# Start of Semester Checklist

## Overview

This checklist intends to help your course meet the minimum expectations of Quality Matters and have proper settings and organized content. The [Canvas Instructor Guide](#) is a great resource if you have questions about using Canvas. DAI is always here to help, please feel free to reach out by emailing [canvas@unthsc.edu](mailto:canvas@unthsc.edu).  As you prepare your course for the new semester, check off items on this list when you have confirmed they are complete.

## Canvas Setup

Import from previous semesters

Make sure your course content has been successfully imported from previous semesters. (Instructor Guide: [How do I copy content from another Canvas course?](#))

Review dates

Review the start and end dates for the course and ensure they accurately reflect the course term and include a short period of time after the end of the term for students to check final grades and assignment feedback. (Instructor Guide: [How do I change the start and end dates for a course?)](#)

External tools

Check if all external tools (e.g., Turnitin, Mediasite, Respondus-LockDown Browser, Zoom, etc.) are working properly, and make sure provide students the links to download the software.

Homepage

Set up or choose a home page to help your student get started (Instructor Guide: [How do I change the Course Home Page?](#))

Syllabus

Set up your syllabus page by uploading your syllabus in Word/PDF format or edit the syllabus tab from the left navigation menu (Instructor Guide: [How do I use the Syllabus as an instructor?)](#)

Navigation

Disable any features you and your students will not be using. For example, if you have decided not to use the BigBlueButton, you should hide the link on the sidebar. (Instructor Guide: [How do I manage Course Navigation links?)](#)

## Content Review

Write measurable learning objectives [QM 2.1, 2.2]

Make sure your course-level learning objectives (CLOs) and module-level learning objectives (MLOs) are specific and measurable.

Align different course components [QM 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1]

Clarify the connection between each assessment/material/activity/technology and your module-level learning objectives (MLOs).

Establish your grading policy [QM 3.2]

Make sure to explain your policy on late submission and grading scale clearly.

Ensure your grading policy in Canvas matches the syllabus.

Create and add rubrics [QM 3.3]

Rubrics have been created and added to discussions and assignments.

Provide support information [QM 7.1, 7.2, 7.3]

Add information or provide links to technical support, accessibility policies, and academic support services and resources.


## Review Important Settings

Set start and end date

Adjust the start and end date of the course located under the "Settings" tab.

Add 7-days to the course end date to allow for student submissions or feedback.

Edit your profile and bio

Edit your profile and add a profile picture to your Canvas Account. Students will be able to see the image displayed in the Inbox, Announcements, Discussions, and People tab.

Simplify course navigation [QM 8.1]

Control which links to appear in Course Navigation on the left side.

Name your pages/file consistently [QM 8.2]

Make sure all the pages/files are named in a consistent way to facilitate readability.

Provide accessible texts/images [QM 8.3]

Make sure all the images have alt texts, tables have header rows, documents are formatted with heading styles, PDFs are not image scans.

Request closed captions for required videos [QM 8.4]

Remember to request closed captions through My Mediasite for all the required videos.

Double-check your due dates

Adjust the due dates and availability dates of your discussions, assignments, and quizzes.

Review student groups (if applicable)

If students are assigned to groups or blocks in the course, create these group/blocks manually or automatically and assign assignments to the group/blocks.

Use external tools (if applicable)

If you plan to use external tools (e.g., Turnitin, Respondus-LockDown Browser, Mediasite, etc.), please reach out to DAI for support information and Canvas template.

## Publish Your Course

Validate links

Check and confirm that all course links are still functional. (Canvas Instructor Guide: How do I validate links in a course?)

Publish your course

You must publish a course before students can access it and its contents.

Review course in student view

Launch Student View to experience your course from a student perspective and confirm all the content and links are accessible for students.

## Additional FAQs

Need to enroll someone (TA, instructor, students) into your Canvas course?
Please reach out to the Office of the Registrar for more information.

Need a program-appointed teaching assistant enrolled into a course?


Please see Canvas Outcomes and aligning outcomes within assignment rubrics.