



canvas  
BY INSTRUCTURE

# The VTSU Canvas Course Template

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OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup> 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

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# Agenda

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1. Introductions
2. Benefits of course consistency
3. Sources of support
4. Overview of the template
5. Impact of differing designs on students
6. Importing the template into your course

# Course Design Consistency

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"The ability to offer course design in a consistent manner can help ensure various Quality Matters standards are met, but when course material is presented consistently over time, the efficacy of the course may also be positively influenced (Baker et al., 2020). Navigating courses that are all different may thus have a negative impact on the student's ability to learn and the faculty's ability to teach if approaches are haphazard in design (Ralph et al., 2017)."

"Our survey demonstrated that consistency and use of technology should be of the utmost importance when designing curricula for all students. As we navigate our way through a highly advanced, technology-driven world, faculty must embrace this need with creative ways to engage students, encourage critical thinking and empower students with the tools to successfully master learning outcomes. Course layouts should incorporate consistency in structure, high standards of transferability semester to semester, course to course, and offer a variety of teaching strategies appealing to reach and engage all learners."

McMullan, T., Williams, D. S., Ortiz, Y. L., & Lollar, J. (2022). Is Consistency Possible? Course Design and Delivery to Meet Faculty and Student Needs. *Current Issues in Education*, 23(3), 1-22.

# Advantages of Using the Template

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**Ease of Development** – The template is simple by design but provides a faculty member with room to tweak it to best meet the needs of the course and program.

## **Student Navigation** –

- Best practices in the field along with **VTSU student survey feedback** indicate that a consistent course design improves ease of navigation within Canvas.
- Students prefer to learn new course content without having to learn how to navigate Canvas modules and pages that differ considerably from class-to-class. The template has been developed to meet this need.

# Faculty Support

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## Canvas Support

Canvas Support staff members have administrative rights to the course as well as the system as a whole and a high-degree of technical knowledge.

Contact Canvas Support: <https://servicedesk.vsc.edu/>

## Center for Teaching & Learning Innovation

The CTLI focuses more on pedagogical concerns and “why” a faculty member would want to adopt a given feature (whereas Canvas Support focuses more on “how” a faculty member can implement a tool or resource).

Contact CTLI: [CTLI@vsc.edu](mailto:CTLI@vsc.edu)

# Self-Service Support

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## The CTLI Website

The site includes a Canvas template guide as well as many other pedagogical, technical, and organizational resources.

Canvas Template Guide: <https://ctli.vermontstate.edu/teaching-with-technology/canvas-template-guide/>

## [Canvas Design Checklist](#)

# Overview of Template

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1. Multi-purpose home page
2. Student support resources
3. Q/A discussion board
4. Weekly introductions
5. Consistent assessment naming conventions

# Differing Designs

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1. Log into Canvas
2. Access three examples:
  - a. FA23 Canvas Template Workshop - Example #1
  - b. FA23 Canvas Template Workshop - Example #2
  - c. FA23 Canvas Template Workshop - Example #3
3. Discuss observations



# Design Questions

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Within the course:

1. Do students know how to contact their instructor?
2. Have they been provided a forum for asking questions outside of class other than email?
3. Are there weekly introductions that describe the content and achievable outcomes?
4. Will students know which readings and other materials apply to each week or unit?
5. Do assignment names include a consistent naming convention (e.g., week 1 – assignment)?
6. Have assignment due dates been set?

# Importing the Template

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1. The Template is saved in Canvas Commons as: [VTSU Faculty - Canvas Template \(Fall 2023\)](#)
2. Steps to import it are available at:
  - a) <https://ctli.vermontstate.edu/teaching-with-technology/canvas-template-guide/>
3. Hands-on activity: Importing the template

# Questions

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