Canvas Student Quickstart Guide

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Get Started with Canvas

Access Canvas via Institution

Some institutions host Canvas within their website, so you may only need to sign into your institution's internal system to access Canvas.

Access Canvas via Canvas URL
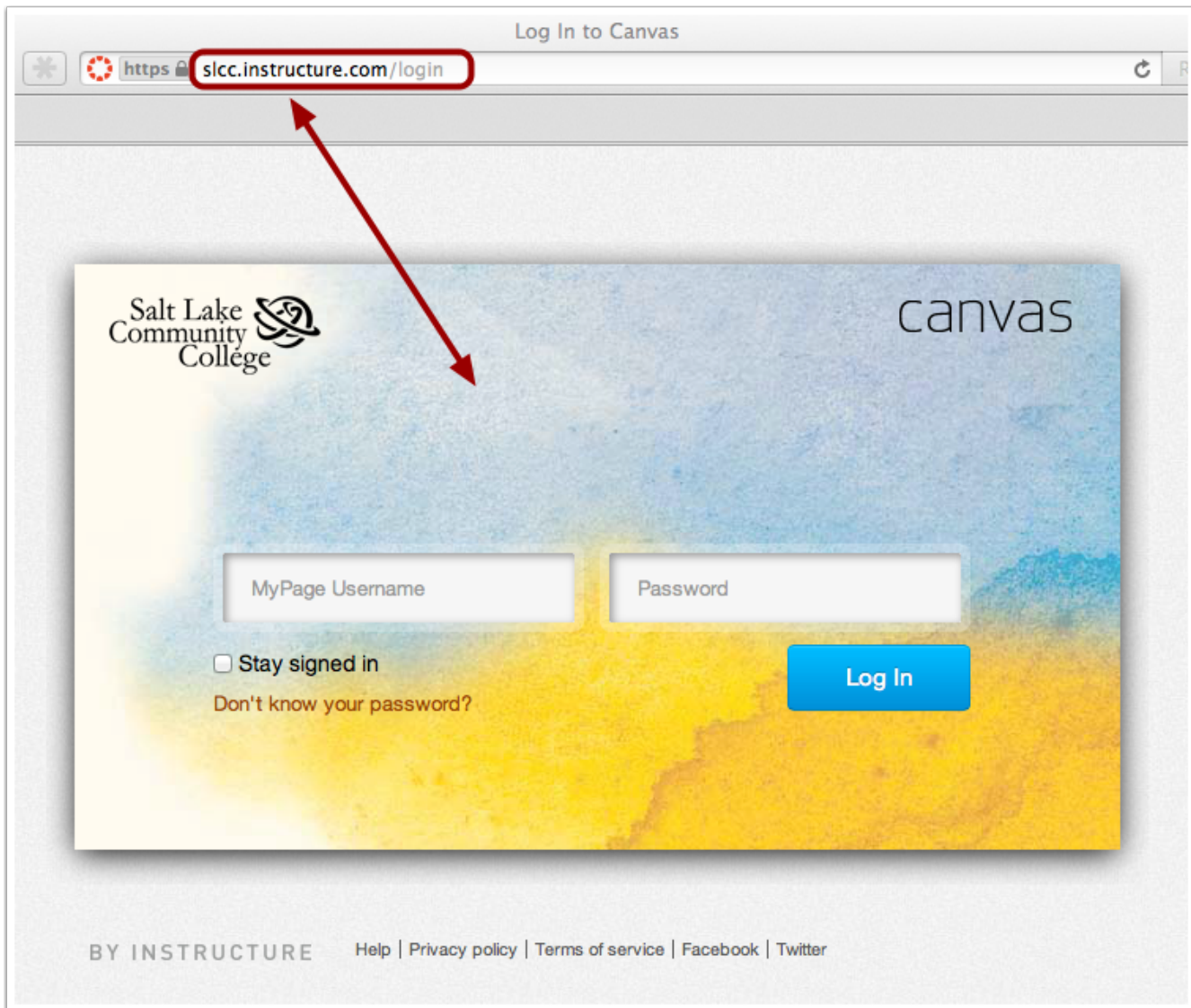
Some institutions have you log in to Canvas using the direct link to their Canvas URL. In a browser window, enter your Canvas URL. Your Canvas login page will appear in the window.

Note: The URL for Canvas Network is learn.canvas.net. The URL for Free-For-Teachers (FFT) is canvas.instructure.com.

View Course Invitation

You've been invited to participate in the course, Canvas Instructor Orientation , as a student.

Name: **Doug Roberts**
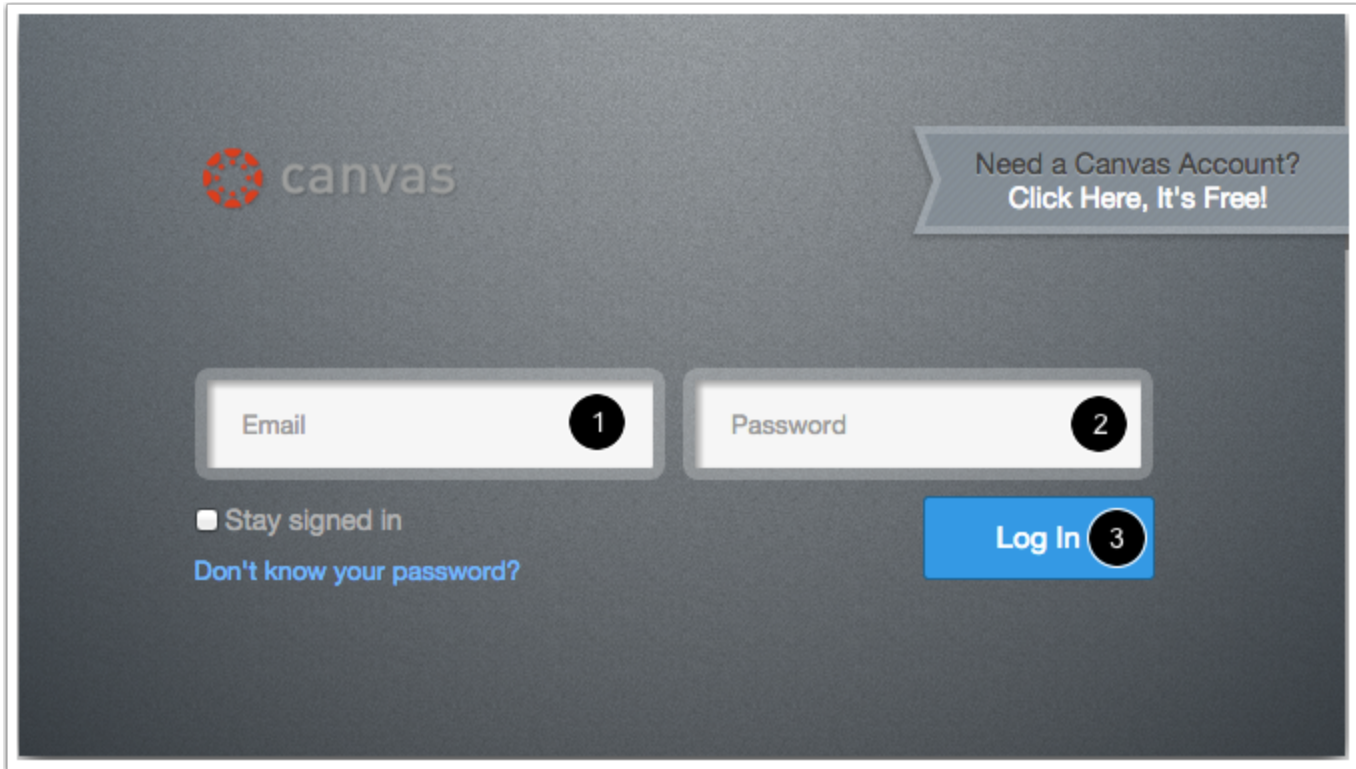Email: **doug.roberts.canvas@gmail.com**

Get Started

canvas

Click here to view the course page | Update your notification settings
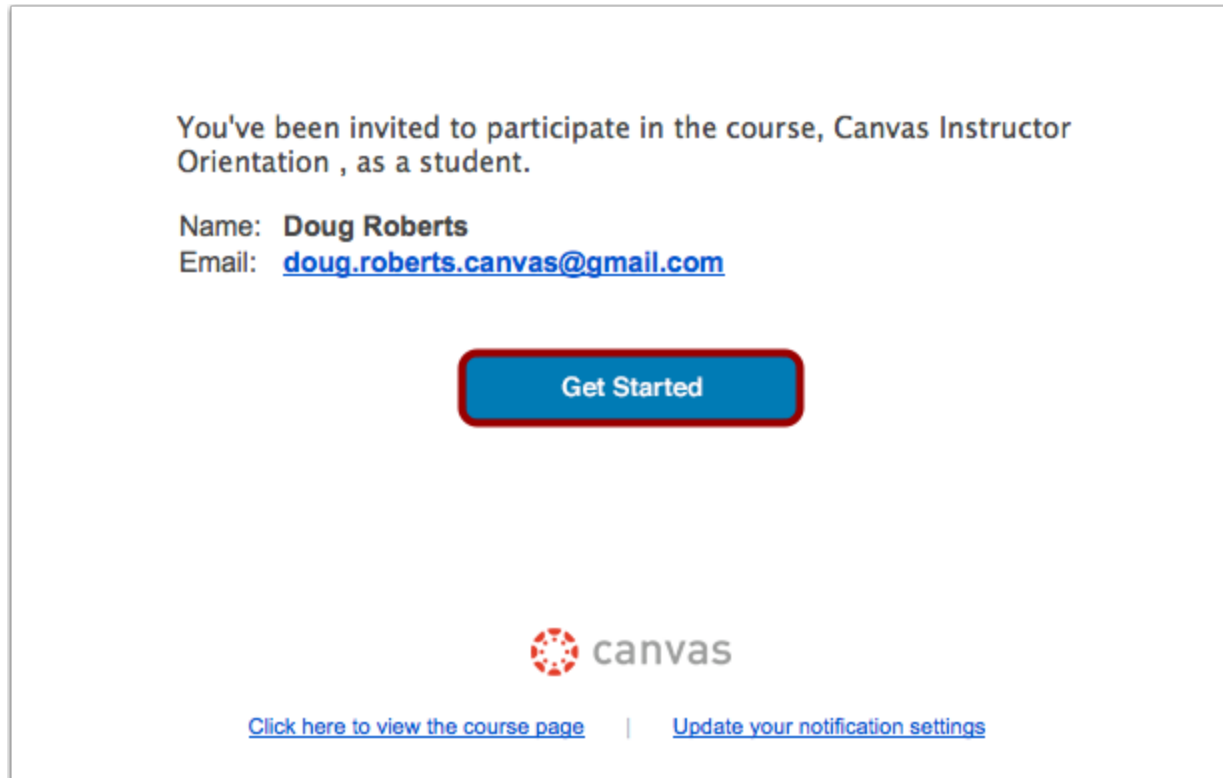
If you do not know your institution's Canvas URL, you can find a link to the page in your course invitation email by clicking the **Get Started** button.

Log in to Canvas

The Canvas login screen requires your login [1] and password [2]. Depending on your institution, login information may vary.
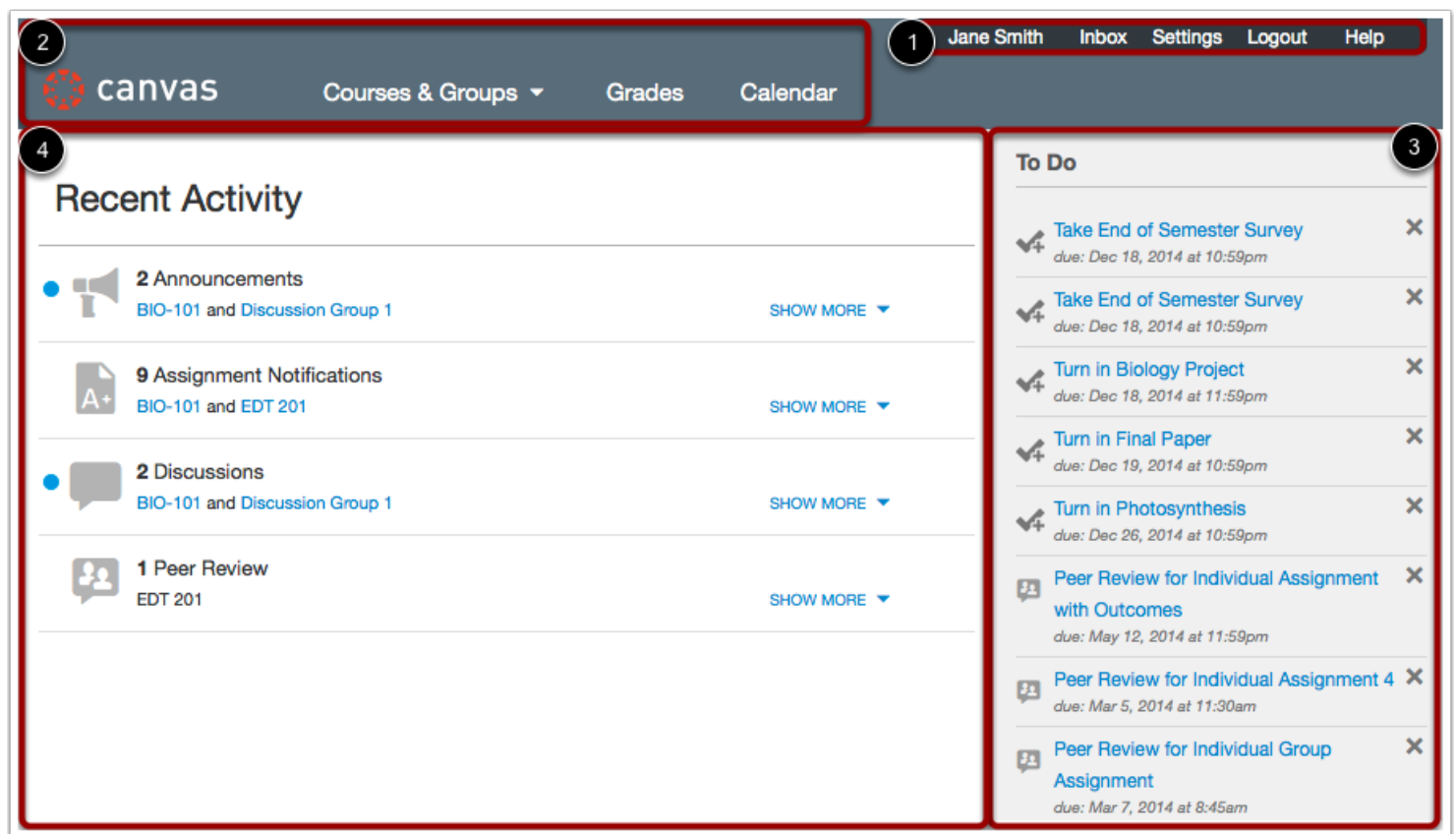
Click the **Log In** button [3].

Each screenshot is acknowledged by its respective university for use in this lesson.

What is the User Dashboard?

The User Dashboard is the first thing you will see when you log into Canvas. The User Dashboard helps you see what is happening in all your courses and allows you to figure out what to do next.

You can return to your User Dashboard at any time by clicking your institution's logo in Global Navigation. (For Canvas Catalog users, clicking your institution's logo will return you to your Catalog dashboard.)

View User Dashboard

The User Dashboard consists of four main elements:

1. the Help Corner
2. Global Navigation
3. the Sidebar
4. the Activity Stream

View Help Corner

The Help Corner provides easy access to your personal user links and appears at the top of every page in Canvas. You can view your Conversations Inbox [1], view your user settings [2], log out of Canvas [3], and get help with Canvas [4].
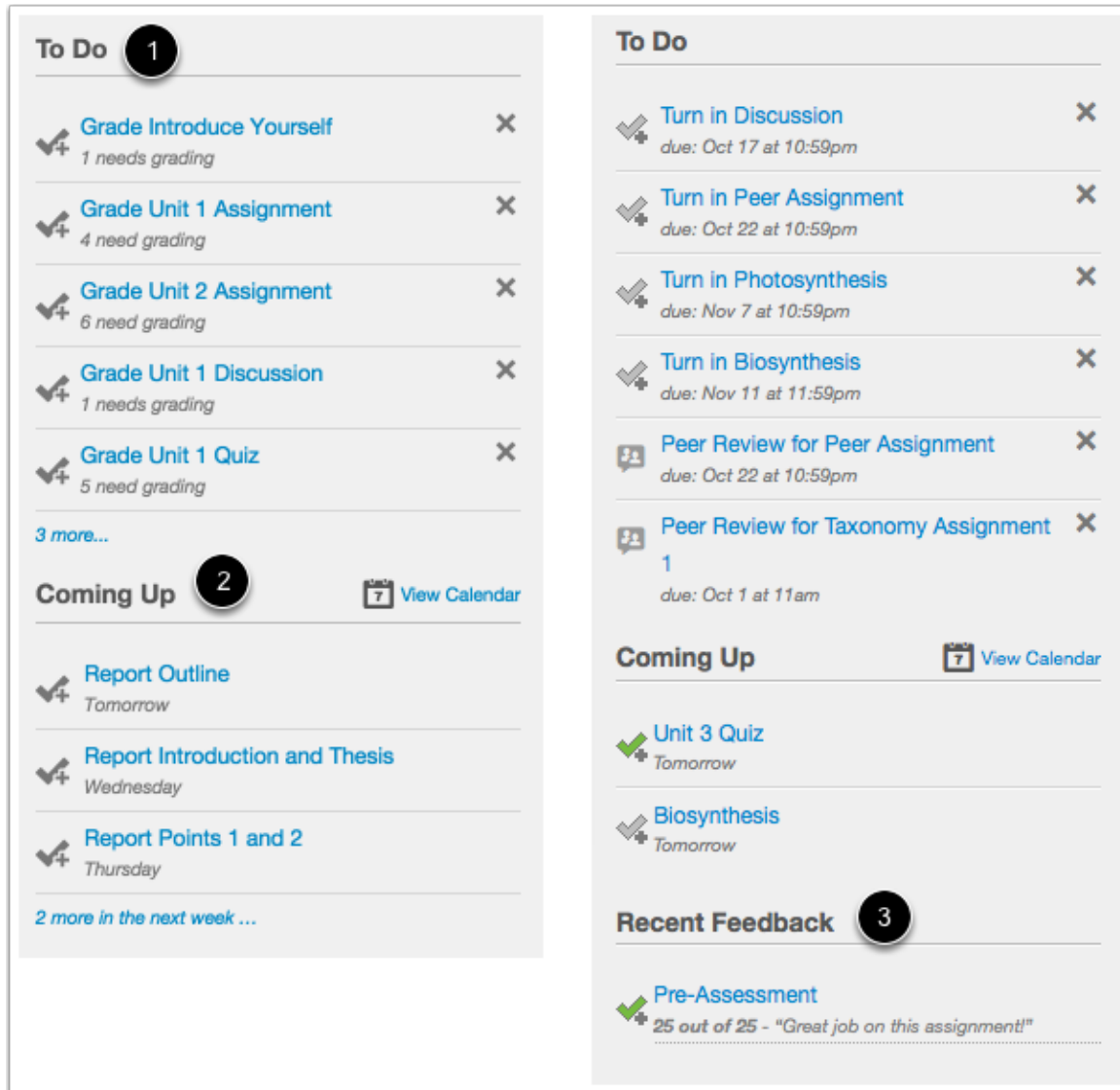
Note: If your institution allows you to create a profile (as part of your user settings), you can click your name to view your profile directly.

View Global Navigation
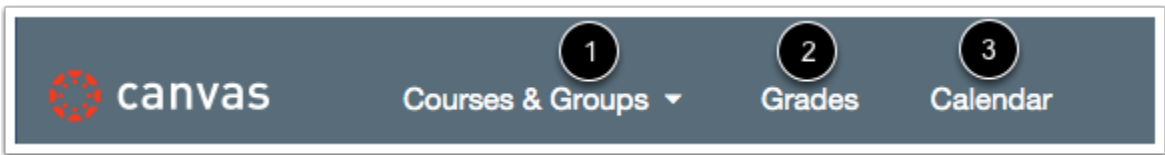
The Global Navigation menu provides you with quick access to all of your courses and groups [1], a summary page for all course grades [2], and the Canvas Calendar [3]. Global Navigation also appears at the top of every page in Canvas. Learn more about Global Navigation.

View Sidebar

The Sidebar helps you see what you need to do next across all your courses and can contain up to three helpful sections.

The **To Do** section [1] shows assignments or events that require your attention. If you are enrolled in a course as a student, the list shows assignments you need to turn in. If you are enrolled in a course as an instructor, the list shows assignments you need to grade. Items remain in this section for two weeks.

The **Coming Up** section [2] shows assignments and events coming due in the next seven days.

If you are enrolled in a course as a student, the **Recent Feedback** section [3] shows assignments with feedback from your instructor.

Manage Sidebar Items

Each section item displays an icon [1] to differentiate between assignments and peer review assignments. Items with green icons indicate the item has been completed as indicated by your user role.

If a section contains more items than are listed, click the **more** link [2].

If there are more than 25 items in the To Do section, you must remove items before you can view any new items. To remove a To Do item, click the **remove** icon [3].

View Recent Activity
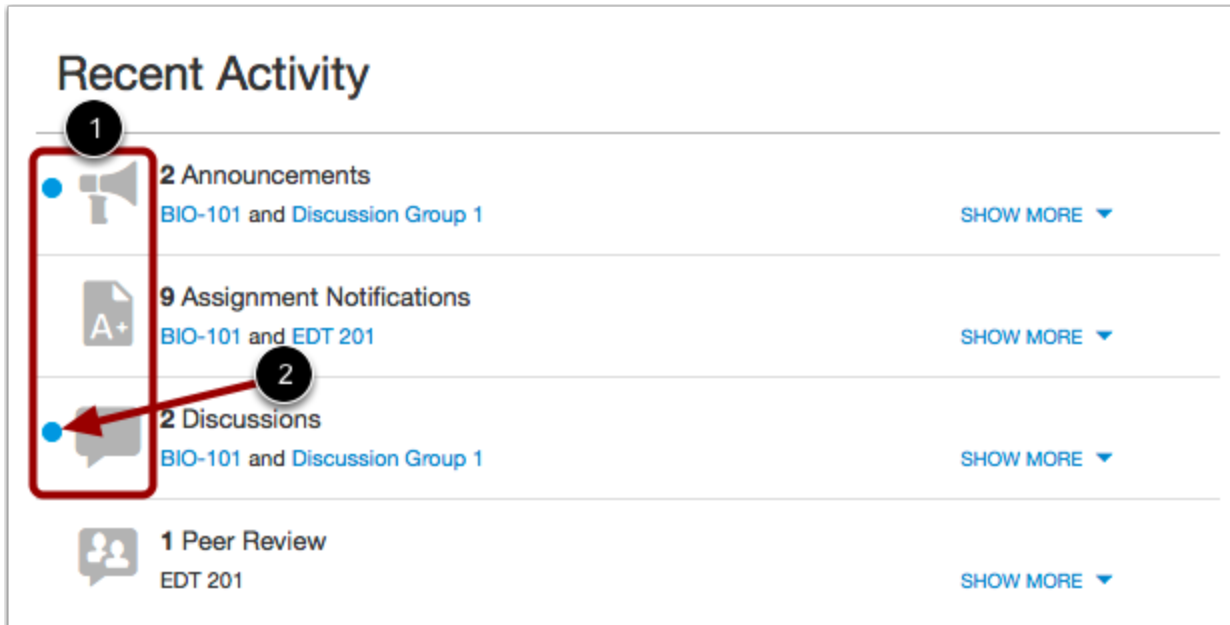
Recent Activity contains a stream of recent notifications from all of your courses, including announcements, discussions, assignments, and conversations. This activity stream helps you see all recent activity in your courses and easily ask questions and post to discussion forums.

Activities are indicated by activity type and display an icon [1] for the activity. New or unread activities are shown by the blue indicator dot [2]. Recent Activity items remain for four weeks.

Expand and Collapse Notifications

You can view the details of each activity by hovering in the notification area and clicking the **Show More** link [1]. To collapse recent activity, click the **Show Less** link [2].

Manage Recent Activity

You can directly access your recent activities by clicking the course link [1]. To remove a notification, click the **remove** icon [2].

Return to User Dashboard
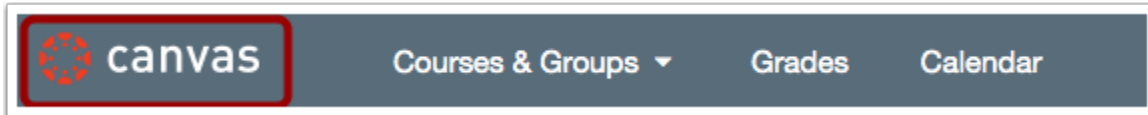
To return to your User Dashboard, click your institution's logo in Global Navigation.

Note: If you are taking a course through Canvas Catalog, clicking your institution's logo will return you to your Catalog dashboard.

How do I view my courses?

After logging into Canvas, you can view your current, past, and future enrollment courses in Canvas.

Open Courses
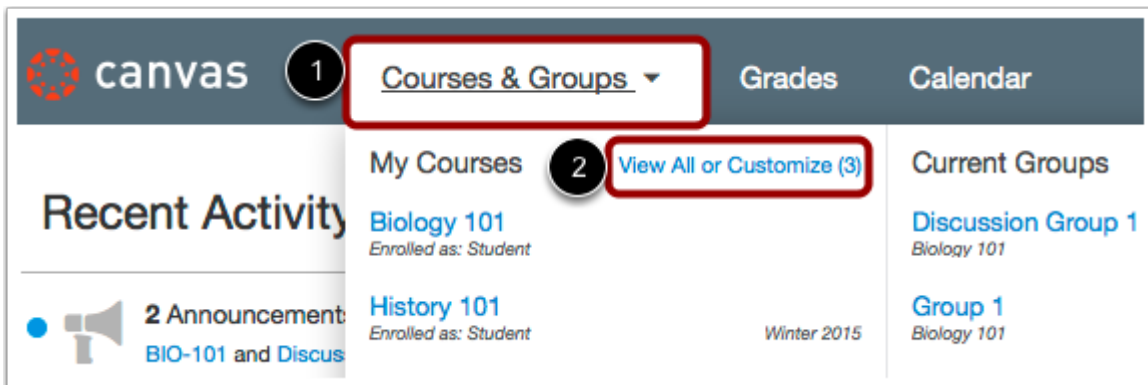
In Global Navigation, click the **Courses** link [1]. (If you are enrolled in any Groups, Global Navigation will show the link as **Courses and Groups**.)

Click the **View All or Customize** link [2].

Note: You can customize your courses that appear in the drop-down menu.

View Course Categories

Courses are organized into three categories: My Courses [1], Past Enrollments [2], and Future Enrollments [3].

View Course Status

Courses that are available to you are listed in blue text [1]. These courses have been published by your institution, admin, or instructor and include a link to the course.

Courses that are not yet available are listed in gray text and have an unpublished tag [2]. These courses have not been published.

Your enrollment status [3] is displayed next to each course name. Statuses can be student, teacher, TA, observer, or designer.

If there is a term date [4] associated with a course, it will appear next to the course name.

View My Courses

My Courses are courses that are part of the current semester or term. However, depending on access settings for a course, My Courses can also display courses that have not yet started or are unpublished.

Note: if you are enrolled in groups, the **My Groups** section will appear and display any groups within your current courses.

View Past Enrollments

Courses under the **Past Enrollments** heading are courses that have concluded but are still available as a read-only archived course. Prior users can view course material and grades but cannot submit any assignments.

View Future Enrollments

Future Enrollments are courses that will be made available as part of an upcoming term or specific course start date. These courses appear in gray text until they are available.

Note: Some institutions may disable the option to view Future Enrollments.

Open Course

To open an available course, click the name of the course.

View Course

View the course dashboard.

How do I use the Course Dashboard as a student?

If you are enrolled in a course as a student, the Course Dashboard helps you navigate your course and manage your coursework.

Note: If you are trying to navigate a Canvas course on a mobile device, we recommend reviewing our Canvas by Instructure Guide.

View Course Dashboard
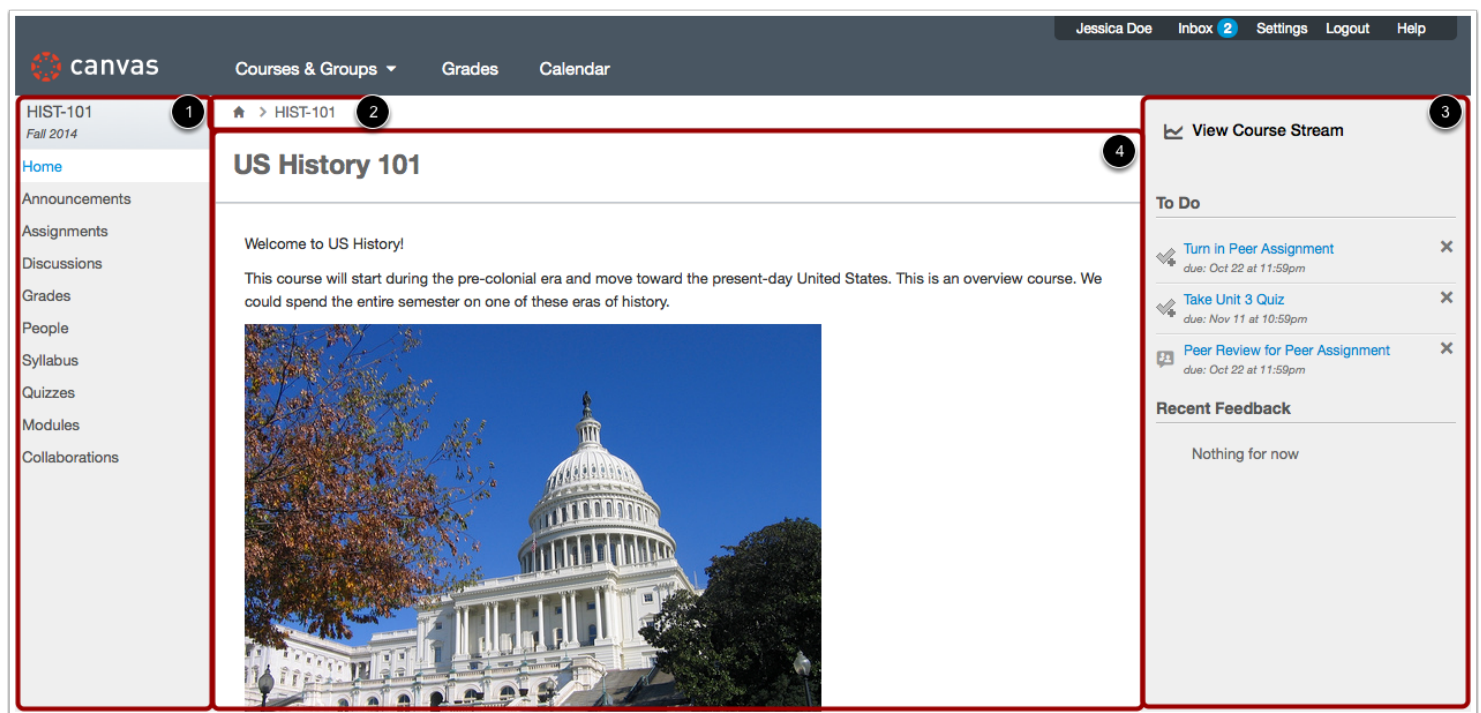
The Course Dashboard consists of four main elements:

1. Course Navigation
2. Breadcrumbs
3. Sidebar
4. Content Area

View Course Navigation
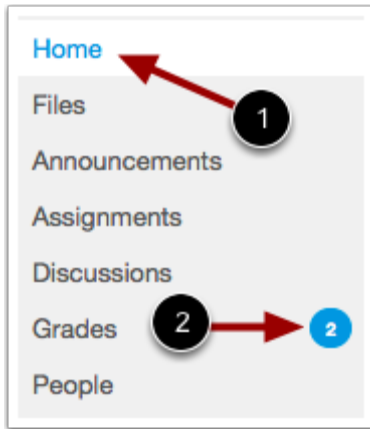
The Course Navigation links help you get to where you want to go within a Canvas course. Instructors can customize what links are shown in a course, so if you don't see links that may display in other courses, your instructor has hidden them from your view.

The active link is highlighted in blue with a white background [1]. This highlight helps you quickly identify the feature area you are currently viewing in Canvas.

You may also see course indicators [2] that show updates for your course grades. Learn more about Course Navigation indicators.

View Breadcrumbs

Breadcrumbs appear above the course content area.

As you view course content, the breadcrumbs leave a trail to show where you are inside the course. You can follow these links backward to visit prior course content.

To return to the User Dashboard, click the breadcrumbs **Home** icon.

View Sidebar
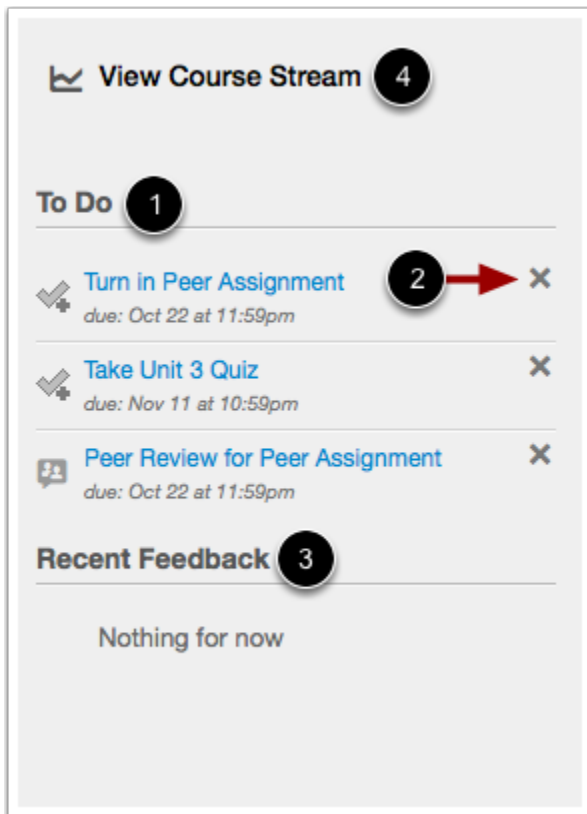
The Sidebar helps you see what you need to do next in your course.

The **To Do** list [1] shows assignments you need to turn in. Items remain in this section for two weeks.

- Each section item displays an icon to differentiate between assignments and peer review assignments. Items with green icons indicate the item has been turned in.
- If a section contains more items than are listed, a link will appear at the bottom of the section showing the number of additional items. Click the link to view all items.
- If there are more than 25 items in the To Do section, you must remove items before you can view any new items. To remove a To Do item, click the **remove** icon [2] next to the item.

The **Recent Feedback** list [3] shows assignments with feedback from your instructor.

If your Course Dashboard displays a page other than the Course Activity Stream, you can [view the course activity stream](#) by clicking the sidebar **View Course Stream** link [4].

View Other Sidebar Items

Depending on your Course Home Page, you may see additional sidebar sections:

- **Course Groups:** shows links to any of your group memberships within the course

- **Coming Up:** shows assignments and events coming up in the next seven days
- **Upcoming Assignments:** shows assignments coming up in the next seven days with a link to view current grades
- **Calendar:** shows mini course calendar with syllabus assignments and events

View Content Area

The content of the course is displayed in the Content Area. The content can be a page, the syllabus, discussions, announcements, quizzes, or imported content. The content can also show the Course Activity Stream.

View Another Course

To view another course, click the Courses & Groups menu in Global Navigation.

What are Course Navigation indicators?

The Course Navigation indicator represents the number of changes in a course since your last visit. Currently, this feature is only used for student Grades.

Note: If you are an instructor and participate in a course activity that generates an automatic grade (such as a quiz), the indicator will appear in your Course Navigation but cannot be cleared by refreshing the page. Please always preview a quiz or use Student View if you are interested in testing student submissions.

Course Navigation Indicators
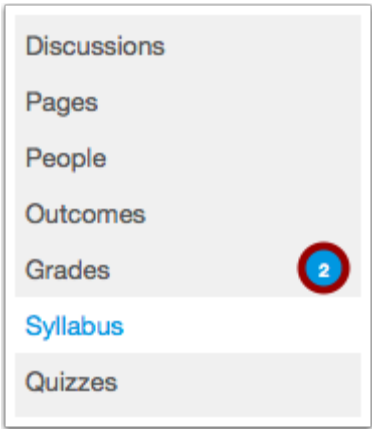
Sometimes a user wants to know what has changed since the last time he or she has visited a course, especially with Grades. The numbered indicator for Grades shows a user either a change in a score, including new scores, or a comment left on a submission by an instructor or a peer.

To clear the indicators, view the Grades page. When you refresh or navigate away from the page, the count will reset.

Student View of Indicators

As a student, when you visit the Grades page in a course, you will see a blue dot next indicating that the assignment that was graded or commented on by your instructor or peer. Remember, the indicators will disappear when you navigate away or refresh the page.

Why can't I access my Course?

Sometimes there are a few reasons why you cannot access your courses.

- If you are self-enrolling in a course using a join code or URL, you may not have completed the registration process. Check your email for information from your instructor as to how to enroll in your course.
- If your institution enrolled you in your course, your enrollment may not have been set up properly. Please contact your instructor(s) for assistance.
- Each course is associated with a specific access date. Depending on the date associated with the course, you may not yet be able to view your course.
- Courses must be published by your institution before you can access them. If a course is not *accessible* to you in your course list, it may not be published.
- Confirm your browser is up to date. Outdated browsers cannot support Canvas courses.

Will Canvas work on my mobile device?

Canvas is built on open web standards and uses minimal instances of Flash, so most features are supported on mobile devices. With the growing use of mobile devices, instructors should build their courses with best practices for mobile in mind.

Mobile Browsers

You can access Canvas on your mobile device through any mobile browser. However, mobile browsers are not officially supported. We recommend using Canvas mobile applications for an improved user experience.

Mobile Applications

We are actively improving our native mobile applications to support as many Canvas features as possible. Instructure has four native mobile applications free for download on both phones and tablets. Please note that mobile applications are only supported in English at this time.

- **Canvas by Instructure** (iOS 7.0+, Android 4.0+). This app provides access to Canvas for both instructors and students while on the go. Depending on your device, not all Canvas features may be available on the app at this time. View Canvas mobile features by version and device.
- **MagicMarker** (iOS 7.0+ iPad only). This app is specifically designed for instructors to assist them with standards-based learning. Syncs with the Learning Mastery Gradebook.
- **Polls for Canvas** (iOS 7.0+, Android 4.0+). This app is the easy to way for instructors to collect student opinion in their classrooms without any extra devices.
- **SpeedGrader App** (iOS 8.0+ iPad only; Android 4.0.3+). This app is specifically designed for instructors and allows them to grade student submissions on the go. Syncs with SpeedGrader and the Gradebook. View SpeedGrader mobile features by version and device.

You can learn more about mobile applications in the Canvas Mobile Guides.

Customize Canvas
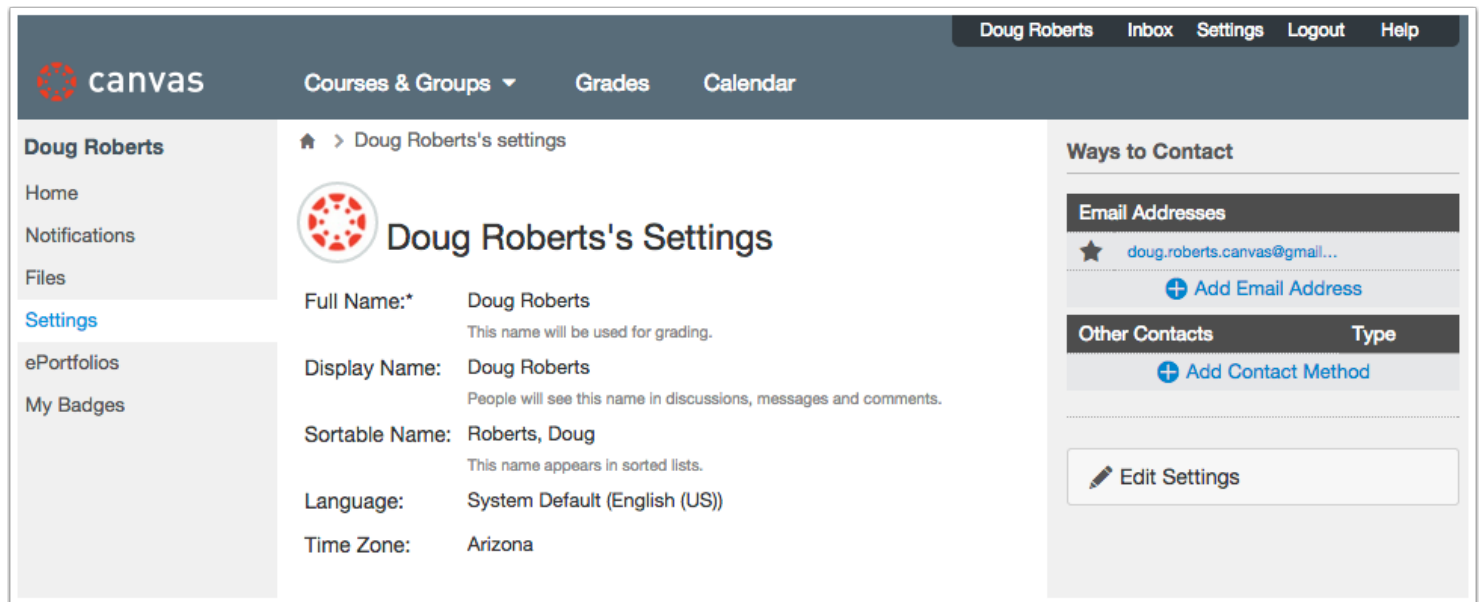
What are my Profile and User Settings?

Profile and User Settings let you control your personal information in Canvas. You can control this information in the Help Corner.

If you want to view a video about personal settings, you can watch the User Settings and Profile Picture video.

Note: Your institution may restrict one or more settings options.

When would I use my profile and user settings?

You can use your profile and user settings to:

- View and edit your user settings, such as display name, language preference, and time zone
- View or add a profile picture
- Set Notifications for your favorite communication channels
- Upload personal Files
- Create and manage ePortfolios of your course work
- Manage new user features

If your institution has enabled profiles, you can also edit your profile information.

Note: Your institution may restrict one or more of these options.

How do I set my Notification Preferences?

Canvas includes a set of default notification preferences for your account. However, you can set your own Canvas notification preferences that connect with your linked web services and other contact methods in in your Profile and User Settings.

Notes:

- These settings apply to all of your courses; you cannot change settings for individual courses.
- The Canvas by Instructure Android app supports setting notification preferences. However, setting preferences inside the app will override preferences in the browser version of Canvas, and some preferences are not supported. Learn about setting preferences in the Canvas app for Android phones and Android tablets.

Open Personal Settings

In the Help Corner, click the **Settings** link.

Open Notifications
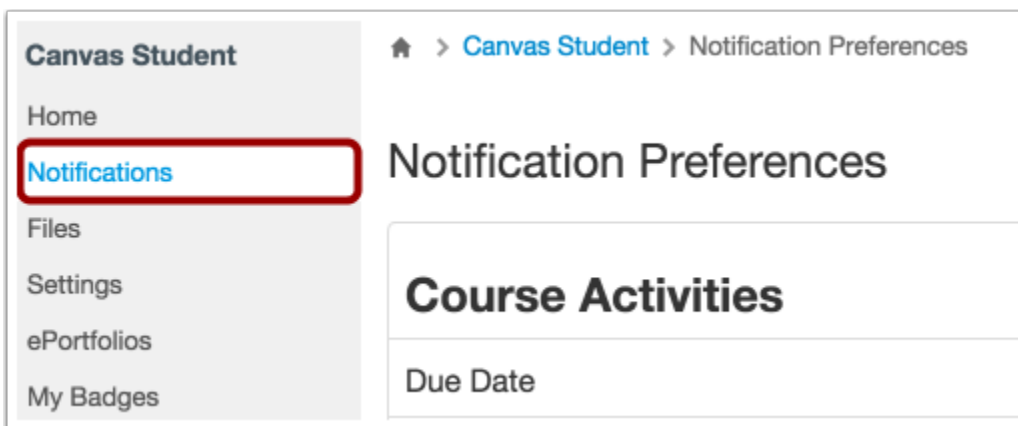
You can view and set notification preferences within your course. In User Navigation menu, click the **Notifications** link.

Edit Notification Preferences

To change a notification for a contact method, hover over the notification type you want to change. Select one of four options.

1. Select the **Check mark** icon to be notified immediately of any change for the activity.
2. Select the **Clock** icon to be notified daily of any change for the activity.
3. Select the **Calendar** icon to be notified weekly of any change for the activity.
4. Select the **X** icon to remove the notification preference so you won't be notified of any change for the activity.

Note: Each set notification preference will automatically apply to all of your courses. They cannot be set individually.

How do I connect to web services outside of Canvas?

Canvas is integrated with a number of third party web services. Most of these services can be configured from the user settings page.

Integrate Web Services With Canvas

> **Web Services**
>
> Canvas can make your life a lot easier by tying itself in with the web tools you already use. Click any of the services in "Other Services" to see what we mean.
>
> ☑ Let fellow course/group members see which services I've linked to my profile

By registering other web services with Canvas, you create different ways to be contacted. By default we do not disclose this information to other users within the system unless you give us your consent.

Integrate Web Services with Canvas

> **Other Services**
>
> Click any service below to register:
>
> - Google Docs
> - Skype
> - LinkedIn
> - Twitter
> - Yo
> - Delicious

Integrated web services include:

- [Google Docs](#)
- [Etherpad](#) (Typewith.me)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Document Previewer](#)
- [Skype](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Delicious](#)

Integrated education-centric web services include:

- Diigo
- [Turnitin](#)
- [Respondus](#)
- Wimba

How do I customize my Courses drop-down menu?

You can customize the courses you want to show in your Courses drop-down menu.

Note: Courses are always listed alphabetically; you cannot reorder your courses manually.

Select Courses from the Global Navigation
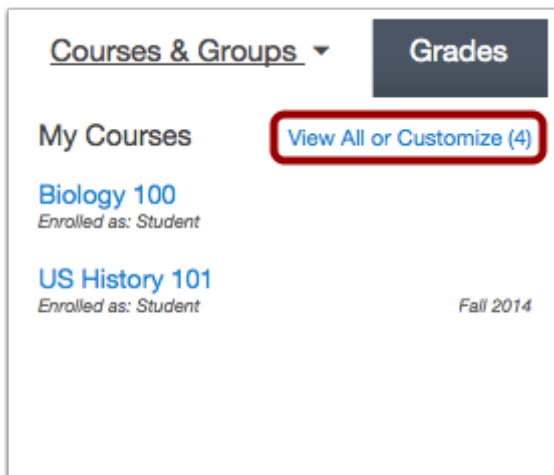
In the Courses drop-down menu, click the **View All or Customize** link.

Choose Courses

Click the star next to a course to add or remove the course from the Courses drop-down menu. Courses with yellow stars indicate a favorite course and are included in the Courses and Groups drop-down menu. You can toggle the stars to favorite or unfavorite a course. You can only favorite current courses.

Your favorite courses will appear in your Courses and Groups drop-down menu after you make your selection(s).

Note: You can see all your present, past, and future courses by clicking the **View All or Customize** link [3]. You will only see future courses if the start date is in the future and you have been enrolled in the course.

Unpublished Courses

Only instructors can favorite unpublished courses [1]. Students can hover over a star icon for an unpublished or concluded course and view a message indicating that the course cannot be added as a favorite [2].

Past Enrollments

Depending on course configuration, some favorited courses may still display the favorite icon even after the course has ended. If a past enrollment course shows the favorite icon, users can unfavorite the course by toggling the star icon.

How do I change the language preference in my user account?

English is Canvas' language default, but you can choose to view the Canvas interface in another language.

Note: Instructors have the option to change the language preference for their courses. If you enroll in a course where the instructor has made this change (most often for a foreign language course), the course language will override the language in your user settings.

Open Settings
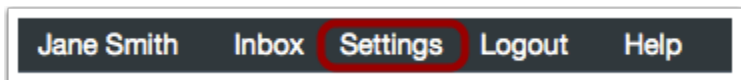
In the Help Corner, click the **Settings** link.

Edit Settings
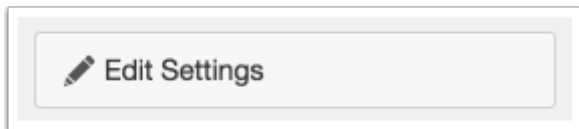
Click the **Edit Settings** button.

Select Language

Choose your preferred language in the Language drop-down menu.

Update Settings

Click the **Update Settings** button.

View Preferred Language

View Canvas in your preferred language.

Participate in a Course

How do I submit an online assignment?

You can submit online Assignments in Canvas using several submission types. Instructors can choose what kind of online submissions they want you to use. You may have the option to resubmit assignments if your instructor allows.

Note: Not all of your assignments may be submitted online. If you cannot see the Submit Assignment link, your instructor may want you to submit your assignment in a different way or the availability date has passed. View the description of the assignment for instructions, or contact your instructor for assistance.

[Learn how to submit a Turnitin assignment.](#)

Third-Party File Application Submissions

You can submit assignments from Google Drive, Dropbox, or another third-party service via your desktop computer in one of two ways:

1. Download the file to your computer and [submit as a File Upload](#)
2. Share the file, copy the file URL, and submit as a Website URL

Mobile Submissions

You can also submit assignments using your [Android](#) or [iOS](#) device.

Note: Not all file types may be available for your assignment, depending on the assignment submission type set by your instructor.

Open Assignments
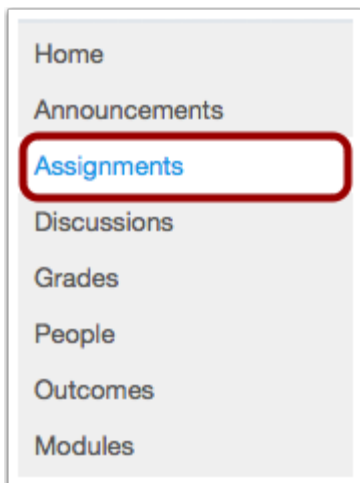
In Course Navigation, click the **Assignments** link.

Note: You can also access your Assignments through the Syllabus, Gradebook, Calendar, or Modules.

View Course Assignments

▼ Upcoming Assignments

🄰 Writing Assignment	Available until Feb 28	**Due** Feb 6 at 11:59pm	-/50 pts
💬 Cell Processes		**Due** Feb 11 at 11:59pm	-/10 pts
🄰 Video Assignment		**Due** Feb 12 at 11:59pm	-/20 pts
💬 Osmosis		**Due** Feb 19 at 11:59pm	-/5 pts

Click the name of an assignment.

View Assignment

🏠 > BIO-101 > Assignments > Writing Assignment

6 ⊕ Submit Assignment

Writing Assignment

1 **Due**   Feb 6 by 11:59pm   2 **Points**   50
3 **Submitting**   a text entry box, a website url, or a file upload
4 **File Types**   doc, docx, and pdf
5 **Available**   Jan 5 at 12am - Feb 28 at 11:59pm about 1 month

Choose one of the following essay questions and write a 1 page response.

Questions:

1. Why is the structure of DNA a double helix?
2. What is diffusion and why does it work?
3. Explain the Krebs Cycle. How does it work?
4. What are the characteristics of living organisms?

When you click an Assignment title, you will see a screen with assignment instructions. You may also see a rubric to help guide your work.
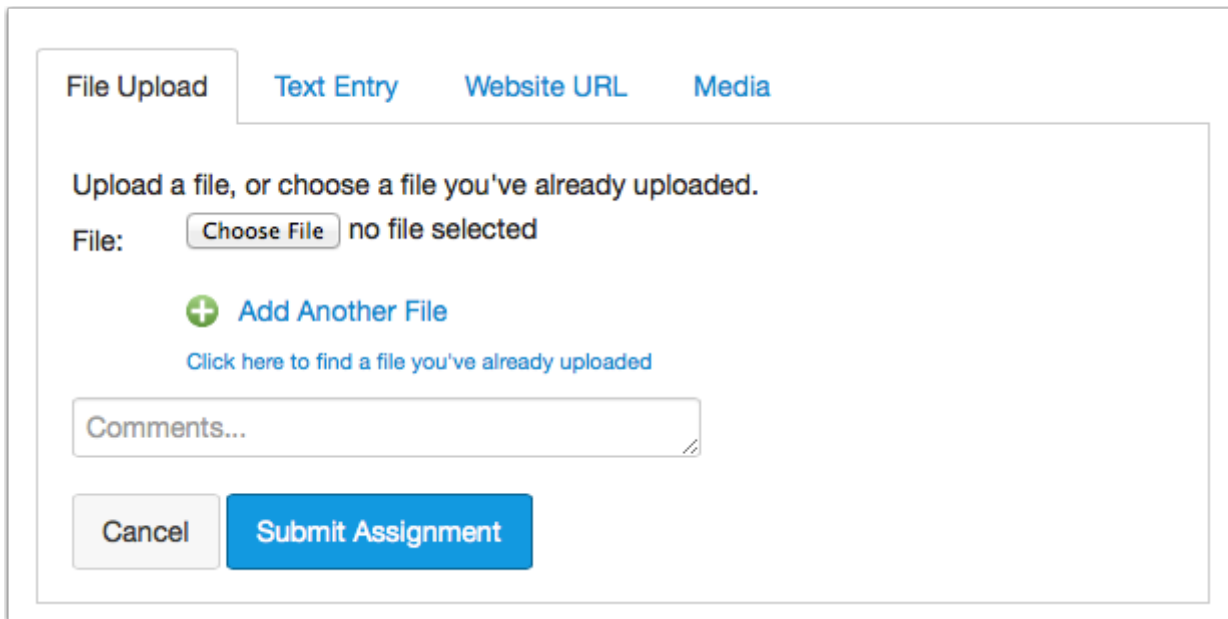
You may see the following assignment details:

1. Due date

2. Total points
3. Submission types
4. File types
5. Availability dates
6. Click the **Submit Assignment** link to submit your work.

Note: If you cannot see the Submit Assignment link, your instructor may not want you to submit your assignment online or the availability date has passed. View the description of the assignment for instructions, or contact your instructor for assistance.

Submit Assignment
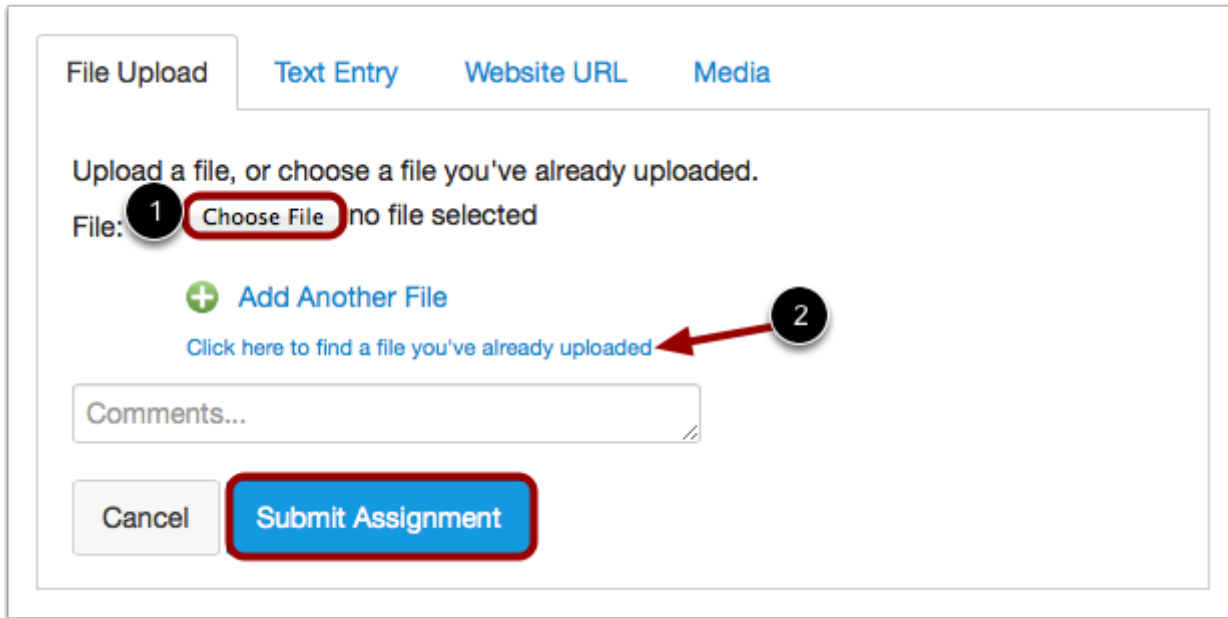
Your instructor will decide what kinds of submissions are appropriate for each Assignment. There are four submission types: upload a file, submit a text entry, enter a website URL, or submit media.

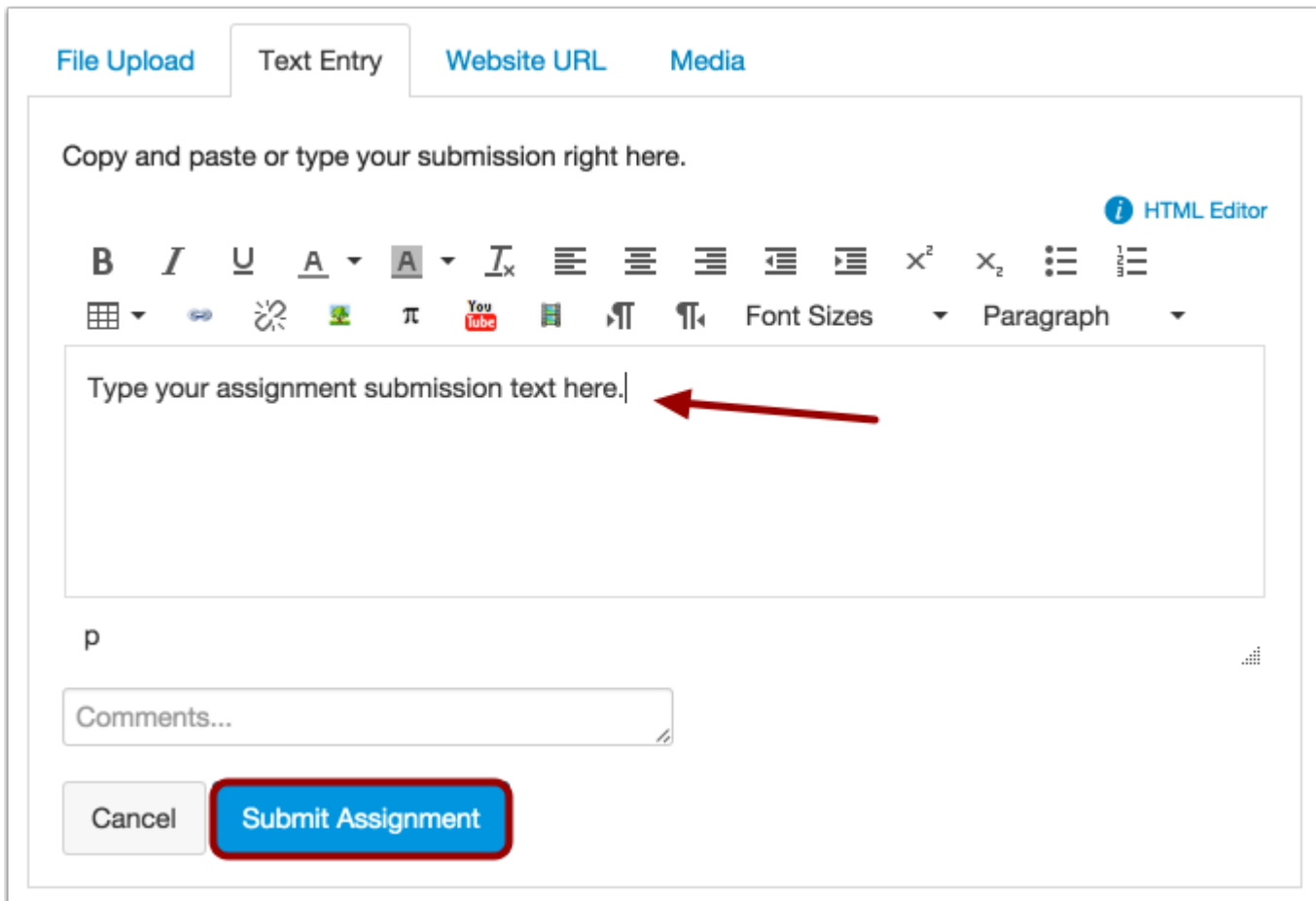**Note:** Not all file types may be available for your Assignment, depending on the assignment submission type set by your instructor.

Submit a File Upload

To upload a file from your computer and submit as your assignment, click the **Choose File** button [1]. If you have already uploaded your assignment to Canvas and want to select it for your assignment submission, click the **Click here...uploaded** link [2].

For a step-by-step guide about uploading files from your computer as assignment submissions, please view the How do I upload a file lesson.
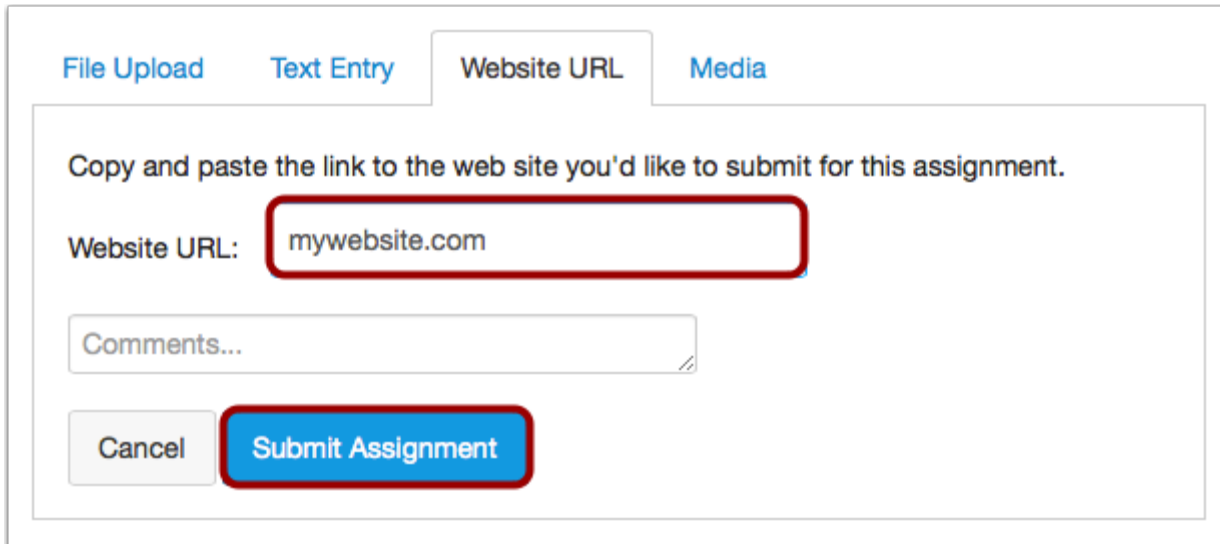
Submit a Text Entry

Type or copy and paste text into the Rich Content Editor. Click **Submit Assignment**.

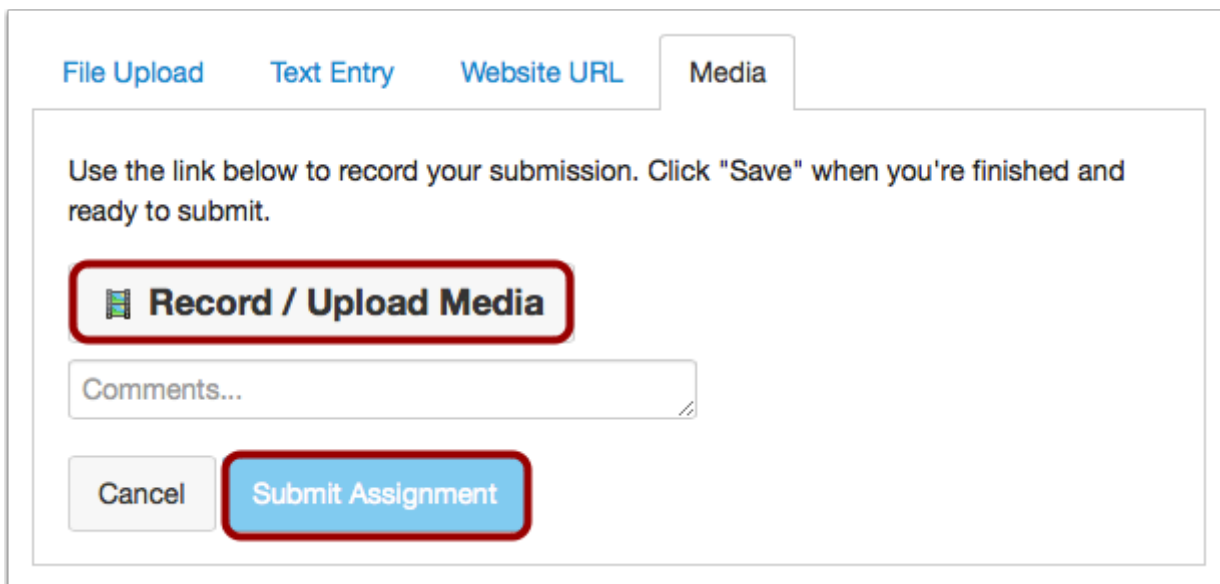**Note:** You can submit up to 16384 characters in the Text Entry field.

Submit Website URL

Type or copy and paste the URL into the Website URL field. Click **Submit Assignment**.

Submit Media Recording

Record or upload media. Follow the instructions given to you. Click **Submit Assignment** when you are done. Learn more about adding media to an assignment submission.

View Submission
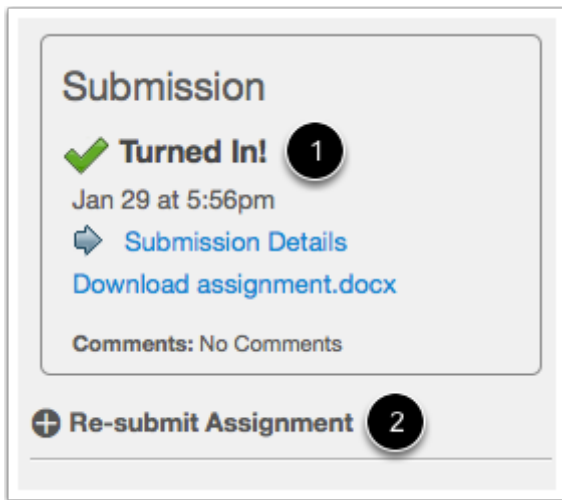
After you have submitted your work, you will see information in the Sidebar about your submission [1].

If you choose, you may resubmit another version of your assignment using the **Re-submit Assignment** link [2]. You will only be able to view the details of your most recent submission in the Sidebar, but your instructor will be able to see all of your submissions.

Once the instructor has graded your submission, you will be notified via the channels that you specify in your Notification Preferences.

You can also see details about your assignment and links to additional feedback in the Gradebook.

Note: Your assignment will still appear in Assignments and the Syllabus; the listing is not removed with assignment submissions.

How do I view my Grades?

You can find your current grades in Global Navigation, or you can view them in the Course Navigation.

[View a video about Grades.](#)

Learn how to view grades in [concluded courses](#).

Open Grades in Global Navigation

In Global Navigation, click the **Grades** link.

View Courses

To view your grades, click the course link.

Open Grades in Course Navigation

In the **Courses & Groups** drop-down menu, click the course title.

Open Grades

In Course Navigation, click the **Grades** link.

View Grades

Grades are sorted chronologically by assignment due date, followed by assignments with no due dates.

You can view the name of the assignment [1], the assignment due date [2], the score you earned [3], the total point value of the assignment [4], and icons for any assignment details [5].

You may also see an icon in the score column [6] indicating the type of assignment you submitted. Once your instructor has graded your assignment, the icon will be replaced by your score. You can click any score field (including ungraded assignments) and approximate your grade using what-if scores.

Assignment groups will always display as a percentage. For percentages, you can hover over the percentage to see a breakdown in the points you've earned vs the total points possible.

Your total grade can be displayed in points or percentage, depending on the preference of your instructor. However, if your course uses weighted assignment groups, your total grade will always show as a percent.

To print your grades, click the **Print Grades** button [7].

Open Scoring Details

Unit 1 Quiz	Mar 19 by 10:59pm	7	10	
Unit 2 Assignment	Mar 25 by 10:59pm	10	10	
Unit 2 Discussion	Mar 27 by 10:59pm		15	

You can view the scoring details for an assignment by clicking on the **Check mark** icon. If there are comments on the assignment, a **Speech Bubble** icon will appear next to the check mark. There could also be a **Rubric** icon indicating the assignment has a rubric attached to it.

You can also learn about additional icons that may appear in the Gradebook.

View Comments

| Unit 1 Quiz | Mar 19 by 10:59pm | 7 | 10 | |
| Unit 2 Assignment *Assignments* | Mar 25 by 10:59pm | 10 | | |

Comments   Close

Here is my submission, please let me know if I need to fix anything. Thank you!   Emily Boone, Mar 10 at 5:01pm

GREAT JOB!   Doug Roberts, Mar 12 at 3:13pm

| Unit 2 Discussion | Mar 27 by 10:59pm | | 15 | |

If there are comments on the assignment, click the **Speech Bubble** icon to view comments [1]. Comments will be organized chronologically [2]. To close comments, click the **Close** link [3].
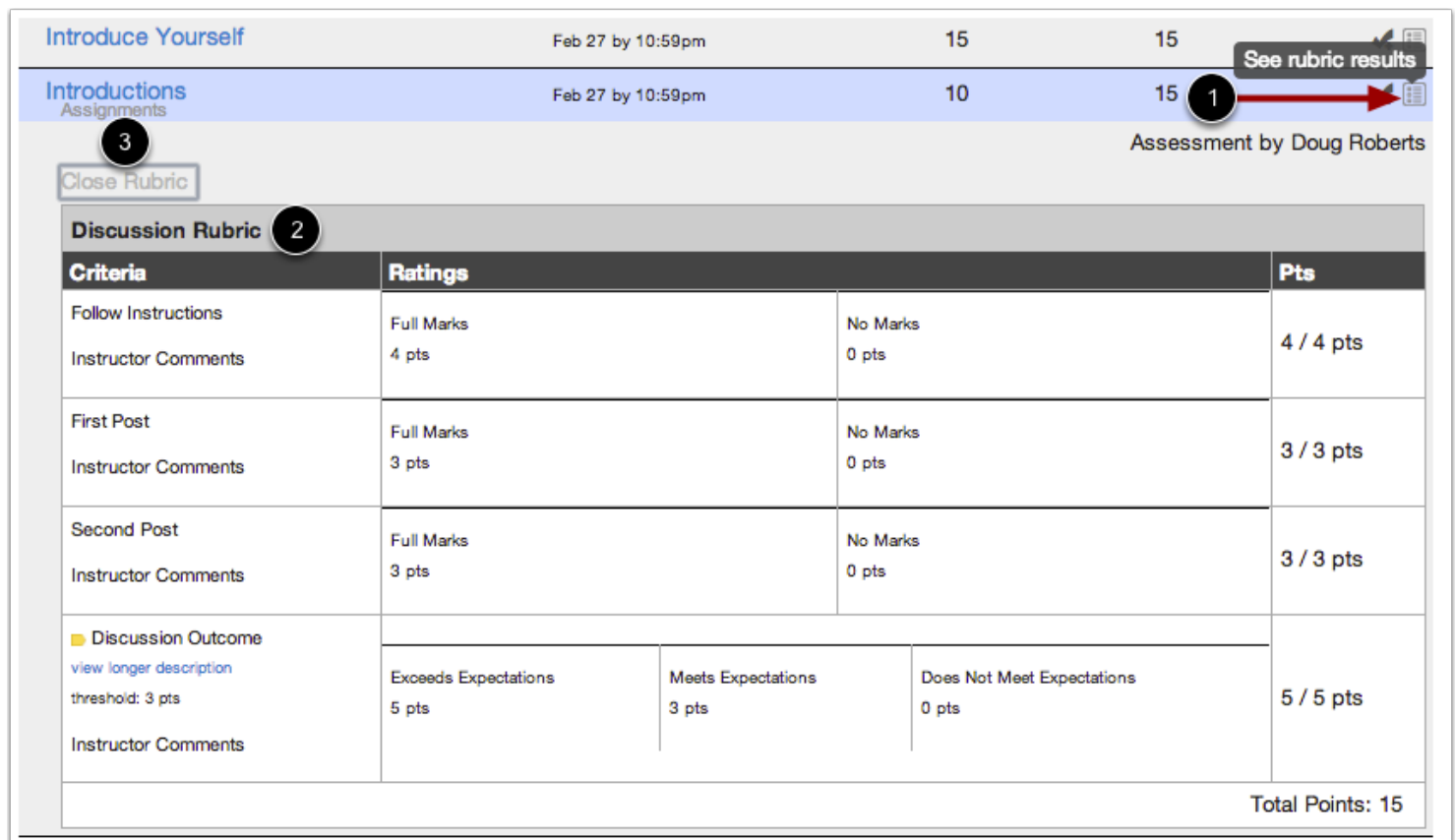
View Scoring Details

| Introductions | Feb 27 by 10:59pm | 10 | 15 | |
| Unit 1 Discussion *Assignments* | Mar 5 by 10:59pm | 10 | | See scoring details |

Score Details   Close

Mean: 7.8   High: 12   Low: 3

Click the **Check Mark** icon to view scoring details [1]. A box and whisker plot will show your score along with the mean, high, and low scores from the class [2]. In the box and whisker plot, the thin horizontal "whisker" extends from the lowest score for any student in the course to the highest score. The thicker, white box extends from the 25th percentile to the 75th percentile, with the median marked inside the white box by a gray line. Your score appears as a blue box on this plot.

You will only see scoring details if more than 5 other students have submitted that assignment in the course. If you do not see the scoring details, then fewer than 5 students have submitted the assignment.

To close scoring details, click the **Close** link [3].

View Scoring Rubric

View your results on the scoring rubric by clicking the **Rubric** icon [1]. View your score based on the rubric [2]. To close the rubric, click the **Close Rubric** link [3].

View Grading Summary

The grade summary allows you to show and revert any saved what-if scores [1], and show/hide all Scoring Details [2].

If your assignment groups are weighted, the sidebar will show the breakdown of weighted assignment groups [3].

Change Gradebook

If you have more than one course, you can use the **course drop-down menu** [1] to view grades in other courses.

Note: If your Grades page shows Assignments and Learning Mastery headings [2], you can also view your standards-based scores in the Learning Mastery link.

How do I view the Calendar?

The Calendar is a great way to view everything you have to do for all your courses in one place.

Locate Calendar Link
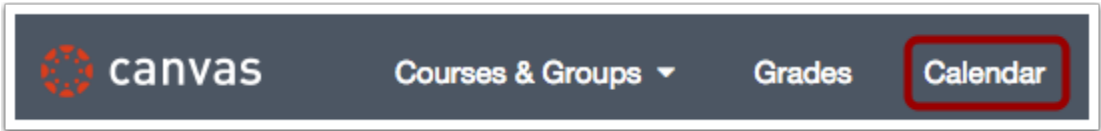
In Global Navigation, click the **Calendar** link.
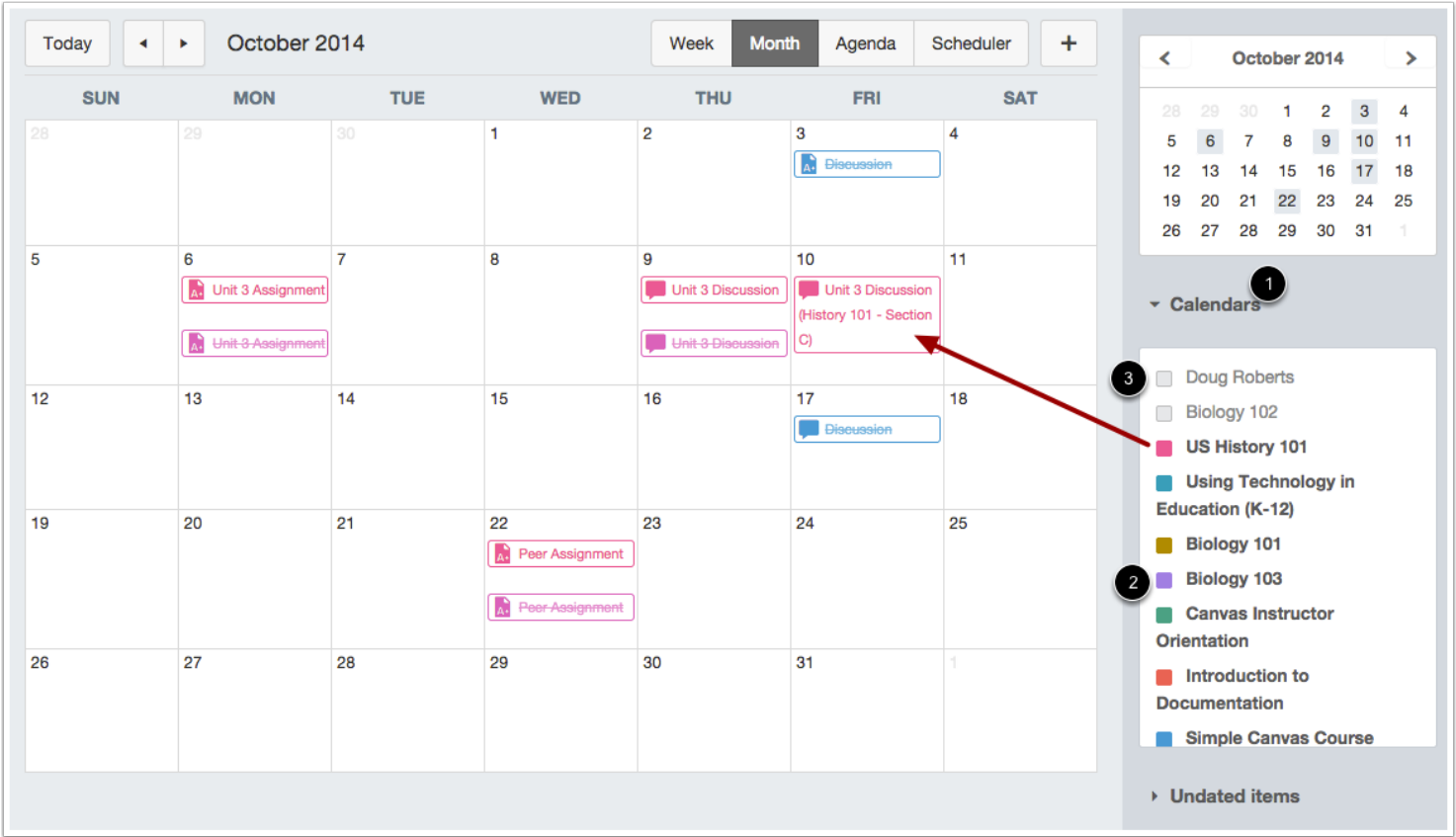
View Calendar
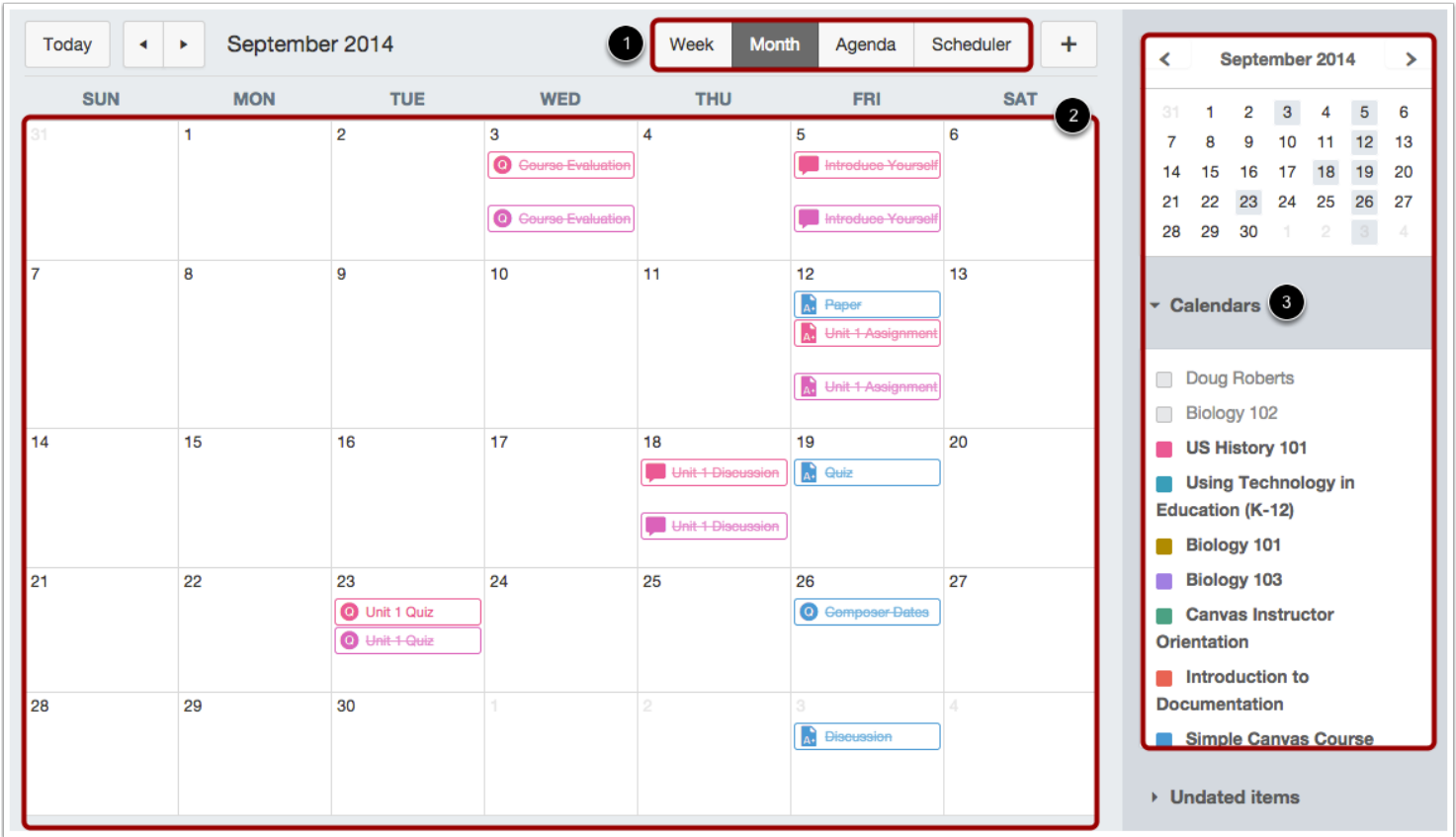
The Calendar displays everything you are enrolled in since the Calendar spans across all courses. In the navigation bar, you can choose to view the calendar in Week, Month, Agenda, or Scheduler view [1]. The view you choose dictates the style of the calendar window [2]. By default, the calendar appears in **Month** view.

The sidebar [3] shows a quick-view calendar, your list of courses and groups, and undated items for your courses and groups.

View Calendar List

Each personal, course, and group calendar is identified by a separate color that populates the calendar view. Associated assignments for each course or group will appear within the calendar view for each calendar. For instance, in the above example, assignments and events from the US History 101 course will appear as pink in the calendar view.

By default, all your course calendars and group calendars will be selected and appear in the calendar view [1]. To hide a calendar, click the box next to the name of the calendar [2]. Calendars that are not active within the calendar view will appear in gray [3].

Note: Colors are arbitrarily assigned to each course; they cannot be changed.

View Undated Events List
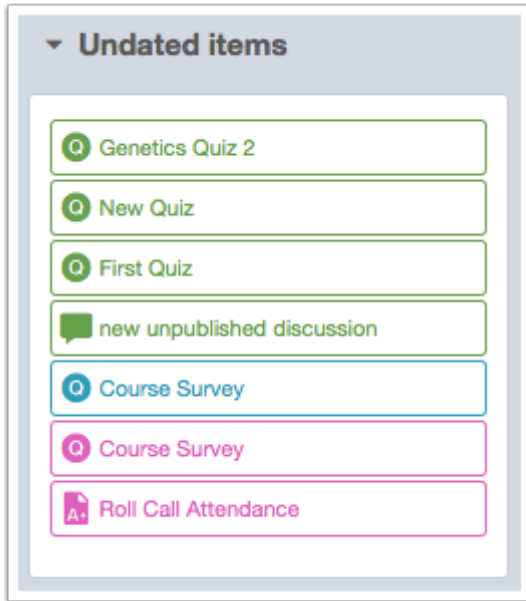

Expanding the **Undated items** link will show you a list of events and assignments that are not dated. The assignments and events will be differentiated by icons and by the personal, course, or group calendar color.

View Calendar by Month

In month view, click the arrow buttons [1] to move from month to month. Click the Today button [2] to view the events for the current date.
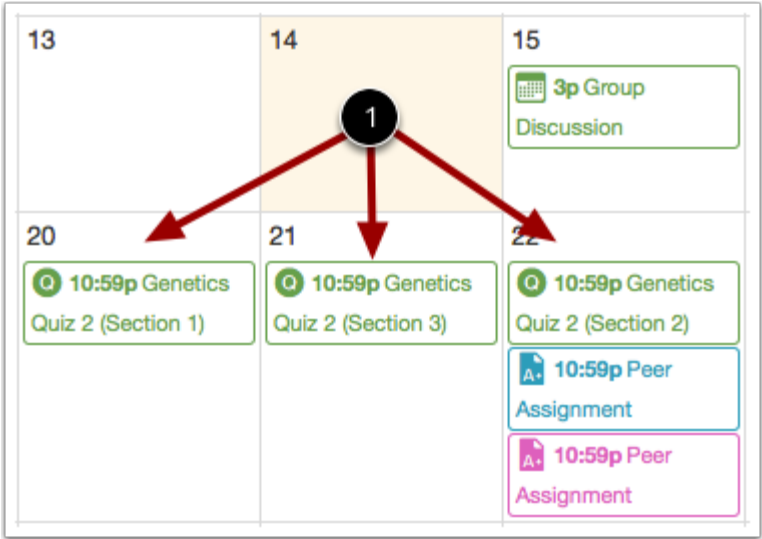
View Due Dates
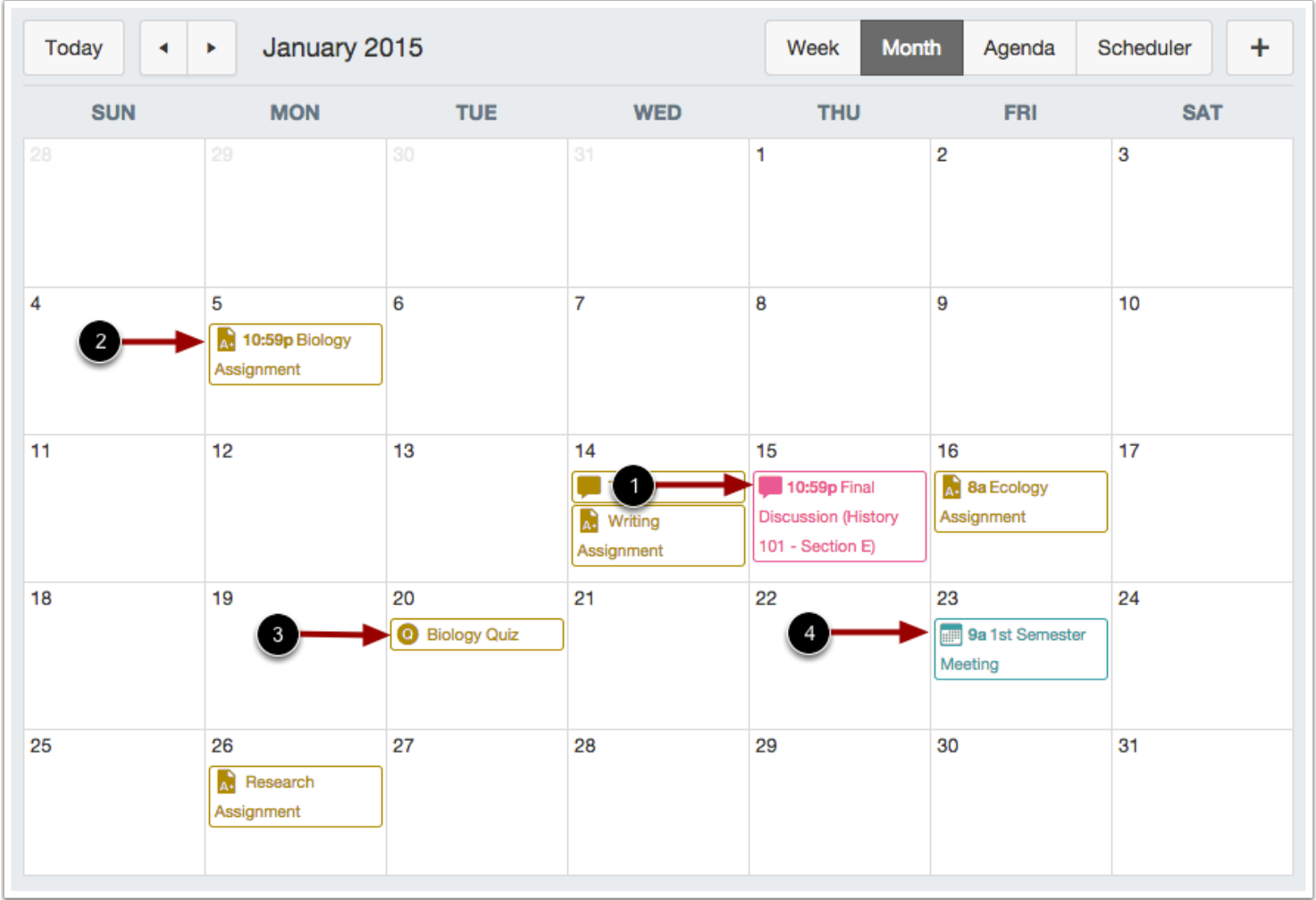
Assignments are shown with an icon next to the assignment title. The icon reflects the assignment type: Discussion [1], Assignment [2], Quiz [3], or Events [4].
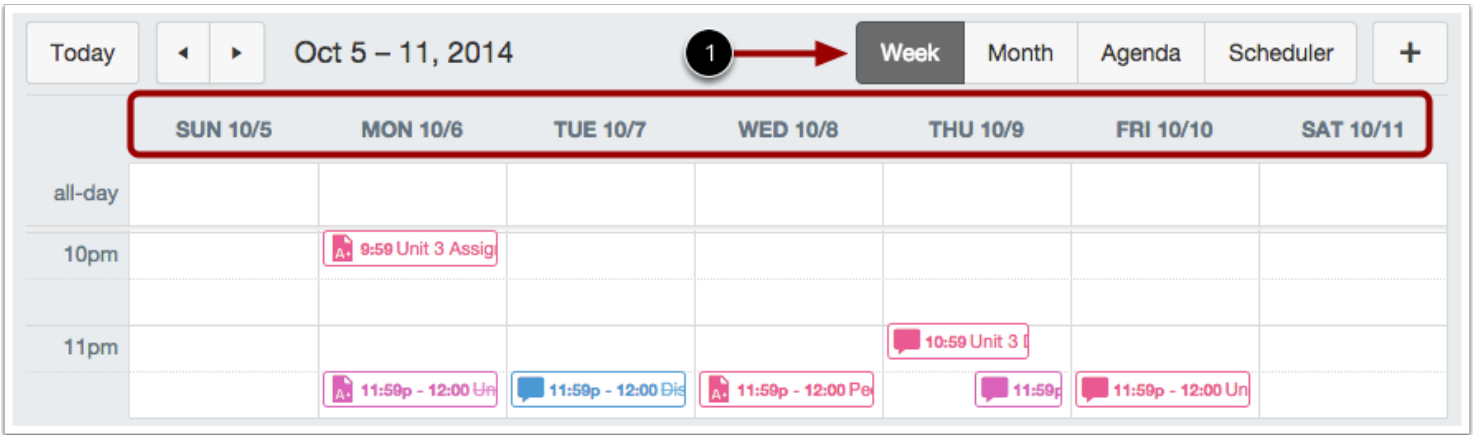
Each item on the calendar is color-coded to match the courses or calendars in the sidebar.

View Varied Due Dates
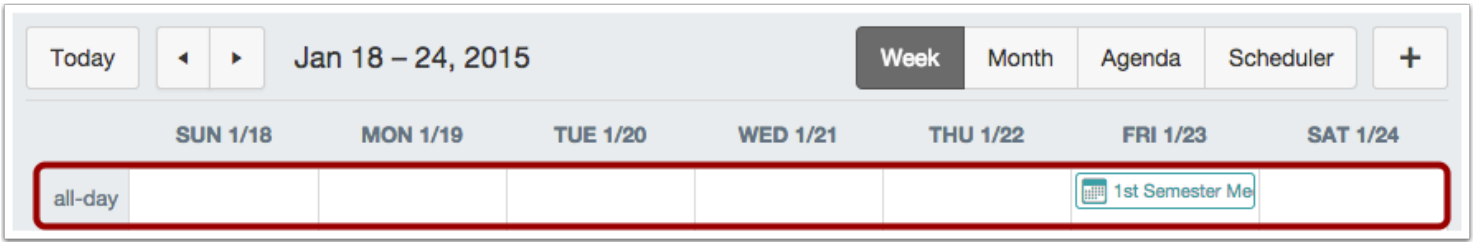

If a course has sections with varied due dates, instructors will see the multiple due dates [1]. Students will only see their section's due date.
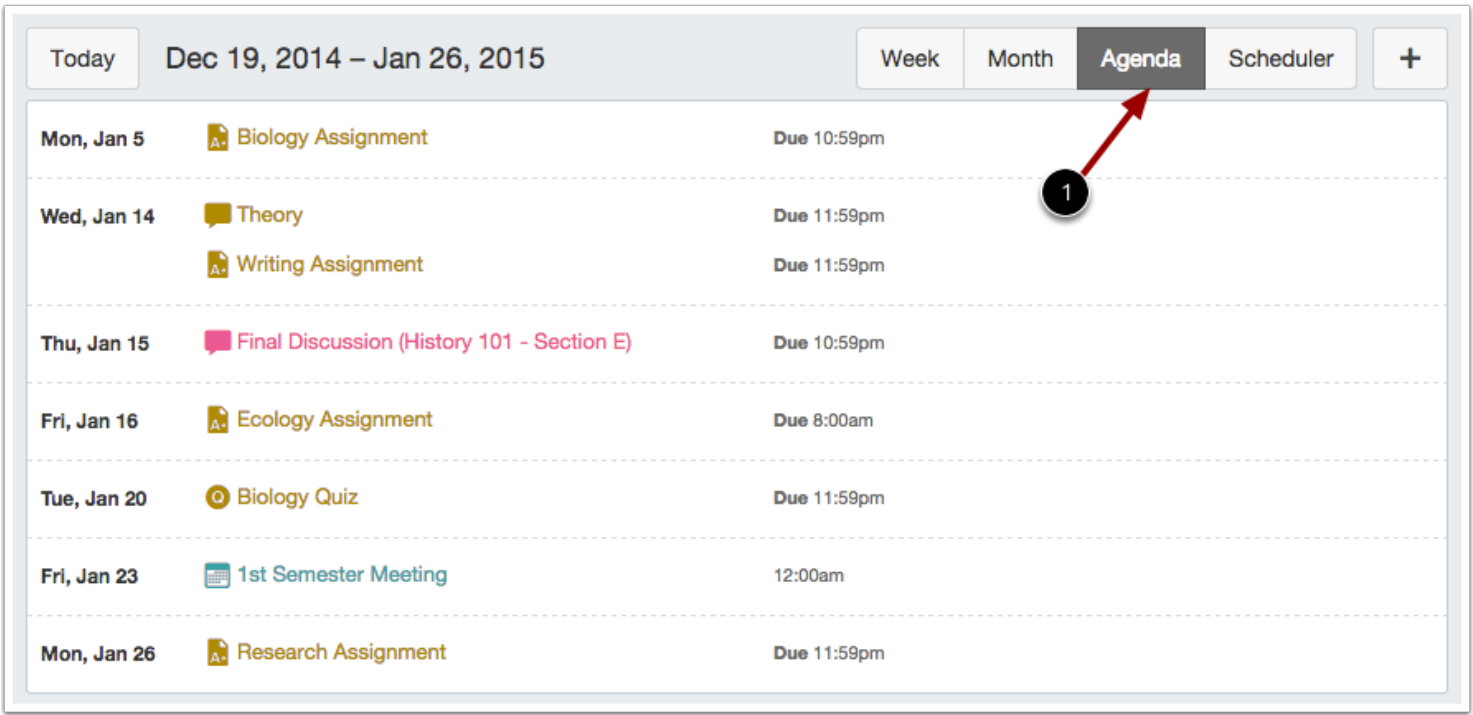
View Calendar by Week

Click the **Week** button [1] to see the calendar by week.

View All-day Events

The new Calendar allows you to view All Day Events at the top slot of the calendar week.
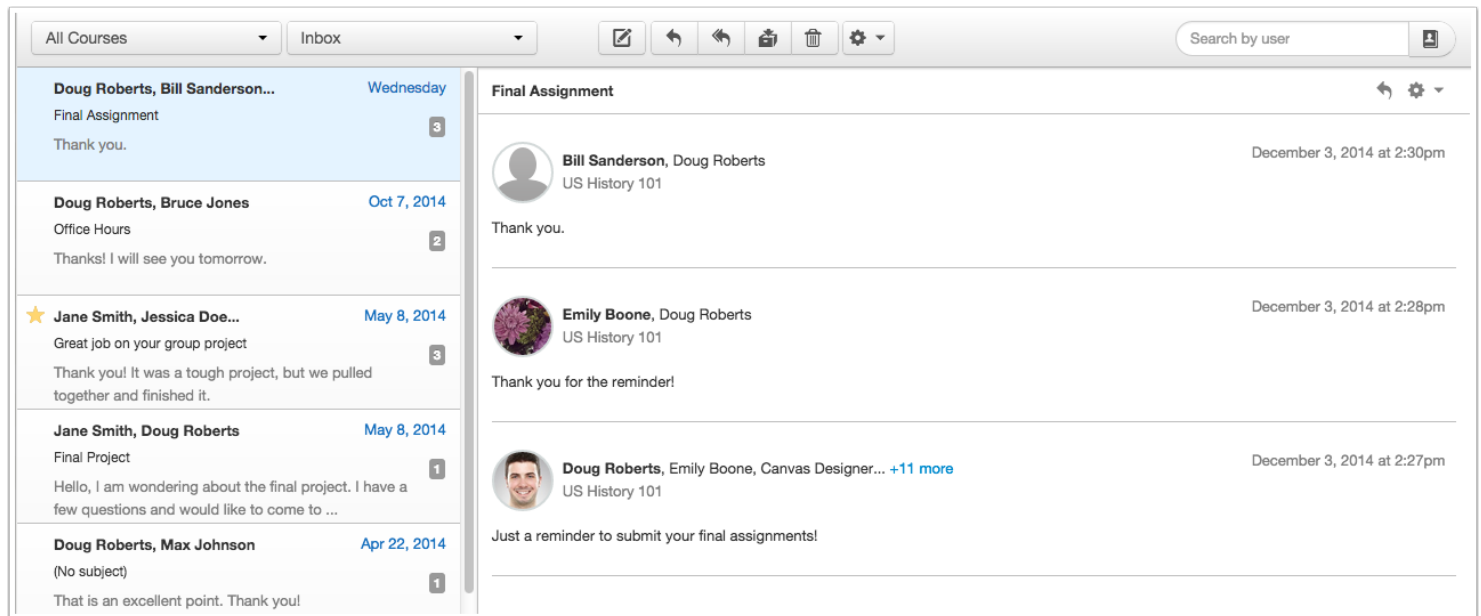
View Calendar Agenda

Click the **Agenda** button [1] to view all of your calendar items, beginning with the month selected in Month view.

What is Conversations?

Conversations is the messaging tool used instead of email to communicate with a course, a group, an individual student, or a group of students. You can communicate with other people in your course at any time.

When would I use Conversations?

Use Conversations to:

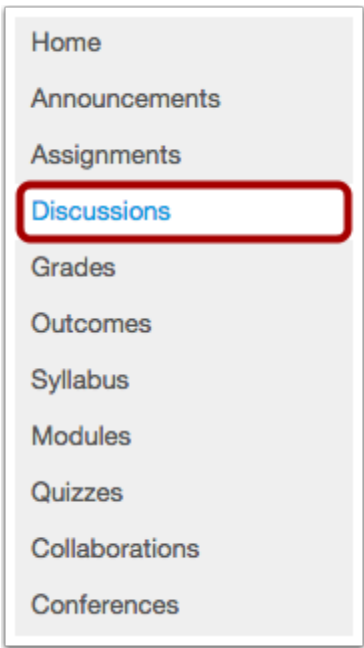- Send a message to someone in your course
- Send a message to your entire class (if allowed)
- Send a message to members of a group
- Reply to messages from others in your course
- Filter conversations by course or type
- View and reply to assignment submission comments

You can adjust your notification preferences to receive conversations using external channels.

How do I reply to a Discussion as a student?

You can easily reply to any discussion, threaded or focused. However, the reply process varies depending on the type of discussion.

Open Discussions

Home
Announcements
Assignments
Discussions
Grades
Outcomes
Syllabus
Modules
Quizzes
Collaborations
Conferences

In Course Navigation, click the **Discussions** link.

Open Discussion Topic

▼ **Pinned Discussions**

Introductions
Last post Mar 18, 2014   Due Mar 28 at 11:59pm   ✅   3 9

▼ **Discussions**   *Ordered by Recent Activity*

Favorite Presidents
Last post Mar 19, 2014   ✅   0 2
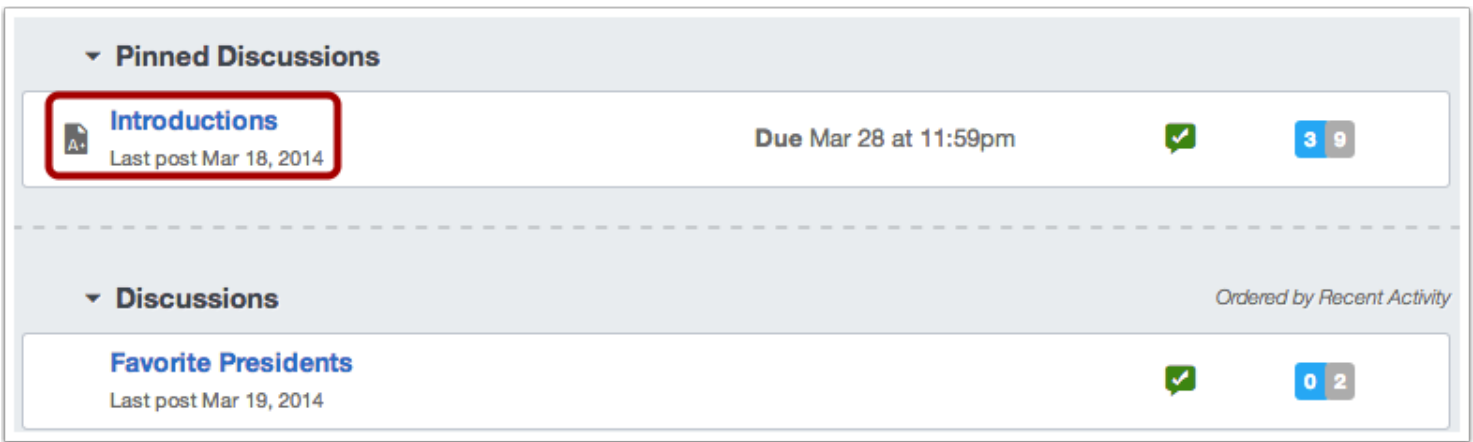
Click the title of the Discussion.

Reply to Discussion Topic
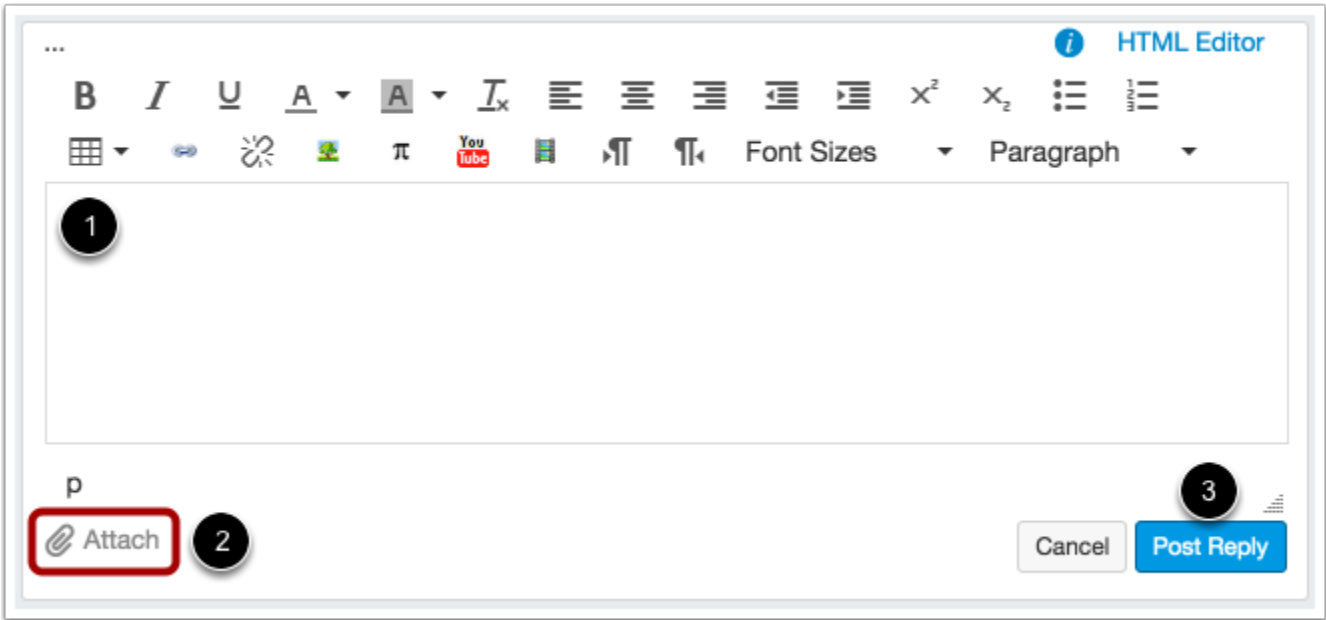
To reply to the main discussion, type your reply in the **Reply** field.

Post a Message

Write your response in the Rich Content Editor [1]. You can add links, photos, equations, and/or media. If your instructor allows, you can also attach files [2]. Once you finish, click the **Post Reply** button [3].

View Your Reply

Your reply will be posted at the bottom of the discussion reply thread. The border of your post will flash blue indicating it has been newly posted. The dot indicator next to your post will immediately turn white if Canvas automatically marks your posts as read. However, if you manually mark your posts as read, the indicator will remain blue.

Reply to a Comment in a Focused Discussion
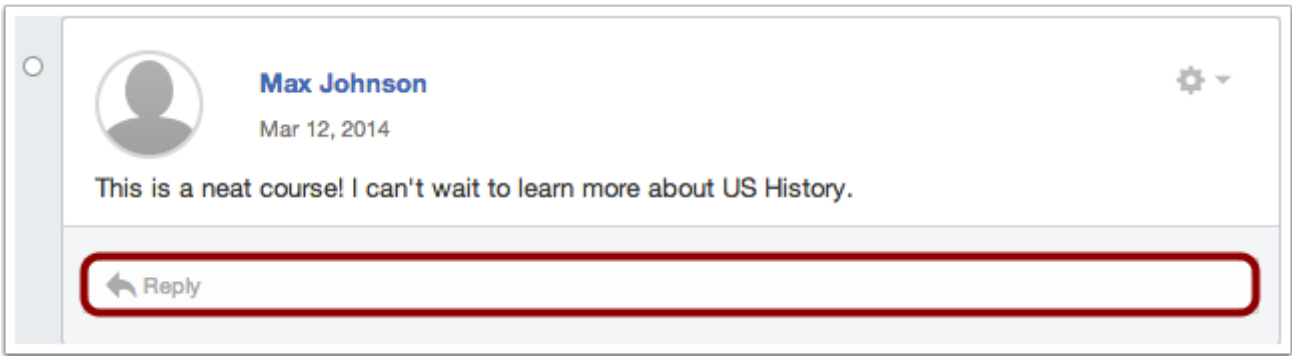
In a focused discussion, you can reply to a comment already posted by another student by clicking in the **reply** field below the post.

Post a Message

Write your response in the Rich Content Editor [1]. You can add links, photos, equations, and/or media. If your instructor allows, you can also attach files [2]. Once you finish, click the **Post Reply** button [3].

View Your Reply

Your reply will be posted at the bottom of the discussion reply thread. The border of your post will flash blue indicating it has been newly posted. The dot indicator next to your post will immediately turn white if Canvas automatically marks your posts as read. However, if you manually mark your posts as read, the indicator will remain blue.

Reply to a Comment in a Threaded Discussion

In a threaded discussion, you can reply to a comment already posted by another student. Locate the post you want to reply to and click the **reply** icon.

Post a Message

Write your response in the Rich Content Editor [1]. You can add links, photos, equations, and/or media. If your instructor allows, you can also attach files [2]. Once you finish, click the **Post Reply** button [3].

View Your Reply

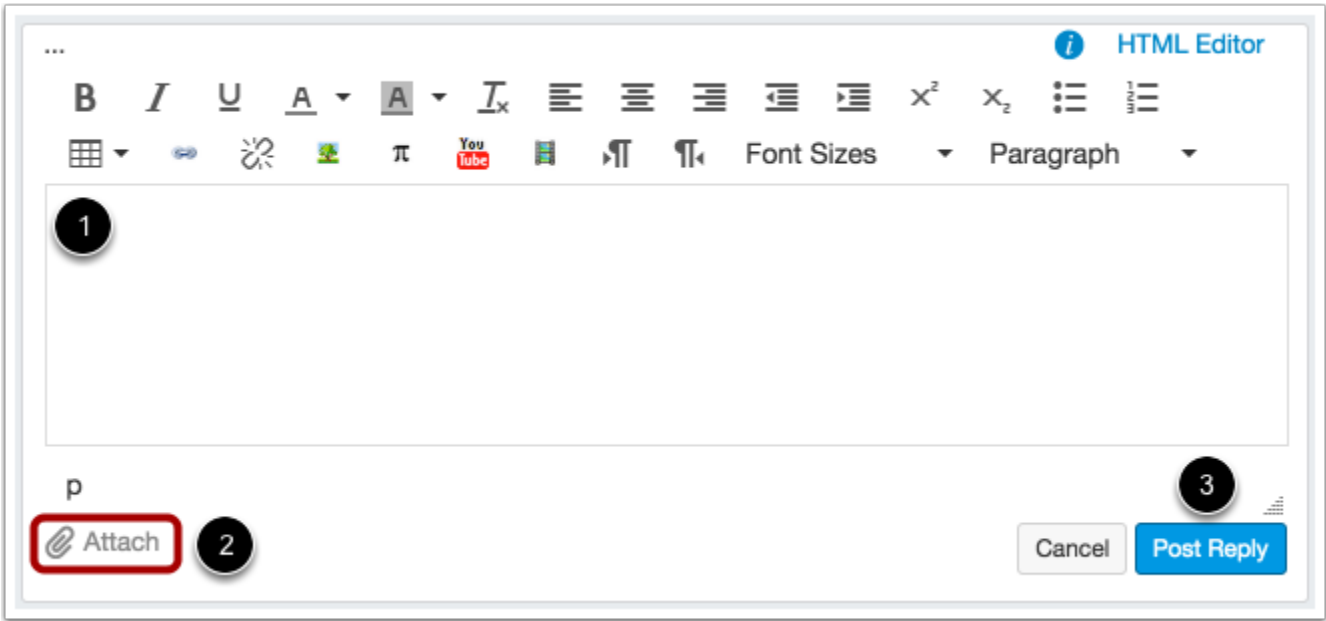Your reply will be posted at the bottom of the discussion reply thread. The border of your post will flash blue indicating it has been newly posted. The dot indicator next to your post will immediately turn white if Canvas automatically marks your posts as read. However, if you manually mark your posts as read, the indicator will remain blue.

More Help

Which browsers does Canvas support?

Learn more about basic computer specifications and accessibility.

Supported Browsers

Because it's built using web standards, Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with a modern web browser.

Canvas supports the last two versions of every browser release. We highly recommend updating to the **newest version** of whatever browser you are using as well as the most up-to-date Flash plug-in.

As of **April 8, 2015,** we support the most recent versions of Flash and popular web browsers:

- **Internet Explorer** 10 and 11
- **Chrome** 40 and 41
- **Safari** 7 and 8
- **Firefox** 36 and 37 (Extended Releases are not supported)
- **Flash** 15 and 16 (for recording or viewing audio/video and uploading files)
- **Respondus Lockdown Browser** (supporting the latest system requirements)

Some supported browsers may still produce a banner stating *Your browser does not meet the minimum requirements for Canvas*. If you have upgraded your browser but you are still seeing the warning banner, try logging out of Canvas and deleting your browser cookies. Learn how to clear your cache on a Mac or a PC.

Required Components

Flash is required in several places in Canvas: media recording/streaming and viewing as well as uploading files to a course or an assignment. Other than these features, Flash is not required to use most areas of Canvas.

The **Java plug-in** is required for screen sharing in Conferences. Please note that some browsers do not support Java. Otherwise, there are no other browser plug-ins used by Canvas.

Update Your Desktop Browser

There are a couple of different ways to update your desktop browser.

1. Every time you open your browser, it will check to make sure it is using the most current version. If it is not updated, your browser will prompt you with a notification and walk you through the update process.

2. Download the latest version of your desktop browser directly. Click the name of your browser below to visit your browser's download page:

- Internet Explorer
- Chrome
- Safari (Safari 7 is only included with OS X Mavericks; Safari 8 is only included with OS X Yosemite)
- Firefox

- [Flash](#)
- [Respondus](#)

Browser Privacy Settings

Some browsers may occasionally make modifications to privacy settings to protect users from possible unsecured content. Unsecured content is identified with the prefix http:// in the URL and can create mixed content in your Canvas Page. Secured content is identified with the https:// prefix in the URL.

Note: If you embed Canvas lessons inside your course, you can now prevent browser issues with mixed content using [secured Canvas Guides URLs](#).

We recommend following any browser security policies established by your institution, especially if you are using Canvas on a computer provided by your institution. You may want to use Canvas in an alternative browser instead.

If you are using a browser that is affected, please be aware of possible restrictions. The following are known issues in specific browsers that may block or create mixed content within Canvas.

Chrome Security
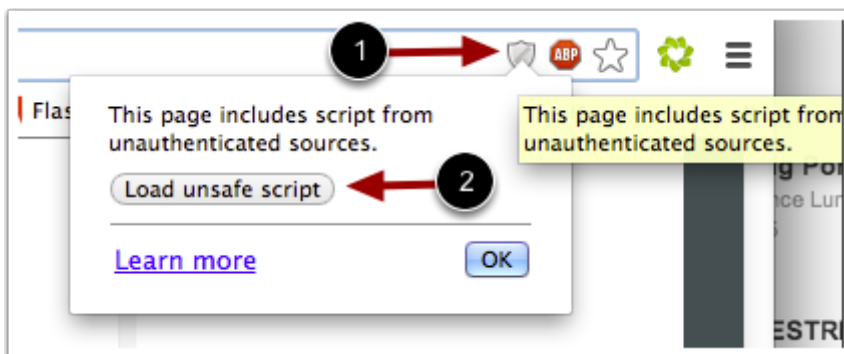
Google Chrome verifies that the website content you view is transmitted securely. If you visit a page in your Canvas course that is linked to insecure content, Chrome will display a shield icon in the browser address bar.

You can choose to override the security restriction and display the content anyway by clicking the shield icon and then clicking the **Load unsafe script** button.

Chrome Media Permissions
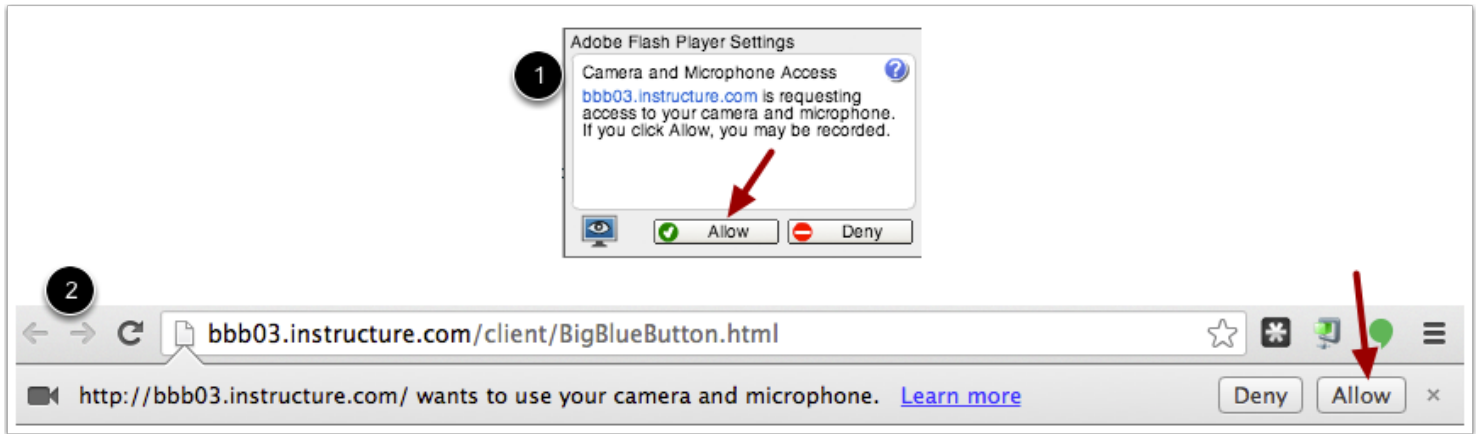
Chrome has its own media permission within the browser. To use your computer camera and microphone within any Canvas feature, you will have to approve two permissions:

1. Allow access to Canvas via the Adobe Flash Player Settings [1]. This prompt appears in the center of the video and audio pop-up windows, or the center of the browser if you are accessing Conversations.
2. Allow access to Canvas via Chrome's media permission settings [2]. This prompt appears just below the address bar. Click the **Allow** button.

Firefox Security

Firefox verifies that the website content you view is transmitted securely. If you visit a page in your Canvas course that is linked to insecure content, Firefox will display a shield icon in the browser address bar [1].

You can choose to override the security restriction and display the content anyway by clicking the shield icon, clicking the Keep Blocking drop-down menu [2], and selecting the **Disable Protection on This Page** option [3].
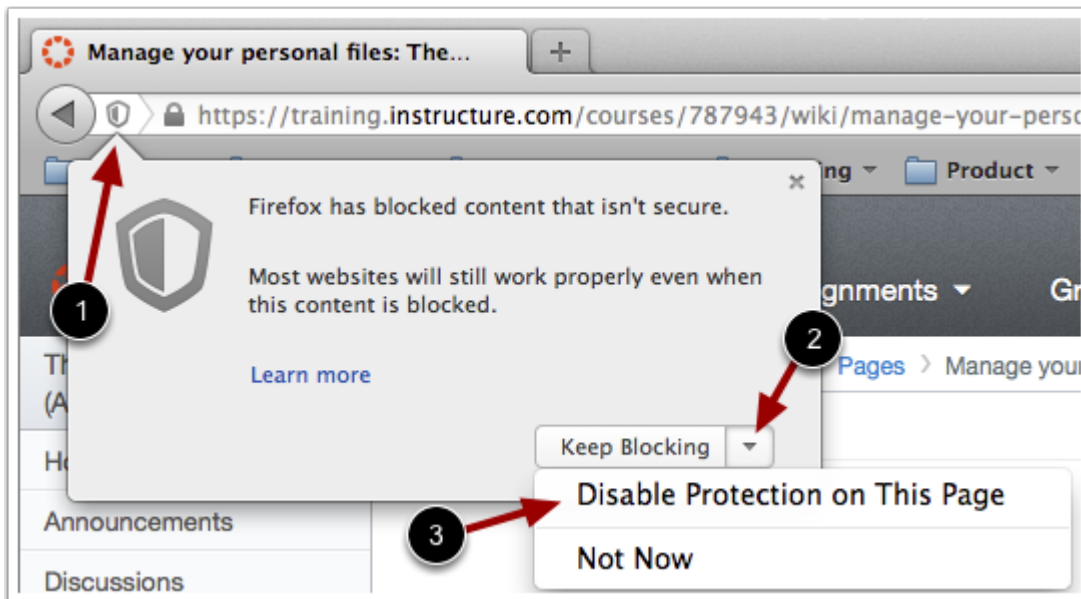
Canvas on Mobile Devices

The Canvas interface was optimized for desktop displays, so using small form factors such as phones may not be a pleasant experience in using Canvas. Canvas is not officially supported on mobile browsers. We recommend using Canvas mobile applications for an improved user experience. (**Note**: At this time, Canvas apps are only available in English.)

Since Canvas uses small elements of Flash, not all Canvas features may be supported on mobile devices, especially on iOS.

Mobile Browsers

Visit the Apple store or the Play store to download mobile browsers. The following major browsers are compatible with mobile devices but Canvas features may not be supported:

iOS

- Safari (default browser that opens from Canvas)
- Chrome
- Photon Flash Player (supports Flash)

Android

- Internet
- Firefox
- Chrome

Note: Android default browser varies per mobile device.

How do I get help with Canvas?

You can get help with Canvas by using the Help link. Depending on your user role, the Help link generates a list of resources to help you with Canvas, such as how to search Canvas Documentation and report a problem.

Notes:

- Depending on your institution, the help link may not be available. Admins may also create additional custom help links.
- Before reporting a problem with Canvas, please Ask the Canvas Community or search the Canvas Guides for help.

Open Help
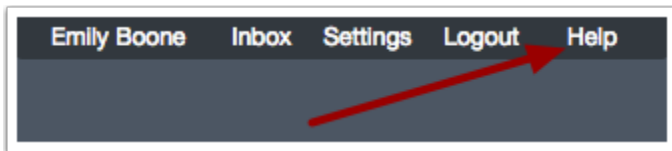
In the Help Corner, click the **Help** link.

View Help Resources

Depending on your user role, there are five main links for help or feedback:

1. **Ask your instructor a question**: Ask your instructor questions about course material or send them a message
2. **Search the Canvas Guides**: Search the Canvas Guides for information about features inside of Canvas
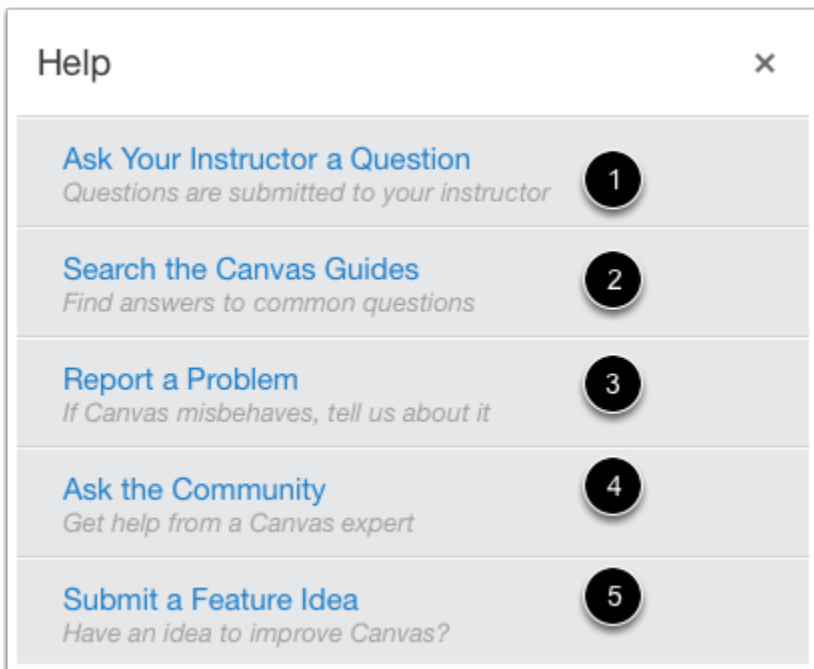3. **Report a problem**: Submit problems with Canvas to our support team
4. **Ask the Community**: Exchange ideas and solutions regarding Canvas functionality with Canvas experts and your Canvas peers
5. **Submit a Feature Idea**: Submit ideas about how to make Canvas better
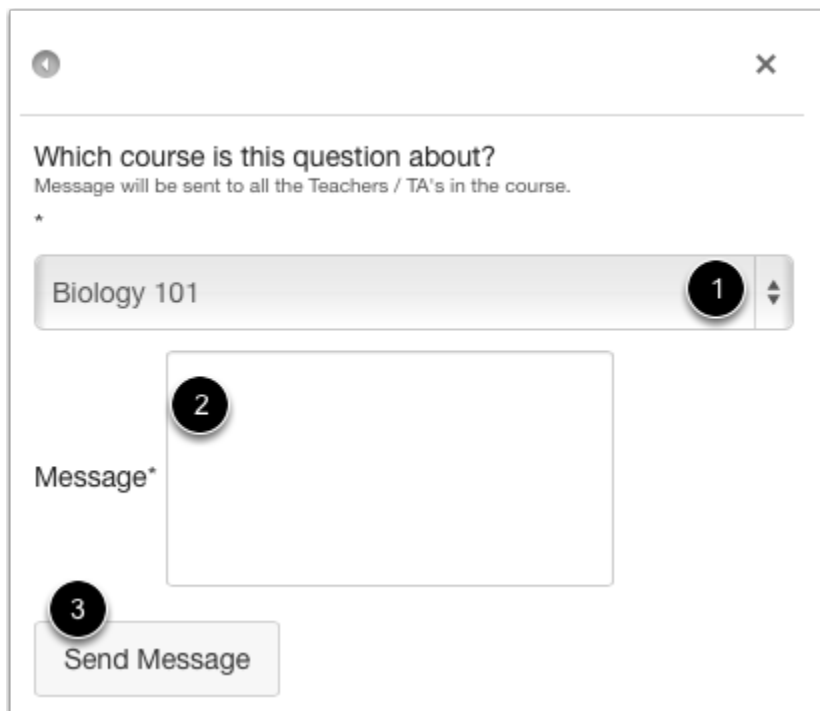
Note: If you are an instructor, the Ask your instructor a question help link is not available to you.

Ask Your Instructor a Question
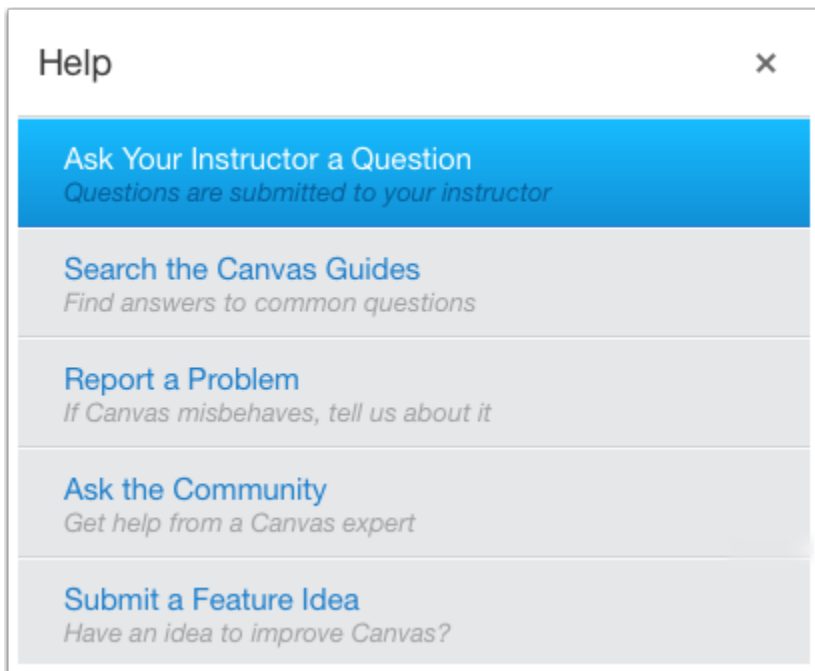
To ask your instructor or TA questions about course material or send them a message, click the **Ask your instructor a question** link.
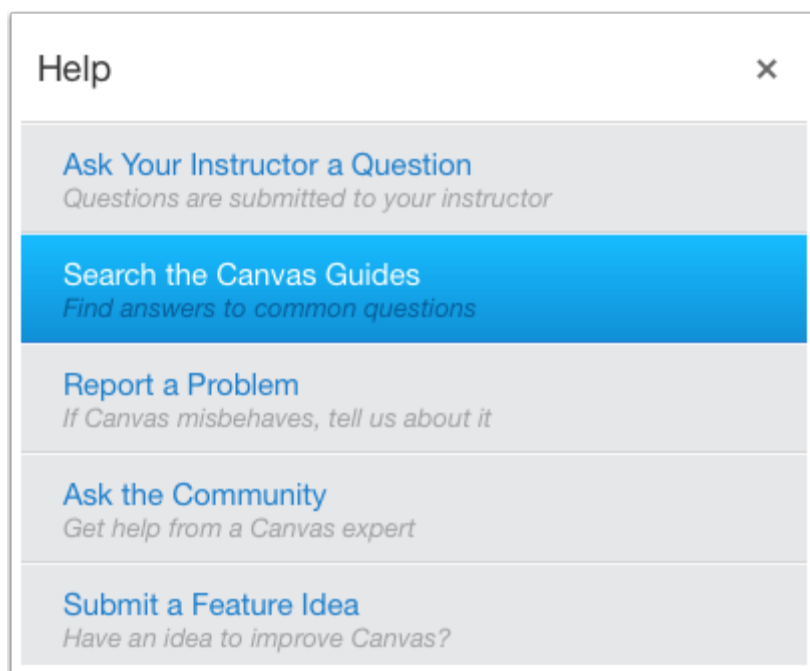
Note: If you are an instructor, the Ask your instructor a question help link is not available to you.

Send Message

Select the relevant course in the drop-down menu [1] and type your message in the description field [2]. When you're done, click the **Send Message** button [3].

Search Canvas Guides
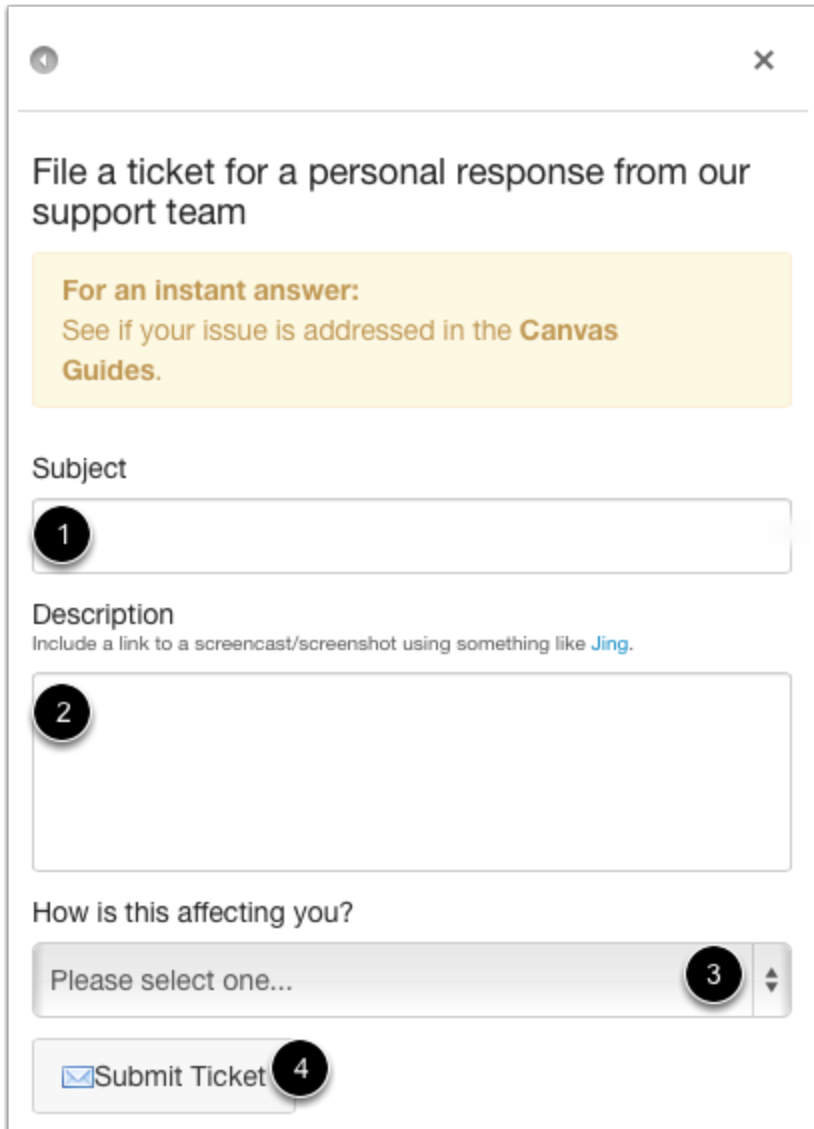
To find an answer to a question about a Canvas feature, click the **Search Canvas Guides** link. This link will take you to Canvas Guides where you can search Canvas documentation for information about features inside of Canvas.

Report a Problem
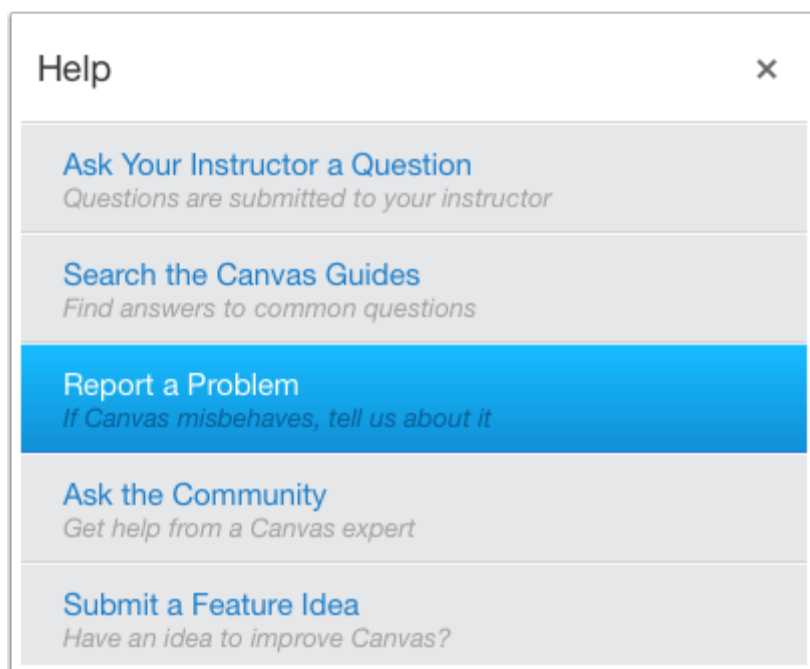
To report a problem with Canvas, click the **Report a Problem** link.

Note: Before reporting a problem with Canvas, please Ask the Canvas Community or search the Canvas Guides for help.

Submit Ticket

In the subject field [1], create a subject for your ticket.

In the description field [2], describe the problem your are experiencing in Canvas. Please be as detailed as possible to help troubleshoot the problem.

In the drop-down menu [3], select the statement that best describes how the problem is affecting you:

- Just a casual question, comment, idea, suggestion
- I need some help but it's not urgent
- Something's broken but I can work around it for now
- I can't get things done until I hear back from you
- EXTREMELY CRITICAL EMERGENCY

When you're done, click the **Submit Ticket** button [4].

Ask the Community
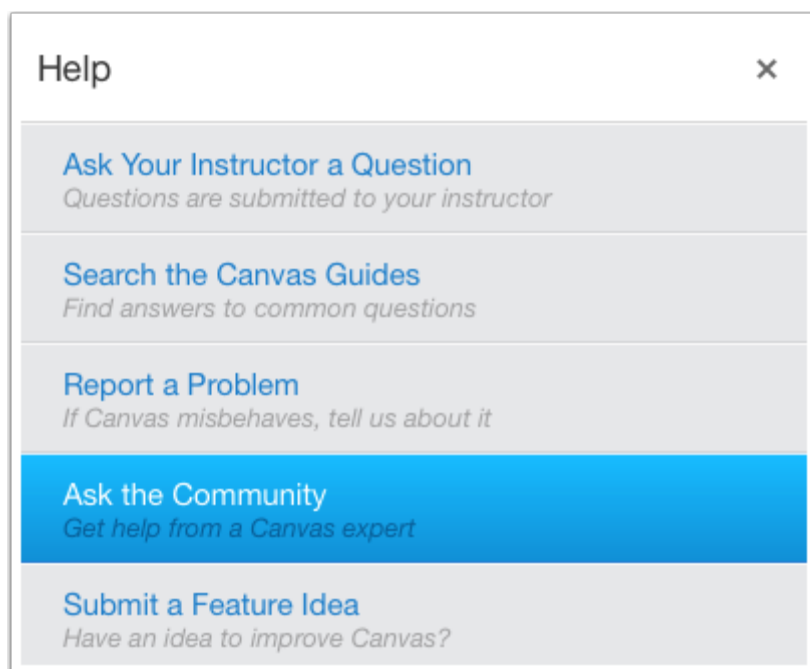
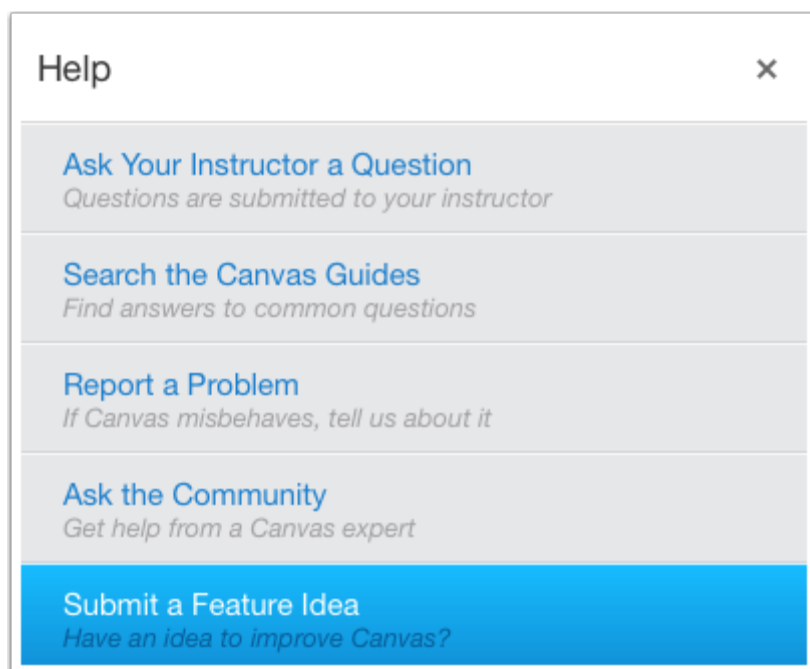To ask a question or get feedback about Canvas from a community of experts, click the **Ask the Community** link. This link will take to you Find Answers and allow you to ask questions and get feedback from Canvas users like you.

Request a Feature

Help ×

Ask Your Instructor a Question
Questions are submitted to your instructor

Search the Canvas Guides
Find answers to common questions

Report a Problem
If Canvas misbehaves, tell us about it

Ask the Community
Get help from a Canvas expert

Submit a Feature Idea
Have an idea to improve Canvas?

Click the **Request a Feature** link. You can submit your ideas about how to make Canvas even better by clicking this link or by visiting Canvas Feature Ideas.