



Student Guide to Canvas at UBC

What is Canvas?

Canvas provides an **online classroom** for each of your courses. Your instructor will use Canvas to communicate with you and share resources and activities you need to complete your course. Through Canvas you can: complete quizzes, submit assignments, give presentations, participate in discussions, view your grades, and more.

What do I need to use Canvas?

Canvas uses your **web browser** to display content. Supported web browsers include: Internet Explorer 8+, Chrome 19+, Safari 5+, and Firefox 12+.

For the best experience with your **screen reader**, use Firefox and JAWS on a Windows system and Safari and VoiceOver on a Mac.

You can also access and work on your courses using the [Canvas Student app](#)¹ on your mobile device. Download the app from the App Store (for Apple devices) or Google Play (for Android devices).

How do I use Canvas?

All courses at UBC have a Canvas course created at the beginning of term. Every time you enrol in a course, you are automatically registered in that course on Canvas.

To see your Canvas courses, **log in to Canvas with your CWL at canvas.ubc.ca**.

ACCESS YOUR COURSES

After logging in to Canvas, you will see your **Canvas Dashboard**. From the Dashboard, the **Global Navigation** (the menu in navy blue) is on the left. The rest of the page has general announcements and tips. Below the announcements, you'll see a course card for each class you are enrolled in.

1. Access a course by clicking on its **card**.
2. Once you enter the course, you will see Course Navigation on the left (to the right of the Global Navigation) with a list of links specific to that course. Click any **link** to visit that section of the course.

¹ <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-4048>



VIEW COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your instructor may use announcements in your course to communicate changes, upcoming events, and other information intended for everyone enrolled in your class.

1. Click **Announcements** in the Course Navigation.
2. On the Announcements page, announcements are listed in reverse chronological order, with the newest appearing first and the older at the bottom.

Tips

- You will receive email notifications when your instructor posts an announcement. To modify notification frequency, go to the Global Navigation, click **Account**, then click **Notifications**. Choose to receive announcement notifications immediately (“notify me right away”) or once a day (“send daily summary”).

COMMUNICATE WITH CANVAS INBOX

You can communicate with your instructor, teaching assistants, and other students in your class using the Canvas **Inbox**. The Inbox is like a personal email address within Canvas.

1. Click **Inbox** in the Global Navigation.
2. Click the compose icon (pencil icon). A Compose Message window will pop up.
3. In the drop-down menu, select the course where you want to send your message.
4. To add individual recipients from the course, you can:
 - a. Search for a person by typing the person’s name in the “To” field.
 - b. Use the course roster. Click the **Address Book icon** next to the “To” field. From the address book, locate the person’s role and select the person’s name.

Tips

- If you right-click or option-click on the Inbox link, you can open your Inbox in a new browser tab. This keeps it handy while you are doing other tasks in Canvas.
- Once a course has concluded, you cannot message anyone in that course using your Inbox. However, you will still be able to see past messages exchanged in the course.

SUBMIT YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

As you complete your course, you may be asked to submit assignments in Canvas.

1. Click **Assignments** in the Course Navigation.
2. Click the **title** of an assignment from the list to open it.
3. Click the **Submit Assignment button** to access the submission page.
4. Click the **tab** that describes how you will submit your assignment (e.g., file, text entry, web address, etc.) and follow the prompts.



5. When ready, click the **Submit Assignment button** on this page to submit your assignment.

Tips

- You can also access your assignments through your Dashboard or, if enabled in your course, via the **syllabus, gradebook, calendar, or modules** area.

PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSION BOARDS

As you complete your course, your instructor may ask you to participate in a class discussion. You can participate by responding to your instructor's discussion question or responding to another student's comment or thread.

1. Click **Discussions** in the Course Navigation.
2. On the Discussions page, discussions are organized with the newest discussion on top. Click the **name** of the discussion you want to participate in.
3. In the discussion, click **Reply** and type or paste your response in the textbox to post to the discussion topic.
4. Depending on how the instructor has set up the discussion, you can also reply to discussion comments from classmates by clicking **Reply** for an individual comment.
5. When you are ready to submit, click **Post Reply**.

Tips

- If the Discussions link is not available in the Course Navigation, you can still access discussions in Modules or Assignments. Just look for the discussions icon (in green) to the left of any item in the module or assignment.
- Using the response textbox, you can add links, photos, equations, and/or media to your discussion responses. If your instructor allows, you can also attach files.

USE COURSE GROUPS

You may be asked to work with other students in a group in your Canvas course. Each group will have its own private group area to work in, which contains announcements, pages, discussions, and files that can be shared within your group.

1. Click **Groups** in the Course Navigation.
2. Click the **title** of your assigned group to access your private group area.

SET UP YOUR OWN GROUPS

If you want to set up a study group or discuss an assignment with others in your course, you may be able to set up your own student group.

1. Click **People** in the Course Navigation.
2. Select the **Groups tab**.



3. Click **+Group blue button** in the upper right side of the screen.
4. Name your group.
5. To allow anyone in the course to join your group, select **Course Members are Free to Join** from the drop-down menu.
6. To invite only certain people to join, select **Membership by Invitation Only**, and invite members to the group by clicking the **checkbox** next to their name.
7. Click **Save**.

Tips

- If the People link is not available in the Course Navigation or if you cannot see the +Group blue button, your instructor has disabled this feature. You can ask to have it enabled.

COMPLETE NON-PROCTORED CANVAS QUIZZES

There are two types of quizzes in Canvas: those that are proctored (monitored) and those that are not. For proctored quizzes, the quiz name will typically say “(Remotely Proctored)”, and you should follow the [instructions for using a tool called Proctorio in Canvas](#).

For non-proctored quizzes:

1. Click **Quizzes** in the Course Navigation.
2. Click the **title** of the quiz you want to take.
3. You may be asked to submit an assessment code (given to you by your instructor). Type in the code when prompted.

Tips

- Note that all assessment types in Canvas are called “quizzes”, even midterm and final exams.
- If your quiz has a time limit, a countdown will appear on your screen when you start the quiz. To hide the time, click the **Hide button** (“<”) to the right of the countdown.

VIEW YOUR GRADES

Depending on how your instructor has set up grading, you will either see grades instantly (e.g, immediately after you take a quiz) or when the instructor manually releases the grades.

To see the grades currently available to you:

1. Click **Grades** in the Course Navigation.
2. Select the **Course** for which you want to view grades.
3. Click **Apply**.



Tips

- In the “Arrange by” menu, you can sort grades in different ways.
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Where can I get more support with Canvas?

If you have **trouble accessing Canvas** from your current location:

- Contact UBC IT’s [Service Centre Help Desk](#)²

For more help with **using Canvas**, please review:

- UBC’s [Student Guide to Canvas](#)³
- Canvas’s [Student Guide](#)⁴

A Guide from UBC’s Keep Teaching Website (keepteaching.ubc.ca)

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² <https://it.ubc.ca/got-question-about-it-products-and-support#helpdesk>

³ <https://students.canvas.ubc.ca>

⁴ <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701-canvas-student-guide-table-of-cont>