

Simple MyCanvas Course Readiness Checklist

Here is a list of settings, best practices, and tips that can serve as a final checklist before you publish your MyCanvas course and start your online delivery. As you work through the checklist, you may want to coordinate with colleagues who teach in the same program(s) of study, to help ensure a consistent look, feel, organization, and configuration.

Course: _____

Course Setup

Here are a number of basic course configurations that should be considered for all your courses.

- Customize your course navigation menu to suit the course, by disabling unused tools, choosing an appropriate order, enabling needed tools, disabling Files and Pages, etc.
- Ensure that the course start and end dates, as viewed on the Course Details page, are accurate
- Upload or select a suitable image to represent your course in the Dashboard
- Enable the Announcements to show on the home page
- Set an appropriate home page- a custom Page, the Modules tool, the Syllabus, etc.
- Consider enabling or disabling, from the Course Details page, the ability for students to download all of the Modules content in one action



Tips

- Consider enabling the Chat tool for quick real-time text communication
- Enable the Media Gallery to allow access to your course videos

- Enable My Media to allow students to create and/or upload their own media files, for group work, assignment submissions, etc.
- Enable other tools as needed including Attendance, LockDown Browser, etc. Even when enabled, certain tools do not appear in the students' view
- Stylize your course Home Page to make it attractive and rich; a Page or the Syllabus can easily be enhanced in the Rich Content Editor

Course Files

Before you start to build your Modules, it is recommended that you first upload, from your computer, any files that you will want to share or use in your course. Once uploaded, they are referred to as **Course Files**. It is important to create an organized file structure, using folders and subfolders, etc. Once file are available in **Files**, you will link them to **Modules** for student access.

- Disable **Files** from the course navigation menu
- Create the basics of your organization structure by creating folders and subfolders, organized and named in a meaningful way that reflects how you deliver the material.
- Upload files from your computer to the appropriate folders, subfolders, etc.
- Upload any images that you intend to include in quiz questions and assignments in appropriately named folders

Tips

- Within the Files tool, it can be a good idea to replicate the structure you intend to create in the Modules tool. For example, if your first module is to be "Course Information", and the subsequent modules "Module 1", Module 2", etc., you can use these same names for the root-level folders in the Files tool. The files that you intend to share in specific modules can be stored in the similarly-named folders or subfolders.
- Even after linking files to modules, you can move them within the structure you have created in Files and the links will remain.
- If you modify a file and upload it to the same folder as the original, you can choose to overwrite the file.

Modules

In most courses, Modules helps control the entire flow of your course and its content, and provides links for students to access most if not all course content, activities, and assessments in a desired sequence.

- Have modules sequenced in the same order in which you want students to access and learn the content
- Use module names that are appropriate and reflective of their content e.g. "Course Information", "Module 1", etc., or that indicate the delivery sequencing or unique topics of study
- Make sure your content and activities are organized into manageable "chunks" and are located in appropriate modules. Link appropriate files (from the Files tool) to appropriate locations in modules.
- Edit module item names to present more descriptive links to students. By default, files linked to modules produce a link that uses the file name only.
- Include Text Headers within modules to further segment the items and provide context
- Provide links to course assessments and other components- specific quizzes, assignments, etc.- to the appropriate spots in Modules. For example, within a module you can include sequenced links to files (from the Files tool), quizzes (from the Quizzes tool), discussions (from the Discussions tool), pages (from the Pages tool), assignments (from the Assignments Index), etc.
- Publish modules as appropriate
- If you need or want to force specific sequencing within modules or throughout the Modules tool, consider adding Requirements and Prerequisites to modules as appropriate



Tips

- Installing a template package (both the **CTL** and the **Marshall School** set are available in the Commons) can help you organize your module content and sequencing, help provide standardization, and speed content development.
- You can manually publish or hide modules or module items as needed.

Pages

Pages can be created and linked to appropriate spots in modules to provide information, instructions, descriptions, and context. Pages are directly editable from the online Rich Content Editor, and be updated quickly and easily without the need to create and/or update external files via a download, edit, and upload process.

- Disable **Pages** from the course navigation menu
- Use descriptive titles for your Pages so that the subsequent links in modules are also descriptive
- Link specific Pages to appropriate spots within modules. Those pages are then editable directly within the module.



Tips

- Pages can include any content that can be embedded in the Rich Content Editor- text, images, video, links to other files, etc.
- Any Page can serve as a template. For example, a Module Overview page can quickly be **duplicated** and edited to serve as an introductory page for other modules.

Assignments Index

The Assignments Index provides two functions- it contains any graded items in the course (quizzes, assignments, etc.), and determines the items and structure of the course gradebook. The gradebook is created and determined by the items and Groups in the Assignments Index. This Index must be configured correctly, using weighted Groups, in order to convert the various point values of your assessments to weighted percentage values.

- Create appropriately named **Groups** with appropriate weight values, and nest the corresponding assessments within the Groups
- If you are including more than one assessed item in a Group, make sure that the relative point values of the assessments are as intended.



Tips

- It is common in the Assignments Index to include many Groups, often containing a single item, in order to ensure the correct weighted value of the item
- If two or more assignments are organized within a single Group, the point values of the assignments need to reflect the intended value. When grouped together, an item worth 10 points has twice the value of an item worth 5 points.

Grades and Gradebook

The gradebook in its default state only displays grades that have been earned, and grades for missing assignments- those that were not submitted by the assignment end date- are not included in the totals. For a more accurate view of the actual totals, you can make a settings adjustment to the gradebook.

- Consider changing the gradebook setting to automatically grade missing (unsubmitted) assignments to 0%
- Consider configuring a late-grading policy in the gradebook to automatically apply a percentage deduction to late submissions
- For crosslisted courses, add a Filter to view the gradebook by Sections



Tip

- Consider informing students to adjust their gradebook settings to **Calculate based only on graded assignments** to ensure a more accurate real-time total grade calculation.

Assignments

Assignments deliver assignment instructions, allow the function to allow students to submit files (if desired), and allow you to grade, mark-up, and add comments to the submissions via **SpeedGrader**.

- Create and configure all your graded and non-graded assignments in the Assignments tool
- Include your full assignment in the assignment instruction field using the Rich Content Editor, whenever possible. If required, include a link to the assignment file in the instructions.
- Enable the file submission feature for any assignments that require students to submit a file
- For online submission assignments, configure the **Online Entry Options** to allow and restrict the types of allowable submitted files
- Enable Turnitin plagiarism detection to automatically generate a similarity report for electronic student submissions
- Create and attach rubrics to help students understand the grading scheme and to assist in your grading of submissions
- Add assignment due dates to add the assignments to student calendars, To Do lists and the Syllabus
- Link assignments to appropriate spots in Modules



Tips

- If you require an item in your gradebook for a manually-graded assignment, like a hand-in paper or project, you must create an assignment configured as a no-submission type assignment.
- Enable the Text Entry submission option for any assignments, if you wish to enable students to submit media that they've stored or created in Kaltura/My Media

Quizzes

Create all your graded and non-graded (practice) quizzes and tests in the Quizzes tool. Many question types can be automatically graded by the system, including multiple choice, fill in the blank, and matching, while others like essay and short answer are graded like an assignment using the SpeedGrader.

- Create and store your questions within appropriately-named **Question Banks** (in **Classic** quizzes) or **Item Banks** (in **New** quizzes)
- Validate all your questions and possible responses for accuracy and point value. For quizzes that draw random questions from Banks, this is best done within the Question Editor and not simply via a Preview.
- Link and randomize questions in quizzes by using question **Groups**
- Ensure that the students can see, or not see, the correct answers after submission, as intended
- In most quizzes that include multiple choice questions, choose to **Shuffle Answers**. In questions, rephrase any “all of the above”-type responses.
- Add appropriate due dates to add the quizzes to student calendars, calendars, To Do lists, and the Syllabus
- Include any student accommodations as needed, by modifying quiz availability or time allowances
- Link quizzes to appropriate spots in modules



Tips

- If using new questions for the first time, it can be beneficial to create and store the questions directly in the quiz to allow for easier regrading.
- Consider using **New Quizzes** to take advantage of new question types like **Hot Spot** and **Categorization**.
- Consider using quizzes- especially those that include rich question types like Ordering, Hot Spot, Categorization, etc.- as practice quizzes
- Consider organizing and storing questions of similar point value in appropriately-named Question Banks, if you intend to draw random questions. When randomizing questions, you must attribute a single point value for all the questions.
- If quizzes that draw questions from Banks have been copied to the course, ensure that the corresponding Bank(s) were copied as well as the quizzes

Discussions

The Discussions tool enables interactive class discussions, allowing both you and your students to start and contribute to discussion topics as desired. You can also configure discussions as graded assignments.

- At a minimum, create a **General Question and Answer** discussion to allow for asynchronous text-based conversations



Tips

- Consider encouraging your students to have their own class-related discussions, by creating discussion topics for them.
- Consider allowing students to create their own discussions, via the Course Details page setting

Final Tasks

Once you are happy with the various settings, organization, and assessments in your course, you are almost ready to release it for your students.

- Double check all the due dates you have added for accuracy
- If you intend to run synchronous video meetings with your students, set up the **Microsoft Teams** integration
- Run the **Link Validator** to check the validity of all the external links in your course, and repair broken links as necessary
- Publish only when the course is ready for students



Tips

- Consider creating an eye-catching or functional Page and setting it as your course home page.
- Show your course to a trusted colleague for feedback.