

Facilitation Checklist

Before class starts

Syllabi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Stearns Center Syllabus Checklist to ensure that your final syllabus has all necessary details. • Describe all assignments in detail, including grading criteria. • Use the Digital Learning team's Online Course Readiness Checklist for the final course review. • At least one week before class begins, email students the final syllabus and instructions for accessing the course materials.
Plan for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share success tips specific to your course and discipline, and general online learning success strategies for students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategies for Online Learning Success (Mason Online) ○ Prepare Your Students for Online Learning (UNSW) ○ Tips for Online Student Success (ASU) ○ George Mason Student Support Services (already in the Canvas template – see Module 0 in your sandbox course)
Course Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the course available to students in Canvas within one week of the class starting, but no later than the first day of class. • Week 0 often refers to the period when students gain access to the Canvas course but before the first official day of the semester. Week 0 Module is an orientation module for the course. In Week 0, you can include orientation activities & resources for your students. You also may assign some tasks to give students practice with various tools that they'll need to use in the course. • You can create a course orientation video or tour so that students can learn to navigate your course. • Post a low-stakes syllabus quiz in Canvas to make sure that students become familiar with the course requirements; they can also gain practice taking quizzes in Canvas. • You can include an “ice-breaker” activity for community-building. • Send out your first announcement/email before the course begins. Welcome your students, introduce the course, and describe the schedule & routines for your online course. You can find examples of what you might include in a welcome message here.

During Class

Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to reply to students' introductions and welcome them to the course. Make introductory contact with all enrolled students when the class begins, perhaps through a welcome email, announcement, or video. Be sure to do the same for any new students who register after the start date.
Office Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post and observe your office hours, whether online or face-to-face. For any changes, send your students an email and post an announcement. If holding virtual office hours, include access instructions for the tool you use (e.g., Zoom).
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be available and responsive to students at least five days per week. Respond to student inquiries within 24-48 hours during the days that you are available. • Be sure that students know what to expect, including any days or hours that you are not available. Being “available” includes: responding to student email, confirming receipt of assignments, logging into Canvas to monitor and participate in discussion forums, and grading assignments.
Technology Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't assume that all of your students have the basic technical knowledge and skills to succeed in a Canvas course. Prepare your students for online learning by directing them to Mason and Canvas resources for technical support. In your syllabus and course modules, provide links to Mason ITS Technical Support. Point out the Help button in Canvas and the link to the Canvas Student Guide. (already in the Canvas template – see Module 0 in your sandbox course)

Instructor Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make regular, proactive contact with each class. Aim to post regular weekly announcements during the semester, keeping students aware of upcoming deadlines and course updates. • Participate in course discussion forums in a way you deem appropriate, intervening to clarify, refocus, provide correction, or add new information. • Provide and monitor an “Ask the Instructor” discussion forum, responding to queries during your available days. • Share information about yourself so your students can get to know you, and use a friendly tone in your communications. Learn about your students’ backgrounds and interests, using them to tailor feedback. • Encourage students to communicate with you, share ideas, and interact with each other. • Contact, encourage, and follow up with students who are not participating or making progress in the course.
Grades and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post grades with qualitative feedback in Canvas. Try to do this in a timely manner, or within one week of the assignment due date. Let students know when to expect grades and feedback. • Use rubrics and comment library in Canvas. Consider video and audio feedback. Use the annotation tool in SpeedGrader. • Explain to the students how to view your feedback. • Allow opportunities to fail without penalty and improve.
Student Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize student problems early. Work with students to diagnose the problem and provide appropriate assistance or referral, such as helping the student find campus or online resources.
Online Communication	<p>Keep best practices in mind for effective online communication. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of challenges in conveying information by email. Word your messages carefully, use language that students will understand, use humor judiciously, and consider using phone calls or voicemails instead of text emails for complicated matters. Also, avoid terse communications, include a greeting, and make your messages and announcements friendly. • Be self-motivated and self-disciplined, planning your time and schedule for your online course. • Each time you check your online course, leave some evidence that you were there (e.g., a brief posting or comment). • Keep students updated with clear and regular communications and announcements. If you need to make any changes in the course, please let students know. • Post and respond to discussion boards and other course activities, observing netiquette guidelines. • Be prompt with providing feedback to students.
After Class Ends	
Final grades and evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Import final grades into PatriotWeb. • Check your student feedback and evaluations. • Consider making course improvements if needed. Contact the instructional design team if you would like help addressing issues, adding new elements, updating course content, or making other changes as needed.
Course Records and Copy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archive your Canvas course at the end of the semester if you need to keep course data longer than 2 years for any reason. • Save paper exams and other course records according to your program or department policies. • Save student emails for at least one year for future reference, in case of grade disputes or other questions. • Complete your course copy for the new semester in a timely manner. Check dates, links, files, images, and exam questions.