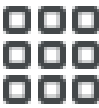


Tech Snacks: Start of Semester Spring 2022

Brightspace

- ❑ If you have a student with an Incomplete for Fall 2021, make sure to give the student an “I” as a final grade in MyInfo. If you have students with current Incompletes that will need to be extended into Spring 2022, let the Registrar know before grades are due. OTLE will obtain a list from the Registrar’s office and ensure that all students with an active Incomplete status in a course will have Brightspace access for Spring 2022.
- ❑ If your Spring 2022 courses aren’t showing up in “My Courses,” click on the grid button in Brightspace and type “202230” into the search bar. Click the pushpin icon next to each 202230 course and unpin any old courses that you no longer want pinned in “My Courses.” If you notice any discrepancies in the Spring courses you have access to, check with your Chair right away. 
- ❑ If you’re teaching multiple sections of the same course, you can ask Jason Geer or Brittany Garden to merge sections, or to rename sections for you. If you are merging sections, don’t do anything else with the courses until the merge process is complete (it will take overnight from when we merge the shells). Please send an email with the course numbers and sections you would like to merge.
- ❑ If you want to copy material from a previous course into your new semester course, do the following: go into the *new* course and click “Edit Course,” then “Import/Export/Copy Components” and follow the prompts from there. Ask Jason or Brittany for assistance.
- ❑ Update your course syllabus and replace your old one in the Content area.
- ❑ Go to the “Edit Course” tab and select “Manage Dates.” Update or add due dates, start dates, and end dates in the following areas: *Assignments, Announcements, Quizzes Discussions.*
- ❑ Double-check any links to external videos or other resources to make sure they still work. Fix or replace any broken links. Click on your Brightspace profile name and click “View as Student” to see the course as a student would see it.
- ❑ Delete outdated Announcements. If you’re re-using old Announcements, uncheck “Always Show Start Dates” in the editing window, otherwise old dates will show up and confuse students or make them think the course is on auto-pilot. Update “Welcome” and/or “Getting Started” messaging for the new course.
- ❑ Plan to attend an OTLE “work party” for faculty to work through course design questions with us and peers (lunch included). These will be Monday and Tuesday, December 13-14 as well as Tuesday and Wednesday, January 4–5.

Note that **courses are open to students starting January 3rd**. Try to at least have a welcome message, syllabus, and textbook information visible to students by then, as some students will start looking at their courses as soon as they open.

General Technology

- ❑ Talk to ITS (helpdesk@msun.edu) about special computer lab or classroom software needs for Spring 2022. Make sure any required software is up to date and working.
- ❑ Let OTLE know if you have any additional instructional technology needs, and we will coordinate with ITS to try to acquire needed equipment. A list of current equipment for checkout is on the [OTLE website](#) under “Instructional Technology.”
- ❑ This is a good time to back up critical files (e.g. electronic media). Make copies on your Z drive, external hard drives, thumb drives, or Microsoft OneDrive.

Brightspace Organization Tips

This is the number one area of student commentary in our annual Brightspace survey. Students appreciate a clear, consistent visual overview of the course schedule.

- ❑ **Create a visual schedule.** Provide a clear timeline or calendar for the semester (even if it's tentative), either in your syllabus or in your Course Documents module in Brightspace. [Here is a folder](#) with a few examples.
- ❑ **Use Brightspace modules in the Content area to reinforce your visual schedule.** Place or link *everything* that students need to see for your course into the respective Brightspace weekly or biweekly modules in the Content area in chronological order--this includes Brightspace activities like Quizzes, Assignments, etc. If students have to check 3 or 4 different spots for each course every week to find their assignments, they will quickly lose track of what needs to be done.

See our [tutorial video on Organizing Course Structure](#) in Brightspace here (also accessible by visiting the "MSU-Northern OTLE" video library on YouTube).
- ❑ **Streamline file and activity names.** If you upload files into the content area, try to make sure file names are clean and consistent. Names "like PPT4_new(3).doc.docx" add unnecessary clutter and visual distraction. Likewise, use consistent nomenclature for Brightspace assignments and quizzes.
- ❑ **Use Brightspace Due Dates.** When due dates are set for activities, students can see them in the Brightspace calendar and they receive notifications. This helps immensely with student organization.

Brightspace Communication & Presence Tips

- ❑ **Create an introduction.** The "Announcement" tool in Brightspace is a great place for you to establish immediate presence by introducing yourself and welcoming students to the class. An introduction video or photo can really help establish a "face-to-face" connection. Talk about yourself, the objectives and structure of the course, and any other critical information that students should know going into the class. Brightspace has a built-in "Video Note Tool" for you to create a webcam-style video in your Announcements. Otherwise, Zoom, Webex, or Screencast-o-matic offer easy screen recording solutions. Contact Jason or Brittany if you need assistance.
- ❑ **Post regular announcements.** The "Announcement" page in Brightspace is the first page students see when logging into your course. This tool allows you to check in with your students regularly, and it will signal your presence in the course.
- ❑ **Set clear expectations for communication.**
Be as straightforward and upfront as possible with students about your expectations for communication. Let them know:
 - Your primary method of communication about important course matters (through Brightspace emails, Announcements, etc.). This information will let them know if they need to adjust their notification settings.
 - How you prefer to be contacted and when they can expect a response.
 - When and how to attend your office hours.