

The MyCanvas Course Readiness Checklist

Here is a list of settings, best practices, and tips that can be helpful as you develop a MyCanvas course, and as a final checklist before you publish your course and start your online delivery. Working through the checklist, you may want to coordinate with colleagues in the same Program of Study, to encourage a consistent look, feel, organization, and configuration for all Program courses.

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. Be consistent with other courses in the Program.
- Ensure that the course start and end dates, as viewed on the **Course Details** page, are accurate. If you need to extend the end date/time, reach out to your ETS.
- Create and/or select and upload a suitable image to represent your course on the **Dashboard**.
- Enable the **Announcements** to show on the Home Page.
- Set the desired **Home Page**- a custom Page, the Modules tool, the Syllabus, etc. Note that most courses use a customized Page as the Home Page.
- If you intend to run synchronous video meetings with your students, set up the **Microsoft Teams** integration, or share the connection information for the **Zoom** meeting on the **Home Page**, or on a Page in a course Module.

- 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.
- Consider enabling the **Media Gallery** to provide quick access to your Kaltura 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, Panopto**, etc. Even when enabled, certain tools do not appear in the students' view.
- Stylize your course **Home Page** to make it attractive and engaging; a Page or the Syllabus can easily be enhanced in the Rich Content Editor.

Course Files

It's important to create an organized file structure for your course, using folders and subfolders, and meaningful naming conventions. As a rule, it is strongly recommended that you first upload, from your computer, any files that you intend to use in your course **before** you start to build your content and Modules. Once uploaded, they are referred to as **Course Files**. Once files are available in **Files**, you will link them to Modules and other content for student access. For example, adding an image- one that you've previously uploaded to Files- to a Page or Announcement is accomplished via **Insert Image > Course Image**.

- Disable **Files** from the course navigation menu.
- Create your organization structure by creating folders and subfolders, organized and named in a meaningful way that reflects how you deliver the material. Be sure that your structure is understandable and logical to others.
- Upload files from your computer to the appropriate folders, subfolders, etc.
- Upload any images that you intend to include in Classic 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 in Files.
- After linking (**+Add**) files to modules, you can move them within the Files structure- the links will update.
- 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 is the interface 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 full file name.
- 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), or assignments (from the Assignments Index).

- Publish** or **Hide** modules as appropriate, from the function on Module's title bar.
- 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. The template packages are best installed as a first step before developing a course.
- You can manually **publish** or **hide** modules or module items as needed.

Pages

Pages are web pages that can be created and linked to appropriate spots in modules to provide information, instructions, descriptions, and context. Pages are directly editable online 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 (**Add**) specific Pages to appropriate spots within modules. Those pages are then editable directly within the module.
- Consider creating a Page specifically as the **Home Page**. Assign it as the **Front Page**, and assign the Home Page to be the **Pages** tool. Make your Home Page clean and attractive.



Tips

- Pages can include any content that can be embedded in the **Rich Content Editor**- text, images, video, links to other files, embedded content, etc.

- Because Pages are editable directly in the Rich Content Editor, consider converting, via cut and paste or other means, some of your document files to Pages.
- 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 three functions- it contains any graded items in the course (quizzes, assignments, etc.), allows you to create and manage graded assessments, and determines the items and structure of the course gradebook. This Index must be configured correctly, usually using **Weighted Groups**, in order to convert the various point values of your assessments to weighted percentage values, and to ensure the gradebook is measuring grade values as intended.

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



Tips

- It is not uncommon for the Assignments Index to include many Assignment Groups, sometimes containing a single item, in order to ensure the correct weighted value of your grade items.
- 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.
- Consider configuring the **Drop** function in a Group if you wish to drop one or more items in a Group.

Grades and the Gradebook

The gradebook in its normal state only displays grades that have been earned. 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%. Note that this setting is effective only if you use **Available until** dates on your assessments.
- Consider configuring a **Late Policy** in the gradebook to automatically apply a percentage deduction to late submissions.
- For cross-listed courses, add a **View < Filter** to view the gradebook by **Sections**.
- Consider populating all the cells in the gradebook with zeros, before the course starts, to minimize student confusion over how the **Total** grade is calculated.



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 ability for students to contribute submissions by files and other means (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 Index**.
- 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. Consider also enabling other different submission types, like **Text Entry**, for accessibility reasons.
- For online submission assignments, configure the **Online Entry Options** to allow and/or restrict the types of allowable submitted files.

- Consider enabling **Turnitin** plagiarism detection to automatically generate a similarity report for electronic student submissions, to help reduce cheating.
- Create and attach **rubrics** to help students understand assignment grading schemes and expectations, and to assist in your grading of submissions.
- Add assignment due dates to make them visible to student **Calendars, To Do** lists and the **Syllabus**.
- Link (**Add**) 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 for each question and not simply via a Preview.
- Randomize questions in quizzes by using question **Groups**.
- Ensure in the quiz settings that the students can see, or not see, the correct answers after submission, as intended.
- In quizzes that include multiple choice questions, choose to **Shuffle Answers**. Rephrase or rework any "all of the above"-type responses.

- Add appropriate Due Dates, which adds the quizzes to student **Calendars**, **To Do** lists, and the **Syllabus**.
- Include any student accommodations as needed, by modifying quiz availability or time allowances, on the **Quiz Details** tab (availability) and/or via the **Moderate** function (time allowance, number of attempts).
- Link (**Add**) 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- not in a Bank- to allow for easier regrading.
- Consider using **New Quizzes** to take advantage of new question types like **Hot Spot** and **Categorization**.
- Consider configuring some quizzes- especially those that include rich question types like Ordering, Hot Spot, Categorization, etc.- as **Practice Quizzes**. These are not graded but are good for review and practice.
- 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) are 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 regarding the course that may or may not need to include you.



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.
- Consider configuring a Discussion assignment as a graded assessment to encourage participation.

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 **Available from**, **Available until**, and **Due** dates you have added for accuracy. View and edit all your assessment dates by viewing the **Edit Assignment Dates** option under the **more options** (three dots) in the Assignment Index.
- Run the **Link Validator** to check the validity of all the external links in your course, and repair broken links as necessary.
- Publish** the course only when it is ready for students.
- Create your first **Announcement**, welcoming your students to the course.



Tips

- Consider creating an eye-catching or functional **Page** and setting it as your course Home Page. You can create and include clickable images (buttons), embed interactive elements that you've created in H5P, or a video you've created in Kaltura or Panopto.
- Show your course to a trusted colleague for critical feedback.