

# Quick Canvas Guide for New Faculty

If you're new to Canvas, this guide is the best place to start.

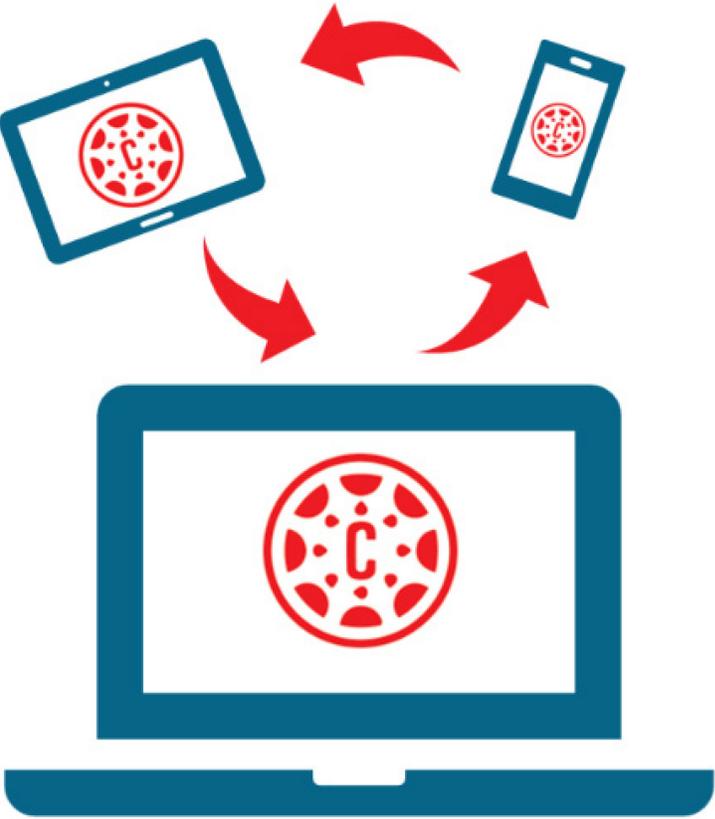


Prepared by  
Department of eLearning & Faculty Development

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# Getting Started with Canvas

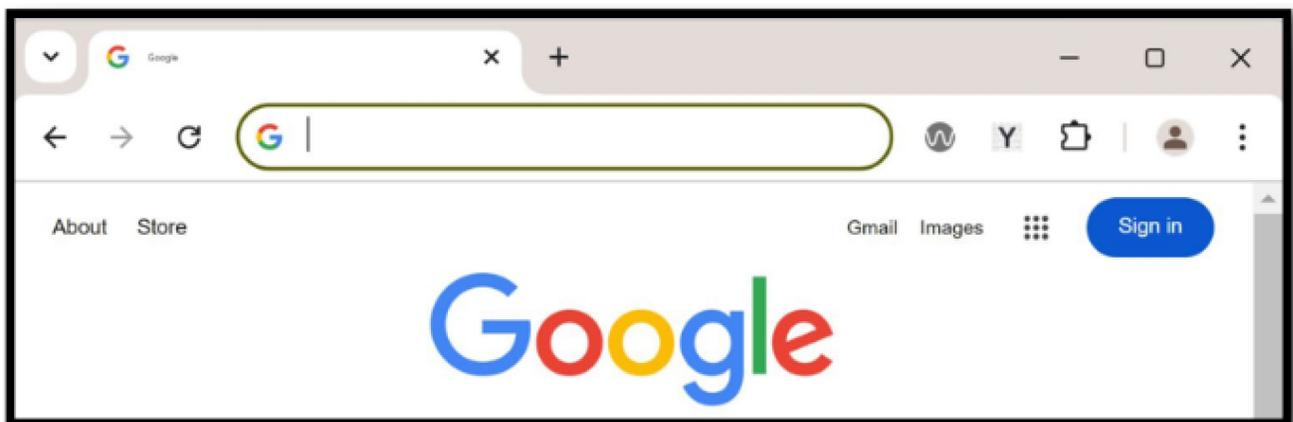


Whether you're new to Canvas or need a refresher, this simple guide will ensure you're ready to facilitate your courses on Canvas.

# Sign in to Canvas

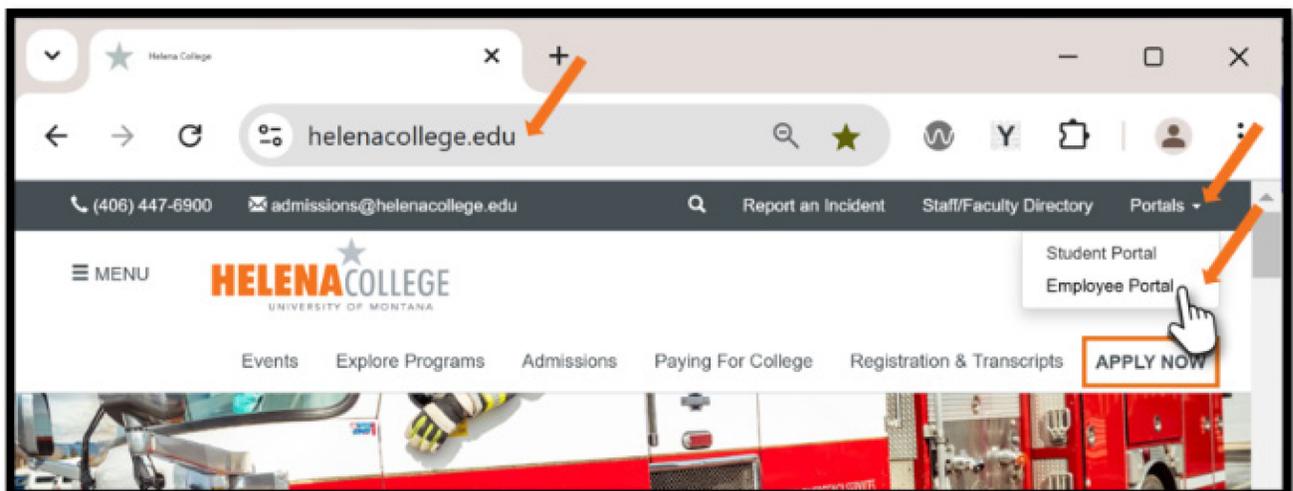
## STEP 1

Open a web browser on your device (Chrome – for the best experience, Firefox, Edge, or Safari).



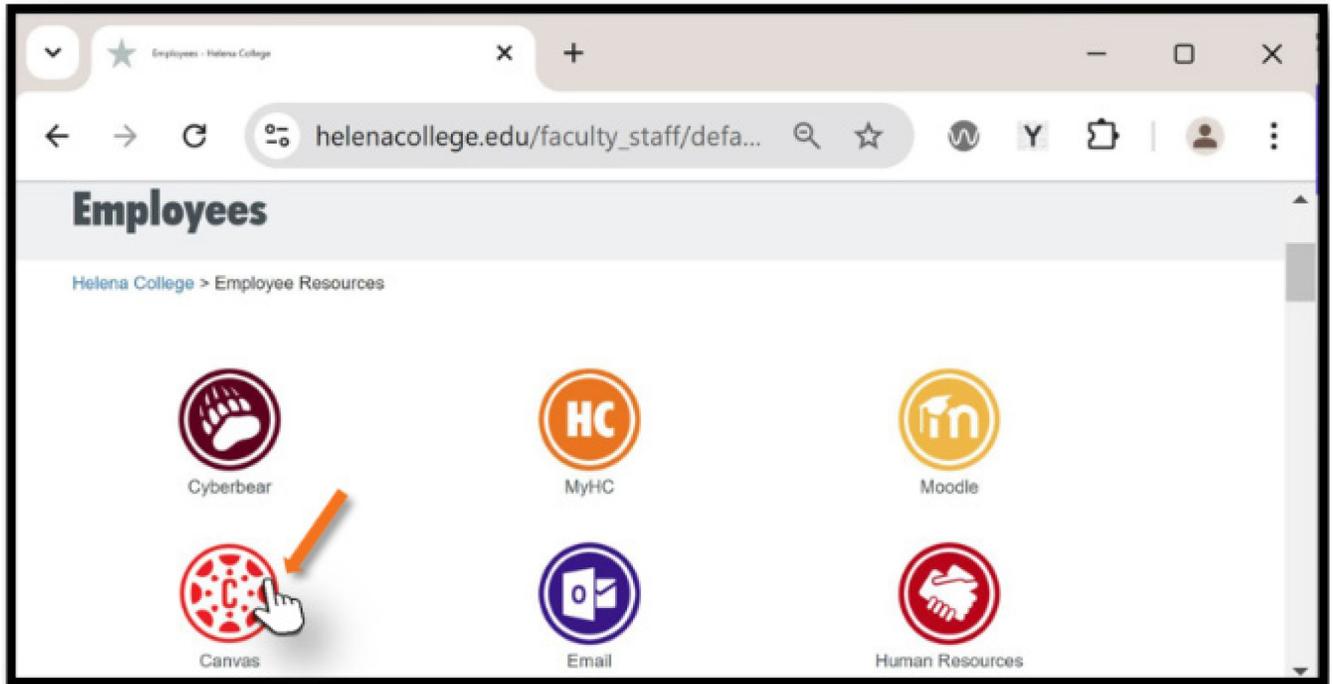
## STEP 2

Type in the address bar `helenacollege.edu`, click Portals and choose Employee Portal.



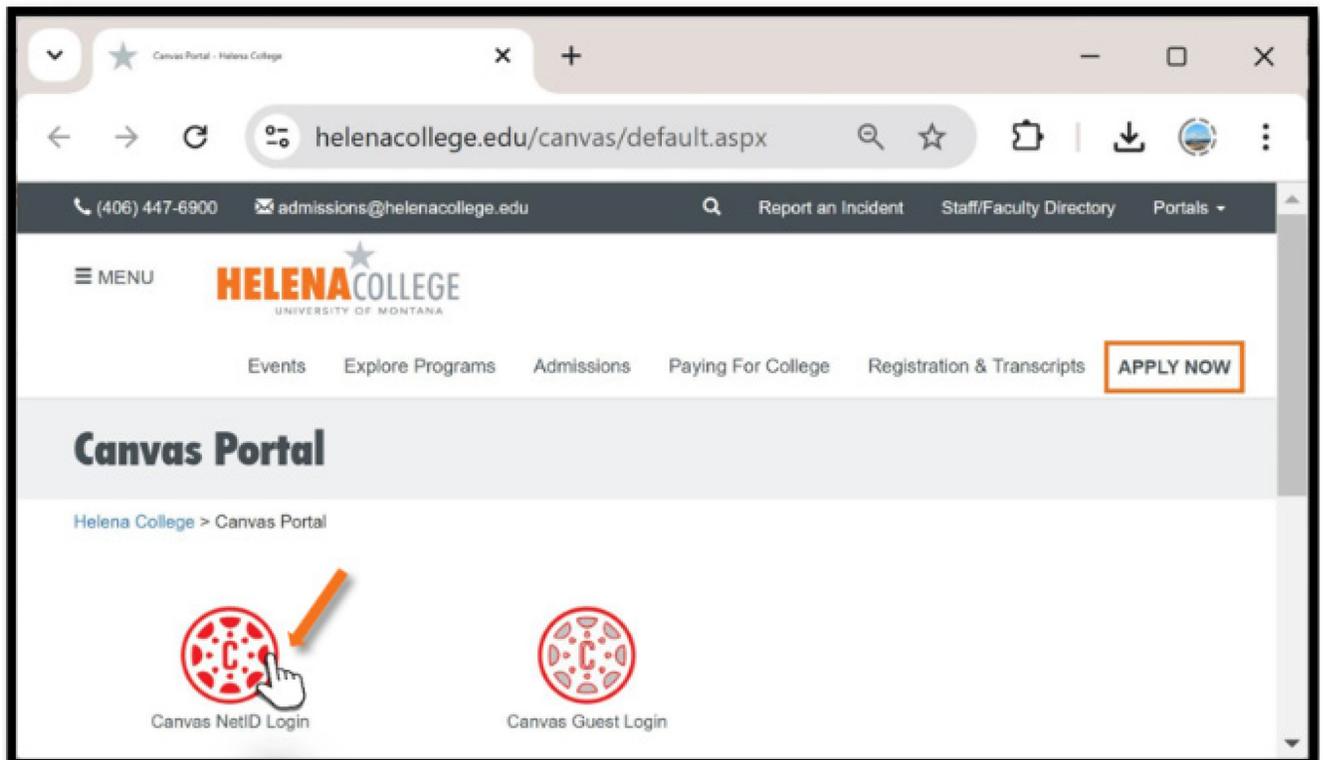
### STEP 3

Choose the Canvas icon.



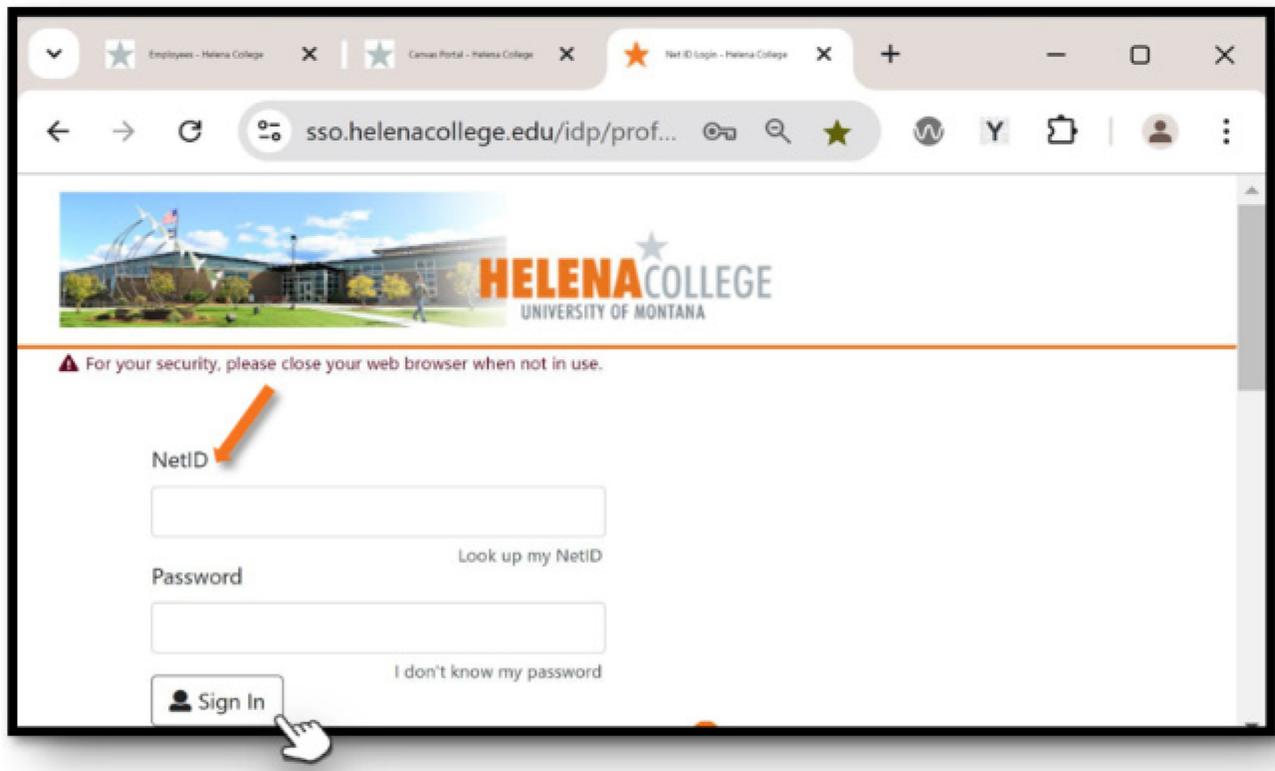
### STEP 4

Choose Canvas NetID Log in.



## STEP 5

Type in your NetID and Password (a new NetID account must be activated before use.).



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `sso.helenacollege.edu/idp/prof...`. The page features the Helena College logo and a security warning: "For your security, please close your web browser when not in use." Below the warning is a login form with the following elements:

- A "NetID" label with an orange arrow pointing to an empty text input field.
- A "Password" label with an empty text input field.
- A "Sign In" button with a user icon.
- A "Look up my NetID" link.
- An "I don't know my password" link.

## STEP 6

You may be prompted to set up Multi-Factor Authentication.

Refer to IT's Instruction guide for more details:

- [How to set up Multi-Factor Authentication?](#)

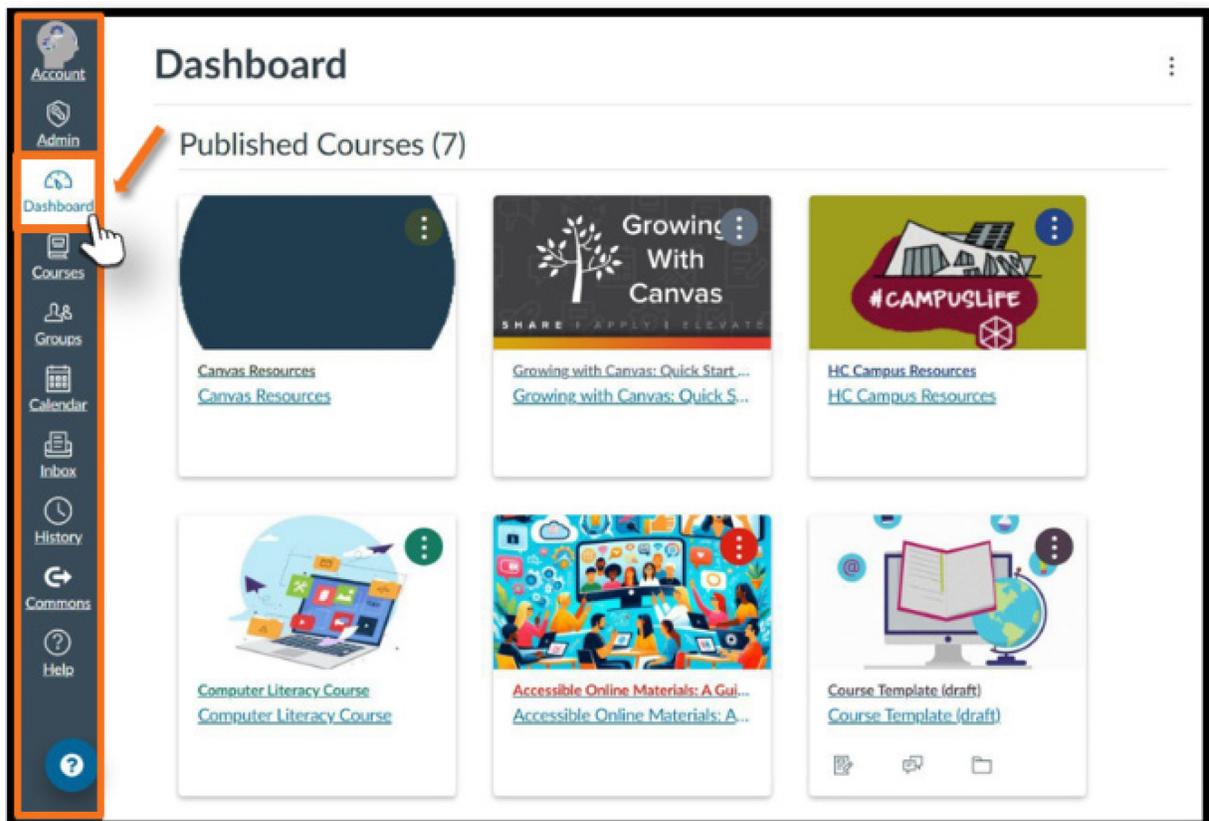
# Navigating Your Canvas Dashboard

The Dashboard is the first thing you will see when you log into Canvas. You can return to it anytime by clicking the **Dashboard** link in the Global Navigation Menu.

## STEP 1

Locate the **Global Navigation Menu** on the left side of your screen.

- The Global Navigation Menu remains visible wherever you are in Canvas for easy access.
- This menu helps you move between different areas of Canvas, such as Courses, Calendar, etc.



## STEP 2

Locate the **Sidebar** on the right side of your Dashboard.

The sidebar helps you see what assignments and events are coming up in your courses. We will look at how this functions later, but for now, here is a quick preview of what it will look like.

- The **To Do** section lists all items needing grading, including assignment names, course names, point values, and due dates.
- The **Coming Up** section shows assignments and events due within the next seven days, including ungraded items.
- The **View Grades** button lets you see the overall grade average for all your active courses.

This is a **PREVIEW** of what this section will look like after your course begins.

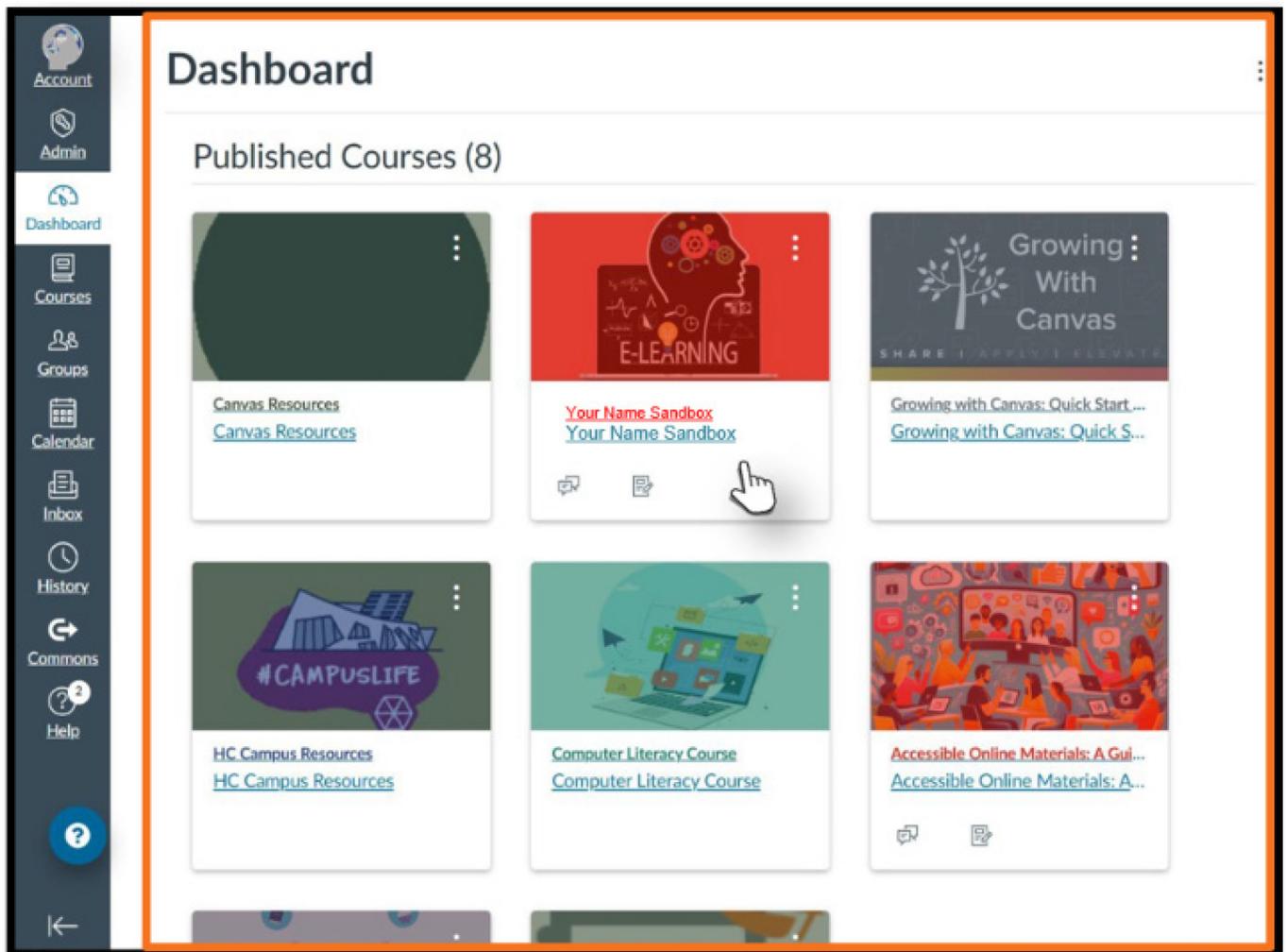
However, you may not have any information in your sidebar until that time.

The screenshot displays a dashboard with two main sections: 'Published Courses (3)' and 'Unpublished Courses (4)'. The 'Published Courses' section includes three course cards: 'BIOB101 - Discover Biology/Lab' (74264-BIOB101, Fall 2024), 'BIOB160 - Principles of Living Sys...' (74030-BIOB160, Fall 2024), and 'ENSC105 - Environmental Science' (74043-ENSC105, Fall 2024). The 'Unpublished Courses' section includes three course cards: 'BIOB101 - Discover Biology/Lab' (30126-BIOB101, Spring Semester 2025), 'BIOB170 - Prin Biological Diversit...' (30127-BIOB170, Spring Semester 2025), and 'ENSC105 - Environmental Science' (30139-ENSC105, Spring Semester 2025). On the right side, a sidebar is highlighted with an orange border. It contains three sections: 'To Do' with four items (Grade Midterm Exams, Grade Genetics quiz, Grade ENSC 105 Quiz #5, Grade Genetics Lab disorders, punnett squares...), 'Coming Up' with three items (Midterm Exam, Midterm Exam, ENSC 105 Quiz #5), and 'Recent Feedback' with the text 'Nothing for now'. A 'View Grades' button is located at the bottom of the sidebar.

## STEP 3

On your Dashboard, locate the **Course Cards** in the center of the screen.

- Each course card represents one of your courses. Click a course card to go directly into a course.
- From inside any course, click the **Dashboard** link in the Global Navigation Menu to exit that course and return to your dashboard.

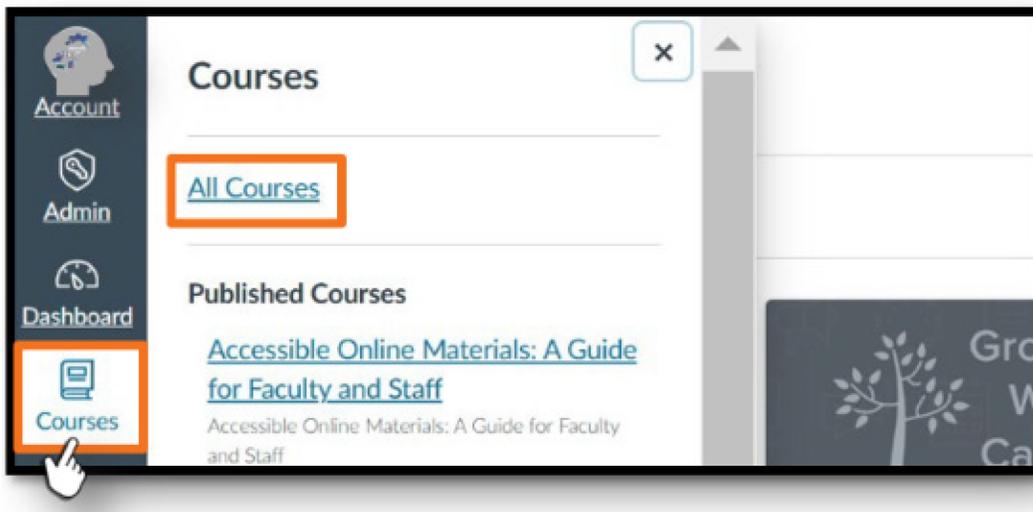




## STEP 5

From the Courses menu, click the **All Courses** link to view the page below.

- This page shows **all** your courses - not just the first 20 on the list.



## STEP 6

Want to customize your course list?

- Choose a favorite course by clicking the **star** icon [1].
- Look for the stars next to courses to mark them as favorites.
- It's a good idea to favorite your **Sandbox** course, current active courses, any courses you'll be teaching next semester, and a **Master** course you can use as a template. Once you've favorited at least one course, only those favorites will show up on your Dashboard. (To see all your courses in alphabetical order again, simply un-favorite everything.)
- Only **active** courses can be favorited. An active course is a course that is published [2] within its designated start and end dates [3].
- If you cannot click the star icon, the course isn't active.



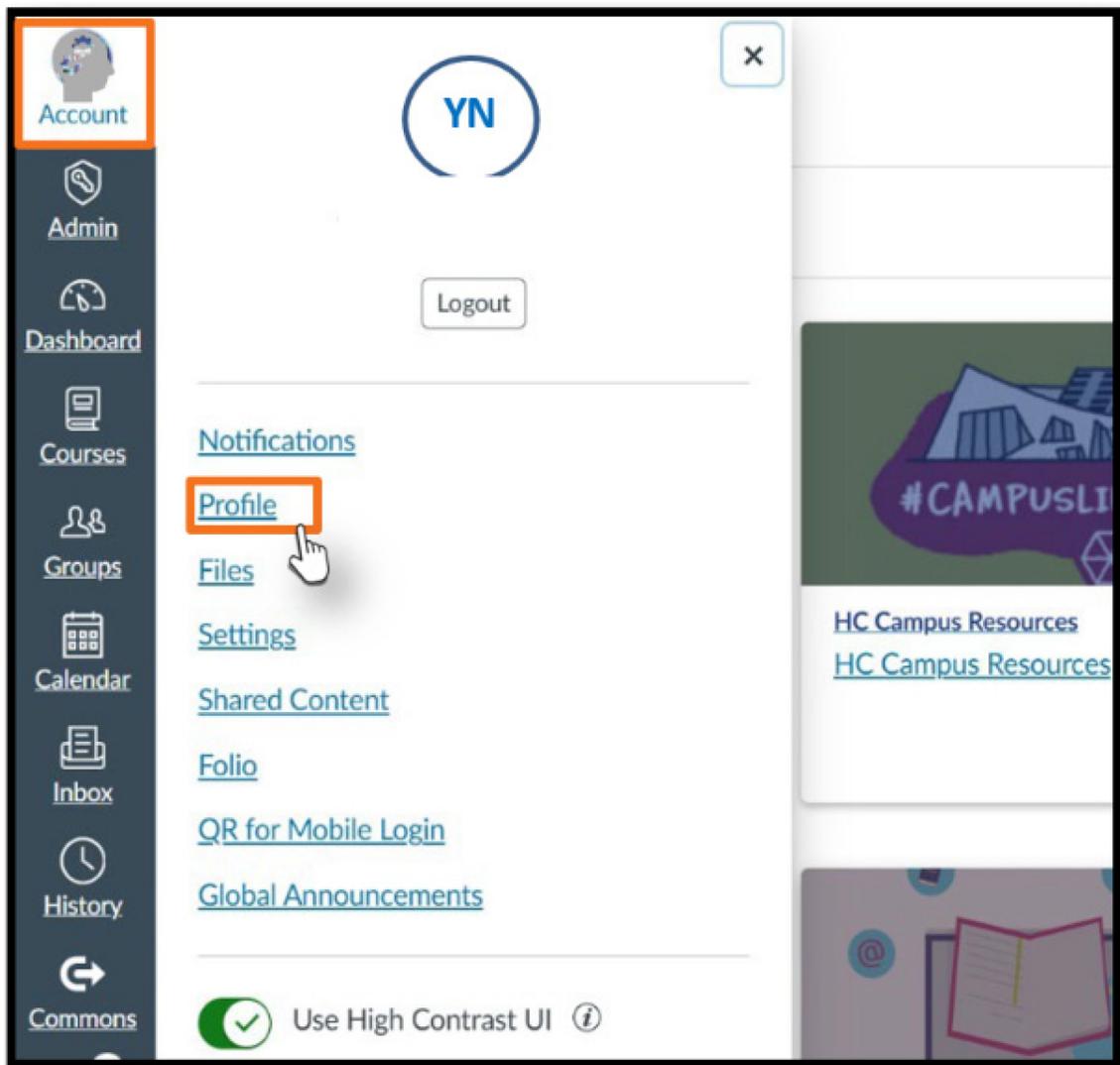
# Set Up Your Profile

Your profile personalizes your Canvas experience and helps you connect with students and colleagues.

In Canvas, you need to set up one profile that students in your courses can see.

## STEP 1

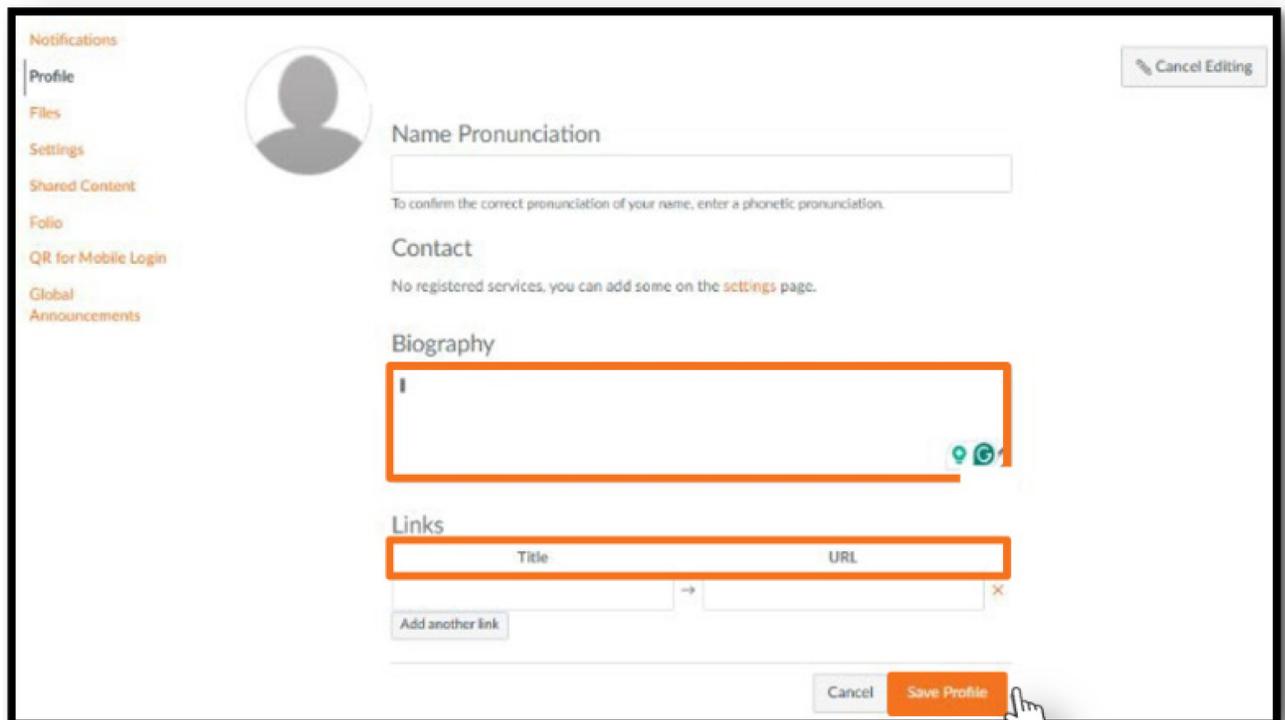
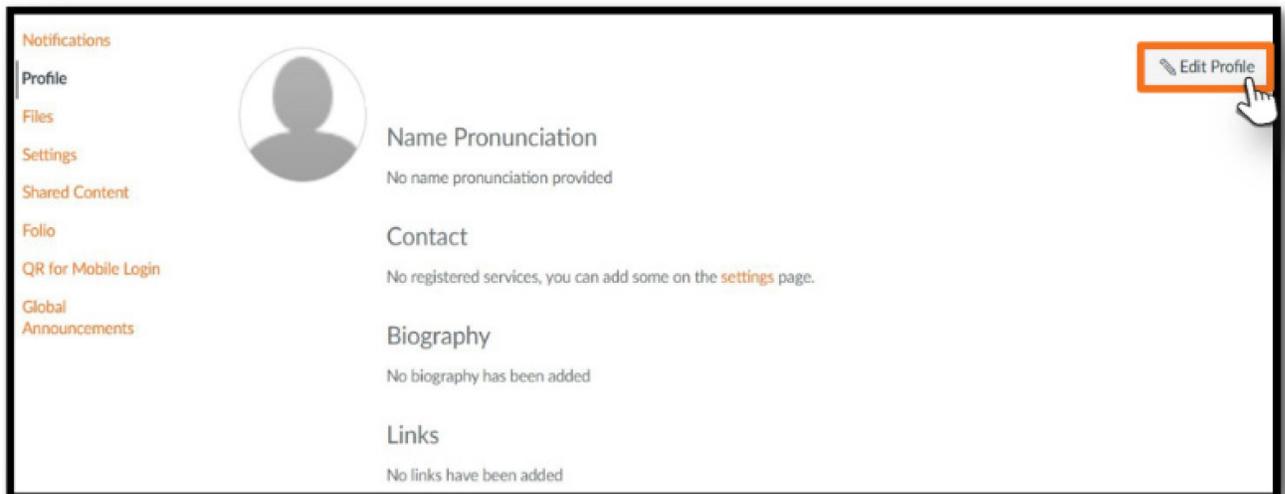
Click the **Account** link from the Global Navigation Menu, then click the Profile link.



## STEP 2

Click the **Edit Profile** button.

- To add a profile picture, click the **picture** icon.
- Then, select a picture by uploading a file or taking a photo.
- Edit your Bio. Use the **Biography** section to share more about yourself.
- You can add personal **links** to your profile, socials, or portfolios.
- Don't forget to **Save Profile**.



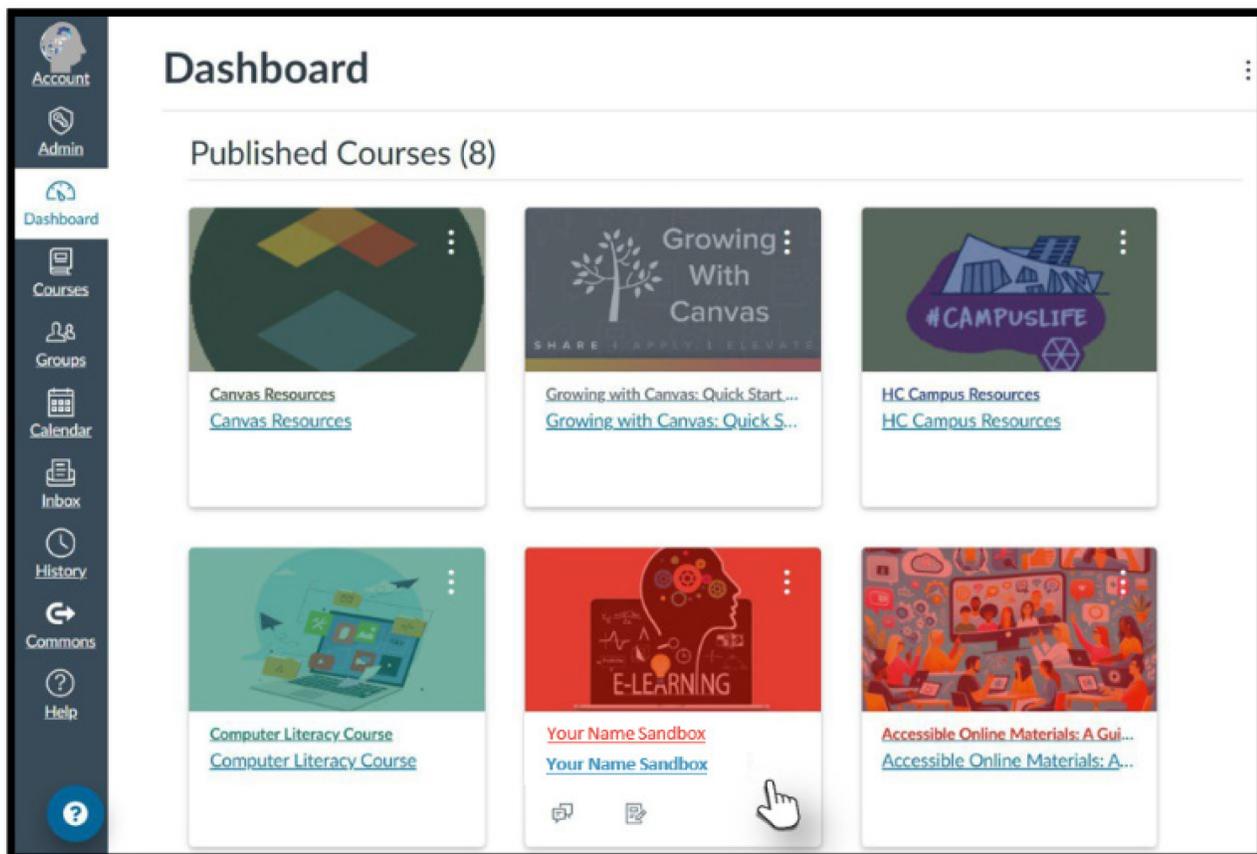
# Find Your Sandbox Course

**This is a private course just for you.** You can use it to explore Canvas, experiment with tools, test ideas, and build content without worrying about students accessing it. Want to try something new or unfamiliar? Your sandbox is the best place to do that.

## STEP 1

Locate your Sandbox course in your Dashboard.

- You should see a course labeled with **Your Name Sandbox**.
- If you don't see it on the dashboard, use the **Courses** link in the Global Navigation Menu to locate it in your complete list of courses.
- If you still don't see it, contact [eLearning@helenacollege.edu](mailto:eLearning@helenacollege.edu)



## STEP 2

Explore your Sandbox course and experiment with some of its features.

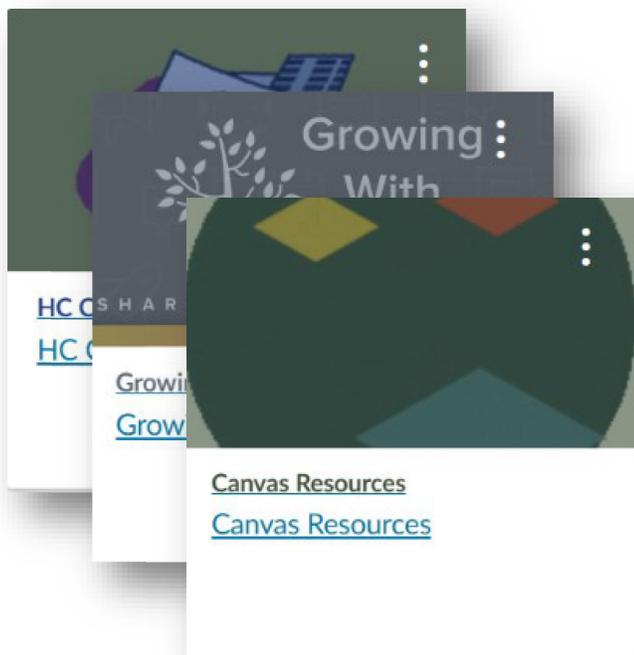
- **Spend some time familiarizing yourself with Canvas and its features.**
- Use the **Modules** link in the menu [1] to see how the course is organized from start to finish.
- Click the **View as Student** button [2] in the upper-right corner to see what your students see. Students cannot view any unpublished pages [3].
- Try building new modules [4], adding new assignments [5], or exploring other features.
- If you create something you like, you can copy it to one of your active courses later.

The screenshot displays the Canvas LMS interface for a course template. The left sidebar contains navigation links, with 'Modules' [1] and 'Assignments' [5] highlighted. The main content area shows the course structure, including 'Course Setup (Tips for Instructors)' and 'Getting to Know Survey (Example)'. The 'View as Student' button [2] is in the top right, and the '+ Module' button [4] is in the top right of the main content area. The 'Getting to Know Survey (Example)' module content [3] is highlighted, showing a survey question and two survey items: 'Getting to Know Survey (Not graded)' and 'Getting to Know Survey (Graded) 2 pts'.

# I See My Course in Canvas but with No Content

## Which courses have content in them, and which are empty shells?

Discovering one of your courses is empty can be frustrating. Let's look closer at which courses should contain content and which ones will require you to add those materials.



### Past Courses:

#### Already have content in the modules

Most courses migrated earlier in 2024 will typically have content from the Moodle platform, our previous LMS.

**On the next page, we will guide you on verifying if your course contains this content.**



### New Courses Shells: No content yet

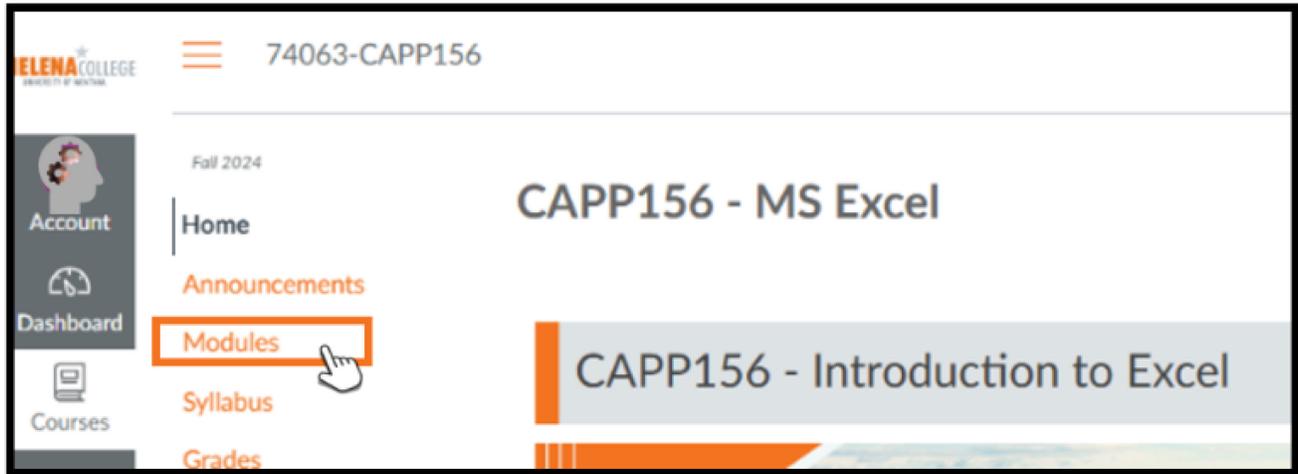
New course shells in Canvas will be empty for future semesters except for the course template. You will need to copy content into these empty shells before the start of each new semester.

**We'll cover those steps later in this document.**

## STEP 1

Choose a course that you'd like to check for content. From the Home Page, click **Modules**.

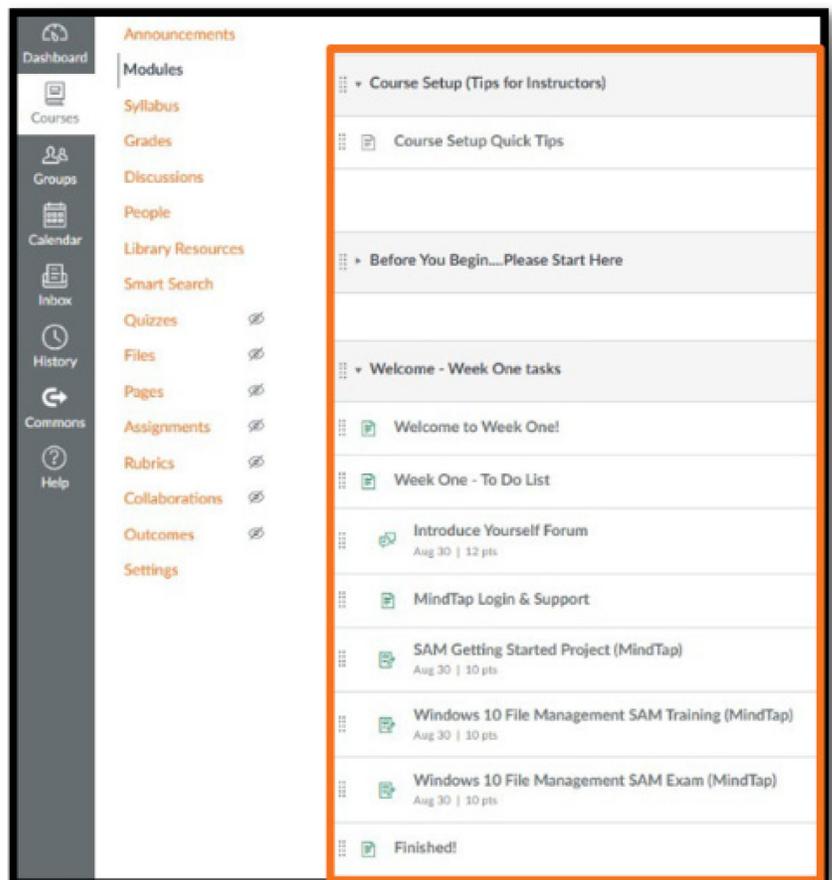
While your Home Page may feature a template that requires editing, this doesn't mean your course lacks all its content. Exploring the Modules view is a simple way to check if your migrated course has its content.



## STEP 2

Scroll down and look for content.

- Scroll down through your modules. Look for content that you recognize from the Moodle platform.
- Identifying familiar materials will help you understand what has been migrated and what you may need to adjust or update as you prepare for your course.
- **Repeat these steps for any courses you are curious about.** If you don't find any recognizable content in one of your courses, make a note of it as we continue through this guide.



# How to Import Course Content into Existing Course?

## STEP 1

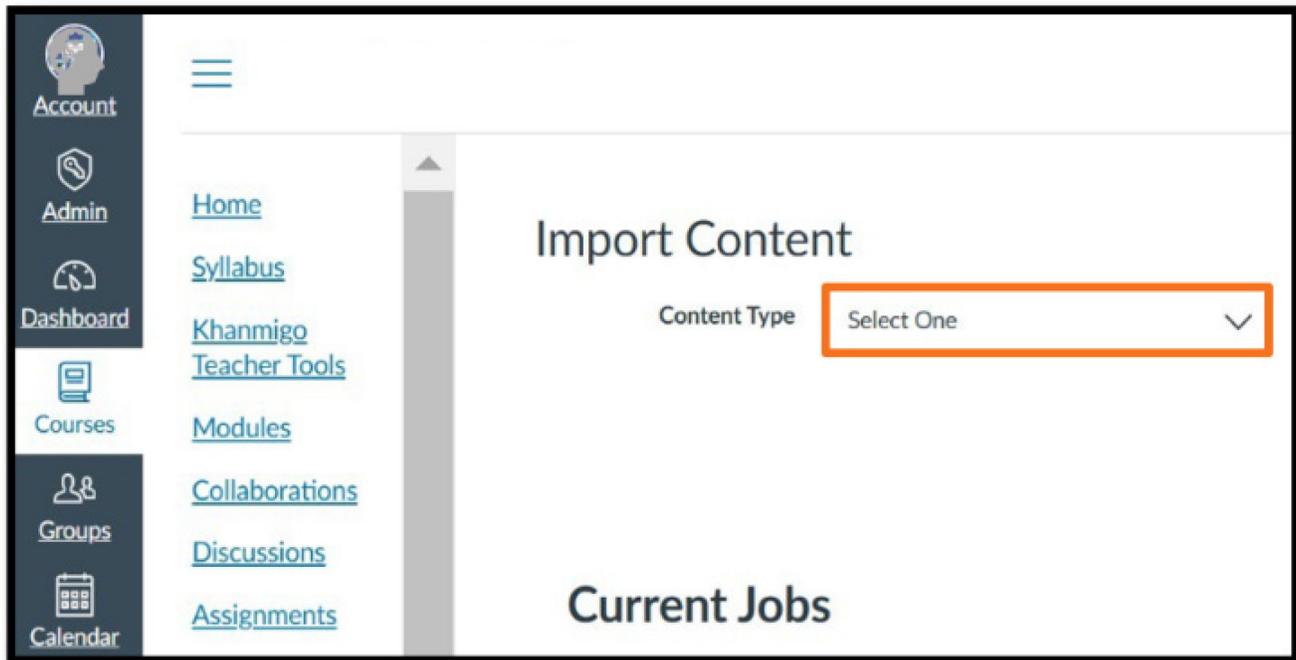
Go to the Canvas community help page for more information on [How to use the Course Import Tool](#).

- Navigate to an existing course where you want to import the course content.
- Click the course card on your Dashboard. (Try using the Sandbox for the beginning.)
- Click the **Import Existing Content** button on the right-hand side of the screen

The screenshot displays the Canvas Dashboard interface. On the left is a vertical navigation sidebar with icons for Account, Admin, Dashboard, Courses, Groups, Calendar, Inbox, History, and Commons. The main content area is titled 'Dashboard' and features a section for 'Published Courses (8)'. Two course cards are visible: 'Canvas Resources' and 'Jelena Kalderon Sandbox'. The 'Jelena Kalderon Sandbox' card has a mouse cursor hovering over it. To the right of the course cards is a vertical menu of course management options. The 'Import Existing Content' option is highlighted with an orange border and a mouse cursor pointing to it. Other options in the menu include 'Import from Commons', 'Choose Home Page', 'View Course Stream', 'Course Setup Checklist', 'New Announcement', 'New Analytics', and 'View Course Notifications'.

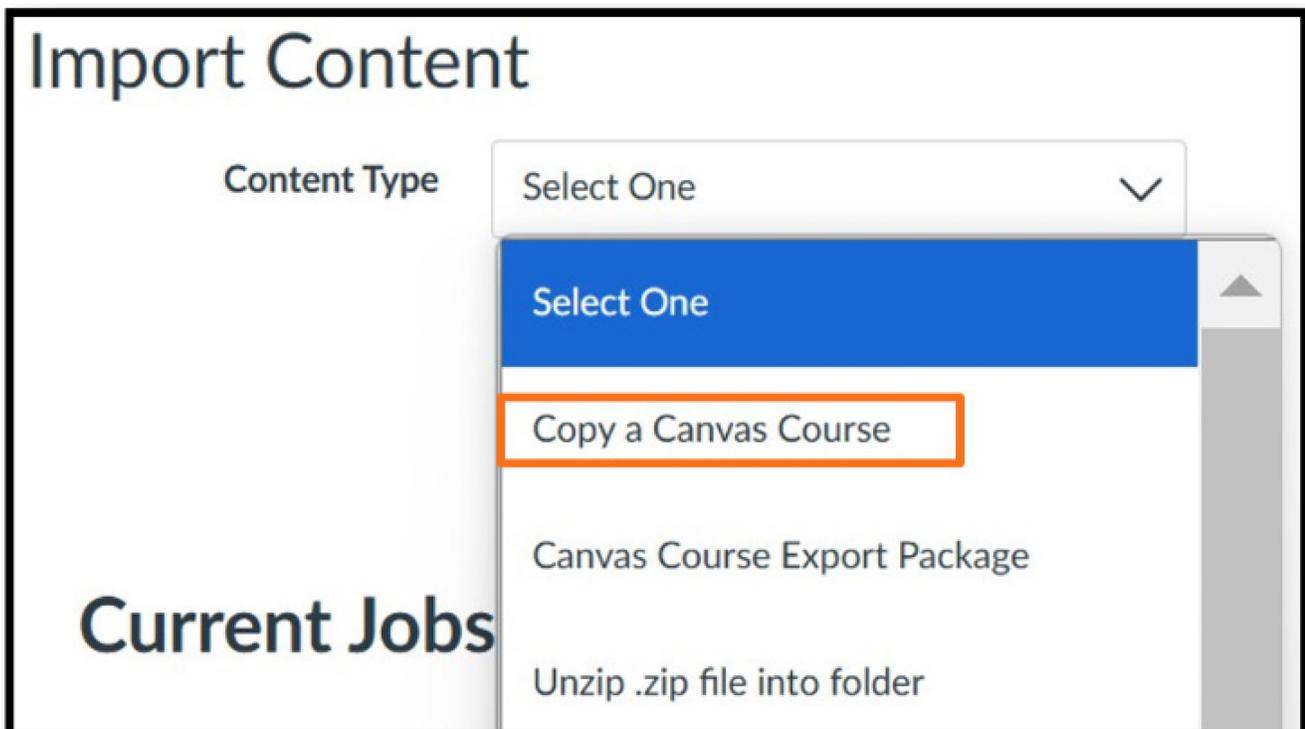
## STEP 2

Click on the drop-down box next to **Content Type**.



## STEP 3

Select **Copy a Canvas Course**.



## STEP 4

Search for a course.

- Type in the **Course name** and pick it up from a drop-down list. You can use **#CRN** for the fastest search.
- Check what you need; **Include completed courses and all content**, or **Select specific content** and **Options**.



**WARNING: These steps can cause you to erase your work in Canvas accidentally!**

Proceed slowly, and take care when following these instructions to avoid mistakes.

**Importing the same course content more than once will overwrite any existing content in the course!**

**Import Content**

Content Type: Copy a Canvas Course

Search for a course: Course name

Include completed courses

Content:  All content  
Note the following content types will be imported: Course Settings, Syllabus Body, Modules, Assignments, Quizzes, Question Banks, Discussion Topics, Pages, Announcements, Rubrics, Files, and Calendar Events.  
 Select specific content

Options:  Import existing quizzes as New Quizzes [?](#)  
 Adjust events and due dates

**!** Importing the same course content more than once will overwrite any existing content in the course.

Cancel Import

Click **Import**.

During the import process, you might notice a **progress bar** [1] and a note telling you that the process is still **running** [2]. You can also check the **date and time** [3] and the **course code** [4] in the file name to ensure you look at the correct import.

## Details

### Current Jobs

---

|             |   |                 |        |
|-------------|---|-----------------|--------|
| Course Copy | <a href="#">PHSX226-1-Gen Science:...</a> | Nov 1 at 8:36am | Queued |
|-------------|---|-----------------|--------|

### Current Jobs

---

|             |   |                 |         |   |
|-------------|---|-----------------|---------|---|
|             | [4]                                       | [3]             | [2]     | [1]   |
| Course Copy | <a href="#">PHSX226-1-Gen Science:...</a> | Nov 1 at 8:36am | Running |  |

When the import is finished, it should say **Completed** [5].

Canvas will automatically check the content; if it detects any **issues**, it will tell you how many it found [6].

### Current Jobs

---

|             |   |                 |                  |
|-------------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Course Copy | <a href="#">PHSX226-1-Gen Science:...</a> | Nov 1 at 8:36am | [5]<br>Completed |
|-------------|---|-----------------|------------------|

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|             |                                      |                 |                  |                 |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Course Copy | <a href="#">WRIT101 - College...</a> | Aug 6 at 2:28pm | [5]<br>Completed | [6]<br>1 issues |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|

## STEP 5

Click the link to learn more about the issues Canvas detected.

|             |   |                   |           |                          |
|-------------|---|-------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| File Import | <a href="#">...on4e_canvas%281%29.zip</a> | Aug 19 at 8:16am  | Completed |                          |
| Course Copy | <a href="#">Credentials</a>               | Aug 15 at 11:43am | Completed |                          |
| Course Copy | <a href="#">WRIT101 - College...</a>      | Aug 6 at 2:28pm   | Completed | <a href="#">1 Issues</a> |

## STEP 6

Take a few minutes to click each link in this list to see if you can determine what the issue is and why Canvas flagged it. (Each link will open in a new tab.)

Common issues you might see:

You might have a **broken link**, and you'll need to fix that in Canvas later [1].

|             |  |                 |           |                             |
|-------------|--|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Course Copy | <a href="#">WRIT101 - College...</a>   | Aug 6 at 2:28pm | Completed | <a href="#">Hide Issues</a> |
|             | <a href="#">Missing links found in imported content - Wiki Page body</a> [1] |                 |           |                             |

### Good Practice:

If you are unsure precisely what you want from a previous course, it is better to import everything and then hide, unpublish, or delete the content you don't wish to than import course content multiple times.

The more times content is imported, the more likely one will experience unexpected problems.

## STEP 7

Please take a moment to check out your course in Canvas and look over the content you just added.

- Use the **Modules** link in the menu [1] to see how the course is organized from start to finish.
- Click the **View as Student** button [2] in the upper-right corner to see what your students see.

What do you notice about the content you moved over? Is everything working as it should?

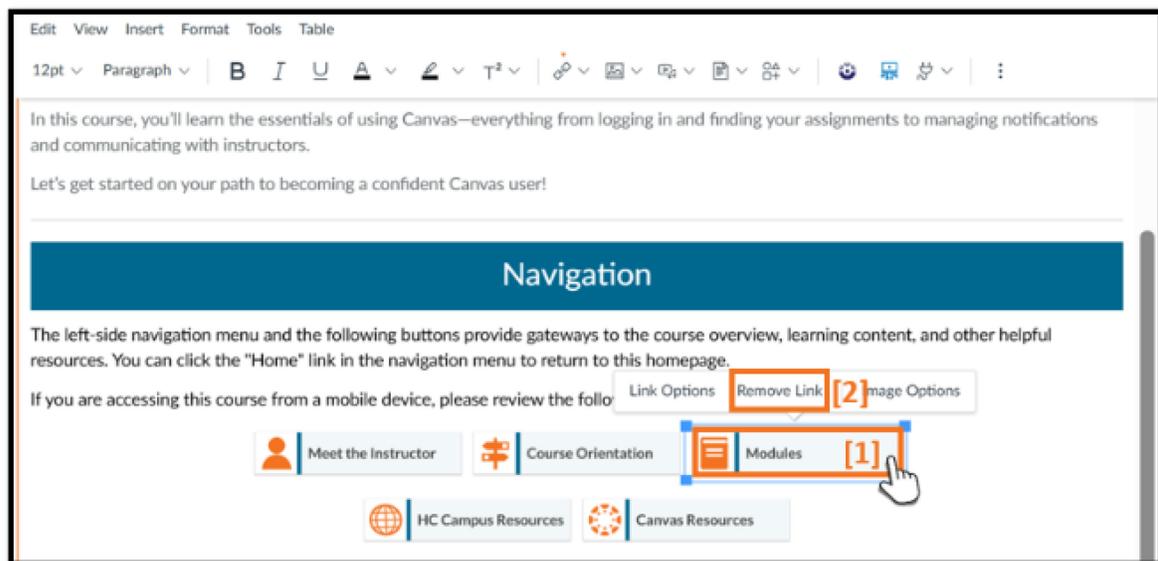
The screenshot displays the Canvas LMS interface for a course titled "74307-PHSX224" in the "Modules" view. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with the "Modules" link highlighted in red and labeled [1]. The top right corner features a "View as Student" button, also highlighted in red and labeled [2]. The main content area shows a list of modules, including "Welcome and Introduction" and "Chapter 01: About Science". The "Welcome and Introduction" module contains sub-items: "Meet Your Instructor", "Course Orientation & Schedule", "Course Materials", and "Create a Conceptual Academy profile". The "Chapter 01: About Science" module contains sub-items: "Work through Conceptual Academy IPC01: About Science" and "LAB IPC 01: Study Effectively".

## STEP 8

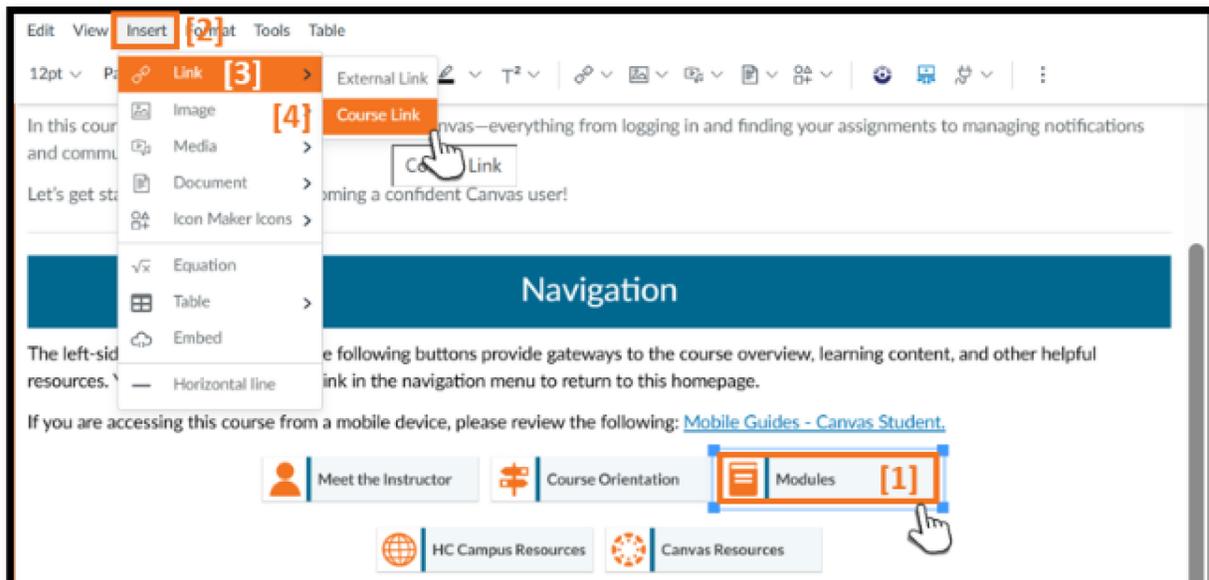
After importing your course content, you may need to relink the **"Modules"** button on the Home Page to ensure it directs students to the correct module page.

Follow these steps:

- Click the **"Modules"** button [1] in the **Edit Mode** of the Home Page.
- Select **"Remove Link"** [2] to unlink the invalid connection.

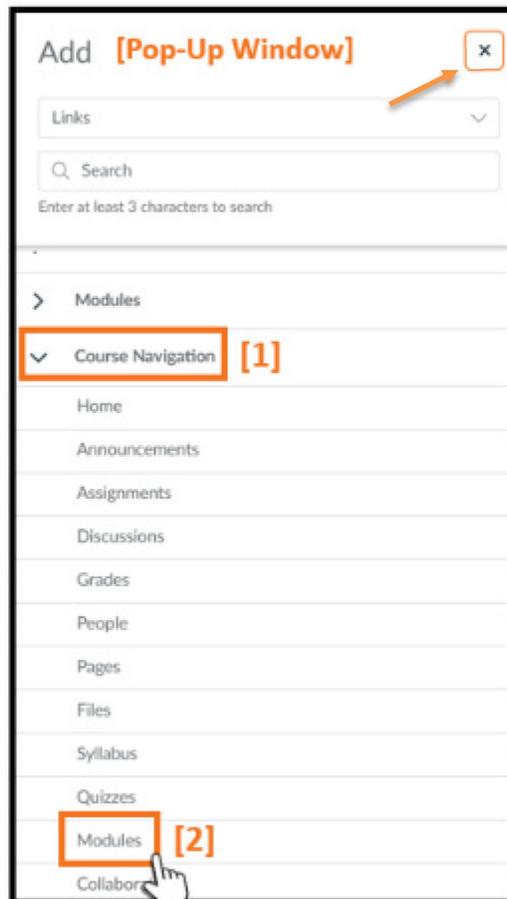


- While the **Module button** is selected [1], in the toolbar, click **Insert** [2] -> **Link** [3] -> **Course Link** [4]. A **pop-up window** will appear.



- In the **Pop-Up Window**, expand the **Course Navigation [1]** section.
- Scroll down and select **Modules [2]**.
- **Close** the pop-up window.
- Scroll down and **Save** the page to apply the changes.

The **Modules** button should now be correctly linked.

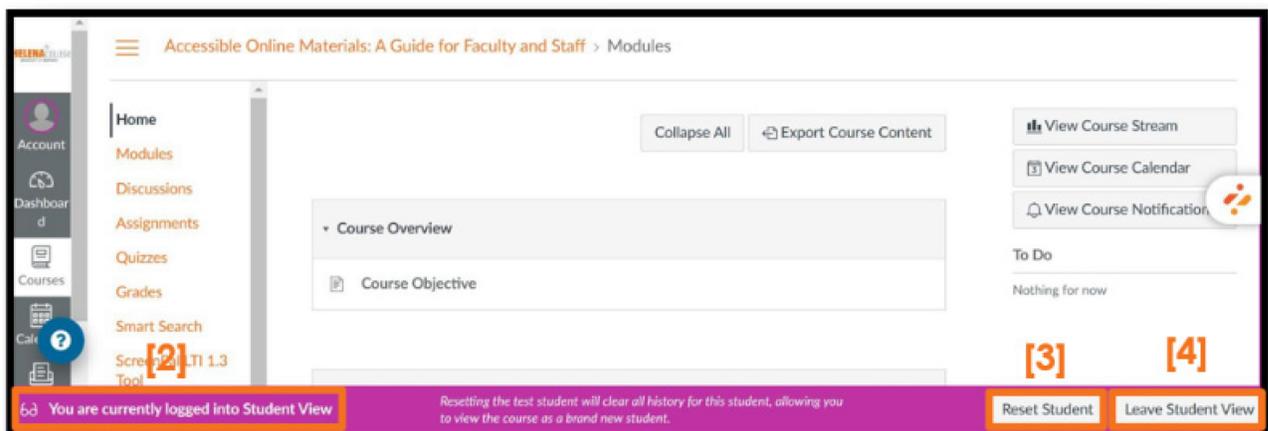
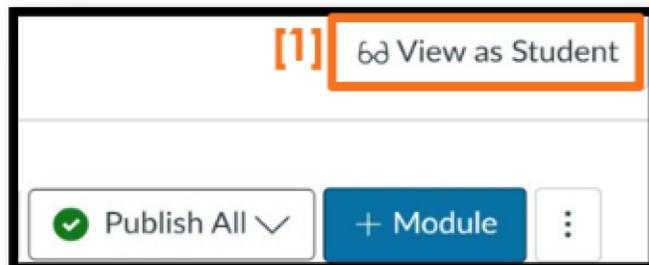


### Final Check:

- Click the **Modules** button to ensure it correctly navigates to the Modules section.
- Use **View as Student** to confirm that students can access Modules without issues.

# View as Student

- Instructors are recommended to navigate the course in **View as Student** after importing materials and developing the course. It helps assess course navigation and presentation of information.
- Instructors can view the course from a student perspective using **View as Student**.
- **View as Student** [1] is accessible from the top right corner of the Home page.
- In the **View as Student**, instructors experience the course as students do.
- The indicator at the bottom of the screen shows when in **Student View** [2].
- Instructors see a different navigation than students, such as the **Settings** link.
- **Viewing as Student** creates a Test Student in the Gradebook for testing purposes. Instructors can submit assignments, post discussions, and take quizzes as Test Student.
- To exit Student View, click **Reset Student** [3] to clear the activity and **Leave Student View** [4] to return to Instructor View.
- Additional details can be found in the Canvas guide [How do I view a course as a test student using Student View?](#)



# More Resources for Instructors

 If you are ready for more, explore these helpful guides:



## [Canvas Guides | Instructure Community](#)

Have a question about Canvas? You can search for answers and watch how-to videos here. [Go to the Community home page.](#)



## [Canvas Resources for Instructors | Video Course](#)

Canvas Resources for Instructors provides instructors with the resources they need to use Canvas successfully.



## [Helena College Canvas eLearning Pages](#)

Dedicated to providing instructors with specific support resources.



Canvas 24/7 Support 

GET HELP ANYTIME!