

Step by Step Online Course Checklist

Step One: Designate a "Home Page"

- Click on "Choose Home Page" in tab list on right side of screen under "Course Status." Choose "syllabus" as home page (press save).
- Click on "Edit" tab in upper right corner. A box opens that you can then copy/paste/insert content into that will, once you press "update syllabus," serve as your homepage for the course. I usually put a few headers in at the top with a welcome video and then simply copy and paste the content from my course syllabus I would normally hand out in class. This then becomes the main homepage every time students click on the class. You can edit/add/delete content easily whenever you wish going forward.
- Add photos, quotes, images of course textbooks, links, etc. Be creative.
- Record a short 3-5-minute video either in YouTube or from your own device. You can then embed this on the homepage at the top so students see you right away and feel welcomed. Leave it up for the first couple weeks or the entire quarter. Your choice!
- Upload a PDF version of your syllabus on the homepage so students can print it off at home.
- Record short videos to explain assignments, course content, structure, etc. and embed them at key places on the home page to help students navigate the written text.

Step Two: Course Organization

- Click on "Modules" on the left list of tabs. Think of modules as a way to weekly organize your class.
- Click on the blue "+module" tab on the upper right. Name your module (such as Week 1, Sociological Foundations, etc.) and click the blue "add module."
- Create weekly modules for the quarter. Add more if you wish.
- Click on the "+" in the heading tab to add content. You can add files, links to assignments, headers to better organize the module, prerequisites, lock the module until it is ready, and even require students to move through the module content chronologically.
- Modules can be shifted up or down, edited, etc. Make sure to click on the little circles on the right so each component is "published" for student access.
- Click on "Assignments" on the left list of tabs to create assignments for students to complete and upload. Put links to the assignments in the weekly modules they are due for better organization.
- Click on "Quizzes" on the left list of tabs to create assessments, surveys, quizzes, exams, etc. for students to complete. Put links to the assignments in the weekly modules they are due for better organization.
- Click on "Discussions" on the left list of tabs to create group discussions for students to comment and interact. These can be organized with smaller groups, facilitated by certain TAs, and coordinated a variety of ways!
- Click on "Announcements" and write a welcome announcement for the students to see. Put key information and links to Canvas tutorials for students so they can familiarize themselves with Canvas.
- You can pre-set announcements to be posted in the future so they serve as reminders for a variety of assignments, tasks, etc. such as reminding students to reply to discussion posts.
- Once you are satisfied with the Canvas site, click the "publish" tab in the upper right-hand corner of the homepage. The class is now live!
- Send out a "welcome" email from your inbox in Canvas (look on the left side list of tabs) to your specific classes.
- Click on the "people" tab to see your enrolled students and whether they've logged into your class. Email them reminders to log on either individually through Canvas or reminders to the class as a whole.

Gentle Reminders

- Try to at least organize the first week's module for students to work through. You don't need to have every single module done for the entire course. This is a unique shift and students will be patient. They expect you to be working weekly on your courses to adapt to this quick change.
- Online classes are not the same as face to face experiences. This is a learning experience for you, too. Focus on the key content and allow for creativity to develop as weeks progress.
- Do not immerse yourself in distance learning best practices immediately. Get the course structure/organization up and going.
- Record voice lectures, video lectures, short video introductions, etc. to keep students engaged. If you want to focus only on textual/written content, that's okay, too.
- Communicate quickly and clearly with students via announcements, emails, and even homepage additions in Canvas. Tell them your communication plan (24-48 hours to respond, etc.) and how to best contact you.
- Try web conferencing (Zoom, Skype, etc.) if you feel comfortable.
- Many course textbooks have learning sites devoted to their content. Contact the publishers as they have staff readily available and have relaxed/eliminated their access prices for this entire situation.
- Once your classes are up and published, take some time to reflect on how you can draw on different kinds of sources/content to illustrate course components. Have a little fun with it exploring what's out there. YouTube, podcasts, films, videos, websites, books, resources, and other kinds of content are great ways to keep students connected to the class and breathe some new life into our courses.
- TAs can easily have their own course sites for discussion sections. Put them in charge of coordinating group discussions, finding content for modules, assisting students with Canvas issues, etc.
- Consider keeping Canvas sites for future face to face courses. They can serve as a virtual "home base" for readings, announcements, content, etc.