Get prepared for success in distance courses at IU School of Nursing: **read this important information about learning online and technology.**

**Access Canvas** and login with your IU account and passphrase.

Canvas includes important resources on the right side of the screen that may hide from view depending on the device and settings. If you can’t see the information, scroll to the right or down to locate the information and tools.

This handout assumes the use of a mouse and instructs you to click certain settings. If you are using an assistive device, substitute that method of accessing the option or setting.

**Dashboard**

The Dashboard contains a red global menubar on the left site, course information in the center, and tasks on the right.
Three option dots in the upper right corner of each course card allows you to assign a nickname and to personalize the card color. The color you choose also is reflected in the Canvas calendar for that course. These choices do not impact the course globally but only your view of the course.

Each course card contains icons for tools that the faculty has enabled in the course. A number icon indicates new items in a course tool.

To see global activity from all your current courses instead of course cards, change the Dashboard view to Recent Activity. Click the three option dots at the top of the screen to make the selection. As with course cards, a number icon indicates new items in a course tool. Click “Show More” to open the title and display details.

On either Dashboard view, you can see To Do (items that have a due date or that the faculty has added to your To Do list), links to Recent Feedback, and a button to View Grades (the current final score in each course in which you are student).
Global Navigation

The red global menubar displays vertically along the left side of the browser window and allows you to access several Canvas functions that are not course-specific. These are described in the following sections.

Account

Profile

In Account, click Profile then “Edit Profile” to include or edit a brief biography. Don’t include personal information such as your phone number or address; access to this information extends beyond your class and should be shared carefully.

To add a profile picture, mouse over the image then click the pencil icon in the lower right corner of the image. Include a personal photo, if not of you then something that represents you or your interests. This helps peers learn about you. This is particularly important in distance courses.

Notifications

Canvas sends course notifications to your IU email. Mouse over each notification item to read more information. Notifications are global to Canvas, not specific to individual courses. They are sent right away, daily, weekly, or not at all. “Right away” does not mean instantly, so if you need to reach your instructor immediately use the communication channel the faculty specified in the course syllabus.

Files

Files lets you to store personal and course-related files including images, documents, presentations, audio, and video files. For more information, review this video about using Files.
Settings allows you to add secondary emails or a phone number for text notifications from Canvas. These alternative notification channels are not viewable by others; therefore, others won’t see or know your phone number or secondary email.

Click the +Email Address link to add a secondary email contact or click the +Contact Method link to add your SMS (text) information. After editing, click Register.

After adding additional contact channels, your Notifications preferences will display additional columns so that you can choose not only the frequency of notifications but the preferred channel.

NameCoach Recorder

NameCoach lets you record your name so that others know the correct pronunciation. It also allows you to specify your preferred gender pronouns.

Access your Canvas Dashboard.

Access courses in which you are or have been a participant, access Canvas groups, or manage the course list. To “favorite” a course and add a Dashboard card, click All Courses then click the gray star to the left of the course name to change the star to orange. To remove the “favorite” status, click All Courses then click the star icon to toggle it back to a gray silhouette or click the card’s three option dots then click Move and Unfavorite.

Visit the home page of any Canvas course group to which you belong.
View due dates and access assignments from any course in which you are participating, add personal items to your calendar, or add a personal item to your To Do list.

Inbox

Inbox is the Canvas messages tool; some locations in Canvas also refers to it as “Conversations.” An indicator shows the number of unread messages. The Inbox includes all current courses in which you are a participant in any role.

Within Inbox, unless you filter the list, the left column contains all messages from any course in which you participate. To filter the list, choose a specific course from the “All Courses” dropdown.

Favorited courses appear at the top, listed with the nickname you chose or by the course name.
The message list contains indicators to help manage your messages:

The current message (or message thread) displays on the right when you select a message. Select the message then reply with the arrow icon in the upper right corner of the message or choose from the gear to Reply to All, Forward, or Delete the message.

The toolbar above the selected message preview lets you (from left to right) Compose a new message, Compose a new multi-course message, Reply, Reply all, Archive, or Delete the message. Click the gear icon for additional options. Move over the icons for an explanation of the function.
does not allow you to create folders but does allow you to move messages into Archive (which is a good practice to keep your Inbox manageable).

To compose a new message, choose (or verify, depending on previous selections) the course for which you are composing. Next, choose one or more individuals or groups from the selected course to which to send your message. All messages are plain text. Click in the content box and type your message. You may choose to add an attachment to your message or create media (either audio only or video/audio) using your webcam and microphone to include with the text.

Notifications

Depending on the choices you made in the Account settings, you may receive a notification in your IU email of new Canvas messages. You can reply or forward from your email, and a copy will stay in your email as well as dropping a copy into Canvas so that you can later follow “the trail” from either system. You cannot add attachments to a reply or forwarded message from your email; they will drop off and never be delivered.

“Search the Canvas Guides” to read step-by-step instructions or access the Video Guide. Create a support ticket with the UITS Support Center in “Ask for Help.” (If you need immediate help, call the Support Center at 317-274-HELP). “Ask Your Instructor a Question” allows you to report a broken link to the instructor; however, it does not specify where the broken link is to be found so provide specifics when possible.
For best results with Canvas, make sure to use one of the two latest versions of the web browser.

Your Course Highlights

Faculty have flexibility in organizing their courses to help you meet your course objectives, but at the School, we strive for consistency between courses, so you don’t spend valuable time searching for important components.

**Home Page**: access Announcements, find faculty information, read basic Canvas and technology information.

**Syllabus**: view or download the syllabus, schedule, and other important course documents (Word documents). A link lets you access important IUPUI course academic policy information including COVID information.

**Modules**: is a “table of contents” with each tool you need in the online component of your course (a few courses may choose to include items like Files, Assignments, and Discussions as stand-alone components in the Menubar) in the sequence you will need them. Icons, along with a title supplied by the instructor, help you to know the type of document or activity you are accessing.

- Pages are created in Canvas for on-screen viewing; the icon looks like a piece of paper.
- Links usually open in a new window; the icon looks like a chain link. After visiting a website, look carefully at the browser’s tabs.

The Canvas window shows the IU Trident; however, the other browser window also may have a Trident if it’s another IU site. Check the titles carefully then close the new window to return to your Canvas course.

- The document icon looks a paperclip.
Canvas lets you download the document, zoom in or out, or scroll through multiple pages to view it online.

- The Quizzes icon looks like a rocket. Quizzes can be online tests, quizzes, or surveys. They may be graded or ungraded.

- The Assignments icon looks like a white paper with a pencil on it. Assignments allow you to type a response in a box, upload a file, or submit a URL. Assignments may include an attached rubric. Turnitin may be enabled for online submissions that will issue to the instructor, and possibly you, a report showing similarities between your written work and other work stored in databases or on the Internet to help identify plagiarism or uncited works you may have used.

The assignment display gives you information including total points available, assignment title and due date, and how the submission is to be made (such as a
file upload or a text box). The screen may also include instructions or other information provided by the instructor. If a grading rubric is used, it will also display. The button to submit the assignment is in the upper right corner.

To submit an assignment, after clicking the Submit Assignment button, browse for the file, select it, then click Open. You can add comments to your instructor if desired, then click Submit Assignment.

Canvas displays a date and time stamp to verify that your submission was successful. If your work is submitted late, you will see an alert to that effect. If the assignment is assigned for peer review, you will see the name of person you are assigned to review.

After your instructor grades your assignment, in addition to the original submission details, you will see the score and the points possible as
well as any comments the instructor included with the grade. If the assignment was graded with Speedgrader, click “Submission Details” then the linked “View Feedback” to view the instructor’s feedback.

The Grades tool notifies you when there is a new score recorded by displaying showing a numeral on a blue disc indicating the number of new grades that have been posted.

- The Discussions icon looks like two “speech bubbles.” Discussions may be graded or ungraded. They are asynchronous (not in real time), threaded conversations open to all members of a group or course. When a new post is made, all members can read and respond to it.

The screen displays the discussion title and the instructor’s initial post. The Reply button allows you to respond directly to the instructor’s original post. Your response will be slightly indented from the left margin. Beneath each original reply a second Reply button allows you to respond to colleagues posts rather than to the instructor’s original post.

To respond to the original discussion, click Reply beneath the instructor’s original post. All initial replies to the original discussion are indented to the same level. To respond to a reply, click Reply after the message. That message will be indented further.

It’s very important to understand threading and the ability to start new threads of conversation (replies—often called initial posts) or continue delving deeper into a thread (replies to replies—referred to as replies to peers).
Course Identifier

Each course has two important identifiers.

At the top of the navigation menu, is the identifier assigned by the registrar’s office. This identifies the semester, campus, school, course, and section number.

The URL is the second identifier. It identifies the course on the Instructure (Canvas) server. If you call the UITS Support Center for assistance, you may be asked for either of these identifiers.

Grades

The Canvas Grades tool shows the name of each assignment, the due date, and your score out of the total
possible. The right column will show your overall grade, allow you to try “what if” scores and any weighting that your instructor may have applied. Icons in the Score column will show if an assignment has been muted (temporarily hidden) until grading can be completed or if a quiz requires one or more items to be manually graded.

What-if scores allow you to see the impact of different scores you might earn on the overall grade. After testing the score displays in alternative color and size and the you will be alerted that the grade being displayed is not official.

Click Revert to Actual Score when you are finished testing.