

# Make Your Canvas Course Student-Friendly in a Hurry

Faculty

## SETTING UP MATERIALS

1. [Use modules](#) to create structure for students. Giving links to all assignments and materials for a week within a specific module makes it easy for students to find what they need.
2. [Create a page](#) at the beginning of each module as an overview of the week's learning objectives and the work associated with them. Make sure to include everything, so that students can use it as a checklist for their week.
3. [Embed assignments, discussions, videos, quizzes and all other material](#) in modules.
4. [Hide all unnecessary items from your course menu](#). Students need to see Home, Announcements, Syllabus, Modules, Grades, and Zoom. Assignments, discussions & quizzes should be embedded in your modules, so students do not need the menu items.
5. Create a rhythm. Students may not have experience with an online class, and setting a consistent rhythm of due dates, activities and videos will help them stay on track. Have submitted work due at the same time every week: for example, Friday at 5pm or Sunday at 11:59pm. You may even consider having two due dates for two separate activities during the week to keep them on track and so that they don't leave all their work to the last day.
6. Provide a skeletal outline of your lectures or materials for classes. This will help keep students on track, and make sure they are paying attention to the right material. Provide the notes in an editable format, like Microsoft Word, and encourage them to flesh out the outline with their own notes as they read the text or watch the lecture.

## STUDENT WORK

1. Put due dates on all assignments, discussions, and quizzes. This populates the student calendar and To-Do pane, which will help them stay on track!
2. To add readings and other non-graded assignments to student To-Do lists, [use Pages](#). The items will appear on the Calendar but won't clutter up the Grades.
3. If you use visibility dates, be mindful of the circumstances. Making items unavailable after a certain date may not be the best option, as students may have limited access to the internet, may be ill, or may be taking care of family members. [Leave items available after the due date](#) – they will still be marked late by the system.
4. Always provide a low stakes assessment the first time you use a tool. Our students are learning this technology as well. Having a small assignment as their first attempt lets both students and instructor learn how to submit and grade before the stakes are high.
5. Provide opportunities for student reflection on learning, even if it's not graded. You can do this via reflective assignments or graded surveys. Students can receive credit for completing the assignment and responding to prompts such as "What is one part of the lecture I need to review" or "How will this apply to my future career".

## COMMUNICATION

1. Provide opportunities for student feedback, both formal and informal. Involving students in the process of teaching and learning helps give students more ownership over their experience, which results in better participation and improved retention rates.
2. Use the Canvas Inbox and Announcements instead of email for communicating with students. They may log into Canvas more often than they check their email, or they may have the app installed on their phone which will notify them. Canvas also keeps a record of everything sent, which helps keep communication honest.
3. Make yourself available via scheduled Zoom and email office hours. Students will still have questions and may have even more questions than normal. Staying present in your courses, not only via lectures and materials but also through emails and office hours, helps students remember that they are not alone.