

# Course Readiness Checklist for Canvas

## About Course Readiness Checklist for Canvas

The Quality Assurance Team for Mason Online | Stearns Center Digital Learning has prepared this checklist as a resource to help you focus on and review key elements before you publish your migrated Canvas content for your students. You may find more Canvas-readiness resources on the [Getting Canvas Ready](#) page, Information Technology Services (ITS), George Mason University.

**Questions?** Please contact **Mason Online | Stearns Center Digital Learning** at [stearns@gmu.edu](mailto:stearns@gmu.edu).

### (1) Course Structure & Content

Yes ✓	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.1 Course Structure and Navigation:</b> The course has a clear structure and organization, including course-level and module-level overviews, which makes content, activities, assessments, and weekly due dates predictable and easy to navigate. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Course Card Image</a>- You may choose an image to display behind your course’s card on the Canvas dashboard.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Homepage Customize Course Homepage</a> and select what you'd like to display on the home page.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Announcements</a>: Weekly Announcement has been set up, either on the Home or a separate page</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Getting Started Information: Create a Canvas page</a> to provide clear instructions to students about how to get started and where to find important information and content. This may include a “course tour” video or detailed steps for starting the course.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.2 Syllabus and Schedule Information:</b> The syllabus and schedule are posted to <a href="#">module</a> and <a href="#">page</a> of Canvas course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <a href="#">syllabus</a> includes class expectations such as <b>learning outcomes</b>, participation rules, etiquette expectations, code of conduct, policies for grading, late work, and make-up work, supplemental textbooks, reading lists, and technology requirements etc. Syllabus is posted as downloadable PDF.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Course Schedule</a> includes a list of readings, activities, assignments, and exams with clear due dates.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Course Calendar</a> is set up in the Canvas course.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.3 Instructor Bio and Contact Information:</b> Instructor information is posted to <a href="#">module</a> and <a href="#">page</a> of Canvas course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post brief bio and photo.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide contact information, availability information, communication preferences, response time for emails and turnaround times for grading.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.4 Institutional and Departmental Resources/Policies:</b> Syllabus or module includes information about resources and policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The course contains information and links to <b>institutional resources</b> (e.g., Library, Writing Center, Counseling, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The course includes institutional <b>policies</b> such as Disability Accommodations, Honor Code, Student Privacy etc., in the syllabus or resource module.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Course includes information about <b>Departmental resources</b> (such as tutoring) and <b>Departmental policies</b> (such as Department-specific policies concerning academic integrity).</li> </ul>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.5 Course Tools:</b> Course tools are used intentionally and promote student interaction, engagement, and active learning. Tools may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tools include <b>Canvas LMS functions and/or other 3rd-party tools</b> which are integrated into LMS (e.g., Zoom, Honorlock, Turnitin, Perusall, VoiceThread, Harmonize, Kaltura, etc.).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Information is shared about where students may find <b>technical help or support</b> about LMS or course tools, such as <a href="#">ITS Help Desk</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.6 Presentation of Course Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Content</b> is "chunked" into manageable pieces by leveraging Canvas <a href="#">modules</a> and <a href="#">pages</a> (e.g. organized by units, chapters, topics, or weeks).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Course Media:</b> All links, files, videos, and external <b>URLs</b> are active and working. Use <a href="#">Link Validator in Canvas</a> to check for any broken links.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>External resources</b> (Word documents, PDF, URLs) open in <b>new window or new tab</b>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>1.7 Assignments and Activities: Descriptions and Instructions are clear, detailed, and include instructor's clear expectations. Students understand how assignments and activities relate to course learning outcomes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Learners are provided detailed directions on how and where they will submit work.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rubrics: Provide assessment rubrics for graded items.</b> Clear grading expectations are identified based on the use of rubrics (See <a href="#">Canvas Guide: Rubrics</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Gradebook.</b> Set up Gradebook in Canvas; Set up Assignments first. See instructions for Gradebook at: <a href="#">Gradebook Overview</a> and <a href="#">How to Use Gradebook in Canvas</a></li> </ul>

## (2) Course Accessibility

Yes ✓	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>2.1 Use Accessibility Checker in Canvas.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify and correct <b>accessibility issues</b> within the course text editor with <a href="#">Canvas Accessibility Checker</a></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>2.2 Documents and External Resources.</b> Make sure that content posted to the course is accessible. See <a href="#">George Mason University Assistive Technology Initiative</a> website for information about creating <a href="#">accessible documents</a> and <a href="#">media</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accessible PowerPoint slides are available for each lecture/presentation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Videos are closed-captioned or have posted transcripts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All Word documents are accessible.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> PDF documents are text-based (not scanned) and fully accessible.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> External Resources - All publisher-provided resources are accessible, or alternate equivalent resources or strategies are provided.</li> </ul>

## (3) Making Final Edits Before Publishing Your Canvas Course

Yes ✓	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.1 Remove all mentions of Blackboard.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In your migrated course, review all content and remove any references to Blackboard. Replace it with Canvas-specific guidance.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.2 Review dates and semesters mentioned in your course.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review all dates and semesters referenced in your migrated course, updating to the current semester and dates.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.3 Run the Link Validator in your Canvas course.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use The <a href="#">Link Validator</a> (found under Course Settings) to check for any dead links in your course. After running validator, replace any bad links.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.4 Set Up to Receive Regular Notifications from Canvas about Your Course.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manage <a href="#">notification settings</a> from your Canvas account Notifications page.</li> </ul>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.4 Publish Your Course.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students will not be able to see your course’s content until you <a href="#">publish your course</a>. Make sure to do this before your course start date.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.5 Check Your Course in Student View.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To “see” what students may view in your course, always check your Canvas course using <a href="#">Student View</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>3.6 Send Canvas Course Invitations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Once the semester or course has begun, send a message to your students to make sure they know that the course is available on Canvas. See <a href="#">Canvas People Overview</a>.</li> </ul>

## (4) Additional Canvas Resources and Information

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>4.1 Blackboard-Canvas Comparison.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">This chart (prepared by George Mason University ITS) compares tools from Blackboard (Bb) Learn with its Canvas equivalent</a>. Please use the information provided below to help familiarize yourself with the tools that are offered in Canvas, where to find them, and how to use them in your course.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>4.2 Course Migration Options: Starting from Scratch.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To begin building, use your Canvas Sandbox or your semester course. Additional sandbox or template courses can be requested. More information about starting your Canvas course from scratch, see: <a href="https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/start-fresh/">https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/start-fresh/</a></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>4.3 Canvas Instructor Video Series: <a href="#">Set Up Your Canvas Course in 30 minutes or Less</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> You can get up and running with these 7 videos from Canvas, which includes an overview of Canvas, how to build and manage a course, and how to create and manage course content. Other training opportunities are posted on the <a href="#">LMS Events</a> page.</li> </ul>