TEMPLE UNIVERSITY
Center for the Advancement of Teaching

Checklist: Creating Your First Canvas Course

Follow these step-by-step instructions to build your first course in the Canvas LMS as efficiently as possible, and use the checkboxes to keep track of each task you complete along the way!

Pre-checklist Activities

Instructors should fully engage in their course design process *before* beginning this checklist. This document makes the assumption that you, the instructor, have previously completed the design and development of the following items for your course:

- Course syllabus (e.g. text of course policies & expectations)
- Some course content (e.g. pdf files, videos, images)
- All major assessments (e.g. quizzes, tests, project prompts, rubrics)

   NOTE: Most steps in this checklist have an associated location in Canvas. Those locations are noted in brackets throughout this document to help you quickly navigate to each one.

Login to canvas.temple.edu to begin.

1. Review your course alignment

☐ Check for alignment between your course learning goals, content and assessments.	Review your planned assessments to ensure they align with course learning goals and competincies.
☐ Review your assessment plan	Be sure that your assessment plan includes: all planned assessments, specific point values, grading scales, and weighting information (if applicable).

   NOTE: At anytime, you can schedule an appointment with a CAT faculty developer for feedback on the alignment between your course learning goals, content, and assessments.

2. Request a Canvas course shell or create one from your banner class list [COURSE TOOLS]

☐ Request a Canvas shell.	Follow these instructions to request a Canvas shell. These courses are not linked to any Banner enrollment. They can be used to create a template course that can be copied to other courses or simply used for practice.
☐ Create a Canvas course from a class listed in Banner.	Follow these instructions to create a Canvas course for any course listed in Banner.

3. Add TAs and assign roles [PEOPLE]

☐ Add TAs, co-teachers, or administrators to your course.	When you add a user to your course, you will be asked to choose a role for that individual. Review role definitions here.

   NOTE: Canvas courses created through banner will automatically enroll students two weeks prior to the start of the semester.

4. Create a syllabus page [SYLLABUS]

☐ Create your course syllabus page using the built-in syllabus feature in Canvas.	If you already have a syllabus document, it is still recommended that you create your course syllabus page using the built-in syllabus feature available in your course.

5. Create an organized module structure for your course [MODULES]

☐ Create an "orientation" or "welcome" module.	This module will be used to introduce your students to relevant course tools, including specific features of Canvas. You may also want to post a welcome or course introduction video here.
☐ Create additional modules for each week or unit in your course.	It is recommended that each module should represent a specific week or unit in your course. Modules should be created in chronological order from top to bottom/ beginning to end.

NOTE: In this step, you will be building the "skeleton" of your course. You will create empty modules to determine the flow of your course now, and add relevant items to these modules in a later step.

6. Upload existing content files into Canvas [FILES]

QUICK TIP: Any time you create or upload something in Canvas, **do so in only one place.** You can then easily link back to the item (a file, page, assignment, etc.) in other parts of your course, eliminating the need for duplication.

☐ Upload any external files you would like to provide to students in your course: e.g. images, documents, prepared presentation slides, lecture notes, videos, etc.	If you have not already optimized your files for accessibility or addressed any permissions/copyright issues, do so before uploading the files to Canvas.

7. Create course content with free-form content pages [PAGES]

☐ Create a course "orientation" or "welcome" page.	These will be included in the orientation module you created in a previous step.
☐ Create additional pages for any content you want to provide to students throughout your course.	Pages allow you to provide content to your students in a wide variety of ways. In any course page, you can include text, images, files (like those you uploaded in a previous step), videos, embedded items from outside sources, and more. Be sure to include concise, descriptive titles for all course pages.
☐ Optimize all course pages for accessibility.	Design each page with accessibility in mind, and check pages for common accessibility issues after saving.

8. Create group sets for student collaboration [PEOPLE]

☐ If you will be using student groups in your course, create your group-sets.	There is no need to create student groups at this stage, but creating the group-sets will allow you to create group assignments.

9. Create all course assessments [QUIZZES, DISCUSSIONS, AND ASSIGNMENTS]

☐ Create quizzes (exams), graded discussions, and other assignments as needed.	Ensure that the point values of each assessment are consistent with your assessment plan. As you create each assessment, you will have the option to select the appropriate assignment group (created in a previous step).

| ☐ Attach the appropriate rubric to each assessment. | As you create each assessment, attach the appropriate rubric, and check that the total points in the rubric are equal to the point value of the assignment to which it is attached. |

NOTE: As you create your assessments, **it is very important to use the built-in option to set a due date for each assignment, quiz, or discussion you create!** Typing the due date into the assignment description is **not** recommended and will prevent the date from appearing on students' calendars or in their notifications.

10. Create rubrics for all planned assessments [OUTCOMES > MANAGE RUBRICS]

| ☐ Create your rubrics using the built-in rubric feature. | If using Canvas outcomes, create outcomes first, and then create rubrics by importing specific outcomes into each rubric. |

NOTE: At anytime you can schedule an appointment with a CAT faculty developer for resources and help designing rubrics for any assignment.

11. Complete your course modules [MODULES]

☐ Add content and assessments to your course modules.	Return to the modules you created in a previous step. In each module, add the appropriate assessments, content pages, and any other items students will need to successfully complete the module (e.g. external links).
☐ Publish all course modules.	Publishing a module automatically publishes any items included within that module.
☐ Customize students' access to modules or module items as needed.	You have the ability to hide certain content from students based on date or prerequisite.

12. Customize your course navigation

☐ Create a course home page.	[PAGES] If desired, create a new page to use as your course home page, and select the option to "use as front page."
☐ Select your course home page.	[HOME] If you created a new page to use as your home page in the previous step, select "the pages front page" as your home page. If not, select a different home page from the list of options available.
☐ Customize your navigation menu.	[SETTINGS] Enable, disable, and reorder course menu items based on your decisions throughout this course design process. It is recommended that you minimize the number of items in your course menu by deactivating unused or redundant menu options. This will streamline course navigation for you and your students.

13. Create a structure to organize assessments and weight grades using assignment groups [ASSIGNMENTS]

| ☐ Create assignment groups based on your assessment plan (for example, quizzes, essays, homework). | If you plan to use weighted grades (rather than a total point system), note that assignments in Canvas can only be weighted based on their assignment group, so keep this in mind as you determine the number and nature of the assignment groups for your course. |

NOTE: Like modules, assignment groups can also be empty at first. Your goal in this step is to build the structure you will need to organize the various course assessments you will create in the next few steps.

14. Create a grading scheme for your course [SETTINGS]

☐ Customize the course grading scheme to ensure alignment with your assessment plan and any specific requirements set by your college or department.

"Grading scale" may be a more familiar term for this aspect of your course. In Canvas, a grading scale is referred to as a "grading scheme."

15. Review your syllabus page and course calendar [SYLLABUS; CALENDAR]

☐ Check your syllabus page, and make adjustments as needed.

Now that you have created your assessments and at least a portion of your course content, it's a good idea to revisit your syllabus page to check for consistency with the rest of your course.

☐ Add due dates to all assignments, quizzes, and discussions in your course.

[ASSIGNMENTS, QUIZZES, & DISCUSSIONS]
This is a very important step, because the due dates you select in the settings for each assessment will appear in multiple parts of the Canvas interface. After adding your due dates, review your course calendar, and create additional calendar events (e.g. student conferences) as needed.

☐ Review gradebook, and make adjustments as needed.

[GRADES]
All course assignments should appear as columns in the gradebook automatically. You may choose to make adjustments to your gradebook organization at this time.

16. Publish your course [HOME]

☐ Publish your course.

Publishing your course will make it visible to everyone on your course roster.

17. Prepare your course announcements [ANNOUNCEMENTS]

☐ Create a "welcome" announcement to welcome students to your course.

In this announcement, direct students to the course orientation or welcome module you have created along with other essential introductory pages for your course (e.g. your syllabus). Students will not see this message until you have published your course.

☐ Create additional course announcements as needed.

You have the option to create multiple course announcements in advance. You can choose the appropriate publish/availability dates for each announcement, and it will be posted automatically at the chosen time.

18. Update your Canvas profile and notification settings [ACCOUNT]

☐ Update your Canvas profile.

This profile will be visible to other Canvas users, including students.

☐ Customize your notification settings.

These settings will apply across your entire Canvas account.

19. Welcome your new students via email

☐ Send a "welcome" email to your students (outside of Canvas).

Some students may not know how to access your course in Canvas right away, so it is important to contact your class via email in order to provide access instructions before the course start date.