Canvas & Technology Orientation

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

Access Canvas and login with your IU network username and passphrase.

NOTE: In Canvas, there are important resources on the right of your screen that the resolution of some computer monitors hides from easy view. Always remember to check for a horizontal scroll bar at the bottom of the window and use it to slide over to access additional information and tools. Or, if your window is small or you are on a mobile device, the menu options may appear vertically down the page.

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 shown below displays a global menubar on the left site, your “favorite courses” in colored cards in the center, and tasks (To Do, Coming Up, and Recent Feedback) on the right. Beneath each course card, icons indicate new items (discussions, assignments, files, announcements) within each course.

![Dashboard Image]
Here is an example of the icons beneath each card. These icons show tools used in the course and include an indicator when new items are added to those tools.

A pencil icon in the upper right corner of each course card allows you to give a Nickname to each course and to personalize the card color. As shown in this image, there are several default colors that you can choose from. The color you choose is also reflected in the Canvas calendar. These choices do not impact the course globally but only your view of the course.

If you prefer a Recent Activity view instead of the course cards, click the gear icon as shown in this image and make your selection. As shown in the image below, Recent Activity shows a list of communication types for each course that includes new items. Clicking “Show More” will open the title to display details of individual communications.

The right-side column includes a task list (including assignments to be graded and upcoming assignments). The View Grades button at the bottom of the list displays an aggregate report from all courses in which you are a participant in any role.
The Global Navigation menubar displays along the left side of the browser window. Through the tools on this navigation, you can access many Canvas functions that are explained below.

**Return to the Canvas** landing page

**Access your Profile**, adjust settings and notifications, or access your files or Canvas portfolios through Account

**View your Dashboard**

**Access courses** in which you are a participant

**Visit the** group home page of any collaborative group to which you belong

**View due dates** from any course in which you are participating

**Send or read messages** in the Canvas Inbox

**Access help** resources. The Help icon is located in the lower left corner and includes several options for finding resources, suggesting Canvas enhancements, and reporting problems. If you’re new to Canvas, your best first stop is “Search the Canvas Guides” where you can read step-by-step instructors or access the Video Guide. Be sure to read “More details” listed below “Supported Browsers.” Canvas works with any browser, but it must be one of the two latest versions; Canvas will alert you if your browser becomes outdated.

“Ask for Help” creates a trouble ticket with the UITS Support Center; however, if you need help immediately, call the Support Center at 317-274-HELP.

NOTE: “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.
One of the global navigation tools is “Courses.” This tool gives access to each of your courses. This displays your favorites as well as a link to view All Courses.

To indicate that a course should display as a favorite, click All Courses then click the gray star silhouette to the left of the course name. Courses that appear as a favorites will display a solid orange star in the All Courses list. You can change a course status from favorite to not favorite at any time by clicking All Courses and clicking the star icon to toggle it between a gray silhouette to solid orange.

The Account tool in the global navigation gives you access to several settings, described in the sections below.

The Edit Profile button allows you to include or edit a brief biography. Don’t include personal information such as a home 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. It is highly recommended that you include a personal photo, if not of you then something that represents you or your interests. This helps your classmates learn who you are, which is particularly important in online courses.

Canvas sends notifications to your university email when certain events occur in your Canvas courses. For an explanation of what each event entails, mouse over the item listed to display a popup with more information. **NOTE:** Notifications are global to Canvas, not specific to your individual course.

To specify when to receive notifications, mouse over the row in the second column and make the desired selection. As shown in this image, the icons are in this sequence: ASAP (as soon as possible), daily, weekly, or never. The selected option is bounded by a white box.
FILES

The Files tool in Account allows you to store personal, course-related files, such as Profile pictures, Word, PowerPoint, Acrobat PDF, audio, video, images, etc. for your course. For more information, review this video about using Files.

SETTINGS

The Personal Settings option in Account 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.

Here’s an example scenario: You prefer to receive Canvas notifications in your personal email rather than your official IU email account. You could also add your cellphone under Other Contacts then choose, for example, to receive email (Canvas conversations/inbox) sent as a text alert to your phone.

In the Ways to Contact box shown here, click the Add Email Address link to add a secondary email contact or click the Add Contact Method link to add information about contacting you via SMS (text). After adding your contact, click the register button.

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

INBOX

The global menubar tool, Inbox, is the email/messages functionality in Canvas. An indicator shows the number of new, unread messages in your Inbox (which includes all current courses in which you are a participant in any role).

The messages tool contains several functions to help you manage and navigate your communication more easily. By default, the list displayed in the left column contains all messages from any course in which you participate. To manage messages more easily, filter the list by choosing a specific course from the dropdown "All Courses" menu.

Any course that you chose as a favorite through All Courses will appear at the top of the list making it easier to select current courses; any nickname you added by editing the course card will display in the list.

The left side of the screen, as mentioned previously is a list of the messages (either from all courses or from the course you selected by filtering the course list).

- A black disc preceding a message indicates an unread message.
- A blue disc preceding a message indicates the current message that your mouse is hovering over.
• Blue shading indicates the message that is currently being previewed in the right side of the window.
• No indicator preceding the message indicates you have read the message.
• The left column displays a list of messages, and the right column previews the current message.

The toolbar above the current message preview lets you compose a new message, reply, reply to all, archive or delete messages. The image here shows the icons in this sequence. Click the gear icon for additional options. Move over the icons for an explanation of the function.

Inbox does not allow you to create folders, but does allow you to move messages into Archive (which is a good practice in order to keep your Inbox manageable).

When you receive a notification in your university or secondary email, it is fully functional; 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.

When composing a new message you will first 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. There are no formatting options when creating a new message; messages are straight text. Click in the white space and begin typing. In addition to or instead of text, you may also choose to add an attachment to your message, create a media (either audio only or video/audio) using your webcam and microphone.
YOUR COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

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

Syllabus: view or download Word documents for syllabus, schedule and other important course documents.

Modules: the “table of contents” containing 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 they are needed.

- The Pages icon looks like a piece of white paper in a blue disc. Pages on the screen for viewing.

- The Links icon looks like a white chain link on a blue disc. Links usually prompt you to open them in a new window. Be sure to look at your browser’s window tabs. After an external link opens in a new window, your Canvas course will show the IU Trident icon. Click the X to close the second window and return to your Canvas course.
The **Documents** icon looks like a white cloud with a down arrow; it is on a blue disc. The documents screen displays the title, allow you to zoom in or out or scroll through the screen, allow you to download the document, or page through multiple page documents. The Canvas documents tool is powered by Box; this is not IU Box and does not indicate that the documents use your IU Box in any way.

The **Quizzes** icon looks like a white lightning bolt within a white circle on a blue disc. Quizzes can be online tests, quizzes, or surveys. They may be graded or ungraded.

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

The display for an assignment provides a lot of good information including total points available, assignment title and due date, and how the submission is to occur (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 your 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 your score and the points possible as well as any comments the instructor included with the grade. If the assignment was graded with Crocodoc (Speedgrader), click “Submission Details” then the linked “View Feedback.” to view the instructor’s feedback.

In addition, the Grades tool in the Menubar, notifies you that there is a new score recorded showing a numeral on a blue disc indicating the number of new grades that have been posted.

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

The discussion screen will display the title of the Discussion 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.
Remember: To respond to the original discussion, click 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 after the message. That message will be indented further.

It’s very important that you understand threading and the ability to start new strands of conversation (replies; often called initial posts) or continue delving deeper into a strand (replies to replies; often referred to as replies to peers).

**COURSE IDENTIFIER**

In each course, there are two important identifiers. At the top of the navigation menu, you will see the identifier assigned by the registrar’s office. This identifies the semester, campus, school, course, and section number.

The second identifier is in the URL is the course identification on the Instructure (Canvas) server. If you call the UITS Support Center for assistance, you may be asked for this course identifier.

https://iu.test.instructure.com/course/1491867
The Canvas Grades tool gives you a lot of information. It will show you the name of each assignment, the due date, and your score out of the total possible. The right column will show your grade, allow you to practice "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 you have tested will display with alternative color and size, and you will be alerted that the grade being displayed is not official.