

Course Shell Checklist

Use this checklist to prepare your course shells in D2L Brightspace before the start of the semester. Depending on your specific course modality and materials, not all these items will apply to you.

For detailed guides, check out our [Faculty Resources](#) website. You may also check out previous webinar recordings and resources in our [Social Distance Ed](#) course shell. Schedule a help session with our Distance Ed team or contact us directly with questions or to schedule a meeting. We can walk through the checklist with you to see which items apply to your course.

Notes on policies:

- **All** instructors must complete [D2L Essentials](#) before accessing course shells.
- **All** course shells are required to have a **Syllabus** and **Gradebook**.
- All instructors scheduled to teach **hybrid** and/or **online** courses must complete [Online Teaching Essentials](#).
- All **hybrid** and **online** courses should follow our [Quality Course Design Rubric](#).
- All **online** courses should follow the guidance on the Dept of Ed’s requirement for [Regular and Substantive Interaction](#).
- All students enrolled in **hybrid** and/or **online** courses must complete [Intro to D2L](#) before accessing course shells.

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Before You Start Editing Your Course Shell

- Decide what types of materials you will use for your course: publisher, library, OER, a mix, etc.
 - Submit [textbook adoptions](#) with the bookstore in March (Summer and Fall semester) or October (JTerm and Spring semester); decide if you will use Direct Digital.
 - Review [OER Resources](#) and contact our [Librarians or DE teams](#) for support.
- Submit [help desk tickets](#) to request any applicable [Course Merge](#) or [Course with Sections](#).
 - If using direct digital and course merge or course with sections, make sure all sections have the same textbook adoptions.
- Submit [help desk tickets](#) to request any applicable [course copies](#) (or complete them yourself).
- Submit [help desk tickets](#) to request any applicable [Co-Instructor enrollment](#). D2L only automatically populates primary instructors from Banner, so if you have a co-instructor, the primary instructor or dept head needs to complete the request. Note: If you wish to enroll someone as [CMU Faculty](#), you may do so without a ticket. This role can view and copy content from your course but cannot edit or view the Classlist or grades.
- Submit [help desk tickets](#) to request any applicable [attendance](#) registers.

Announcements/Welcome

- Personalize your welcome message and point students to Start Here.
- Use [Announcements](#) for course wide messages. (Use Outlook for individual messages vs the email tool in Classlist.)

- If using copied course content, check all published Announcements are still applicable. (Dismissing announcements only removes them from your view, not your students' view.)

Start Here Module

- Instructor Introduction – Personalize with bio, contact info, and office (including virtual) hours.
- [Course Syllabus](#) – Personalize and update with the current course ID, title, section, CRN, semester, year. Double check info, such as textbook, grading, etc. is current if copied from a previous semester. Check that EAS statement, Student Services, and [CMU's recommended technology](#) info is current. (**Online courses:** be sure to document [Regular and Substantive Interaction](#).)
- Course Schedule – Personalize with your course timeline.
- [CMU Policies](#) – Check you still have this link with current details if you copied a course from a previous semester.
- [Student Services](#) - Check you still have this link with current details if you copied a course from a previous semester.
- [Student D2L Resources](#) - Check you still have this link if you copied a course from a previous semester.

Classlist

- Communicate with students who still have the New Student role. They need to complete [Intro to D2L](#) before they can access your hybrid or online course shell, and they will be dropped from your class if they do not complete this intro.
- Check your [Classlist](#) in D2L matches your roster in Banner.

Grades

- Set up a [Weighted](#) or [Points](#) gradebook. Categories, items, and weights/points should align with those outlined in the syllabus. For more info: [Gradebook guide](#).
- Applicable Assignment, Discussion, and/or Quiz items are associated.
- Check there are no restrictions on gradebook items.
- Decide how to handle zeros in the gradebook. Communicate this to students so they understand how ungraded items affect running total grade.
- Letter grades are needed for grade sync with Banner at the end of the term.

Dates

- Review [Dates & Calendar guide](#).
- Announcements – Check start and end dates.

- Course Duration – Double check the dates in Course Admin > Manage Dates are accurate.
- [Release Conditions](#) – Check dates are accurate.
- [Intelligent Agents](#) – Enable the No Student Course Access in 7 days IA from the template if you wish. Review IAs for accuracy if copied from another course.
- Assessments – Availability and due dates are accurate for all Assignments, Discussions, Quizzes.

Content

- Consider the outcomes for your course. [Institutional Student Learning Outcomes](#) are posted online. Contact your department head for information on program and course outcomes. Contact your department and/or DE for assistance with module level outcomes in a course.
- Review [Content guide](#) and [Creating Accessible Content in D2L](#).
- Check Table of Contents – if course/components were copied, make sure there are no duplicate modules.
- All content is organized in modules and visible to students as needed. (Use [View as Student](#) to check.)
- All internal course links work. All external URLs use meaningful link text and open in a new tab/window.
- Text is readable. PDFs are text based (vs scanned images).
- Media includes captions/transcript.
- Decide if you wish to use [Brightspace Templates](#) when creating HTML files/pages for personalization and enhanced engagement with visual design and interactive elements.

Assessments

Assignments

- Review [Assignments guide](#).
- If course/components were copied, make sure there are no duplicate Assignments.
- Relevant instructions and due dates are present.
- Any attachments are working.

Discussions

- Review [Discussions guide](#).
- If course/components were copied, make sure there are no duplicate Discussions.
- Introduction Discussion – Make visible and personalize
- Ask the Instructor Discussion – Make visible and personalize
- Provide clear expectations/examples with prompts.

- Relevant instructions and due dates are present.
- Understand the difference between Forums and Topics. Do not hide or set Release Conditions/restrictions on Forums.
- If using Course with Sections, every topic must be restricted by section enrollment.

Quizzes

- Review [New Quiz Experience guide](#) and [Question Library guide](#).
- If course/components were copied, make sure there are no duplicate Quizzes.
- Relevant instructions and due dates are present.
- Use the [Accommodations](#) tool to set up extended time for any student with FAMs from EAS as needed.
- Consider how you want to publish results and if/how you want to customize quiz results displays.

Rubrics

- Review [Rubrics guide](#).
- Remember to make any updates to Rubrics in Discussions, Assignments, and/or Grade Items before you start using the rubric for evaluation.

Groups

- Review [Groups guide](#).
- If you have late adds/drops, this will affect your groups. Check all students are included correctly.
- If using Course with Sections, every group must be limited to students from the same section.

Integrations/External Resources

Virtual Meetings (Zoom, Teams, etc.)

- Consider linking [Zoom for virtual office hours](#). Check out [Zoom Meetings in D2L](#).
- If using Course with Sections, be sure student privacy is maintained across sections. For example, a channel in [MS Teams](#) or a synchronous Zoom meeting should allow only students enrolled in the same section to interact.
- If sharing recordings, be sure to maintain student privacy.

Publisher Materials

- Direct Digital – Follow instructions provided by the bookstore. Know if you are using [VitalSource](#) or an individual publisher for delivery in your course.

- If using VitalSource, post support materials for students: [VitalSource SetUp for Students](#) and [VitalSource Accessibility Options for Students](#).
- If using requesting Course Merge or Course with Sections and using VitalSource for Direct Digital, inform DE so they can give the updated Course ID to the bookstore.
- Make sure any integration link is set to Open as External Resource.
- Check your link to the ebook is working correctly.
- Courseware – Contact your publisher rep if you’re not sure how your specific materials are to be integrated. We currently have the following integrations available in D2L:
 - Cengage (MindTap)
 - Goodheart-Willcox
 - Macmillan Achieve
 - McGraw Hill Connect
 - McGraw Hill ALEKS
 - Pearson MyLab/Mastering (phasing out by Pearson by the end of 2023 – contact your textbook rep about updating to Access Pearson)
 - Pearson Direct Integration (direct digital)
 - Access Pearson (Revel, Live Response, and etext with access code)
 - Lumen Waymaker and OHM
- Instructions and publisher technical support contact info are provided for students.
- Relevant assignments, due dates, etc. are set up in the courseware.
- If integrating publisher materials with your gradebook, be sure the items are populating correctly.

Panopto

- **Assignment Folders** - If you need students to record Panopto videos for assessments in your course, please remember to create an Assignment Folder (or folders) in your course. This must be done in each course, each semester, even if you copied a course. [Creating a Panopto assignment folder \(PDF\)](#) - [Watch a video demonstration](#)
- **Reusing Videos** - When you create a recording from your D2L course shell, it is automatically stored in the Panopto course folder. The sharing permissions set for the folder and/or individual recordings will determine students’ ability to view the recordings. When you wish to reuse videos, you'll need to either copy them to your new folder or adjust the permissions. [Adjusting sharing permissions \(PDF\)](#) - [Watch a video demonstration](#) Note: Please be sure to maintain student privacy when reusing any videos recorded during class.

- **Archived Videos** - Auto archiving after 6 months will be implemented on August 1, 2023. Any videos that have not been viewed for 6 months will be automatically archived. Archived videos appear in the same folder but are accessed through the Archived button. An archived video can be restored to an active state by the creator of the video. (Note: On August 1st, 2024, any archived videos that are older than 2 years will be automatically deleted.) Please refer to IT's updated [Panopto File Retention guide](#) for more information. What happens to a Panopto video when it is archived: Archived videos are not available for immediate viewing. Restoration of an archived video can take up to 48 hours.
- Check out [Panopto guides](#) for captioning, editing, adding quizzes, etc.

Turnitin

- If you have copied a course (or components of a course) and plan to use Turnitin, re-enable this tool for each applicable assignment. If you go to Assignments, you should see which previously used Turnitin, and you may re-enable it as needed. This must be enabled prior to any submissions so that the tool functions properly.
- Double check your settings are those you wish for specific assignments.
- Check out [Turnitin guides and resources](#).

Respondus

- Enable or reenable Respondus as needed. If you have copied quizzes from a previous course and plan to use Respondus, this requires instructors to access the LockDown Browser Dashboard before quizzes/exams can be taken by students.
- Set up a low-stakes quiz for students to test that their LockDown Browser or Monitor set up is working correctly.
- Check out guides for [Respondus LockDown Browser](#) and [Respondus Monitor](#).
- iPad: [Setting an exam to allow students to use the iPad Edition of LockDown Browser](#) and [iPad Edition of LockDown Browser guide for students](#)
- Chromebooks: [Chromebook extension for LockDown Browser guide](#)