



# BRIGHTSPACE TOOLS

## TO HELP YOU & YOUR STUDENTS STAY ON TRACK

Taking a little time before your course starts to complete a few simple tasks can help set your students up for success, feel more engaged, and save you time during the term. This guide provides an overview of 5 tools in Brightspace to do just that, complimented by strategies and resources for you to consider.

### 1

## Course syllabus

Students use the course syllabus as a roadmap to participate in and complete your course. Like all good maps, having clear instructions helps students better understand what is expected of them. Including all this information in one place helps them be organized, and can limit the amount of routine email inquiries you receive about the course.

### Strategies:

- **Weekly Schedule:** to highlight key activities, readings and/or assessments for each week.
- **Detailed Assessment Instructions:** include due dates, so students can map out their semester plan for success.

### Supporting resources:

1. [Course syllabus resources, including a template](#)

### 2

## Checklists

Regardless of how you decide to present your content (i.e. weekly/modular), consider adding a summary page or checklist at the beginning of each section. The checklist should highlight the key things you expect your students to complete.

### Strategies:

- **Brightspace Checklist Tool:** list the important things you want your students to do; students can check items off the list, and you can monitor their progress by tracking the page.
- **Summary Announcement:** can be prepared in advance with a scheduled release using the Announcement tool, noting key expectations for the week/module.

### Supporting resources:

1. [Checklist Guide](#)

2. Sample checklist

In Module 3, please complete all the items in the checklist below:

- Read Chapter 3 in the textbook
- Make an original posting in Module 3 discussion thread
- Complete Module 3 sample quiz

3. [Announcement Guide](#)

4. Sample announcement

Hello students:

Throughout the semester, I will be using the Announcements tool to post a summary of tasks for the week. I will post a new message each Sunday evening, which will help you focus on the important tasks for the week ahead. In week 1 I suggest you:

- Explore the Student Resources CITL website to learn about its features (if you are new to this Learning Management System)
- Read the course syllabus and contact me if you have any questions.
- Read the material in the Getting Started section of the course (you can find it in the Table of Contents in the navigation bar above).
- Get started on the assigned readings for week 2 (chapters 1-3 of the textbook)

Have a good week!

### 3

## Course Calendar/Due Dates

Using the Brightspace Calendar effectively allows students to receive notifications when work is due, when new content is added, or when you return marked work.

### Strategies:

- **Display in Calendar:** Link assessments to the Calendar when you set them up.
- **PULSE App:** Encourage your students to turn on notifications or download the Brightspace PULSE app to keep track of key calendar activity.

### Supporting resources:

1. [Calendar Guide \(manage dates\)](#)

2. [Notifications Guide \(for instructors and students\)](#)

3. [Sync Brightspace Calendar with personal calendars \(student resource\)](#)

4. [Brightspace PULSE App \(for students\)](#)

# 4

## Announcements / Reminders

Use the announcement tool for just that, announcements, quick bursts of information that redirect (if necessary) to a particular section in the course site or to a specific topic in discussions for details.

### Strategies:

- **Pre-plan Announcements:** compose the message and pre-set the delivery date in the Announcements tool (e.g., a welcome message, reminders about due dates or events).

### Supporting resources:

1. [Announcements Guide](#)

2. Sample welcome message

Hello students!

Welcome to Sample Course 101 of Winter 2021!

My name is Jane Doe and I will be your instructor for this course that runs for 13 weeks ending on Day/Month.

This is the homepage for our course and I will post a new message each Sunday evening which will help you focus on the important tasks for the week ahead. You can contact me at janedoe@mun.ca or using the email within Brightspace.

I look forward to working with you during this course!

Jane

3. Sample announcement on a course information topic

Hello:

I have received several inquiries about the upcoming group project due at the end of week 7. Please note that you can find detailed information about this project in your course syllabus. However, if you have further questions, please post them in the discussion forum called “Questions about the Group Project” under Discussions (link).

Looking forward to seeing your projects!

# 5

## Intelligent Agents

Intelligent agents allows you to create customized messages based on student activity/lack of activity in the course site. These little encouraging messages (text, audio, or video) can go a long way to help students remain engaged in the course (e.g. have not logged into the site by set date, missed a deadline, or to celebrate student achievement on an assessment).

### Strategies:

- **Acknowledge Critical Activity/Dates:** Identify the components that are critical for student success in the course, and create an intelligent agent for them (e.g. last day to drop the course, assessment linked to a troublesome topic, or grade on a mid-term).

### Supporting resources:

1. [Intelligent Agents Guide](#)

2. Sample messages

**Agent due to lack of course activity:**

Hi Susan,

Our records indicate that you haven't logged in to your Sample Course 101 course in more than 5 days.

Remember it is important to keep in regular contact and to set aside time every few days to login and work on your course. If there are reasons that you haven't been able to login, then please contact me right away (use janedoe@mun.ca or the Brightspace email – replying to this message will not work).

I hope to hear from you soon.

Jane

**Agent to recognized achievement:**

Hello Eric,

Everyone should be recognized for their outstanding efforts, and you just got an A on the last test! Congratulations and keep up the great work!

Jane

**Have more questions about Brightspace?  
Contact CITL's Support Centre.**

**[citl.mun.ca/support](https://citl.mun.ca/support)**



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