Canvas Student FAQs

Provided by the Galveston College Distance Education Department

1. What is Canvas? Why should I bother using it?

Canvas is the college's Online Learning Management Platform. The platform allows you to:

- Access your courses.
- View coursework, grades, assignments and assessments.
- Communicate with your instructor.
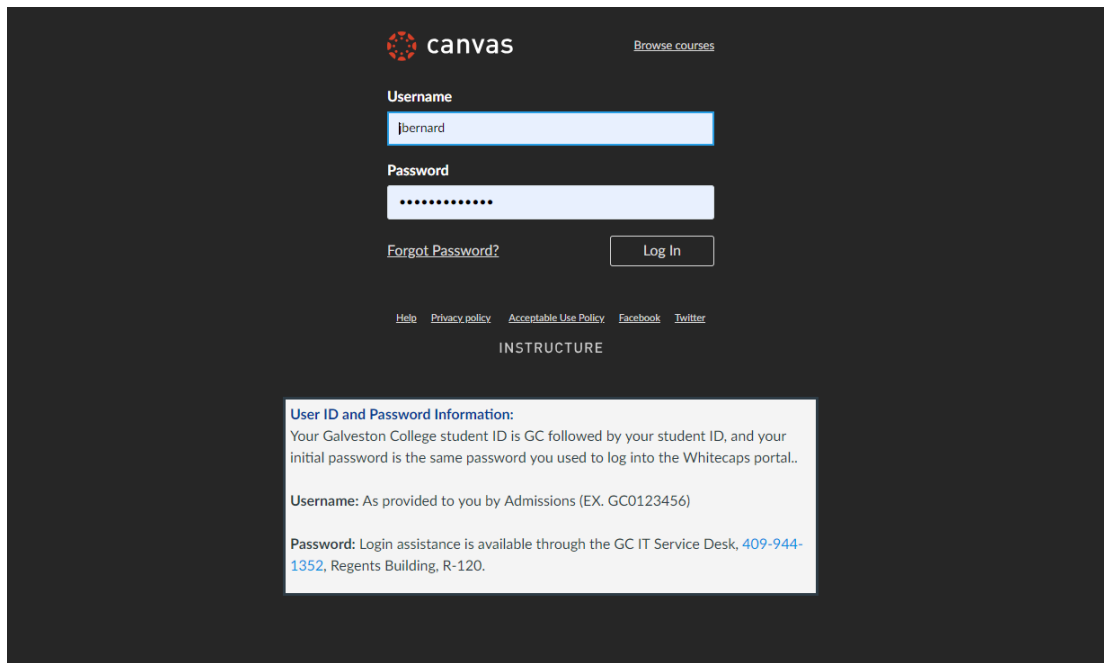- Collaborate with your classmates.

We encourage you to log into Canvas at least once a day to keep up with your coursework.

2. Where do I login? How do I log in? What's my login info?

Students are normally set up with an account once they successfully complete the application process and are officially granted a student ID. In order to access Canvas, go to the GC homepage at www.gc.edu and click on the "Canvas" link on the right hand side of the page:
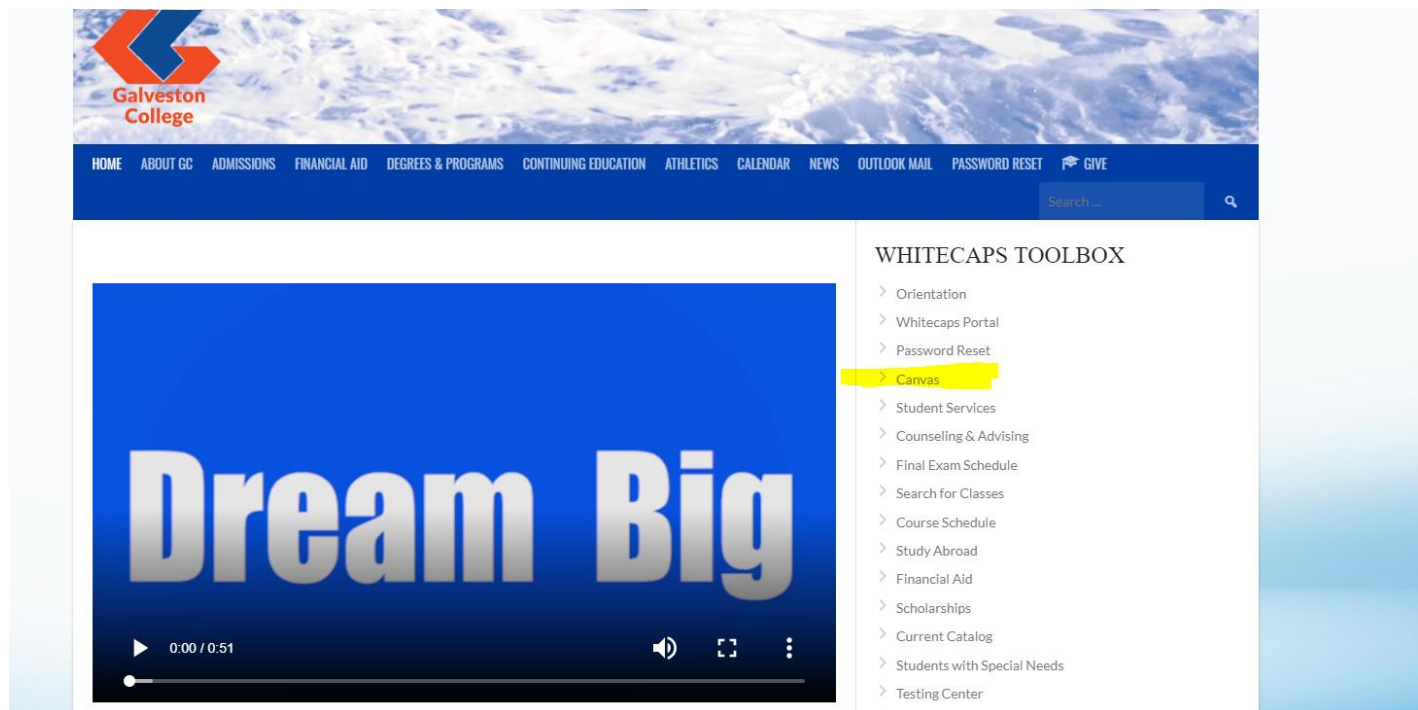
Once you are at the login page, use the same information provided to you by Admissions to log into Canvas. This is the same information you use to log into your Whitecaps Portal as well as your Whitecaps email address.

Note: If you cannot access Canvas at this point, please go through the following steps:

-Verify your login information.

-Contact the IT Service Desk at 409-944-1352 to ensure that your login credentials are correct and/or have your password reset.

-Contact the Distance Education department at DistanceEd@gc.edu

Once you are logged in, you should be at your Dashboard, which will look something like this:
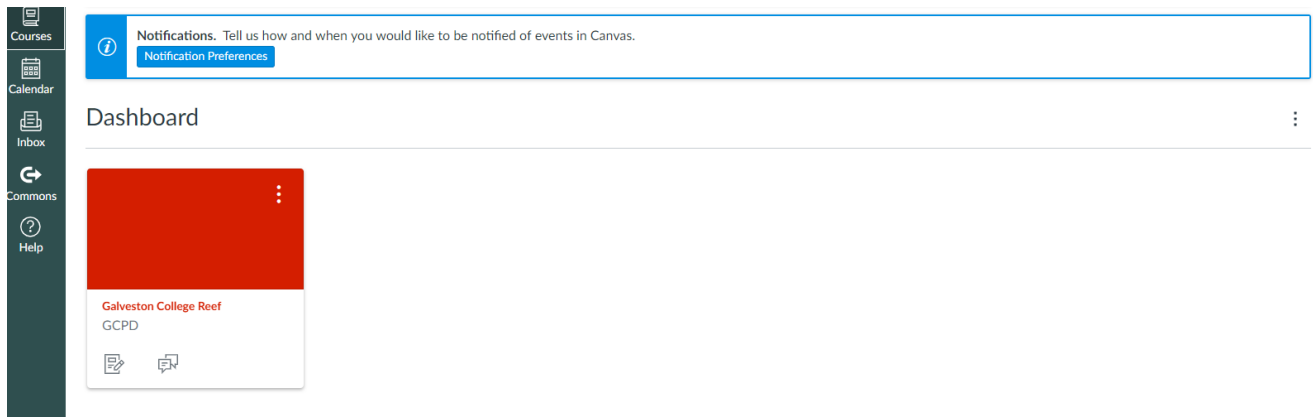

3. Great, I'm in! Now what?

Once you are at your Dashboard, please update your settings. Your Canvas settings should ideally include the following:

- Your Full Name
- Whitecaps email address (your email address at GC)
- Profile picture
  - Note: We ask students to upload a clear profile picture that is appropriate for college use. This allows instructors to put a friendly face to you, their online student.
- Correct time zone (Central Time)

To edit your profile, go to the "Account" icon on the left-hand side of the page and click on the circular icon right above the word "Account":
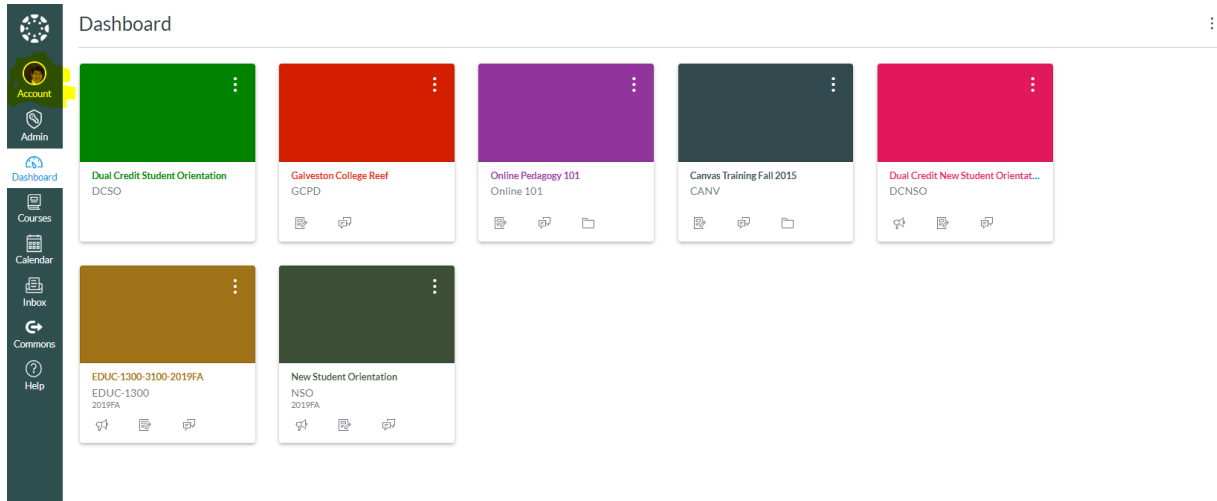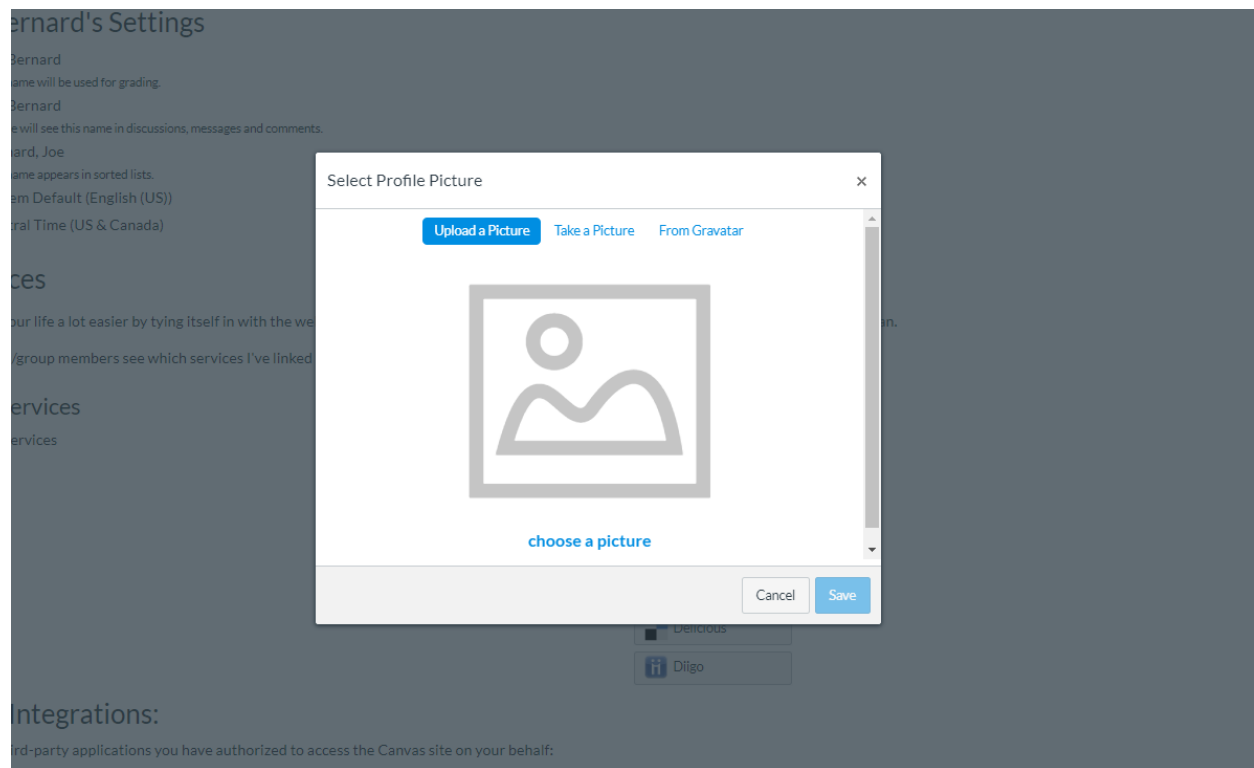
Click on "Settings" to get to your profile. You should land on this page:
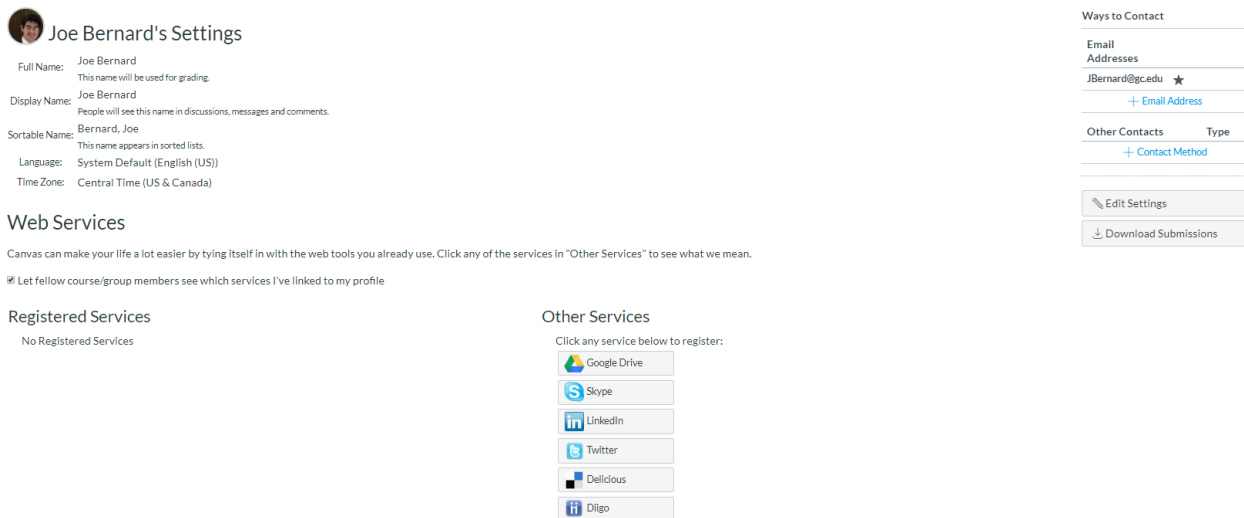
Verify that your full name, time zone and email address are all correct. Once that is completed, change your profile picture by clicking on the circular icon next to your name and upload a photo via the tool that pops up:

Note: Please make sure that either your photo is saved to your computer OR your computer has a webcam that can your photo. In general, Distance Education encourages your profile photo to be:

- Clearly defined
- Appropriate for use at an institution of higher learning

4. What is the Dashboard?

Your Dashboard will display courses that you are currently enrolled in. If you do not see the courses you are currently taking or are slated to take for the upcoming semester, please make sure to do the following:

Click on "Courses" on the left-hand side of the page and then click "All Courses":
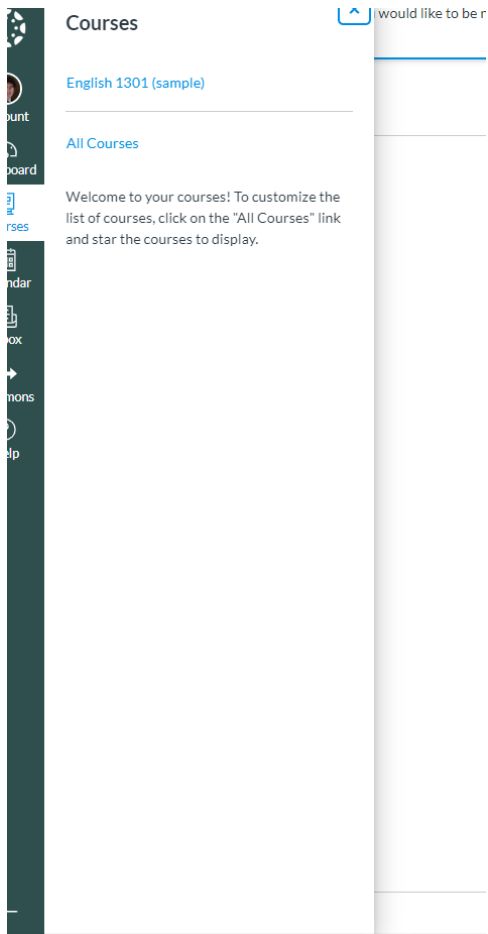
You will see a list of all courses you are enrolled in along with the role you have in the course (Which should be "Student"). Make sure that the courses you want to see in your Dashboard have the star next to their name illuminated.

If you do not see your courses and you have been registered for at least 24 hours, please contact Distance Education.

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All Courses

	Course	Nickname	Term	Enrolled as	Published
⭐	■ English 1301 (sample)			Teacher	No

Browse More Courses

5. I can see my courses and I clicked on one of them…what do I do now?

Your instructor should have a landing page where they will point you to their syllabus, assignments and other important material you need to know about. Instructors have various landing pages, but they will all have valuable information and/or directions to that information. If you need assistance navigating an instructor's course, please reach out to the instructor via their preferred communication method.

6. Ok, but how do I reach my professor?

You can use Messages, a tool in Canvas. To get to messages, follow the steps below:

Click on "Inbox" on the left-hand side of the page.

Dashboard

Courses

Calendar

Inbox

History

Commons

Help

You will then see a screen with any messages you have sent and/or received along with the option to create a new message by clicking on the highlighted icon in the upper right hand corner of the screenshot below:
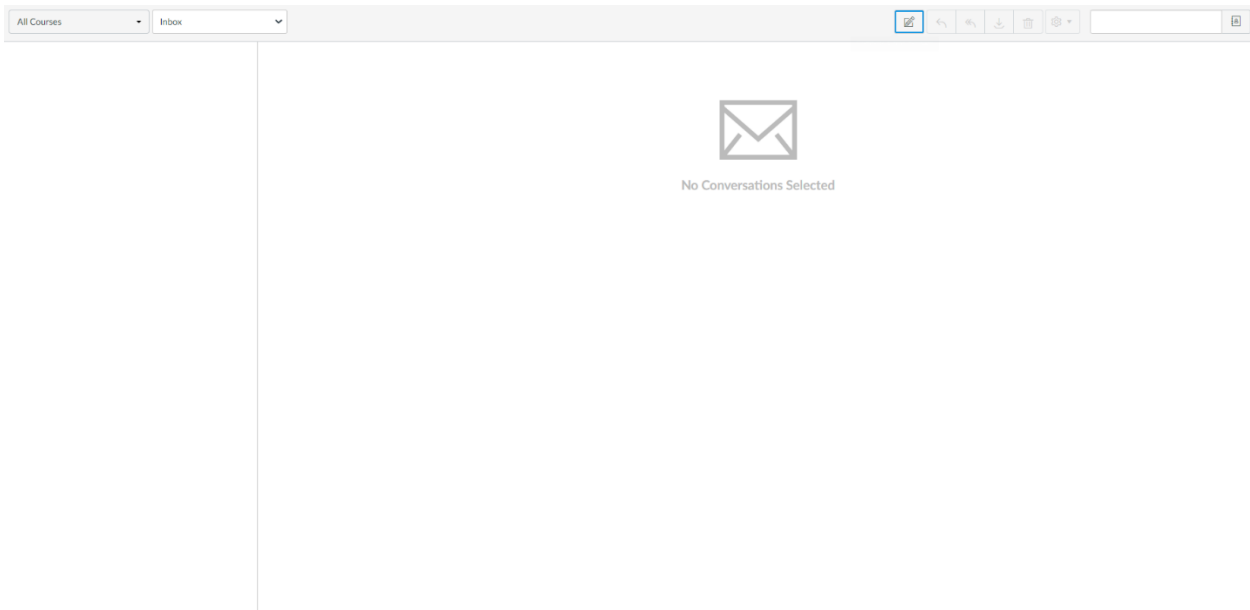
You should then see the screenshot below:
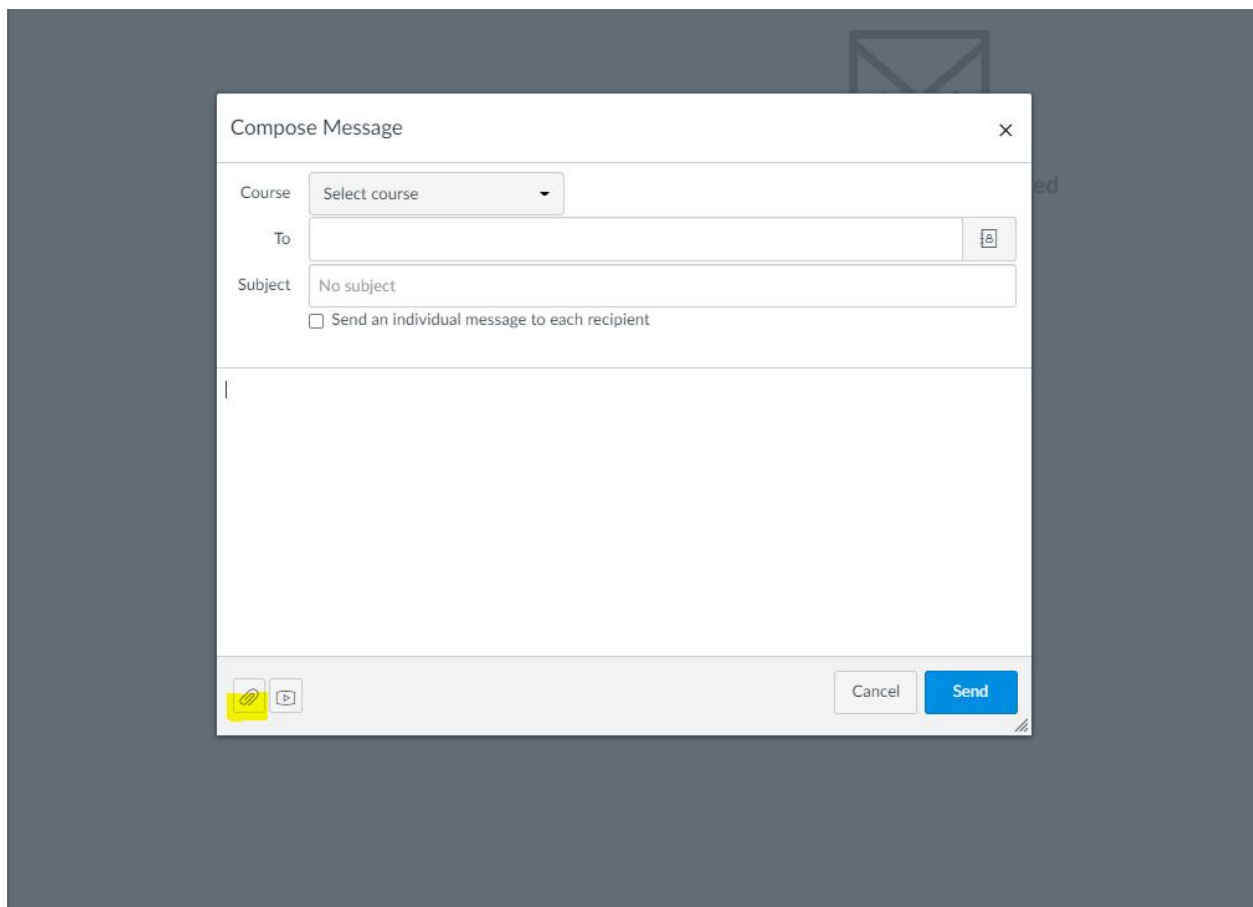
To successfully send a message:

-Make sure the "Course" field has the correct course (ex: If you are enrolled in ENGL 1301 and BIOL 1404, but want to send a message to your ENGL professor, make sure the "Course" field has ENGL 1301 selected).

-Click on the icon next to the "To" field and select your professor from the pop-up menu that will appear. Make sure it's your professor and not another student!

-Give your message an appropriate subject in the subject line, write out your message in the box below and attach anything relevant via the paperclip icon in the lower-left hand corner of the screen.

-Hit "Send" and you're done!

7. Even after going through all this and contacting my instructor, Canvas is still hard for me to use. What do I do?

Canvas can take some getting used to, so it's completely understandable if it takes a while to figure out how to make sense of the platform. If you need additional support, we are here to help! Work with your instructor first to get familiar with their specific course and feel free to get in touch with us at DistanceEd@gc.edu so that we can assist you with your specific needs. We also have several links on our webpage to videos, articles and other helpful resources to make your online learning experience streamlined and even…fun?

The Distance Education department at Galveston College hopes you have an awesome experience learning here at GC! Our contact info is below if you ever need us:

Departmental email address:

DistanceEd@gc.edu ←Please use this first!

Distance Education Coordinator:

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