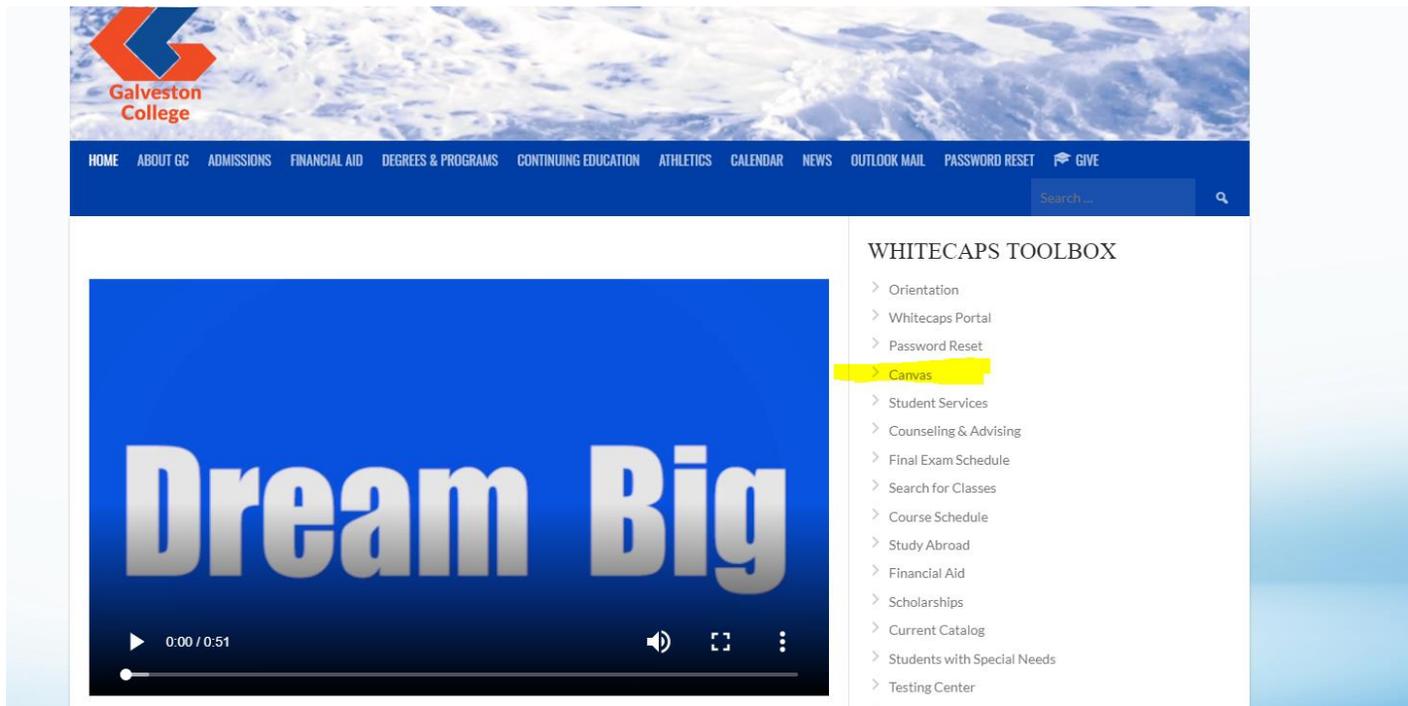Canvas Quick Start Guide

Provided by the Galveston College Distance Education Department

1. Getting access to Canvas and logging in

Instructors are normally set up with an account once they are hired on by the College. 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 login provided to you by our IT team (the login info you use to access your email and Whitecaps portal):
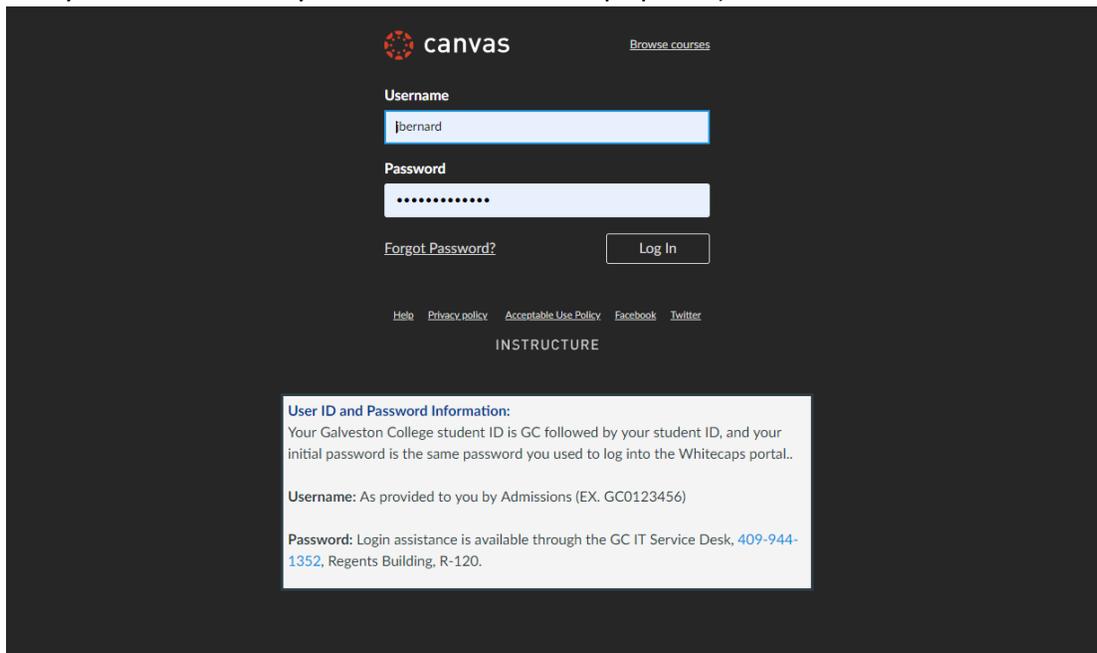
Note: If you cannot access Canvas at this point, please go through the following steps:

-Verify that your login information is correct.

-Email your program coordinator and/or division director to clarify that you have the proper login credentials.

-Contact the IT Service Desk at 409-944-1352 to ensure that your login credentials are correct.

-Contact the Distance Education department at either:

PReyes@gc.edu OR JBernard@gc.edu

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

Courses

Calendar

Inbox

Commons

Help

Notifications. Tell us how and when you would like to be notified of events in Canvas.
Notification Preferences

Dashboard

⋮

Galveston College Reef
GCPD
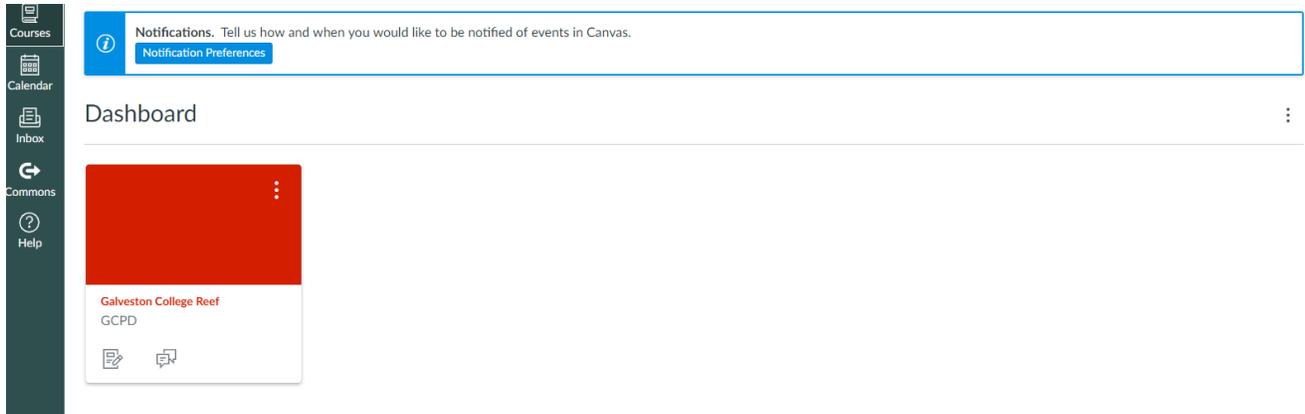
1. Updating your settings

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 instructors to upload a clear profile picture that is appropriate for college use. This allows students to put a friendly face to you, their online instructor.
- 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":

Galveston College
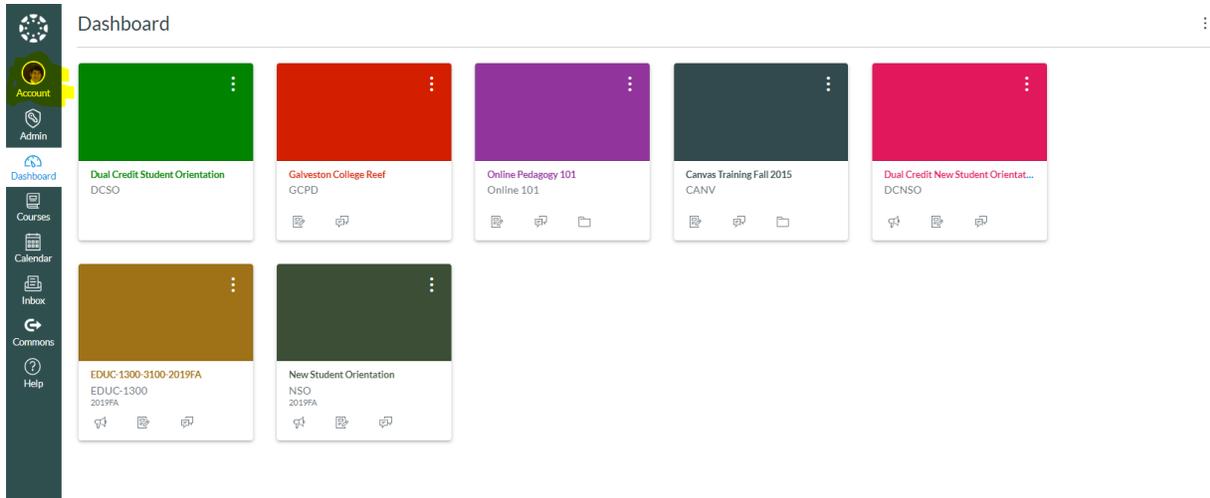
Click on "Settings" to get to your profile. You should land on this page:

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:

©Galveston College Distance Education, 2020

Select Profile Picture ×

Upload a Picture   Take a Picture   From Gravatar

choose a picture

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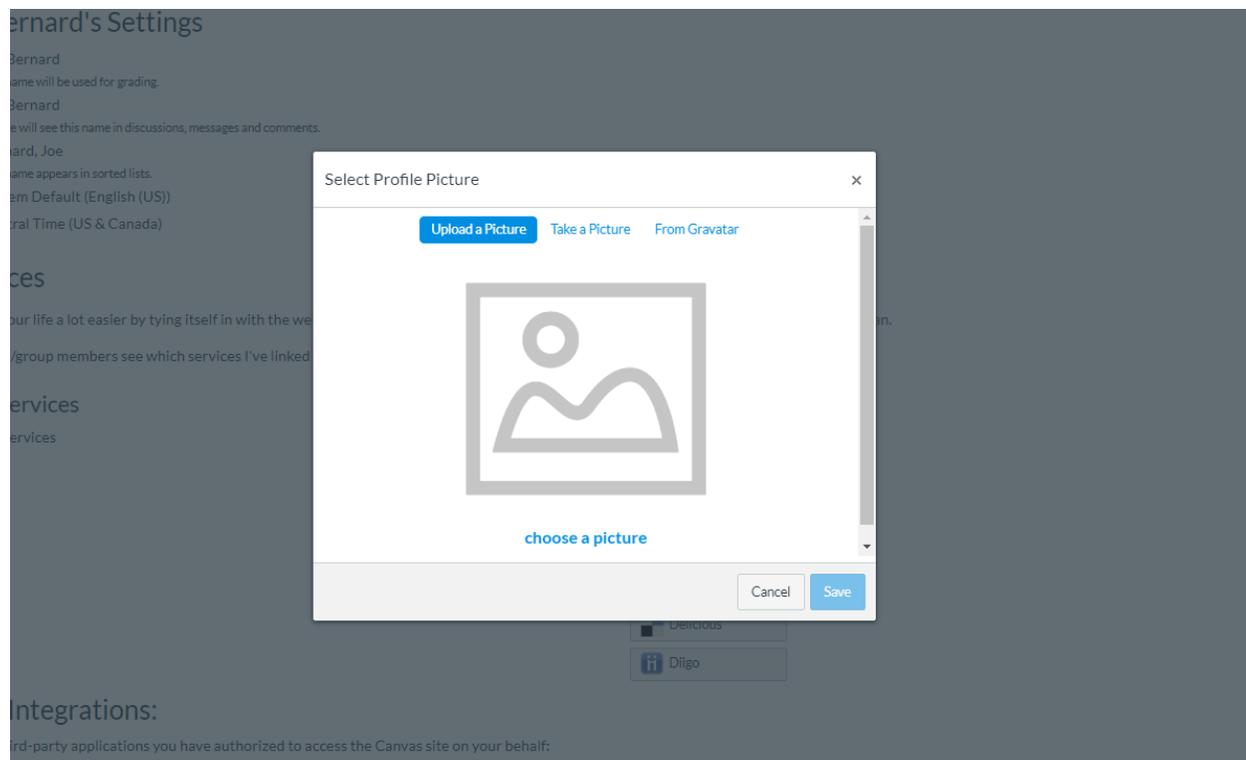
Note: Please make sure that either your photo is saved to your computer OR your computer has a webcam that can your photo. In general, Distance Education encourages your profile photo to be:

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

2. Your Dashboard/Viewing your Courses

Your Dashboard will display courses that you are currently teaching. If you do not see the courses you are currently teaching or are slated to teach 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":

Courses

English 1301 (sample)

All Courses

Welcome to your courses! To customize the list of courses, click on the "All Courses" link and star the courses to display.
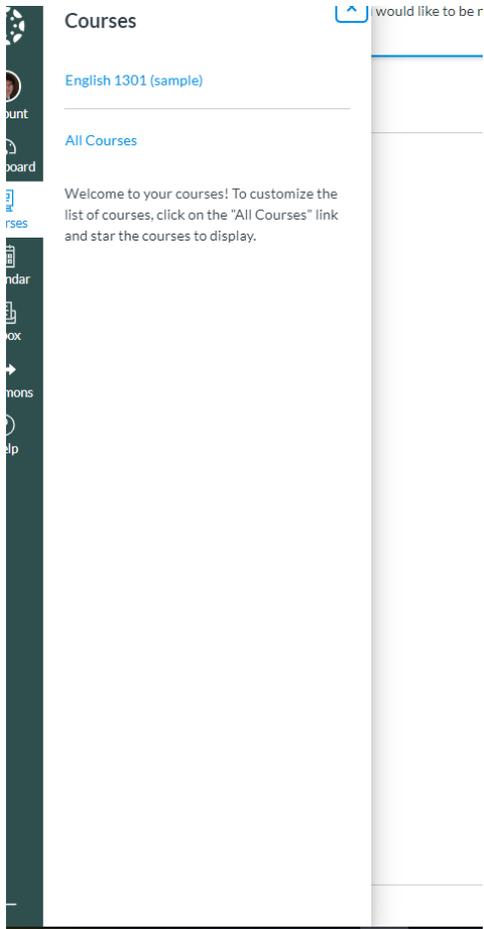
You will see a list of all courses you are enrolled in along with the role you have in the course (Which should be "Teacher"). Make sure that the courses you want to see in your Dashboard have the star next to their name illuminated.

All Courses

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

Browse More Courses

3. Creating/Editing courses

Course Creation:

Your courses should already be visible in your Dashboard and/or your "All Courses" list (see previous section for instructions regarding course visibility). This should also include your sandbox courses (more on that below). If they are not, please contact the Distance Education Coordinator or Director of Educational Services for assistance.

- Sandbox course:
  - A Sandbox course is an empty course shell where you can create, edit and modify material as much as you desire. Please note that a Sandbox course cannot be viewed by students.
  - If you would like a Sandbox course, please contact the Distance Education Coordinator or Director of Educational Services for assistance.

Setting up your courses:

What follows below are some of the most common functions you will use as an instructor in Canvas. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of functions in Canvas. If you would like more assistance in implementing specific features of Canvas or desire further elaborate on the concepts presented, please contact the Distance Education Coordinator or Director of Educational Services for assistance.

Uploading your Syllabus and other course material:
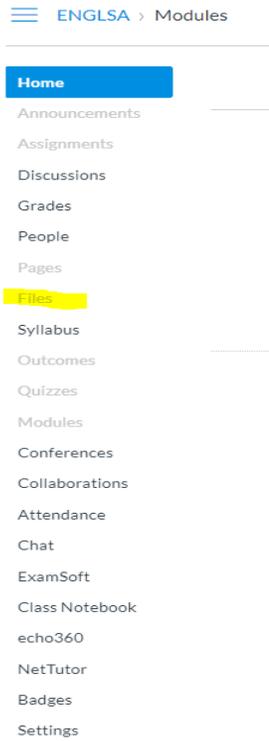
Galveston College requires that all instructors who use Canvas post their syllabus so that students can access it at any time. There are a few ways to do this, but just to get started, follow the steps below:

I.   Click on the "Files" tab on the left hand side of the screen

ENGLSA › Modules

Home
Announcements
Assignments
Discussions
Grades
People
Pages
Files
Syllabus
Outcomes
Quizzes
Modules
Conferences
Collaborations
Attendance
Chat
ExamSoft
Class Notebook
echo360
NetTutor
Badges
Settings

II.   Create a Folder entitled "Syllabus" by clicking on the "+Folder" button in the upper-right hand corner of the screen

ENGLSA › Files

Search for files   0 items selected   + Folder   ⬆ Upload

▾ ☐ English 1301 (sample)   Name ▲   Date Created   Date Modified   Modified By   Size

This folder is empty

0% of 524.3 MB used   All My Files
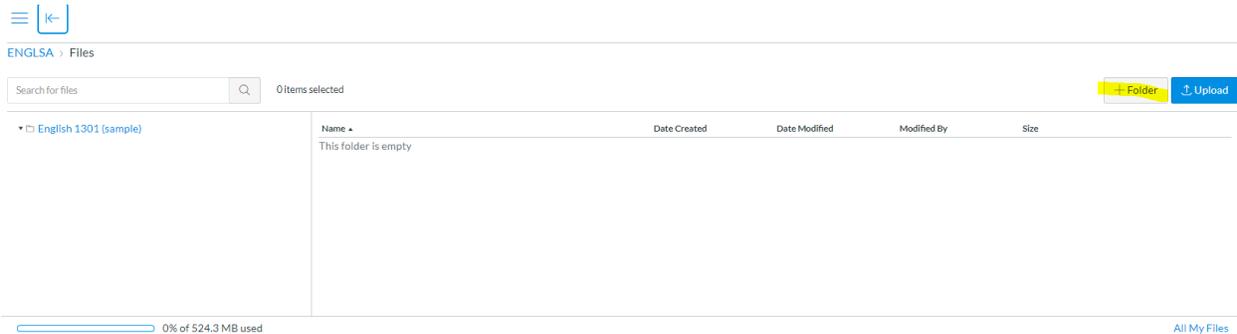
III.   Click on the newly created folder entitles "Syllabus" and then click on the "Upload" button in the upper-right hand corner of the screen

Search for files   0 items selected   + Folder   ⬆ Upload

Name ▲	Date Created	Date Modified	Modified By	Size
▼ ☐ English 1301 (sample)				
▼ ☐ Syllabus	This folder is empty			

0% of 524.3 MB used   All My Files

That's it! You can use this same process to upload any files you need for your course.

Announcements:

Announcements are a fantastic method to communicate with your entire class efficiently and seamlessly. Follow the steps below to learn the basics of creating an announcement.

     I.   Click on the "+Announcement" button in the upper-right hand corner of the screen

me   All   Search   🔒 🗑   + Announcement

nouncements   External Feeds

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nferences
llaborations

No Announcements

Create announcements above

     II.   Fill in the "Topic Title" bar with a summary of your announcement and fill in the textbox beneath with what you want to announce to your class.

Topic Title

🖥 HTML Editor

B   I   U   A ▼   ▼ T_x ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡   x²   x₂   ≔ ≔
⊞▼   ⊡   ∞   ✂   ▦   √x   T   ⟳   ∨   ▣   ¶   ¶   12pt   ▼   Paragraph   ▼   ⓡ

0 words

Post to

All Sections ✕   ⌄

III.   Select any option you want from the ones listed before clicking on "Save" in the lower right hand corner of the screen.

Attachment   Choose File   No file chosen

Options
- ☐ Delay posting
- ☐ Allow users to comment
  - ☐ Users must post before seeing replies
- ☐ Enable podcast feed
- ☐ Allow liking

Cancel   Save

Assignments:

To create an assignment, please go through the following steps:

I.   Click on the "Assignments" tab on the left-hand side of the screen when in your course:

Home

Announcements

Assignments

Discussions

Grades

People

Pages

Files
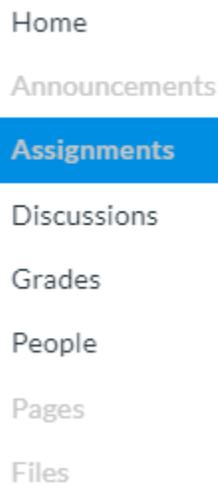
II.   Click on the "+Assignment" button in the upper right hand corner of the page. You should land on the following screen:

III.   From here, name the assignment in the "Assignment Name" bar and type out the instructions for your assignment in the larger box. Once that is completed, you can choose from several different options will be briefly explained below:

a. Points: How much your assignment will be worth in terms of point value.

b. Assignment group: What label you want your assignment to have. To create an assignment group, please following these instructions:
   i. Click on the "+Group" button on the main Assignments page.
   ii. Name the group (Essays, Tests, etc.)
   iii. Now you should see the group pop up on your main assignments page.

c. Display grade as: Distance Education recommends keeping the default selection of "Points".

d. Submission Type: You will have four submission types:
   i. Online: Students submit your assignment online.
      1. Note: In the online entry options, Distance Education recommends choosing the format you want your students to submit. If your students are submitting any kind of written assignment, we recommend File Uploads and/or Text Entry.
   ii. No submission: This makes your assignment more of a placeholder in Canvas. Not recommended by DE because this could cause confusion among your students.
   iii. On paper: Choosing this option records the assignment in your gradebook, but students submit the actual assignment to you on paper.
   iv. External tool: Canvas allows you to use other apps to submit work. If you want to use an external tool, please consult Distance Education so we can best assist you.

e. Group assignment: This is an advanced feature that Distance Education can happily show you how to set up.

f. Peer Reviews: This also is an advanced feature that DE can happily show you how to set up.

g.   Assign to: Make sure that "Everyone" is in the box.
h.   Due: Select a due date.
i.   Available from and until: Choose the dates you want the assignment to be available for submission:
j.   Click on "Save" if you want to work on the assignment details further without students being able to see the assignment yet. If you are ready for students to see the assignments, please click "Save and Publish".
k.   If you want to go back and edit the assignment or publish/unpublish the assignment after creating it, please see the screenshot below:

Discussions

To create a new discussion thread, click on Discussion on the left hand side of the screen in your course and then click on the "+Discussion" button in the upper right hand corner of the screen.

Just like filling out your assignments, you can title your discussion in the title bar and compose whatever you want to discuss in the larger box.

Before you post, you will have a few options to go through:

    I.   Attachment: If you want your students to read through a file, view a file or interact with a file for the discussion, you can attach that file here. Click on "Choose File" and then follow the instructions.

    II.   Options:
        a. Allow threaded replies: Students can converse with each other after posting their initial thoughts.
        b. Users must post before seeing replies: Students will have to put up an initial post before they can read what others have to say.
        c. Enable podcast feed: An advanced feature (and a cool one!) that you can talk to DE about if you want to incorporate podcasts into your discussions.
        d. Graded: Click on this box if you want to be able to grade the discussion. You will have to fill out very similar options to that of creating an assignment.
        e. Allow liking: Allows students to express their pleasure with a particular post. Up to you.
        f. Add to student to-do: Adds the discussion to student's "to-do" list on their Dashboard.
        g. Group discussion: Feature DE can assist with.
        h. Available from/until: Same procedure as assignments.

    III.   Once finished, click on "Save" or "Save and Publish" if you want students to see the discussion thread right away.

    IV.   You'll notice that there is a green "Subscribed" box near the middle of the page. This means that you will receive email notifications regarding new posts. If you do not want this feature, click on the green box so that it turns grey to not receive email notifications regarding new posts.

Quizzes:

To create a Quiz, click on the "Quizzes" tab on the left hand side of the course page and then click on the "+Quiz" button in the upper right corner of the page. You should get to a page that looks like this:

Instructions on how to create a quiz follow:

I. Name your quiz and detail your instructions in the corresponding boxes.
II. Choose if you want the quiz to be a graded or practice quiz (other options can be reviewed at another time).
III. Choose what Assignments group you want the quiz to fall under.
IV. Choose whether or not you want Canvas to:
   a. Shuffle answers to the questions you provide.
   b. Set a time limit in minutes that you can dictate via the blank box next to "Minutes".
   c. Allow multiple attempts for the quiz.
   d. Let students see their responses.
      i. Note: This feature can be a wonderful review tool or a vehicle for cheating. Please consult your Department head for input on how to use this tool.
   e. Show one question at a time instead of all questions at the same time.
   f. Require an access code (please consult DE if you choose this option)
   g. Filter IP addresses (please consult DE if you choose this option)
V. Choose when you want the quiz completed and available before clicking on "Save".

At this juncture, your quiz is created, but there are no questions. In order to create questions, please follow these instructions:

I. Click on "Edit" in the upper right-hand corner of the Quiz screen:

II.   Click on the "Questions" tab next to "Details"

III.   Click on "+NewQuestion" to get to this screen:-

From here, you can:

I.   Compose your question in the space provided.

II.   Choose which answers are Correct and Incorrect.

III.   Add more answers.

IV.   Finish creating the question by clicking on "Update Question".

Repeat this process until your questions are all finished. Once done, click on "Save" or "Save and Publish" if you want students to see the quiz.

Note: There are a NUMBER of handy features that Canvas has to make your quiz creation go much faster. Please reach out to Distance Education if you would like training on these features.

Grades:

Click on the "Grades" button located on the left-hand side of your course page. You should land at a screen that looks like the screenshot below (note: this is a test course, so things look empty):
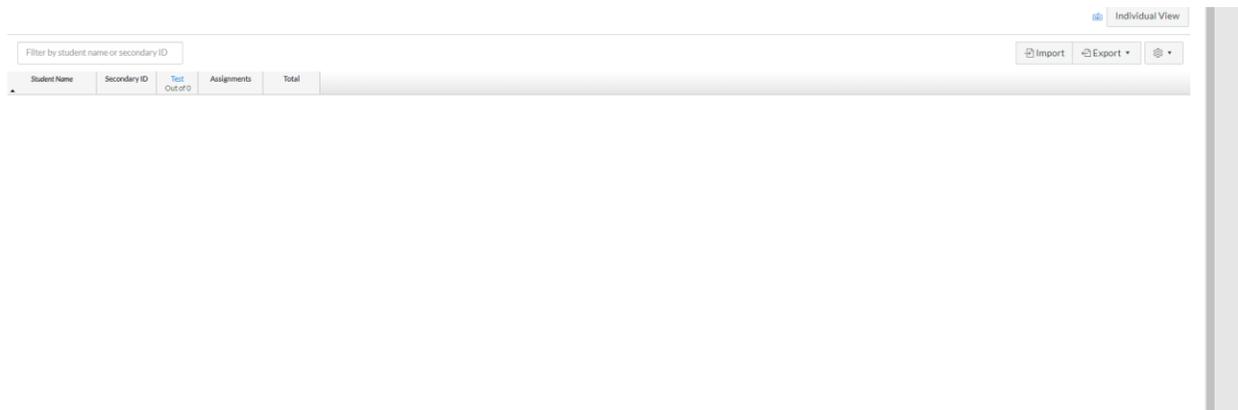
A few notes about the gradebook:

I.   You can find individual students by their name or ID number by typing in either in the "Filter by student name or secondary ID" box.
II.   Your individual assignments will be listed in columns with their point totals.
III.   Your assignment groups will also be visible.
IV.   You can import or export gradebooks via the import/export buttons in the upper right-hand corner of the page. If you choose to import or export gradebooks, please reach out to your Department Head to see what your department's practices are.

People:

Clicking on the "People" button located on the left hand side of the course page will bring to you your course roster. It should look like this:

A few notes about managing your course roster:

I.   You can click on a student's name and follow the instructions provided to send them a message if you need to.

II.   If you need to add a student, co-teacher or observer to your course, click on the "+People" button in the upper right corner of the screen and follow the instructions provided.

III.   You can search for students via the "Search People" bar.

Course settings:

By clicking on the "Settings" tab on the left hand side of the course page, you will land on the Course Settings page. It should look like this:

A few notes about managing your course settings:

I. Please make sure the Time Zone is set to Central Time.
II. You can hide Canvas features you do not want to use in your course. To do this, follow these instructions:
   a. Click on "Navigation" on the Settings page (next to "Sections" and "Apps)
   b. You will land on a page that looks like this:

   c. From here, you can drag and drop anything you don't want to use underneath the "Drag items here to hide them from students" title. This can help limit confusion on the part of students when it comes to interacting with your course.
   d. Click "Save" once you are finished.
III. If your course title is not correct or needs to be changed for more specificity (ex: Environmental Science to ENVR-1302 MW), follow the instructions here:
   a. Go to the Course Details page (next to Sections)
   b. Click on the box next to "Name" and type in the title you want your course to have.
   c. Once finished, click on "Update Course Details" at the bottom of the page.
IV. Most of your course settings have been predetermined by Distance Education. Please do not attempt to modify any of these settings unless you have talked to Distance Education about what you want to change and the rationale behind the change.

Closing thoughts:

I.   Please make sure that when you are ready for students to view your course and course material, you click on "Publish". You will know if something is published on Canvas if there is a green box marked "Published" with a checkmark next to the word.

II.   If your students are having trouble accessing the course material, make sure that you have published the material and all assessments.

III.   If you have a student who is not showing up in Canvas, but is on your Whitecaps roster, reach out to Distance Education.

IV.   If you want additional training, tips and guidelines, please contact Distance Education.

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

Distance Education Coordinator:

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409-944-1324

Director of Distance Education:

Joseph Bernard

JBernard@gc.edu

409-944-1226