OVERVIEW

Welcome to the quickstart guide to the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Moodle template. The CEHD Moodle template can be copied using the following URL:

This template will help you create a Moodle site (for an online course, hybrid course, or to augment an in-person course), that is well-organized, user-friendly, and allows your students to focus on your course content. It is a place to start and can be modified to meet your specific course goals.

The template can be used by anyone designing a course, but we recommend that you work with an Digital Education and Innovation (DEI) Instructional Designer in order to create the most engaging and instructionally effective online learning environment possible for your students.

The CEHD Moodle template reflects the standards outlined in CEHD’s guide to course design, The Check. As you begin to use the template, start by reviewing The Check (PDF) and consider keeping it and this quickstart guide available for easy reference.

OPTIONS FOR COURSE DOCUMENTS

You’ll notice that throughout the template there are text-based placeholders for your course documents (for example, Overview and Learning Objectives in the section for each week). We have created organizers for your course information in two Moodle Pages — Getting Started and Syllabus. Some standardized text within each has page has been provided for you (e.g., Expected Behaviors and Respectful Contributions and University Policy Statements). We recommend presenting all course information in these pages. Your students will not need to download a file, open a separate application, or leave the Moodle site to access course information.

If you have any questions or need support, contact your IT Fellow or email Digital Education and Innovation (DEI) at deiteam@umn.edu.
MOODLE COURSE SETTINGS

Edit each of the following settings by clicking Edit Settings within the Settings block. Note: In order to view all available options within each setting section, you may need to click the gray triangle next to the setting heading (e.g., Course Format).

General > Course Start Date

To ensure each section aligns with the academic calendar, enter the date of the Monday that falls on or before the first day of class. If you are using a format other than weekly, this date will be the earliest date for which activity logs will be generated.

Course Format > Format

Format determines the layout of the course site. The template is set to Topics format, which organizes your content so that each topic (week, unit, etc.) has its own section. The first topic will begin on the Course Start Date (see above). If you decide to switch to another format such as Weeks, where content is organized into sections by weeks, each section may need to be reformatted.

Course Format > Course Layout

The Course Layout setting will determine if the whole course is displayed on one page (screen) or split over several pages (section headings become hyperlinks). The template has been set to display all sections on one page.

Appearance > Force Theme

DEI has designed a Moodle theme for CEHD; the template uses this theme. This theme clearly identifies the site as a CEHD course through the use of unique styling and the integration of the College’s wordmark.

Completion Tracking > Student Progress (Optional)

This feature tracks student completion of Activities (including accessing Resources) and has been enabled in the template. The Activity Completion setting will need to be enabled for each Activity and/or Resource you add to the course. When enabled, students will see a visual cue in the form of a checked-box icon that indicates the completion of an enabled activity or that an enabled resource has been accessed.
Filters

Edit by choosing Filters from the Settings block. The University has enabled 7 filters for our Moodle courses. The template uses the default settings with one exception—the Display emoticons as images filter has been disabled. When this filter is enabled some mathematical and statistical notations can be misinterpreted as emoticons.

COURSE HEADING

In order for students to clearly identify the Moodle course site, placeholders have been provided for the department course number, course title, location, and meeting time. Replace these text placeholders with the appropriate information for your course.

GETTING STARTED AND SYLLABUS MOODLE PAGES

Both Moodle pages are located in the first section (Topic 0, see below) of the main page, under the heading Course Information.

Getting Started

This Moodle page was created with headings (placeholders) for the important course information your students will refer to throughout the course (see the Course Information section of The Check). Refer to the Learning Technologies section of The Check for more information on what technology information should be included in the Requirements section. Sections with full-text statements on Expected Behaviors and Respectful Contributions, U of M accommodations, and Communications Methods have been created for you to use or modify.

Syllabus

This Moodle page is organized into placeholder sections that align with the U of M’s Syllabus Requirements Policy. The U of M Policy Statements section includes all of the recommended policies in full-text.

Library Resources

The University developed this feature that provides students with a direct link to the student’s library account and Course Reserves (a.k.a. digital course pack).
Moodle Template Quickstart Guide

**Moodle Course Evaluation**

The template includes a link to a Course Site Evaluation (built with the Moodle Feedback module), to be completed by your students at the end of the course. Data collected in the Feedback module are private to the course instructor(s) and teaching assistants.

**YOUR INSTRUCTOR BLOCK**

Replace the placeholder image with your headshot (resized to 150 pixels wide and 150 pixels high). Replace the text-based placeholders with your contact information and office hours. Consider linking your name in this block to your faculty profile or bio page on the College’s web site.

**MAIN CONTENT SECTIONS**

The template uses the Topic format. You should change the default headings for each section to your preferred topic titles, adding date ranges for each topic when appropriate. You may also change to Weekly format and assure dates coincide with that of your course.

**Course Information**

Sometimes referred to as “week zero” or “topic zero,” this is the first section in the template. This Course Information section includes the Getting Started and Syllabus Moodle pages, and a convenient link for students to access their grade report. Your students will also find the Announcements Forum in this section (see below).

**Announcements Forum**

This forum is for instructor-to-student communication. It uses the News forum type so only instructors may post topics. Use this for important updates, changes to course schedule or meeting locations, etc. All students will be notified by email when you add a new post to this forum.

**Each Topic Section**

Each Topic Section includes headings for the topic Overview, Learning Objectives, Resources and Activities. Each of these headings provides a visual cue that can make it easier for students to identify topic expectations and locate relevant resources. Place descriptive text and/or links to resources and activities beneath each of these headings as appropriate to your course topic. We have also included the Introduction Forum in the first topic section (see below).
**Introductions Forum**

The purpose of this forum is for the instructor(s) and students to introduce themselves to each other. This forum is configured as an “Each person posts one discussion” type forum. Each student would post their introduction and then reply to as many other student or instructor posts as they like. Flipgrid and Voicethread are alternative technologies that can be used in place of this forum.

**Course Site Resources**

This course contains resources and Moodle activities that are visible to students via link only, in order to provide student-friendly context and conserve screen real estate. This topic is purposefully hidden and located at the bottom of this course page in order to provide a storage area for these links. Please note that if the links in this topic area are deleted, the corresponding links elsewhere in the course site will malfunction.

**BLOCKS**

The placement for each block in the left column (from the top down) for all included blocks has been preset (i.e., Instructor will always be the first block on the left column and Navigation will always be the last block in the left column). A blank U of M Moodle site comes with many default blocks which are seldom used in CEHD courses, so many have been removed or hidden from the template. If you need to use one of the hidden or omitted blocks, feel free to add them as needed.

**Get Help**

In the Get Help block, you’ll see a link to a Google doc that includes links to various student resources including one-on-one technical support. Also included in this block are links to additional support resources from the University (e.g., Educational Policies, Smart Learning Commons, Student Writing Support, Student Mental Health, and Campus Safety and Security). This Google doc is maintained and updated by Digital Education and Innovation so that students will always have access to the most current information.

**Ask Questions about the Course**

The Ask Questions about the Course forum is a general forum where students can post questions to be addressed by the instructor and their peers. Questions could pertain to anything related to the course (e.g., assignments, readings, technology). It is a place for instructors to answer questions that are common to all students.
ADDITIONAL MOODLE 3.0 RESOURCES

We have developed additional guides to Moodle 3.0. They cover features not listed in this Quickstart guide, including gradebook, forums, assignments, and quizzes. You can find the guides in a shared Google Drive folder at this address: http://z.umn.edu/moodle30guides