Guide to the SON Canvas Template Package

Contents

Getting Started

The purpose of the template is to provide consistency across courses so that students know where to go and what to do, reducing the cognitive load associated with logistics and navigation, preserving it for coursework.

The Canvas template has four main components:

- A course homepage
- A Start Here Module
- A Course Resources and Materials Module
- A Learning Module
    - An overview page
    - A content page
    - Learning activities/assessments

There is also an unpublished page in the course called " 💡 Template Tips," which includes some additional information about using the template.

Always import the entire "package" into each course. It is not possible to "copy/paste" content from one course to another in Canvas. This causes broken images and links for students, even when they look fine and work for you. The template "package" includes all images, including buttons, icons, and banners, that are a part of the template in the course files. Once you have applied the template to a course, it can then be imported from the next semester's shell in its entirety.

If you would like a development course to start working on applying the template to future courses, please contact Audrey Bryk-Lee (albrykle@uncg.edu).

Important Disclaimer: This is a general guide to how this process will work in most cases. When you import your own unique course content, you may have settings in place that affect the process or available options in various ways. If you run into this situation and it looks/works differently compared to what you are seeing here and you are unsure how to proceed, please reach out!
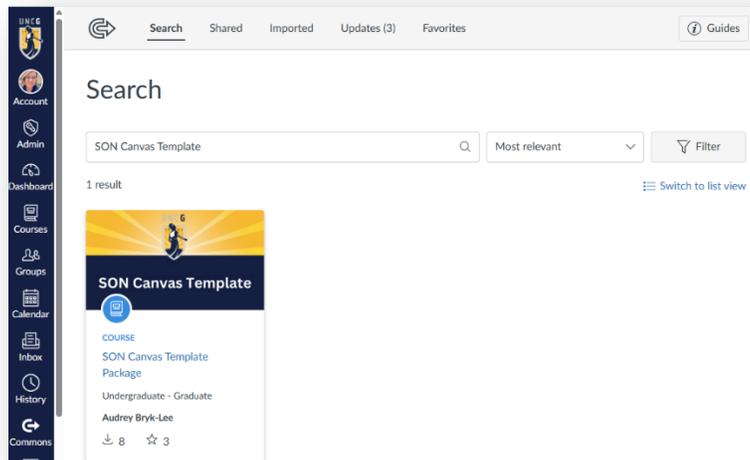
Step 1: Import the SON Canvas Template Package

Add the template to the empty shell.
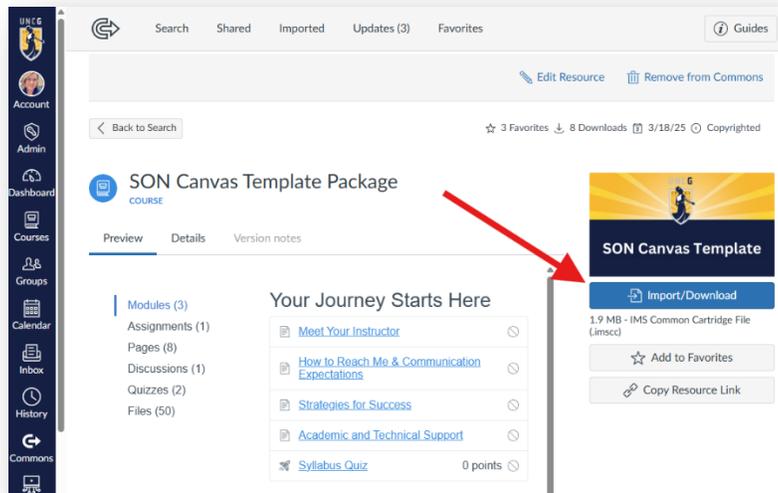
1. Login to Canvas.

2. Click **Commons** from the global navigation bar on the far left.
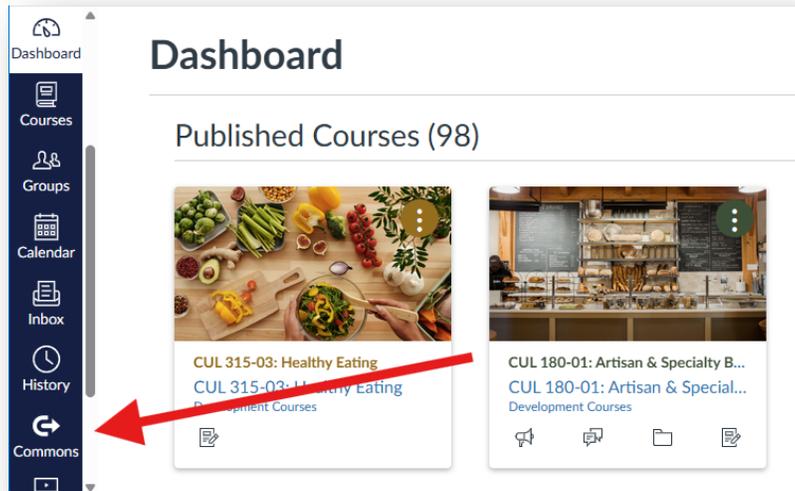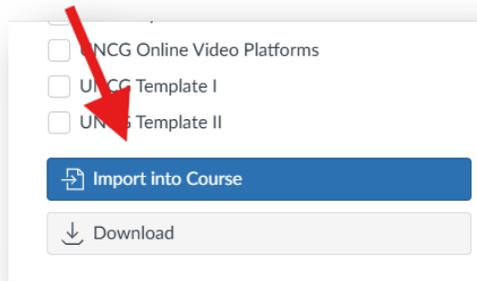

3. Search for the "SON Canvas Template Package." You can also search for it by the author's name, Audrey Bryk-Lee, which may be easier to remember in the future.

4. Click the name of the course.
5. Click **Import/Download**.

6. Search for the Canvas course to which you would like to add the template or select it from the list.

7. Scroll to the bottom and click **Import into Course**.

You should then see a message -

You have successfully started the import! It may take a little while to see changes in your course.
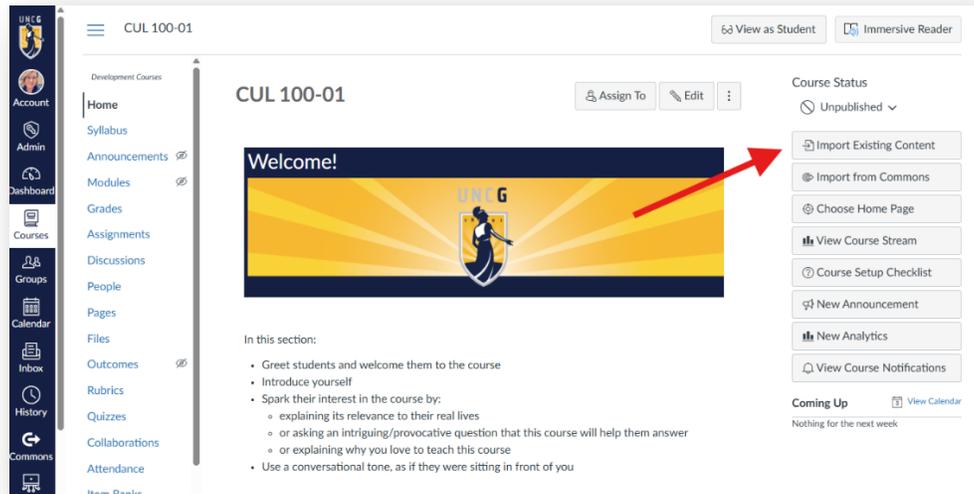
Step 2: Import Course Content

Next, add your course content. If you are developing a brand-new course, you can skip this step.

1. Navigate to the course.

2. From the course homepage, click **Import Existing Content**.

3. From the "Select Content Type" drop-down menu, select **Copy a Canvas Course**.
4. Start typing the name of the course you'd like to copy in the "Search for a course *" field.
5. Decide if you would like to import all content or select specific content. If you have a lot of excess in your course, now is a great time address that by selecting only the content you wish to continue using with your students to integrate into the template format.
6. Click **+Add Import to Queue**. You can monitor the import progress from this screen.

Step 3: Adapt Learning Modules to Template Format

If you imported the template package first, you should see the template modules at the top of the modules page, followed by your course content modules.

There are two different approaches to this step:

A. Duplicate the template Learning Module as many times as needed and then add relevant items to the new modules.
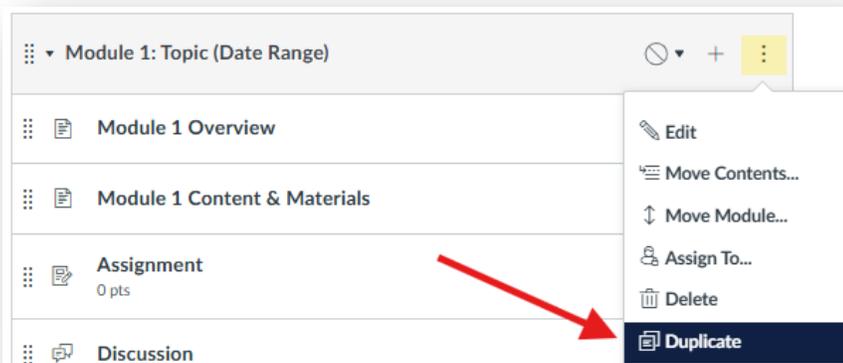
B. Or, adapt each of your original modules to the template format and structure using the template Learning Module as an example.

If you are developing a course from scratch or have never used modules before (students had to navigate to "Assignments," "Files," etc. to locate items in the course), it will be easiest to use the first option.

In many cases, the second option will work great! Especially if you already have time-based modules ("Week One," "Week Two," etc.).

In either case, ensure:

- The module name includes the topic and a date range
- The activities that students complete within that time period appear in chronological order

Step 4: Adapt Activity Instructions

The template uses the TILT Framework to set students up for success on their coursework (assignments, quizzes, etc.) by clearly indicating the purpose, task, and criteria.

- The "Purpose" section should connect the assignment to the learning outcome(s), why the knowledge/skills are important and valuable, and how they transfer to contexts outside the classroom (their "real" lives).
- The "Task" section should word assignment instructions in terms of what actions the student will take to successfully complete the assignment.
- Ideally, the criteria will include a detailed rubric. It can also include examples and non-examples as well as how the assignment contributes to their overall grade for the course.

If you have imported the template package into your course, you can safely copy the content from the template assignment and paste it into your existing activities' instructions.

Step 5: Adapt Presentation of Content

"Content" includes anything students will consume (read, review, watch, etc.) to build their knowledge base and prepare for class and/or activities. It can include articles, eBooks, recorded lectures, tutorials, documentaries, websites, and more! For this template, items of this nature are consolidated onto one page, which is the second item in the module.

Module 1 Content

Readings

1. Read part four - "Motivation and Human Development in Families, Schools, and Societies" in Self-Determination Theory : Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness ➥

2. Review this article - Cognitive Load Theory and Its Relationships with Motivation: a Self-Determination Theory Perspective ➥ - from Educational Psychology Review

Videos

The free, self-paced course Introduction to Self-Determination Theory: An approach to motivation, development and wellness ➥ is not required but includes many helpful videos where Dr. Richard Ryan, who developed the theory, provides real world examples of SDT in action. Refer to these to clarify concepts as needed.

Additional Resources

Bookmark this article as a quick reference in the future: Self Determination Theory and How It Explains Motivation ➥

Duplicate Content Page

You can duplicate the "Module 1 Content" page from the template package as needed so you will have one for each learning module in your course.

- From the "Modules" page in your course, click the three-dot menu to the right of the page name, then select **Duplicate**.
- Use the handlebars (four rows of two dots on the far left) to click and drag it into place in the correct module.
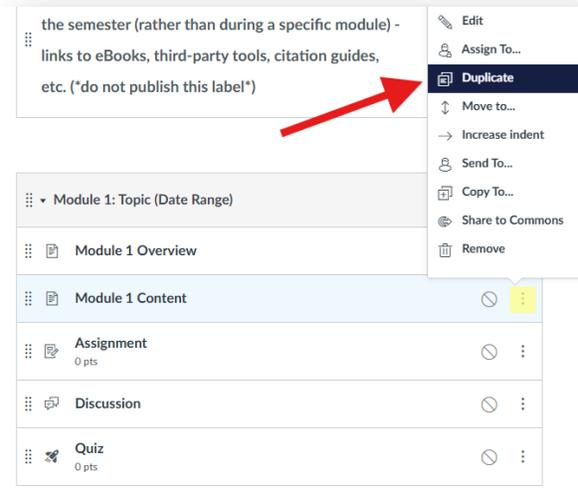
Copy/Paste Page Content

You can also safely copy/paste the contents from the template page **within the same course**. So, if you already have "Content" pages in each module, rather than duplicating the page, you can copy (Ctrl+C) the content of the "Module 1 Content page" and paste it onto each exiting content page to reformat the page in the style of the template.

Personalize the Headings and Icons

If the headings do not exactly reflect your content, that's okay! Adapt them as needed, keeping the format and structure in place. You can find additional icons to pair with headings by click the **Images** button in the Rich Content Editor, and then selecting **Course Images**.
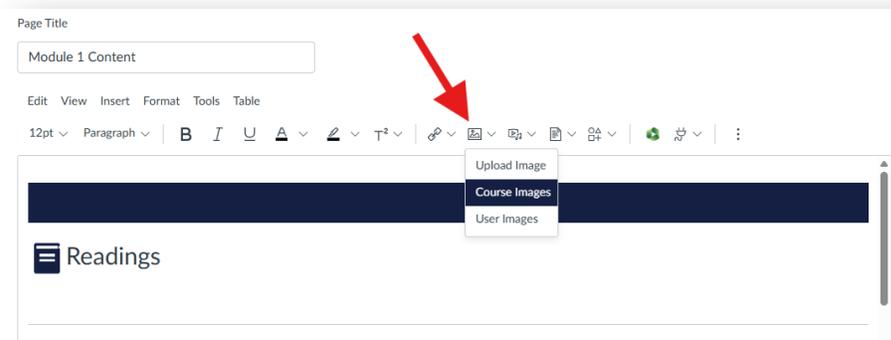
A panel of images from the course files will appear. Review the options and select the one that will be most relevant to your needs.
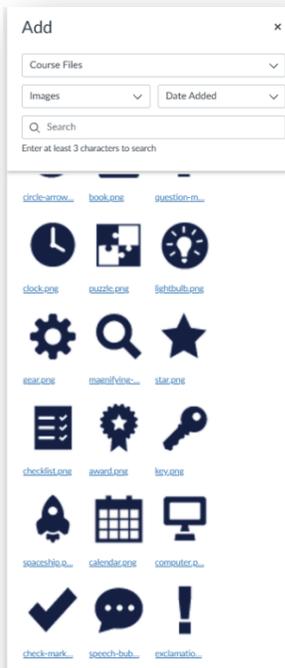
Be sure to mark the image as "decorative" for accessibility (click the image > **Image Options**).

When adding a heading next to the icon, use the **Heading 2** style from the dropdown menu. This will keep the font size consistent *and* make your page accessible!
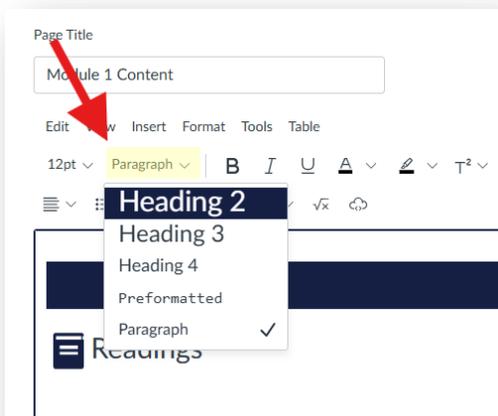
Provide Context

Provide context when presenting content items to students. Consider what you would say about it if they were sitting in front of you, and include that (e.g., What is it? Why is it here? How should they use it? When will they need it? Should they read it closely or review it? etc.).

> **Non-example:** [Introduction to Self-Determination Theory: An approach to motivation, development and wellness](#)
>
> **Example:** The free, self-paced course [Introduction to Self-Determination Theory: An approach to motivation, development and wellness](#) is not required but includes many helpful videos where Dr. Richard Ryan, who developed the theory, provides real world examples of SDT in action. Refer to these to clarify concepts as needed.

Identify Course-Level Materials

As you are doing this work, keep an eye out for anything that might be a good fit for the "Course Resources and Materials" module. For example, if you include a link to an eBook in your Week Two module and expect students to refer to it again in weeks four, six, and nine, you can house it in the "Course Resources and Materials" module, and provide a link to it here.

Step 6: Create the Module Overview Page

Once you have the module's activities and "Content" page in place, you can write your module overview page.
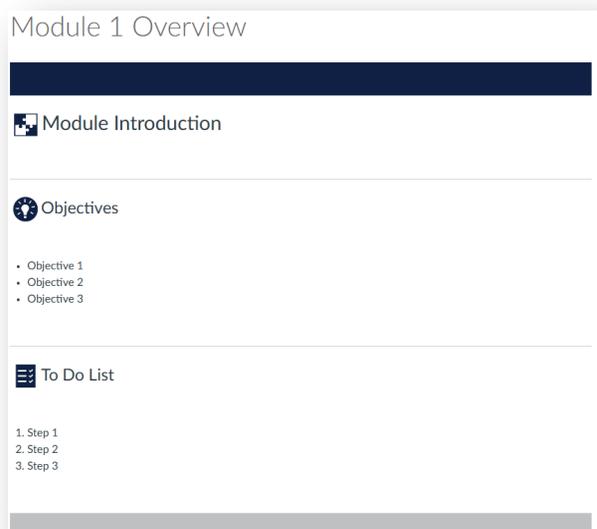
- Use the introduction to gain students' attention and stimulate recall of prior knowledge. Ideas:
  - Use novelty or a surprising fact
  - Ask a question that this module's content will help them answer
  - Link to a related story in the news that will grab their attention
  - Or even share a meme!
- The module objectives should connect to course-level learning outcomes and indicate what is expected of students by the end of this discreet unit.
- The To Do List should provide students with a checklist of what they need to accomplish during this discreet unit.

Copy/Paste Content

If you already have a page for this in each module, simply copy the content from the template "Module 1 Overview" page and paste it onto that page, moving any existing content into place and filling in any gaps as needed.

Duplicate Page

Otherwise, you can duplicate the template page as many times as needed:

- From the "Modules" page in your course, click the three-dot menu to the right of the page name, then select **Duplicate**.
- Use the handlebars (four rows of two dots on the far left) to click and drag it into place in the correct module.
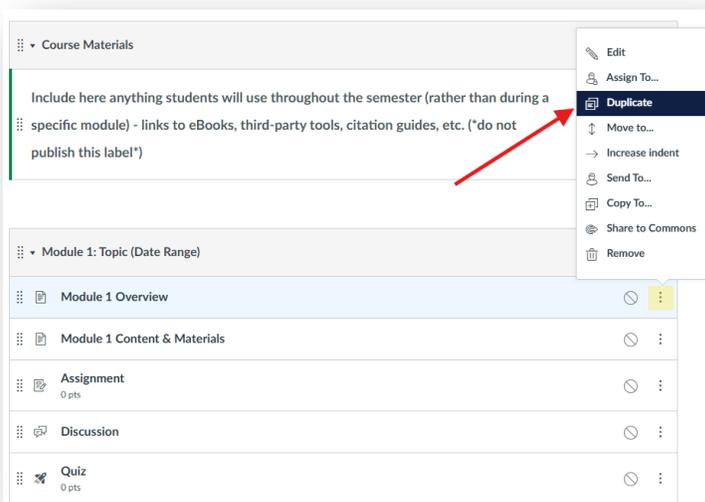
Step 7: Add the Syllabus

For consistency across courses, use the **Syllabus** link in course navigation to locate the page where you will upload your syllabus. The "Syllabus" button on the course homepage links to this "Syllabus" page. You must add your syllabus here for that button to work.
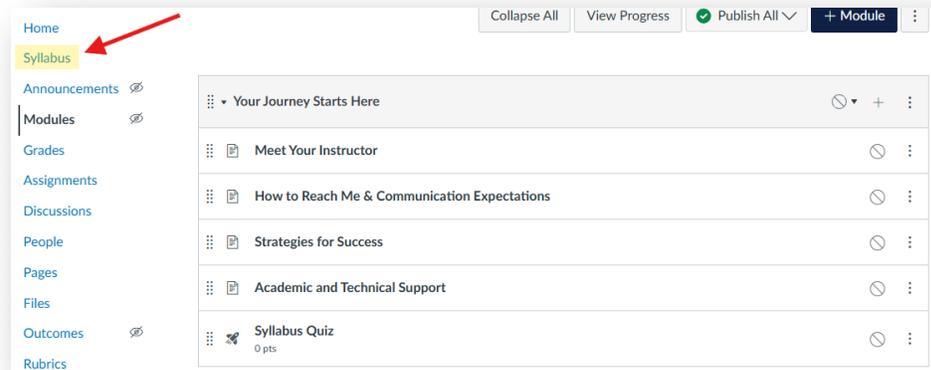
You can add your syllabus content directly to the content editor, or use the **Documents** button to add a file to this page.
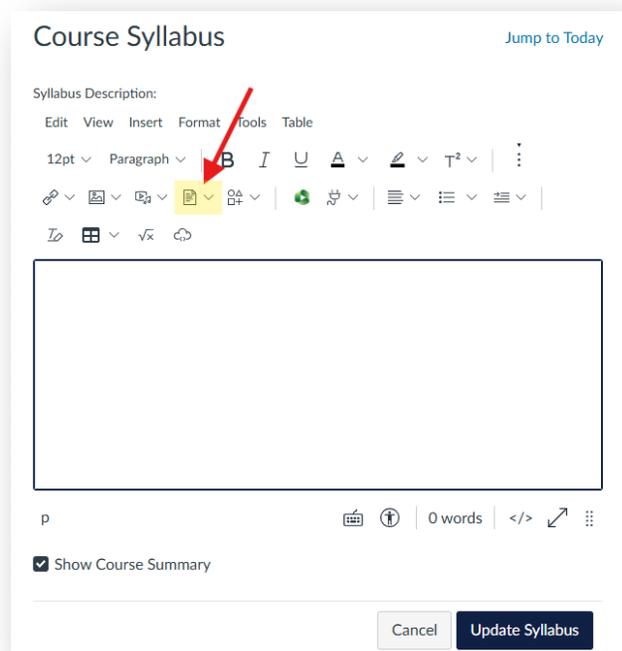
You can also use the OneDrive integration to embed your syllabus (**Apps** button > **Microsoft OneDrive**). Note that this creates a new copy of the file for this course. You must return here to make any edits (rather than the original file in your OneDrive).
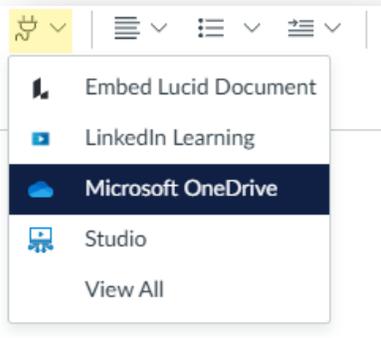
Step 8: Create "Start Here" Content

The "Your Journey Starts Here" module includes pages as *suggestions* of topics you might want to include to get your students off to a successful start in your course. Move any existing introductory content in your course to this module.

The template pages here are *empty* and must either be updated with your own personalized content or deleted.

Important: The "About Your Instructor" button on the course homepage links to the "Meet Your Instructor" page in this module. Please complete and publish this page. OR you must remember to delete *both* the page *and* the button on the course homepage.

Step 9: Add Content to the "Course Resources and Materials" Module

If you have links to eBooks, third-party tools, citation guides, etc. that students will use *throughout the semester*, rather than only during a specific learning module, move them into the "Course Resources and Materials" module.

How do you know if an item should go into the "Your Journey Starts Here" module or the "Course Resources and Materials" module?

- If it is about course logistics, a campus resource, or in support of their general success, put it in the "Your Journey Starts Here" module.
- If it's introductory or something they'll use *once* at the start of the semester, it should go in the "Your Journey Starts Here" module.
- If it's course content or something they will use to complete coursework, it goes in the "Course Resources and Materials" module. Ask yourself, does this support the achievement of a learning outcome or completion of assignments?

Step 10: Personalize Course Homepage

Depending on the content you imported, you may or may see the template homepage when you click **Home** from the course navigation. If you do see it, you can skip to Replace Prompts with Your Content.

If you do *not* see this page when you click **Home**:

- From the course navigation, click **Pages**.
  - You may need to click **View All Pages** from the top of the page that appears.
- Locate the page called "Course Homepage" and click the three-dot menu.
- Select **Use as Front Page.**

- Click **Home** from the course navigation.
- From the buttons on the course homepage, click **Choose Home Page**.

- Select **Pages Front Page** and click **Save**.
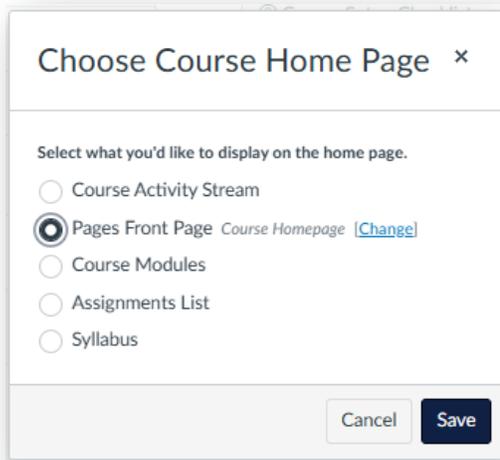
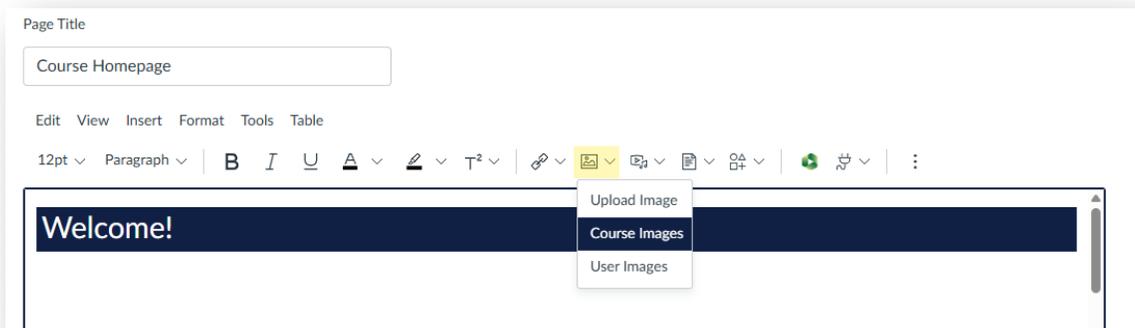

Replace Prompts with Your Content

Click **Edit** at the top of the page to replace the prompts in each section with your own content.

Replace Banner Image

If desired, you can replace the banner image at the top with one of the other options:

- Delete the banner that's there.
- Click the **Images** button and select **Course Images**.

- A panel will open on the right. Search for "Banner" to see the available options, and click the one you want to use.
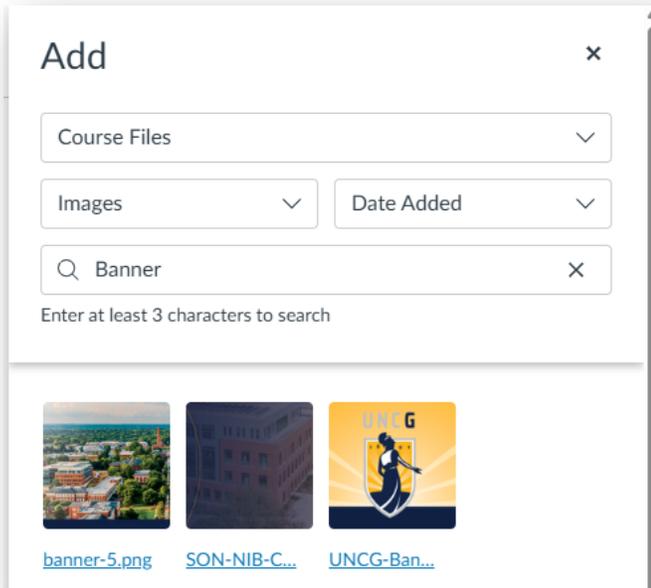
- Click the image and select **Image Options** to mark the image decorative for accessibility.

Add Additional Buttons

If desired, you can add additional buttons at the bottom of the page. All possible button images are stored in the course files.

- Place the cursor where you would like to add a new button (e.g., after the "Modules" button at the bottom of the page).
- Click **Images.**
- Select **Course Images**.
- Search for "Button" to see the available options and click on the one you want to add.
- Once it's on the page, click the image and select **Image Options** to add alt text for accessibility. A button *must* have meaningful alt text (do not select "decorative" for a button). It can simply be the word on the button. For example, the Syllabus button has "Syllabus" alt text.

- Select the image again to add a link. Click **Links** (button that looks like a chain link).
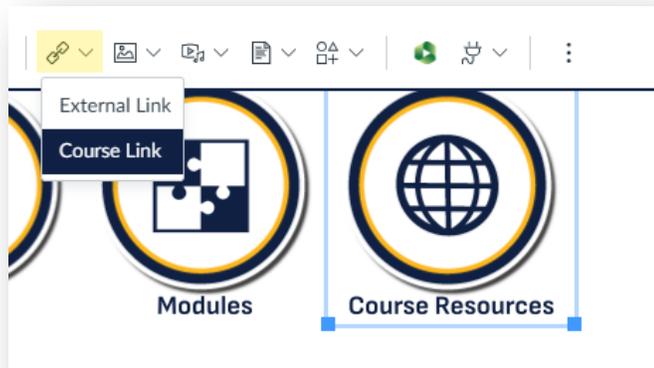
  - This will most likely be a **Course Link**. When you click this, a panel will appear on the right where you can select a course item to link to.
  - If it's to a resource *outside* of Canvas, select **External Link** and paste the URL in the field.
  - Note: a "button" in Canvas is simply an image that links to something. If you skip this step, the button will not work.

Step 11: Publish Content

The only published item in the template is the course homepage. All other content must be published before students will be able to see it. Keep in mind that a published item in an *unpublished module* will not be available to students. The item *and* the module must be published.

Unpublished (nothing visible to students):

Published (everything visible to students):

Unpublished Module (nothing visible to students):

Step 12: Review Course in Student View

Before publishing the course from the course homepage, click **View as Student** to perform a quality control check.
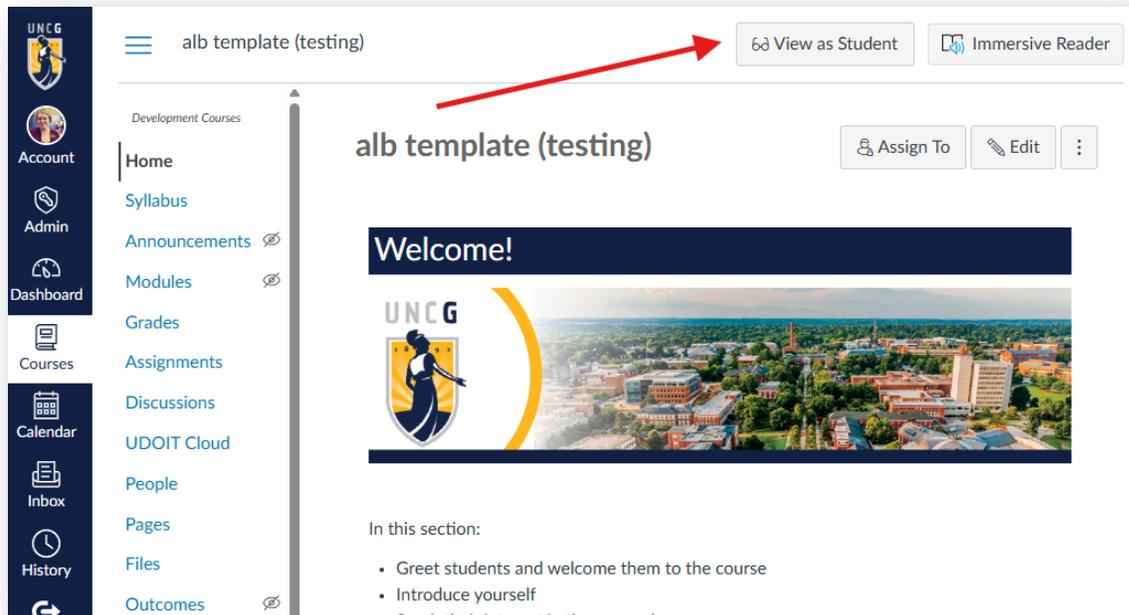
Put your "student hat" on and try to view and use the course as a student would to ensure everything is making sense and working as expected.

Additional Quality Control Measures

- To run a check for broken links in the course, go to **Settings** and click **Validate Links in Content** on the right.
- If you have inherited this course from another instructor, add **Smart Search** to search for their name to find any instances where you may need to make updates (**Settings** > **Feature Options** tab > toggle **Smart Search** to "enabled").
- To quickly check and update due dates in one spot, go to **Assignments** in the course and click the 3-dot button in the top right. Select **Edit Assignment Dates**. All due dates in the course will appear in a list that you can review and update as needed.

Support

Contact UTLC@uncg.edu or your ATS if you need any support.