

Tips for Using Brightspace to Support Student Learning

1: COMMUNICATE COURSE EXPECTATIONS EARLY

- Send the syllabus at least 1 week before the start of the semester.
- Use a syllabus quiz to check students' understanding of course expectations.
- Notify students in advance what textbooks, technology, and other supplies they will need for the class.
- Verify and provide eText access instructions and relevant tech support information.
- Communicate class policies (e.g., attendance, due dates, policies on late assignments and make up work, grading, communication method and response time).
- Open the Brightspace course early (i.e. up to 2 weeks before the first day of class).
- Explain how Brightspace will be used for the course (e.g., how to navigate/find content, quizzes, which Brightspace and other Ed Tech tools will be used, etc.).



2: ORGANIZE COURSE CONTENT FOR EASY NAVIGATION

- Make the syllabus available in the Syllabus tool in Content.
- Make sure the course assignment titles and point values match the syllabus.
- Use unit or weekly modules to clearly and logically label content, and avoid using sub-modules.
- Provide an overview of each module with goals/objectives and learning activities.
- Provide access to the upcoming week's/unit's course materials ahead of time to help students prepare.
- Leave past week/unit materials available for students to revisit/review.

3: USE THE GRADEBOOK TO INFORM STUDENTS' ONGOING PROGRESS

- Automatically release the **"Calculated Final Grade"** for students to see their current grade total displayed at the top of their gradebook.
- Use the Brightspace gradebook setting **"Drop ungraded items"** to inform students of their current progress.
- Grade and post grades promptly. Be sure to enter a "0" for any student who did not complete the assignment within the timeframe that you will accept it.
- Display all assignments and point values in the gradebook on the first day of class.
- Organize grade items in Grades tool in a logical way (e.g. categories or chronological order).
- Use the [Gradebook Checklist to self-check your gradebook settings](#).

4: BUILD CONNECTIONS THROUGH REGULAR COMMUNICATION

- Set assignments due at consistent days/times from week to week or unit to unit.
- Use Dates to help students better manage learning tasks through Brightspace calendar and notifications.
- Use the Announcements tool (preferred over e-mail) regularly for full class messages (e.g., Weekly reminder of important due dates).
- Use video or audio to add a sense of instructor presence. (e.g., assignment feedback with Video Note, short instructional videos with self).
- Use a Questions & Answers discussion topic to manage student questions.

5: PROVIDE QUALITY FEEDBACK

- Provide prompt feedback with instructions to improve future performance.
- Provide feedback in ways that help students understand how to improve on future assignments (e.g., use rubrics; provide details/explanations of grades).
- Provide explanations of difficult concepts (i.e. using the assignments as both assessments of learning and an additional opportunity to teach).
- Provide feedback inline (in assignments), in the comments section of the gradebook, and/or embedding audio/video feedback.
- Include instructions for viewing instructors' feedback.



6: DIRECT STUDENTS TO TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- Provide [help desk contact information](#).
- Link [Brightspace student guides and videos](#) (scan QR code).



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Visit the [Brightspace resources](#) page to learn how to adjust the Brightspace settings.

For technical help, please [contact the help desk](#).

For teaching or pedagogical help, please [contact a CELT consultant](#).