Personalizing Your Course in Canvas

Personalizing your course helps to create an inviting online course environment that engages students. The Social Presence Theory focuses on the awareness and interaction that occurs amongst people (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976). They (1976) noted that the use of media assists in the development of a social presence, which is interpreted as sociable, warm, personal, and sensitive. Developing a welcome message is one way to define your social presence in your course and connect with your students (Aragon, 2003). Creating an engaging learning environment can increase student satisfaction and build a community of learners (Richardson & Swan, 2003). Below are tips to help you develop the social presence in your course.

Editing Your Settings

To create a personal feel to your posts and responses, add a profile picture.

**Step 1:** On the Canvas home page, click on **Settings** located in the upper right corner of the screen.

**Step 2:** Next, on the center of the screen, to the left of your name, click on the **Placeholder Image**.

**Step 3:** Click on **choose a picture**. Navigate on your computer to find your picture and click **Save**.
Now your image will display throughout Canvas helping to give your interactions a personal touch.

**Customizing the Home Page on Canvas Courses**

Canvas allows you to design a personal homepage to welcome your students and display important course information.

**Step 1:** On the Canvas Main Home Page, hover the mouse and click on **Courses**.

**Step 2:** Under Courses, select the course you would like to personalize.
Step 3: Now you are on the home page of the course you selected. From the right pane, click on Choose Home Page.

Step 4: Now click on Pages Front Page from the pop up window as shown in the image below. Then, click Save button:
Step 5: Click on **Pages** link from left pane.

Step 6: Click on + **Page** button as shown in below image.

Step 7: You will now see a text box as shown below. Add title and add information to this page:
Creating a Welcome Video for a Course Home Page

Canvas allows you to record or upload media. The steps below describe how to access the media tool and Option 1: Record Media or Option 2: Upload Media.

**Step 1:** On the course home page, click **Edit this Page** on the right-hand panel.

**Step 2:** On the toolbar, click on the **Movie Reel Icon** to Record or Upload Media.
Option 1: Record Media

Step 1: On the Record Media tab, you have the option to Record with Webcam or Record with Microphone only.

Step 2: If a Flash notification appears, click on “Allow”.

Step 3: Once the camera displays, click anywhere to start recording. Once complete, click to stop recording.

Step 4: Next, preview your recording and then click Save.
Option 2: Upload Media

Step 1: Click on the **Upload Media** tab.

Step 2: Navigate on your computer to find the file you would like to upload. You can upload an Audio file or a Video file.

Step 3: Select the file and the upload process will begin.
Save Changes: You are still in the edit mode of the page. Click **Save Changes** on the lower right corner of the screen to exit editing the page, save all changes, and view the finished page.

Publish Changes: The page is saved and now to make it available to students you need to publish it.

- First click **Publish** button

- Now click on **View All Pages** button

Welcome to eCourse

Welcome to eCourse
Select **Use as Front Page** from the drop down.

Now you will have a personalized course home page with a welcome message for your students.

**References**
