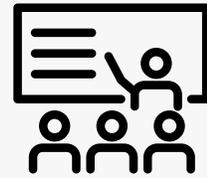


Student Suggestions for Canvas Course Design



What do students have to say about the most effective ways instructors use Canvas?

In the Fall of 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, over 5,000 University of Kentucky undergraduate students were surveyed to learn more about the nature of teaching and learning during this global educational phenomenon. One question asked students to identify which aspects of their instructor's teaching were most helpful. A number of students discussed the effective use of Canvas course shells as one helpful practice. The quotes below are a sample of those survey responses.

"The format of our Canvas page is easy to understand and all of the course material is divided up into weekly sections to make it more manageable. This allows me to remember a bigger portion of the content."

"The resources provided on the Canvas tab are helpful and he provides a lot of good examples in each topic. Each lecture has a quiz associated with it which is helpful to practice the material before homework and tests."

"Constant, high quality communication via Canvas. In a semester filled with information overload, her signal is consistently effective."

"My instructor communicates with us through Canvas everyday so we understand exactly what we need to be working on each day and throughout the week. The course is also very easy to navigate on Canvas which is very helpful."

Strategies for Using Canvas to Support Students

As instructors, we have a lot of flexibility when it comes to course organization and design. As we create our Canvas course shells, employing some of the following strategies can help make them more navigable and intuitive for our students.

- 1 Organize Content with Modules** Use modules to organize and order course materials to guide your students through each week. Consider creating a template for pages to present information (readings, videos, assignments, quizzes, and other resources) in a consistent way.
- 2 Use Announcements Strategically** Use Canvas announcements to share reminders, clarification, and resources. Give students a general idea of when and how you plan to use announcements. Maintain a consistent line of communication without overwhelming them with messages.
- 3 Create Assignment Due Dates** Creating Canvas assignments with due dates can help students keep track of the tasks that are due on the syllabus. Even assignments that don't require a submission (i.e., readings) can be added to Canvas so that they pop up in students' to-do lists.
- 4 Explain your Course Shell Design** Early in the semester, take time during class to walk students through your course shell to explain how it is organized and where they can expect to find course materials and assignments.