Design For Student Success

Understand Tool Integration

Learn How Tools are Integrated Throughout Canvas

Integrated Tools in Canvas (video; 1:33)
https://youtu.be/dI7T4Y3rke8
Putting it all Together: Canvas Shortcuts (video; 2:31)
https://youtu.be/KzE2TdB02Ko
Add a Page to the Student To-Do List
https://it.umn.edu/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-add-page-student-do-list
Making Canvas Design Decisions (video; 7:20)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfPGDSMNuqc&feature=youtu.be

Design for Accessibility

Accessible U: Instructor Role
https://accessibility.umn.edu/your-role/instructors
Accessible U: Start with the 7 Core Skills
https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills
Digital Accessibility Badging Program
/services-technologies/digital-accessibility-badging-program

This program is a series of courses that teach you how to create accessible slide decks, documents, and PDFS.
Use UDOIT to Scan a Course for Accessibility Issues
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-use-udoit-scan-course

Use the Rich Content Editor (RCE)

What is the Rich Content Editor?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-is-the-New-Rich-Con...
Guide to Using the Rich Content Editor (video; 5:01)
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Video-Guide/New-Rich-Content-Editor/ta-p/383...
Create and Organize Content Self-Help Guide
https://it.umn.edu/services-technologies/self-help-guides/canvas-create-organiz...
See “Use the Rich Content Editor” section in this self-help guide for more resources.

Make Design Decisions

Organize Your Course Content

Canvas Pages vs. Canvas Modules
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructional-Designer/Canvas-Pages-vs-Canva...
Canvas: Understanding Modules (video; 4:05)
https://youtu.be/RkdEXEfXy64
Decide How to Organize Your Course Content
https://it.umn.edu/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-decide-how-organize-you...

Choose a Home Page

What Layout Options Are Available in the Course Home Page?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/What-layout-options-are-ava...

Choose How to Display Your Syllabus

Use the Syllabus Tool
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Syllabus-a...

Three Ways to Display Your Course Syllabus
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-three-ways-display-your-course

Choose Course Navigation

Canvas Course Navigation and Student View (video; 4:16)
https://youtu.be/JcKKHyQaAjw
Good Practices for Setting Your Course Navigation for Students
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-good-practices-setting-your
Manage Course Navigation Links
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-manage-Course-Navi…

Design Your Course to Gather Useful Analytics

Using Learning Data: Sustainable Practice
https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/177961/pages/using-learning-data-sustainable-pra…
This link goes to an open Canvas course on analytics that ATSS maintains.
Student Privacy in the Online Environment
https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/177961/pages/student-privacy-in-the-online-envir…
This link goes to an open Canvas course on analytics that ATSS maintains.
Learning Analytics at the University of Minnesota
https://pressbooks.umn.edu/learninganalytics/
This link opens a pressbook built by ATSS.

Build Your Course

Use Templates

Use Templates

Use a Template
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-use-template
What is Canvas Commons?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Commons/What-is-Canvas-Commons/ta-p/1788
Import and View a Commons Resource in Canvas

https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Commons/How-do-I-import-and-view-a-Commons-r…

Create Your Course

Create Content and Assessments

Canvas: Create and Organize Content
/services-technologies/self-help-guides/canvas-create-organize-content
Canvas: Use Groups for Collaboration
/services-technologies/self-help-guides/canvas-use-groups-collaboration

Publish Course Content

Publish Your Course Site

Canvas has two levels of content, the course level and the content item level. Students will see nothing if you do not Publish the course. Individual content items also need to be Published before students can see those.

The Different States of a Canvas Course
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/What-are-the-different-stat…
Publish a Course Site
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-publish-a-course/t…

Show/Hide Course Content

If you want to hide individual items from students, even while a course is Published and visible, you can leave the items Unpublished until you are ready for students to view them.

Publish/Unpublish Content Items
/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-publishunpublish-content-items
Publish or Unpublish an Assignment
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-publish-or-unpubli…

Use the Student App

Use the Student App

What is the Canvas Student App?
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-is-the-Canvas-Stude…
Instructors Should Use the Canvas Student App
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDqmXJ9kQRc&feature=youtu.be
Download the Canvas Student App on My iOS Device
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Student-iOS-Guide/How-do-I-download-t…
Download the Canvas Student App on My Android Device
https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Student-Android-Guide/How-do-I-downlo…
View Your Course Site on the Student App
https://it.umn.edu/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-view-your-course-site-s…