Fall 2020

Canvas Course Welcome/Orientation Home Page

A Recommended Home Page Template Designed By Faculty For Faculty

Suggestion- Faculty Publish the Home Page by Monday, August 3

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Purpose of the Canvas Home Page

The Canvas home page is the first thing students see when logging into a course in Canvas. The purpose of the Canvas home page is to communicate early to students about the format and meeting pattern of the course, and to set the stage for a positive learning experience throughout this unprecedented fall semester.

For clarity and consistency of the student experience, the Canvas home page should include the following information:

- Course prefix, section, number and title information
- Faculty contact information and office hours
- Course format (on-campus, hybrid, remote, online)
- Meeting pattern and any Zoom links, if applicable
- For on-campus and hybrid courses-
  - Share the plan for social distancing in the designated classroom (e.g., splitting the group into two, with one group meeting on Tuesdays and the other group on Thursdays)
  - Communicate instructions for the first day of class (e.g., everyone meets remotely or everyone comes to campus)
  - Communicate that while we don't know with certainty how the pandemic may evolve, if it becomes necessary to adjust or make modifications to the in-person aspects of the course (such as a fall back to all-remote learning), what approach will be taken to notify students of any needed changes.
  - Encourage students to bring a mindset of flexibility, grace, compassion for each other, and a shared commitment to following safety protocols as we navigate new ways of moving through buildings, engaging in classrooms, and more.

This document shares sample text for Canvas home pages appropriate [for all courses](#) regardless of format, as well as text particular to each of the four course formats we are using at CU Denver this fall:

- [On-campus](#)
- [Hybrid](#)
- [Remote](#)
- [Online](#)

The content suggested and modeled here is information students can access in advance of the semester to help them begin to set/reset their expectations for fall and be able to begin planning their fall semester schedule. Please feel free to use/edit this text for your own Canvas home page.

Sharing the Home Page with Students

To make the home page visible prior to the rest of the course, you will want to only publish the home page and then publish the course; you can leave all other course components unpublished until you wish them to be available for students to view. For directions on creating and publishing a home page in Canvas, please see:

- [How do I set a Front Page in a course?](#) (document)
- [How to change the Course Home Page?](#) (document)
- [Creating a Homepage with Canvas LMS](#) (12-minute video)
- [Canvas LMS Tutorial - Setting the Homepage](#) (8-minute video)

For all courses...

On your Canvas home page please provide a welcome to your course. The welcome section is an opportunity to provide students with an overview of the course, and enhance their interest in the course content and learning outcomes. It is also the starting place for building a welcoming, inclusive and energizing learning experience. This content is likely the first thing students will see when entering the course Canvas shell. It is a chance to speak directly to students, to talk about what the course covers and why it matters, and to give students a sense of both the content and tone they can expect throughout the semester.

Example:

> Hello, and welcome to Intro to Art (FINE 1001)!
>
> This course is an introduction to visual art in all its forms and variations. People began making images for expressive and communicative purposes a long, long time ago, and we're still doing it today, perhaps more than ever before. Art has a lot to tell us about ourselves, about human history, and about the world we live in. I see art as a form of communication, and artistic production throughout history as an ongoing conversation about our interests and worries. In this class you will become part of—and even add to—that conversation. As we explore the incredible variety of art that fills our world, we will build fundamental skills that will serve a lifelong engagement with the arts, and many other endeavors. Learning about visual art is a journey, and one I look forward to undertaking with you this semester!

The Welcome section might also include visuals related to the course. A recorded video message could be embedded in Canvas in lieu of text; see the [How do I embed a video…?](#) help section for instructions on how to do this.

ABOUT ME

Sharing some information about yourself helps to begin building a relationship with students and establish credibility. What you say should reflect the conversations you typically have with students, but might include your academic background and professional experience, your

enthusiasm for your field, personal interests, or other relevant tidbits about yourself. Consider what you think would be helpful to hear at the start of the class, and what you typically share with students during the course of the semester.

Here is an example that includes both professional and personal content:

> I'm Professor Dunlap, but please call me Joni [she/her/hers]. I am a professor of learning design and technology (LDT) in the School of Education and Human Development (SEHD). I have a doctorate in Educational Administration, Leadership, and Supervision (emphasis Instructional Design and Technology). I have been a professor at CU Denver since 2000, and teaching at the university level for over 20 years, and teaching online for all of those years. I haven't always been an academic: I produced and directed pledge drives for public television, I was a publicist, I was a project manager at Broderbund Software during the dawn of personal computers, among other adventures.
>
> My partner Todd is also a professor (computer science), and we have two fantastic daughters -- Gillian (17) and Raeghan (14). My hobbies include anything involving my daughters, playing ukulele and guitar (and taking piano lessons now), cycling, writing, storytelling, Qi Gong/yoga, music, dancing, and talking about going camping. I'm crazy about British comedy, corny musicals, science fiction movies from the 1950s, Alexander Calder, and the ocean; and I collect old science and social science textbooks (1930s-1960s).

Similar to the Welcome section, this section could also include a photo of you, your workspace, or something from your personal life (e.g., a photo of your family or pets, or a photo from your last holiday). A recorded video message could also be embedded in Canvas in lieu of text; see the [How do I embed a video…?](#) help section for instructions on how to do this.

OFFICE HOURS & CONTACT INFORMATION

In this section, please provide information on when you are available to meet with students via Zoom, as well as how students may contact you.

Example:

> I typically have time each weekday and over the weekends to connect via Zoom or phone if you have specific questions or concerns you'd like to discuss or ideas for

projects you'd like to brainstorm. Please message me through Canvas, email me at joni.dunlap@ucdenver.edu, or leave me a voicemail message at 720-319-8096 with a suggested day and time to connect and I will get back to you as quickly as possible to finalize our schedule. In addition, please know that each week I am available during my virtual office hours in Zoom on Mondays from 6-7:30pm and Thursdays from 6-7:30pm. I strongly encourage you to reach out to me at any time. The Zoom link for virtual office hours is <link to Zoom space>.

PRE-SEMESTER INFO AND TIMELINE

Provide some indication to students of the approximate timeline for finalizing and sharing the syllabus and the course Canvas site (or other platforms, if applicable)—whether that is prior to the start of the semester or on the first day of class. Doing so gives students some insight into the preparations you have been engaged in for the course, and also lets students who are looking for information know that it is forthcoming, and when it should be available. This section is also a good place to provide advance information about textbooks and other required or recommended supplies.

Examples:

> **Syllabus:** I am in the process of revising and finalizing the course syllabus. It will be finished and available through Canvas [explain where within Canvas it will be posted] by the Monday before the start of classes, if not sooner.

> **Canvas:** I will be building out the course Canvas site between 8/1 and 8/15. The full course site will be open no later than the end of the day on 8/15.

> OR

> The course Canvas site is open and available to all students enrolled in the course. If you are looking through the site, you will notice that many sections are missing or incomplete. I will be building out the site between 8/1 and 8/15. I have decided to make most of the site accessible to students during that time so that anyone who is interested can see the process and development of the Canvas course materials. PLEASE NOTE: Everything appearing on Canvas prior to 8/15 is provisional and subject to change. I will post an announcement on Canvas—no later than the end of the day on 8/15—when the site is finalized.

Textbooks/Supplies: There is one REQUIRED textbook for this course: [Debra DeWitte, Ralph Larmann and M. Kathryn Shields, *Gateways to Art*, 3rd ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2019)](). ISBN: 9780500841150 (paperback) / 9780500841341 (loose leaf) / 9780500841235 (ebook) → This text provides foundational information about course content that we will build upon and put into practice in class lectures and discussions, and in assignments throughout the semester. <include cover photo>

I also RECOMMEND [Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*, 11th ed. (Pearson, 2015)](). ISBN: 9780205886999 (paperback) / 9780205935796 (ebook) → This book is a helpful resource for anyone new to communicating about visual arts, and is especially useful for the Artwork Analysis and Art in the Community papers.

OPTIONAL but RECOMMENDED supplies:

- A small sketchpad and pencil or pen for observational drawing
- A dedicated folder on your computer/tablet for course materials
- A dedicated area and system for notes on course readings, lectures and discussions

SOMETHING EXTRA

Consider adding something extra to the launch page—something engaging, provocative, fun. For example:
- You could start a collaborative playlist in Spotify and invite students to contribute in advance of the term starting
- You could share a relevant TED Talk video, and invite students to share their responses to a Google Doc
- You could provide a Twitter or Instagram hashtag and invite students to post photos from their daily lives using the course hashtag
- You could invite them to share their questions about the course to a Google Doc so you can begin responding for the group in advance of the semester start
- You could share a photo in Instagram and invite students to provide a caption for the photo

Although not all students will have the opportunity or desire to participate in this type of activity in advance of the semester starting, a more playful pre-launch activity can begin to promote connection and community and help students explore the course and various tools and platforms that may be used during the semester.

If your course is scheduled as an **on-campus** course...

In this section of the Canvas course home page, please describe the **on-campus** delivery format and any associated platforms (e.g., Canvas, Zoom) you plan on using.

Example:

> Life at CU Denver will look different in the fall—it has to—but the university community is committed to working together to act in the best interest of the safety and well-being of our entire campus community, while delivering an excellent student-centered educational experience. This will allow many students to return to campus in a limited and careful way by incorporating online and virtual learning with on-campus classroom instruction where it can be provided safely and when it is essential to the academic needs of the course curriculum. I personally make this commitment to you—that I will act in the best interest of your safety and well-being and will do my utmost to provide you with an engaging, relevant learning experience. For more information about returning to campus, please see the CU Denver Safe Return page, specifically the Safe Return FAQ.
>
> This on-campus course is scheduled to **meet on campus** and will meet at a specific time and place that is reflected on your schedule. However, for health and safety needs the classroom spaces have been reconfigured to allow for social distancing of at least six feet. This means that not all of us will be able to meet at the same time. Given this is a T-Th course, I will be working with you to determine who attends class on campus on Tuesdays and who attends class on campus on Thursdays. We will work together to establish this schedule during our first class meeting which will be done via Zoom.
>
> Also, I know that many of you are looking forward to in-person classes but that there may be others in the course who for various reasons are unable to or do not want to return to face-to-face learning. I will do everything I can to accommodate a remote learning environment for the fall semester should you choose to remain off campus.
>
> During the first week we will spend some time getting oriented to the course format, course content, and each other. In the meantime for more information on the two primary platforms we will use to support our on-campus meetings, please see the Office of Information Technology's document that provides helpful directions on **Getting Started with Canvas** and **Getting Started with Zoom**.

CLASSROOM PRACTICES, CONTINGENCIES AND COMMUNICATION

In this section, remind students of health and safety protocols they will need to follow when they come to campus, and let students know how and where they can find information and updates if any changes to the course become necessary.

Example:

> Following the recommendations of the CDC and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment those returning to campus will need to practice physical distancing (6 feet or more), avoid crowds greater than 25, follow hygiene and cleaning protocols, and wear a face covering at all times. For more information, please see the **Health & Safety** section of the [CU Denver Safe Return FAQ](#).

> As we have experienced since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic requires constant adjustment of plans and expectations, so flexibility is more important than ever this Fall semester. Of course we all hope that our on-campus course will be able to continue meeting on campus, but if the CDC and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment recommend we shift back into quarantine, I will work with you to make this transition to remote and online learning as seamless as possible. If we receive a quarantine order prior to the start of the semester, I will update this home page accordingly--please be sure to check back between now and the start of the semester for any updates or adjustments to our meeting plan.

If your course is scheduled as a **hybrid** course...

ABOUT THE COURSE FORMAT

In this section of the Canvas course home page please describe the **hybrid** delivery format and any associated platforms (e.g., Canvas, Zoom) you plan on using.

Example:

> Life at CU Denver will look different in the fall—it has to—but the university community is committed to working together to act in the best interest of the safety and well-being of our entire campus community, while delivering an excellent student-centered educational experience. This will allow many students to return to campus in a limited and careful way by incorporating online and virtual learning with on-campus classroom instruction where it can be provided safely and when it is essential to the academic needs of the course curriculum. I personally make this commitment to you—that I will act in the best interest of your safety and well-being and will do my utmost to provide you with an engaging, relevant learning experience. For more information about returning to campus, please see the CU Denver Safe Return page, specifically the Safe Return FAQ.

> This hybrid course is a **mix of on-campus and online**, depending upon the needs of the class. Some meetings will be in person, while others will be online using platforms such as Canvas and Zoom. It is helpful to note that for health and safety needs the classroom spaces have been reconfigured to allow for social distancing of at least six feet; this means we will not all be able to attend class in-person each week. I will be working with you to determine who attends class on campus on Tuesdays each week and how our online meetings and activities will work throughout the semester. We will work together to establish this schedule during our first class meeting which will be done via Zoom.

> Also, I know that many of you are looking forward to in-person classes but that there may be others in the course who for various reasons are unable to or do not want to return to face-to-face learning. I will do everything I can to accommodate a remote learning environment for the fall semester should you choose to remain off campus.

> During the first week we will spend some time getting oriented to the course format, course content, and each other. In the meantime for more information on the two primary platforms we will use to support our on-campus meetings, please see the Office

of Information Technology's document that provides helpful directions on **Getting Started with Canvas** and **Getting Started with Zoom**.

First day of class reminder: As a hybrid course we will engage in a mix of on-campus and online learning activities. For our first class meeting scheduled for [day and date of first class] we will meet via Zoom to discuss our class meeting schedule for the semester. Please be prepared to join class via Zoom at [start time of class] on [day and date of first class]. If you have any questions about using Zoom or joining class through this platform, please let me know. Class Zoom link: [URL]

CLASSROOM PRACTICES, CONTINGENCIES AND COMMUNICATION

In this section, remind students of health and safety protocols they will need to follow when they come to campus, and let students know how and where they can find information and updates if any changes to the course become necessary.

Example:

> Following the recommendations of the CDC and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment those returning to campus will need to practice physical distancing (6 feet or more), avoid crowds greater than 25, follow hygiene and cleaning protocols, and wear a face covering at all times. For more information, please see the **Health & Safety** section of the CU Denver Safe Return FAQ.
>
> As we have experienced since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic requires constant adjustment of plans and expectations, so flexibility is more important than ever this Fall semester. Of course we all hope that our hybrid course will be able to continue meeting on campus as scheduled, but if the CDC and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment recommend we shift back into quarantine, I will work with you to make this transition to remote and online learning as seamless as possible. If we receive a quarantine order prior to the start of the semester, I will update this home page accordingly--please be sure to check back between now and the start of the semester for any updates or adjustments to our meeting plan.

If your course is scheduled as a **remote** course...

ABOUT THE COURSE FORMAT

In this section of the Canvas course home page please describe the **remote** delivery format and any associated platforms (e.g., Canvas, Zoom) you plan on using.

Example:

> Life at CU Denver will look different in the fall. It has to. But, the university community is committed to working together to act in the best interest of the safety and well-being of our entire campus community, while delivering an excellent student-centered educational experience. Offering this course remotely this semester means that we can better ensure both student health and safety in this class and across the university, and a cohesive learning experience throughout the term. Most of us would probably prefer to be together in the classroom. I would. I personally make this commitment to you— that I will act in the best interest of your safety and well-being and will do my utmost to provide you with an engaging, relevant learning experience.
>
> This remote course is **fully online and synchronous (with some asynchronous aspects)** which means we meet each week via Zoom [fill in with the specific times for your class — EX: on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30-10:45 AM]. Please plan to be available for real-time interactions with me and others in the class during those times. During our scheduled class sessions we will [summarize the characteristic structure and activities that will take place during class meetings — EX: discuss readings and viewings, engage in weekly assignments, work on projects, and complete assessments]. Some of the course time will be online and asynchronous, which means we do not meet at a specific time each week either on-campus or via Zoom, however, we will work together in Canvas and other communication and collaboration platforms to discuss readings and viewings, to engage in weekly assignments, to work on projects, and to complete assessments. Please review the syllabus for dates and format.
>
> **First day of class reminder:** ALL of our classes this semester, starting Day 1, will occur through Zoom. Please be prepared to join class via Zoom at [start time of class] on [day and date of first class]. If you have any questions about using Zoom or joining class through this platform, please let me know. Class Zoom link: [URL]

COURSE ZOOM LINK(S) AND INFO

We want students to feel comfortable and confident about joining class remotely on the first day (and every day after). If your course will use Zoom as its primary platform for virtual meetings, let students know that is the case and provide information such as the URLs for class sessions and office hours. It may also be helpful to provide some guidance on Zoom basics, such as getting Zoom setup on different devices, and finding and joining meetings.

If your course will use virtual meeting/collaboration platforms other than or in addition to Zoom, let students know what those platforms are, how and when they will be used in the course, and how to access them.

Examples:

Use the following link to join all Zoom class sessions: [URL]

Use the following link to join Zoom office hours: [URL]

Getting Started with Zoom: The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has a helpful guide for setting up and using Zoom for classes

Getting Started with Canvas: The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has a helpful guide for setting up and using Canvas for classes

If your course is scheduled as an **online** course...

ABOUT THE COURSE FORMAT

In this section of the Canvas course home page please describe the **online** delivery format and any associated platforms (e.g., Canvas, Zoom) you plan on using.

Example:

> Life at CU Denver will look different in the fall—it has to—but the university community is committed to working together to act in the best interest of the safety and well-being of our entire campus community, while delivering an excellent student-centered educational experience. Offering this course online this semester means that we can better ensure both student health and safety in this class and across the university, and a cohesive learning experience throughout the term. Most of us would probably prefer to be together in the classroom. I would. I personally make this commitment to you— that I will act in the best interest of your safety and well-being and will do my utmost to provide you with an engaging, relevant learning experience.
>
> This online course is **fully online and asynchronous** which means we do not meet at a specific time each week either on-campus or via Zoom. This is not the same as independent or self-paced instruction. Although we will not be meeting together in a classroom each week, we will be working together in Canvas and other communication and collaboration platforms to discuss readings and viewings, to engage in weekly assignments, to work on projects, and to complete assessments
>
> For more information on the two primary platforms we will use to support our on-campus meetings, please see the [Office of Information Technology's document](#) that provides helpful directions on **Getting Started with Canvas** and **Getting Started with Zoom**.