

‘Top 5 Canvas Course Design Must-Haves’

	1 - Clean Look	Benefits
1	<p>Home Page is designed with few elements, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Instructor’s name and brief welcome message ★ Visual representation of instructor (e.g. brief personal video introduction, or a headshot) ★ ‘Start Here’ and navigation to modules 	Feeling welcome, knowing how to navigate the course (Start Here), and where to find weekly content (link to modules) are key elements for student success in online classes.
	2 - Good Use of Canvas Structure	Benefits
2	<p>Modules are used as a ‘table of contents’ to present “shortcuts” to files, assignments, discussions, quizzes, reading lists, and other resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Course content is organized by weeks, units, etc. ★ A module for faculty bio, syllabus, mandatory program resources, etc. is called ‘Start Here’ and has a direct link from the home page 	A module for each week provides a way for students to see, at a glance, what will be expected of them. They also serve as guides for how students move through a unit’s content and activities.
	3 - Clear and Consistent Organization	Benefits
3	<p>Each module provides the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Learning Outcomes ★ Task list ★ Introduction/Overview in the beginning and a Conclusion/Summary page at the end 	‘Learning Outcomes’ provide adult learners a concrete way to measure learning; a ‘Task List’ helps them organize their time, and a ‘Conclusion’ page “bookends” each module.
	4 - Easy Navigation	Benefits
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Modules and items within modules have a thoughtful naming convention (e.g. “Week 1: Introduction to Geography” not just “Week 1”) ★ All links, files, videos and external URLs are active and working ★ Unused items are hidden from Course Navigation 	The faster the student is able to find and identify items within the course, the more satisfied and, consequently, the more engaged with the content the student will be.
	5 - Accessible to All Students	Benefits
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Blackboard Ally accessibility scores of 90% or more ★ Text is formatted using Rich Content Editor (e.g. use of headings and paragraphs, ordered lists, etc.) ★ Accessibility Checker within the Rich Content Editor is used ★ Images are used to support course content and accompanied by text descriptions (Alt text) ★ Videos include captions or have a transcript 	Student success , regardless of ability, is possible by providing course materials that are accessible to all students. Assistive technology devices or software should be able to interact/ access content effectively if Canvas documents are accessible.