

Start of Term Checklist

Canvas is an online system used by the University for hosting course sites. It is a versatile teaching tool. Canvas is the official platform for course delivery.

All courses have Canvas sites, which are automatically created four months prior to each semester. There is no need to request one. These course sites will be empty when they are first created. You can either [add content](#) within the course shell or [copy content from a previous Canvas course](#) or development site. Unused Canvas sites remain hidden from students.

If you need assistance, please let us know by emailing: deiteam@umn.edu.

New to Canvas?

Are you using Canvas for the first time? Follow these steps:

- ☐ Canvas can be accessed through the [MyU portal](#) under Teaching or by going directly to canvas.umn.edu.
- ☐ Review [Canvas Basics for Teaching: Video Series](#) for a quick start.
- ☐ Consider using the [CEHD Canvas Template](#) to provide structure to your course site.

How to Find Your Canvas Site and Your Students

- ☐ When you are listed as the instructor or TA in [PeopleSoft](#), your courses will automatically appear on the Canvas Dashboard and Courses list. If you do not have access, contact your department's scheduler.
 - ☐ [Customize your Dashboard to control the courses that are listed.](#)
- ☐ Students are automatically enrolled into Canvas sites for academic courses. Instructors are not able to [manually enroll or directly add students](#).

Copy Content from a Prior Term to Your Canvas Course Shell

- ☐ [Import Canvas content from a previous semester](#) or development site. In the new course site, from the **Home** page, select **Import Course Content**. Choose to copy from a Canvas Course. Search for and select the course that will be copied. You can choose to copy all content or [select specific content to copy](#). By choosing the select specific content option you can choose to copy only those materials and activities you will be using in the new

semester. This will help you prepare your Canvas site for digital accessibility. You can also update dates as part of this process.

Review Course Settings

From the **Settings** link in the left-hand course navigation menu:

- ☐ Verify course full and short names.
- ☐ Verify course format.
- ☐ Enable the UMN course grading scheme (choose, **Set Grading Scheme** and then **Select Another Scheme** and choose **University of Minnesota Letter Grade Scheme**).
- ☐ [Edit course navigation](#).
- ☐ Recreate [student groups](#) if you are using them (Group Sets copy from prior courses, but groups within them do not).

Review Course Content

- ☐ Apply the Remove strategy from the [3 Rs framework](#) for digital accessibility
 - ☐ Keep the materials and activities you will use in the new semester.
 - ☐ Archive materials and activities you will not use but need to keep for future reference. Move these to a location that students do not have access to, such as a private Google Drive folder, a development Canvas site or offline storage on your laptop.
 - ☐ Delete materials and activities that you have archived and those that you will not use in the new semester.
- ☐ Create modules to organize and display course content and materials by week, unit, or topic. Optional, use the **Prerequisites** and **Requirements** to track student progress on each module.
- ☐ Review and update existing content in module overview pages, as needed. Module overview pages are a course feature included with the CEHD Canvas template.
- ☐ Upload course **Files** that you have already [reviewed and prepared for digital accessibility](#) (course syllabus, course readings, grading rubrics, etc.).
- ☐ Add content (course resources/student assignments).
- ☐ If you are using online course reserves (**Library Course Materials** in Canvas), follow the [instructions to build your course materials page](#) or contact coursematerials@umn.edu to submit a new reading list or to request your reading list from a previous semester be copied to the new semester.

- ☐ Verify due dates and availability dates.
- ☐ Update the **Syllabus** page.
- ☐ Delete outdated or unnecessary headings, content, or activities.
- ☐ Configure the gradebook (**Grades**) to support grading described in the syllabus.
- ☐ Set up a [grade posting policy](#).
- ☐ Organize course activities by using **Assignment Groups** to organize graded activities and assignments into categories.
- ☐ Organize items within each group in chronological order.
- ☐ Set **Assignment Groups Weight** (gradebook category weights), if required.
- ☐ Verify alignment between course total points and course syllabus total points.

Update Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussions

- ☐ Verify your module activities are published.
- ☐ Verify assignment and activity due dates. Due dates automatically appear on the course calendar and the [Syllabus page](#) as convenient reminders for students. "Available from" and "Until" dates will unlock and lock the activity.
- ☐ Verify instructions are accurate and well formatted.
- ☐ Verify the submission type (assignments only).
- ☐ Publish all modules, headers, pages, quizzes, discussions, and assignments.
- ☐ Publish your course before the official course start date.
- ☐ Verify that groups and group sets are populated correctly in the **People** space, if using.
- ☐ Verify assignments are weighted correctly, if using a weighted grading system.
- ☐ Verify discussion settings, including post options, grade (if applicable), group settings, and due dates.
- ☐ Verify discussions are listed in the correct order on the **Discussions** page.

Find and Fix Digital Accessibility Issues

- ☐ Enable the [Check Accessibility with UDOIT](#) in your course site's Navigation settings.
- ☐ Select **Check Accessibility with UDOIT** from your course menu
- ☐ Select **Scan this Course**

- ☐ Address the errors and suggestions found in your course's content and files.

Share Your Course with Students

- ☐ Publish all modules, headers, pages, quizzes, discussions, and assignments.
- ☐ Publish your course before the official course start date (when you want students to begin to be able to access the course).
- ☐ Send an email to your students introducing yourself and telling them how to access your course in Canvas and any tasks required before the first class meeting.

Things to Consider

- All of your content will be deleted if you click the **Reset Course Content** button. While this may be valuable to you while building a course, it would be wise to avoid using this button while a class is in session.
- Do not click on the **Permanently Delete this Course** button.
- Use caution when using the **Conclude this Course** button. Doing so will restrict both the instructor and students to read-only access to the course.
- Students will not receive any Instructor-generated announcements or messages sent from Canvas until the course is published AND students have accepted the Canvas Terms of Service.
- Pay attention to the clock hour setting on any activity or assignment where you have set a date. Canvas lists 12:00 to indicate midnight, the very first minute of a selected day. To set a clock time for the end of the day, choose 11:59PM.

Help us improve our resources. Take this [one-minute survey](#).