

# Top 10 Tips for a Great Start to Fall



## Further Resources

### 1: Get off to a good start!

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Before the First Day                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review Course Rosters &amp; Contact Students</li> <li>○ Familiarize Yourself with Your Teaching Space</li> <li>○ Test the Technology You'll Be Using</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Four First Week Principles                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Curiosity</li> <li>○ Community</li> <li>○ Learning</li> <li>○ Expectations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draft a welcome email and send it to your students' email addresses found in your <a href="#">WINS</a> course roster.</li> <li>● Post an <a href="#">announcement in Canvas</a> that showcases that “your lights are on” and you’re there for them, excited to learn with them, and how they should get started.</li> <li>● Think about having students complete an activity (e.g., <a href="#">survey in Canvas</a>) that has them share about their excitement, anxiety, and barriers they foresee. A great fillable prompt is “I wish my teacher knew...”</li> <li>● Learn more about the technologies you will be using in your classes on the <a href="#">ICIT Services</a> page. In particular, review <a href="#">standard classroom technology</a> set-ups and, if you’re teaching in a new video-enabled room, please review <a href="#">these training opportunities</a> (some still available!).</li> <li>● Read <a href="#">How to Teach a Good First Day of Class</a></li> </ul>

### 2: Design with flexibility in mind.

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>What will you do if....</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Your students can't make it to class or miss assignments?</li> <li>○ You or your students become ill?</li> <li>○ Something doesn't go as planned?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build flexibility into your course policies and ensure this is transparent for your students. This could take the form of “oops tokens” or flexible attendance. There’s no <u>right</u> policy - choose what works for your course and your students. For more on this, check out this <a href="#">blog post</a> in the ACUE community about considering the student perspective.</li> <li>● Give students <a href="#">choices</a>! This could be through flex assignments, topic choices, or student-created learning objectives.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Begin preparing for the shift to remote after November 20</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create back-up plans in case of tech failures and communicate those plans with your students.</li> <li>● If you're teaching a F2F or hybrid course, examine your course objectives to determine which may need to be met before the remote switch.</li> <li>● Consider running a student survey before making remote learning plans to find what will work (and won't work) with your students.</li> </ul>
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### 3: Plan for student engagement.

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Connect with students               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduction Videos</li> <li>○ Individual Check-Ins</li> <li>○ Virtual Office Hours or Afternoon Tea</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Develop activities that create a shared experience among your community of learners               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Group Notes or Polling</li> <li>○ Small Group Work</li> <li>○ Peer Review</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule individual check-ins or virtual office hours/afternoon tea in Webex <a href="#">Meetings</a> or <a href="#">Teams</a>. Take a look at this resource that shows <a href="#">how to set up online office hours</a> using Webex in Canvas that is accompanied by a <a href="#">resource link you can share with students</a>.</li> <li>● Want to do breakout groups? An update is coming in September from Webex to include this functionality in Meetings. Until then, check out <a href="#">a few workarounds</a>.</li> <li>● Develop activities where students can take collaborative notes in <a href="#">Google Docs or Slides</a>.</li> <li>● Use <a href="#">PollEverywhere</a> to engage students with their devices to answer questions about your course material and topic synchronously.</li> <li>● Create opportunities for students to work on problems together, complete a larger project, or discuss your course topics in a <a href="#">Canvas group discussion</a>.</li> <li>● Have students peer review one another's work using <a href="#">PeerMark</a>. Want more tips for peer review? Check out this website on <a href="#">Peer Assessment!</a></li> <li>● Check out these Chronicle articles on <a href="#">How to Make Your Teaching More Engaging</a> and <a href="#">5 Ways to Connect with Online Students</a> for further ideas!</li> </ul>

### 4: Think about your content.

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Design your Canvas home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organize your <a href="#">modules</a> chronologically and use <a href="#">pages</a> to</li> </ul>

<p>page with your students in mind</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a variety of content (e.g., readings, videos, podcasts--even making some of your own!)</li> <li>• Check your content to make sure it supports students in meeting course outcomes.</li> <li>• Let students know if you expect them to pick up textbooks from the Bookstore</li> </ul>	<p>help guide students in Canvas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about using <a href="#">Linkedin Learning</a> videos, TedTalks, and <a href="#">podcasts</a> along with traditional texts, as well as making your own videos in <a href="#">Kaltura</a> with <a href="#">machine captions</a>.</li> <li>• Make content relevant and connected by doing <a href="#">course mapping</a> and <a href="#">BWD</a>.</li> </ul>
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**5: Develop a communication plan.**

<b>Quick Tips</b>	<b>How do I get started?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with emailing students before the semester begins</li> <li>• Establish communication expectations during the first week</li> <li>• Leverage Canvas Announcements for quick check-in messages that convey that you care and course-related updates</li> <li>• Think about ways to manage typical “Course Question” workload</li> <li>• Take phone calls from students through your mobile device or computer by using Cisco Jabber</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Tip 1 for more information on emailing your students and leveraging Canvas announcements!</li> <li>• In your syllabus and first week interactions, indicate the best ways to contact you, your response time, and comfort with face-to-face meetings. Want more syllabus ideas? Check out <a href="#">How to Create a Syllabus</a> from the Chronicle. Some instructors are even looking at syllabi in a different way. Take a look at <a href="#">How to Turn Your Syllabus Into a FAQ</a> for more ideas!</li> <li>• Manage student expectations to place general course questions (e.g., about assignments, due dates, etc.) in a place the whole class can see (e.g., <a href="#">Canvas Discussion</a> or <a href="#">Webex Teams</a> Space) so all students can benefit from the answer and help answer them, too!</li> <li>• Want to answer office line calls from students on your mobile device or computer? Download <a href="#">Cisco Jabber</a>.</li> </ul>

**6: Understand equity and access.**

<b>Quick Tips</b>	<b>How do I get started?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review accommodations from Center for Students with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enroll in the Center for Students with Disabilities’ <a href="#">CanvasFaculty/Staff Resource Course</a> for all kinds of</li> </ul>

<p>Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share different supports and opportunities to help students reach their learning goals</li> <li>● Think about the implication of synchronicity for students</li> <li>● Think about doing the simple things in your Canvas course site: 12 point font, black font, sans-serif, hyperlink descriptor not “click here”, descriptive alt text for images, and captioning videos</li> <li>● Want to learn more? Complete TEACH (9/15/20)!</li> </ul>	<p>information on how to make your course more accessible and equitable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider the <a href="#">Universal Design for Learning (UDL)</a> guidelines and <a href="#">Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</a> as you design your course.</li> <li>● Read Flower Darby’s articles for some general quick tips on <a href="#">how to be more inclusive in the virtual classroom</a> or <a href="#">how asynchronous online discussions can be equitable and inclusive</a>.</li> <li>● <a href="#">Enroll in TEACH</a>, particularly reviewing the Module on Equity, Inclusion, and Access, as well as the specific page on <a href="#">Easy Peasey Accessibility</a>.</li> <li>● Check out <a href="#">this site</a> that has resources to use when working with students with hearing impairments.</li> </ul>
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**7: Examine assessments.**

<b>Quick Tips</b>	<b>How do I get started?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Does your “usual” assessment translate to this semester’s modality?</li> <li>● Hybrid - consider the strengths of both modalities</li> <li>● Online - to lockdown or not?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Whether in class or online, make sure the length of the assessment matches the available time. Are you assessing knowledge and comprehension or speed? For online assessments, you may need to balance this with a desire to limit time to look up answers.</li> <li>● Decide whether an exam is the best (or only) way to assess your learning objectives. If not, consider other types of assessments - presentations, papers, videos, blogs, etc. For more on this, read <a href="#">“What do final exams mean during a pandemic?”</a> from The Chronicle.</li> <li>● If you want to use a lockdown browser to minimize students’ ability to look up answers during your online assessment, you can find more information about Respondus <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>● Have open conversations with your students about academic integrity and your expectations that go beyond the student code of conduct, as discussed in this article from Inside Higher Ed about the <a href="#">“Best Ways to Stop Cheating Online”</a>.</li> </ul>

**8: Leverage Technology to Where it Helps**

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Webex Meetings and Teams</li> <li>● Webex Meetings and Teams in Canvas</li> <li>● Canvas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pages</li> <li>○ SpeedGrader</li> <li>○ Rubrics</li> <li>○ Quizzes</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Google Apps for Education</li> <li>● Watch out for tech fatigue!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule virtual office hours in Webex <a href="#">Meetings</a> or think about fielding student questions in Webex <a href="#">Teams</a>.</li> <li>● Want to keep it all in Canvas? You can use <a href="#">Webex Meetings and Teams in Canvas</a>!</li> <li>● In Canvas, use <a href="#">pages</a> by using headings, text, images, and videos to guide students. Use <a href="#">SpeedGrader</a> in Canvas to quickly grade assignments--you can also add a <a href="#">rubric</a>! Want to do a reading check? Create a quick <a href="#">quiz</a>.</li> <li>● Develop activities where students can take collaborative notes in <a href="#">Google Docs or Slides</a>.</li> <li>● Create or find “how-to” videos and instructions for students to show them how to use the tech tools that you will be using. You could also encourage them to visit (or revisit) the student TechQuest Canvas course. <a href="#">More information about TechQuest</a> is available from ICIT.</li> </ul>

**9: Avoid burnout.**

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Instructional vitality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Find a friend - here, there, and everywhere</li> <li>○ Connect with your department</li> <li>○ Join the upcoming communities of practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Practice self-care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If you’re used to hallway conversations and coffee dates with colleagues, find ways to continue those through video chats, phone calls, or distanced gatherings.</li> <li>● Chat with your chair about how you could start a departmental video call series to share ideas or discuss common teaching challenges.</li> <li>● Reconnect with your disciplinary organizations through virtual conferences, social media, or personal connections.</li> <li>● There are a ton of great general teaching resources online. The <a href="#">Cult of Pedagogy</a> might inspire you, or maybe <a href="#">Teaching in Higher Ed</a> is more your style.</li> <li>● This <a href="#">list of articles</a> on Edutopia provides several ideas for dealing with stress and preventing burnout. There isn’t a perfect one-size-fits-all solution, so try to find what works for you. Be mindful of how you’re feeling in different situations.</li> </ul>

**10: Contact LEARN and LTC for support.**

Quick Tips	How do I get started?
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- LEARN for workshops, book groups, and other forums to discuss teaching and learning questions and research
- LTC for hybrid, remote, and online teaching, as well as help with campus-supported technology tools

- LEARN  
[learn@uww.edu](mailto:learn@uww.edu) or [pelzelh@uww.edu](mailto:pelzelh@uww.edu)
- LTC  
[LTC@uww.edu](mailto:LTC@uww.edu)  
262-472-1004  
Webex and in-person consults by appointment
- LEARN and LTC offer various instructional development events throughout the year. Check out our areas on the [UW-W Signup Tool](#) for upcoming opportunities. Don't see what you're looking for--contact us for an individual consultation!