

Chalk-to-Canvas: Similarities and Differences

Canvas has all of the core functionality found in Chalk, but each system operates under a different paradigm. Chalk is instructor-centered and focuses on document distribution; Canvas, a Web 2.0 platform, emphasizes the student experience and focuses on instructional interaction and collaboration. With this in mind, there 5 things that instructors need to be aware of when transitioning from Chalk to Canvas:

How is Canvas Different from Chalk?

1 Publishing courses & course content

In Canvas courses and **content are not available to students unless explicitly published.*** In Chalk, content is available to students by default and instructors have to set a display date and time if they want to restrict student view.

* Exception: Files directly uploaded to Files link are automatically set to be published.

2 Organizing course content with Modules

In Chalk, most instructors upload documents to folders under Course Material to organize their course content. Canvas uses **Modules**, where content is organized in expandable menus which allows instructors to **link to documents residing in a central document repository.** Instructors can find their documents more easily and are less likely to upload multiple versions of the same document.

3 One Inbox for all classes

In Canvas, instructors can email—have **Conversations** with—students just like in Chalk. **Canvas Conversations** are sent with instructor's name in the *To:* field and the course name in the *Subject:* field. Replies are recorded in Canvas. This together with the **one Inbox design**, allows instructors and students to **check all their communications in one place.**


4 Personalized Notification Settings

As smartphones and mobile devices become more popular, Canvas allows **individuals to decide how and when they want to be notified** of events and communications. By default, announcements, conversations and other notifications are sent via email, but faculty and students can choose to receive notifications via SMS text messaging as well.

5 As-Needed External Tools

Chalk is an all-in-one platform that provides a defined set of tools. Canvas provides a set of core functions—course document management, communications, assignment and feedback, assessment, and gradebook—and gives instructors the **flexibility to add external tools** such as Blogs, Wikis, Box, or Google Docs, as needed in a plug-and-play fashion.



 **Tip:** During the transition period, be sure to let your students know your Canvas course URL and how your course content is organized.

Chalk vs. Canvas Most Commonly Used Features Comparison

<u>Chalk</u>	<u>Canvas</u>	<u>How is Canvas Different?</u>
Announcements	Announcements	Publish announcements and/or pull in posts from blogs and other information sources into the announcement stream via RSS.
Assignments	Assignments	Create assignment shells from modules, calendar, or the assignment tool. Graded discussions and quizzes are also automatically displayed. Create assignment groups here to weight the final grade.
Blog	N/A	Canvas does not have a built-in blogging tool. Create course blogs at UChicago Voices (voices.uchicago.edu) and collect student journal entries using Assignments.
Course Documents	Modules	Use Modules to organize course content. You can group material by units or weeks with optional scheduled release or prerequisites.
Discussion Forum	Discussions	Instructors can grade, pin, and close forums. Individuals can respond to subscribed threads by replying to notification emails directly.
Email	Inbox	One Inbox allows individuals to view messages from all classes in a single location. Choose whom to send messages to: individually or by course roles (instructors, TAs, or students).
Files	Files	Files uploaded to a course are accessible to students by default. Instructors may restrict access to some or all files.
Grade Center	Grades	Enter grades, download submissions, mute assignment notification and more. Use SpeedGrader to review and annotate online submissions. For paper submissions, create grade columns via Assignments and enter scores and comments in Grades.
Groups	Groups	Set up student groups in your courses for assignments and in-class work, both graded and ungraded. See also: Users.
Library Course Reserves	Library Reserves	Library course reserves works the same way in Chalk and Canvas. Look for the Library Reserves link on the left.
Syllabus	Syllabus	Syllabus automatically displays all course events and graded assignments in a chronological list view. It makes a great home page.
Tests	Quizzes	Create and administer online quizzes and anonymous surveys; conduct and moderate exams and assessments, both graded and ungraded.
Users	People	Grant access to your course by adding CNetIDs. View student activity reports, such as page views. See also: Groups.
Wiki	Pages	A place for content (text, links, images, audio, and video) and resources that don't necessarily belong in an assignment, or that you want to refer to in multiple assignments. Grant students editing privileges to use Canvas Pages as a collaboration tool, as an alternative to Google Docs under Collaborations. Or, if you need a full wiki site, use UChicago Wikis (wikis.uchicago.edu).