

University of Saskatchewan: Canvas Course Checklist

How to Use: This checklist is broken into four major components of course design. Within each component, there are criteria related to designing learning that are based on educational research. The left-hand row indicates the degree of importance of each criterion.

- ★ (1-star) indicates an **Essential** and standard design component
- ★★ (2-star) items are considered **Best Practice** and add value to a course
- ★★★ (3-star) items are **Exemplary** and elevate learning

Your goal should be able to check **Yes for every Essential criterion** and to be able to check Yes for numerous other criteria.

Criteria are tagged to indicate how they support achievement of the *USask Learning Technology Ecosystem Principles (ULTEP)* and *Universal Design for Learning Guidelines (UDL)*.

For assistance in achieving the various criteria in your course(s), please review the hyperlinked resources inside the table or email gmctl@usask.ca with a request.

A. Syllabus, Course Information, & Navigation	
★ Essential ★★ Best Practice ★★★ Exemplary	
Yes ✓	Criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Course syllabus is posted within the Syllabus menu item. Syllabus contains the required information from the academic courses policy. USask - Syllabus Template and Guide
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Course Navigation menu is clear and consistent. Pages and Files menu items are hidden unless they are intended to be directly accessed by students. Other items not used in this course are hidden. Canvas Guide - Navigation Links 📌 ULTEP 6 Efficient and easy to use 📌 UDL 7.3 Minimize threats and distractions
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Instructor has provided key learning information such as learning outcomes as well as course materials, supplemental textbooks, and reading lists. 📌 UDL 8.1 Heighten salience of goals and objectives
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Instructor has provided class expectations such as participation rules, etiquette expectations, code of conduct; policies for grading, late work and make-up work; and technology requirements . USask - Remote Teaching Netiquette Guide
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Instructor has provided contact information which may include biography, availability information, communication preferences (e.g., using email or Canvas Inbox), response time, picture, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Student Groups within the course include the name of the course in the Group Set name (e.g., groups are named “Math 101 Project Group” instead of only “Project Group”). 📌 ULTEP 6 Efficient and easy to use

<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Home Page provides visual representation of course; a brief course description or introduction; clear instructions for students (e.g., where to begin) and quick and easy navigation to content. UDL 2.5 Illustrate through multiple media ULTEP 6 Efficient and easy to use
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Course card on Dashboard provides visual representation of the subject by adding an image in Course Settings. Canvas Guide - Add Image to Course Card UDL 2.5 Illustrate through multiple media
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Course contains information and links to institutional resources (e.g. Library, Student Learning Services).
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Course syllabus has a welcoming and supportive tone, including acknowledging challenging circumstances that the course may be offered during (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic).
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	An introductory video provides an overview of the course design and instructions on how to efficiently navigate the course tools.

B. Course Content

★ Essential ★★ Best Practice ★★★ Exemplary

Yes ✓	Criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Copyright law is followed. USask - Copyright for Online Teaching
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	All links, files, videos, and external URLs are active and working. Panopto video sharing settings allow access to students registered in this course. Canvas Guide - Link Validation USask - Panopto
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Learning activities include student-student interaction to foster a sense of community (e.g. discussions, collaborations, and peer review). ULTEP 7 Designed to enable connection ULTEP 2 Active and Social
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Learning activities include student-teacher interaction (e.g. discussions, SpeedGrader annotations, written, audio, or feedback on assignments). ULTEP 7 Designed to enable connection ULTEP 2 Active and Social
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Content is "chunked" and sequenced into manageable pieces by leveraging modules and pages (e.g. organized by units, chapters, topic, or weeks). Canvas Guide - Modules UDL 3.3 Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Unused items from a course import or migration (e.g. from Blackboard) have been hidden or removed.
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Learning activities include student-content interaction (e.g. question prompts or quizzes along with readings and videos) and provide opportunities for self-assessment. ULTEP 3 Designed for reflection and growth ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Media components (e.g. videos) are chunked into shorter videos no more than 10 minutes length.

<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	There is a “Welcome” or “Introductions” discussion to build a sense of community and establish rapport. Instructors participate in the discussion. ULTEP 7 Designed to enable connection
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Modules and items within modules have a thoughtful naming convention (e.g. name the module “Chapter 1: Genetics,” not just “Chapter 1”). UDL 2.2 Clarify syntax and structure
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Modules begin with an Overview page and end with a Summary page to “ bookend ” each module. UDL 3.1 Activate or supply background knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Modules include prompts or activities/quizzes to activate students’ prior knowledge on the topic before presenting new content. ULTEP 3 Designed for reflection and growth
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Modules include learning outcomes or objectives to help students focus their learning. ULTEP 3 Designed for reflection and growth
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Text headers and indentation are included within modules to help guide student navigation. Canvas Guide - Add Text Header UDL 2.2 Clarify syntax and structure
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Module completion requirements and/or prerequisites are utilized to provide course structure, pacing and flow. Module locking is only used for practical or pedagogical reasons. Canvas Guide - Adding Prerequisites UDL 3.3 Guide information processing and visualization
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Opportunities for students to provide feedback on the course are available to students during the course.
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Auto-open Inline Preview of documents is used thoughtfully. Canvas Guide - Auto-open for Inline Preview
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	MasteryPaths are included to differentiate learning paths for students. Canvas Guide - MasteryPaths UDL 7.2 Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity

C. Assessment of Student Learning

★ Essential ★★ Best Practice ★★★ Exemplary

Yes ✓	Criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Assessments that require a student submission are built using the Assignment tool . Transparent assignment instructions and necessary files are included in the same place. Canvas Guide - Assignments ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Various assessments are used (e.g. discussions, file upload assignments, quizzes) to increase learner engagement and promote active learning. UDL 4.1 Vary the methods for response and navigation
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Low-stakes (formative) assessments (e.g. surveys, quizzes, discussions) occur frequently throughout the course to measure knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These occur before high-stakes assessments. ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	High-stakes (summative) assessments are clearly aligned with stated learning outcomes. ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment

<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Assessments include the ability for graders to use SpeedGrader to score and provide prompt and high-quality feedback. Canvas Guide - SpeedGrader 🗎 UDL 8.4 Increase mastery-oriented feedback
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Assessment activities (e.g. discussions, assignments) are included in-line with other content within Modules. 🗎 ULTEP 6 Efficient and easy to use
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Rubrics are provided and are used to assess assignments and/or discussions. Canvas Guide - Rubrics 🗎 ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Assessments include opportunities for students to retake or resubmit after receiving feedback (from peers, TAs, instructors). 🗎 ULTEP 3 Designed for reflection and growth 🗎 ULTEP 4 Designed for students who are remixing and/or creating 🗎 ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Assignments area uses Assignment Groups to assist students in tracking progress (e.g. using What-If). Other assessments that do not require an online student submission are also included with due dates and weights. Canvas Guide - Assignment Groups 🗎 ULTEP 3 Designed for reflection and growth
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Sample assignments are provided to illustrate instructor expectations. 🗎 UDL 5.3 Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance 🗎 ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Rules within Assignments Groups are set up to allow students flexibility and choice in the assessments they complete (e.g, automatically drop the lowest score). Canvas Guide - Assignment Groups Rules 🗎 ULTEP 5 Designed for student control and ownership of learning
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Practice quizzes include automated feedback to support student learning. 🗎 ULTEP 3 Designed for reflection and growth
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Canvas Outcomes are created and aligned to assessments. Canvas Guide - Outcomes . 🗎 UDL 8.1 Heighten salience of goals and objectives
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Rubrics are created using created Canvas Outcomes as the criteria. Canvas Guide - Align Outcomes with a Rubric 🗎 ULTEP 8 Inclusive of learning-centered assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★★	Learning Mastery Gradebook is enabled to allow both students and instructors to monitor progress in relation to the Outcomes. Canvas Guide - Learning Mastery Gradebook

D. Course Accessibility

★ Essential ★★ Best Practice ★★★ Exemplary

Yes ✓	Criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Tools are used to identify and correct accessibility issues within the course. Canvas Guide - Accessibility Checker 🗎 UDL 7.3 Minimize threats and distractions 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Colour enhances the aesthetic appeal and effectiveness of the course; sufficient contrast between text and background makes information easy to read; and color is not used in isolation to convey meaning. Canvas Guide - Accessibility Checker 🗎 UDL 7.3 Minimize threats and distractions 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible

<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Images are used to support course content (e.g., banners, headings, and icons) and are accompanied by text descriptions (Alt text) or captions for more complex descriptions. Canvas Guide - General Accessibility Design Guidelines 🗎 UDL 1.3 Offer alternatives for visual information 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible
<input type="checkbox"/> ★	Styles (e.g. Paragraph, Headings, etc.) are used to format text. Canvas Guide - General Accessibility Design Guidelines 🗎 UDL 4.2 Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Hyperlink text incorporates the hyperlink destination/purpose (e.g., avoid raw URLs) and includes words and phrases to provide context for screen-readers (e.g., use “Canvas Guide - Hyperlink” rather than “Canvas Guide”). WebAim - Introduction to Links and Hypertext 🗎 UDL 4.2 Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Audio materials are accompanied by a transcript and Videos are closed-captioned. Panopto - Import Automatic Captions 🗎 UDL 1.2 Offer alternatives for auditory information 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible
<input type="checkbox"/> ★★	Tables are used appropriately and are accessible. 🗎 ULTEP 1 Accessible

Resources

- Baldwin, S., Ching, Y.-H., & Hsu, Y.-C. (2018). Online course design in higher education: A review of national and statewide evaluation instruments. *TechTrends*, 62(3), 46-57. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-017-0215-z>
- Baldwin, S., & Ching, Y.-H. (2019). Online course design: A review of the Canvas course evaluation checklist. *International Review of Research in Open & Distributed Learning*, 20(3), 268-282. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v20i3.4283>
- Best practices for building Universal Design principles into your Canvas courses. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.sfu.ca/canvas/instructors/universal-design/building_udl_into_canvas.html
- CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. Retrieved from <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
- Moore, E. (2017, October 16). Implementing Universal Design for Learning on Canvas. Retrieved from <https://community.canvaslms.com/groups/designers/blog/2017/10/16/implementing-universal-design-for-learning-on-canvas>
- Online Course Best Practices Checklist. (2012). Retrieved from <https://www2.palomar.edu/poet/BestPracticesChecklistSP1>

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