Student

Canvas Overview

In this video, you will get a brief overview of the Canvas user interface. To learn more about this topic, visit the Canvas guides at guides.canvaslms.com. Additionally, permissions vary between users and institutions, so what you see in this video may be different from what you see in Canvas.

The Canvas user interface has three main components - the Dashboard, Global Navigation, and Sidebar. The Dashboard is the first thing you see when you log into Canvas. It provides a high-level overview across all your courses.

The Dashboard has two different viewing options - the course view or the recent activity stream. The Dashboard course view includes a course card for each of your favorite courses. Each card can include up to four tabs, which represent the four main Canvas features for student course activity: Announcements, Assignments, Discussions, and Files. These tabs mimic visibility and order in Course Navigation, so for instance, if an instructor hides the Announcements link, the Announcements tab will not be displayed.

The total number of activities are indicated on the appropriate tab with a number icon. You can directly access these recent activities by clicking the tab. You can change a couple settings for your course cards by clicking the card Settings icon. First, you can create nicknames for your courses to help you organize your dashboard. In the Nickname text field, enter the nickname for your course. Click the Apply button. The new nickname will appear. Course nicknames appear in the Dashboard, Course Navigation Menu, course breadcrumbs, and notification emails and only changes the name of the course for the individual user who created the nickname. If users need to know the original name of the course, they can hover over the nickname and the original name will appear. To remove a nickname, open the card settings and remove the nickname. The Nickname field will display the original name of the course. Click the Apply button to save changes.

You can also change the color for your course cards. In the card settings select the color you would like to assign to the card. You can also enter a HEX code for any color. Then click apply. To view the recent activity stream, click the toggle to right. The recent activity stream view contains a stream of recent notifications from all your courses, including announcements, discussions, assignments, and conversations. New or unread activities are shown by the blue indicator dot. You can view the details of each activity by hovering in the notification area and clicking the Show More link. To collapse recent activity, click the Show Less link. You can directly access your recent activities by clicking the link. To remove a notification, click the remove icon.

Another interface component is the Global Navigation, which is a static menu on the left side of the page that gives you direct access to your courses and other information in Canvas. This menu is accessible from any page within Canvas. To modify your user settings or profile, click the Account link. You can also specify your notification preferences, upload personal files, or manage ePortfolios here. Click the Logout link to Logout of Canvas. To hide the slide-out menu, just click the menu link again or click the close icon.

Click the Dashboard link to return to the Canvas Dashboard at anytime. By clicking Courses, you can access your individual courses or view a list of all courses in which you are enrolled. Here you can customize the courses that display on your Dashboard and in your Courses list by clicking the stars next to the course names.

Click Groups to access any groups in which you are enrolled or to view a list of all your

groups. Click the Calendar link to view the global calendar, which shows an aggregated view of all assignments and events from each of your courses. The Inbox link will take you to your Conversations. You can compose and send new messages to other students and teachers here, or view any existing conversations. And click the Help link to access help resources, including the Canvas Guides, the Canvas Community, or Canvas Support. If you ever have a problem with Canvas, be sure to click the "Report a Problem" link to get help from a support agent. This link may not be available to all Canvas users.

The last interface component is the Sidebar. On your dashboard, the sidebar includes a To Do list, Coming Up feed, Recent Feedback, and a View Grades button. The To Do list helps you keep track of assignments that you need to complete. Click any assignment link and Canvas will direct you to the appropriate page. You can also click the close icon next to any item to ignore the assignment. The Coming Up feed lists upcoming assignments and events within your courses. Under Recent Feedback, you will see the latest comments from instructors or peers on previously submitted assignments. Click the View Grades button to quickly access the grades for any of your courses. Note that when viewing Canvas with a small screen resolution, any sidebar content aligns with the bottom of the page.

Now let's visit a course and take a look at the course interface. The course interface consists of 4 main components: the Course Navigation, the Content Area, the Breadcrumb Navigation, and the Sidebar.

The course navigation menu provides links to the different areas of your course. Your instructors have the ability to customize this menu, so it may vary slightly from course to course. This menu can be collapsed by clicking the menu icon. The content of the course will be displayed in this Content Area. The Breadcrumb Navigation shows your current location within a course and allows you to easily move to a previous screen.

The Course Sidebar is similar to the Canvas Sidebar. It includes a View Course Stream link to see recent course activity, as well as your To Do list, Coming Up feed, and Recent Feedback comments.

You've now completed this *Canvas Overview for Students.* For additional information on this or any other topic about Canvas, just visit guides.canvaslms.com. You can also ask questions and engage with other Canvas users by visiting community.canvaslms.com.