

# NWFSC ONLINE FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

## Required Elements in NWFSC Online Courses

Please review the following checklist of requirements for online courses in Canvas:

### SYLLABUS

- Use the official syllabus template from Academic Affairs available [here](#).
- Complete all required sections of the template.

### GRADING

- Set up the Canvas gradebook with all assignments and assessments.
- Align gradebook categories and weights with the course grading policy.

**Reminder:** You must keep your gradebook updated so students can see an accurate point in time grade. Their grade should always reflect the points or percentage earned out of the total points available at that moment in the course.

### INSTRUCTOR PRESENCE

- Add a professional photo to your Canvas profile.
- Provide an instructor introduction (video with captions, written message, announcement, or homepage introduction).

### GETTING STARTED INFORMATION

- Provide clear instructions on how to begin the course.
- Ensure course navigation is easy for students.
- Post as a Getting Started module, announcement, or homepage message.

### ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

- Clearly state learner interaction expectations.
- Include at least one peer-to-peer engagement opportunity (discussion, group activity, etc.).

**Note:** Provide regular and substantive interaction through consistent instructor presence, proactive outreach, and timely academic feedback.

### ACCESSIBILITY & STUDENT SUPPORT

- Ensure all course materials are accessible and meet at least 90% UDOIT score.
- Publish course content for student access.
- Include technical, academic, and accommodations support information.

**Note:** A minimum score of 90% is required before publishing your course for student access. If your course is below 100%, you must have a plan in place to work with an instructional designer to reach full compliance by the end of the first week of the term.

# ONLINE COURSE ELEMENTS

## DETAILED OVERVIEW

### Support & Canvas Training

CITL offers one-on-one assistance, training sessions, and video tutorials to help faculty meet these standards. For additional support, contact the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) at [online@nwfsc.edu](mailto:online@nwfsc.edu) or 850.729.6464.

## SYLLABUS

**POST YOUR SYLLABUS AS ONE OF THE FIRST ITEMS IN YOUR COURSE. USE THE OFFICIAL ACADEMIC AFFAIRS SYLLABUS TEMPLATE AND COMPLETE ALL REQUIRED SECTIONS. THE SYLLABUS SHOULD ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING:**

- Reflect the approved course description and learning outcomes.
- Include a clear grading policy that matches your Canvas gradebook.
- Contain required institutional statements, including the proctoring statement and attendance policy.
- Provide current instructor contact information and communication expectations.

## GRADING

**YOUR CANVAS GRADEBOOK MUST ACCURATELY REFLECT THE GRADING POLICY IN YOUR SYLLABUS. ENSURE THE FOLLOWING:**

- All assignments and assessments are entered in the gradebook and properly weighted.
- Late work, make-up, and extra credit policies are clearly explained in both the syllabus and course.
- **Reminder:** Per the Faculty Handbook, you must keep grades up to date throughout the term so students can accurately track their performance in the course.

## INSTRUCTOR PRESENCE

**ESTABLISH YOUR PRESENCE EARLY TO HELP STUDENTS FEEL CONNECTED AND SUPPORTED.**

- Add a professional photo to your Canvas profile for easy recognition.
- Provide an introduction in the course – this may be a video with captions, a written message, an announcement, or a personalized note on the home page.
- Maintain regular communication and visibility throughout the term through announcements, feedback, or discussion participation.

## GETTING STARTED INFORMATION

### **GUIDE STUDENTS ON HOW TO BEGIN THE COURSE AND LOCATE ESSENTIAL MATERIALS.**

- Post clear instructions for how to start working in the course and access key items like the syllabus and first assignments.
- The “Getting Started” content may appear as a module, announcement, or home page message – whichever fits your course design best.
- Ensure the navigation is intuitive and that students can easily locate materials and support information.

## ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

### **ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT PROMOTES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND SUPPORTS STUDENT LEARNING.**

- Clearly communicate your expectations for interaction, including frequency of participation, quality of responses, and netiquette guidelines.
- Include at least one peer-to-peer engagement opportunity, such as a discussion post, group project, or collaborative activity.
- Online courses must include regular and substantive interaction to meet US Department of Education expectations. Instructors are expected to provide predictable and regularly scheduled interaction, initiate communication that guides students through the course, and reach out proactively when support is needed. Regular and substantive interaction also includes offering timely and meaningful academic feedback and engaging students in activities that relate directly to the course content.

## ACCESSIBILITY & SUPPORT

### **ALL COURSE MATERIALS MUST BE USABLE AND SUPPORTIVE FOR EVERY STUDENT.**

- Ensure all content meets at least a 90% accessibility score before publishing the course using the UDOIT Accessibility Checker.
- If your course is below 100%, you should have a plan in place to work with an instructional designer to reach full compliance by the end of the first week of the term.
- Add alt text for images, captions for videos, and use accessible document formats.
- Publish your course and all relevant materials before the first day of class.
- Provide information on technical, academic, and accommodations support, which is available through the pre-loaded “Welcome to NWF” area or your syllabus.