

The Use of Home Page as a Weekly Organizing Mechanism

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A mantra for instructors in higher education involves telling students, “It’s on the syllabus.” Canvas provides a tool to orient students to the weekly tasks for the course, decreasing the need to tell students to refer to the syllabus or to answer repetitive questions about upcoming topics and assignments. This brief quick hit describes the use of Home in Canvas to aid in course organization and management.

I use a Home Page in Canvas to give students the upcoming assignments and tasks for the week by creating a new Page for the upcoming week at the end of each week. The Home Page works well because it allows the instructor to provide links to Assignments, Discussions, Files, and Modules, among other features. To create a new Home Page:

- Add a page in Pages
- Title the page (such as Week 9)
- Type in your description of the topics for the next week
- Link in any materials you want students to access that week by highlighting the relevant text on your page, and then clicking the Links, Files, or Images to the right of your screen, or drag and drop (See Figure 1).
- Consider using pictures to increase student interest by illustrating each week’s topic (see Figures 2 and 3).
- Once saved, make this new page your Front Page in its settings (see Canvas Help for more information).
- In Home, select Choose Home Page, then Pages Front Page to make the page the first thing students see when they click into the course (just the first time).

Using the Canvas Home Page as described can aid in promoting student engagement, making course materials more accessible, and helping students and instructors become more efficient by reducing time spent searching for relevant course materials. I have found that once students become accustomed to the use of the Home Page, they regularly visit the page, even asking for updates if I am behind schedule. I have also found the Home Page to be beneficial to me as an instructor, as I am more timely posting materials and assignments to Canvas, and more

thoughtful about the upcoming week, also decreasing procrastination. An additional benefit is providing a record of the course, going back through the pages for each week, which helps in reporting on the course or for future offerings of the course. Overall, the use of the Home Page to provide information about the course benefits both instructors and students, by enhancing course efficiency and organization.

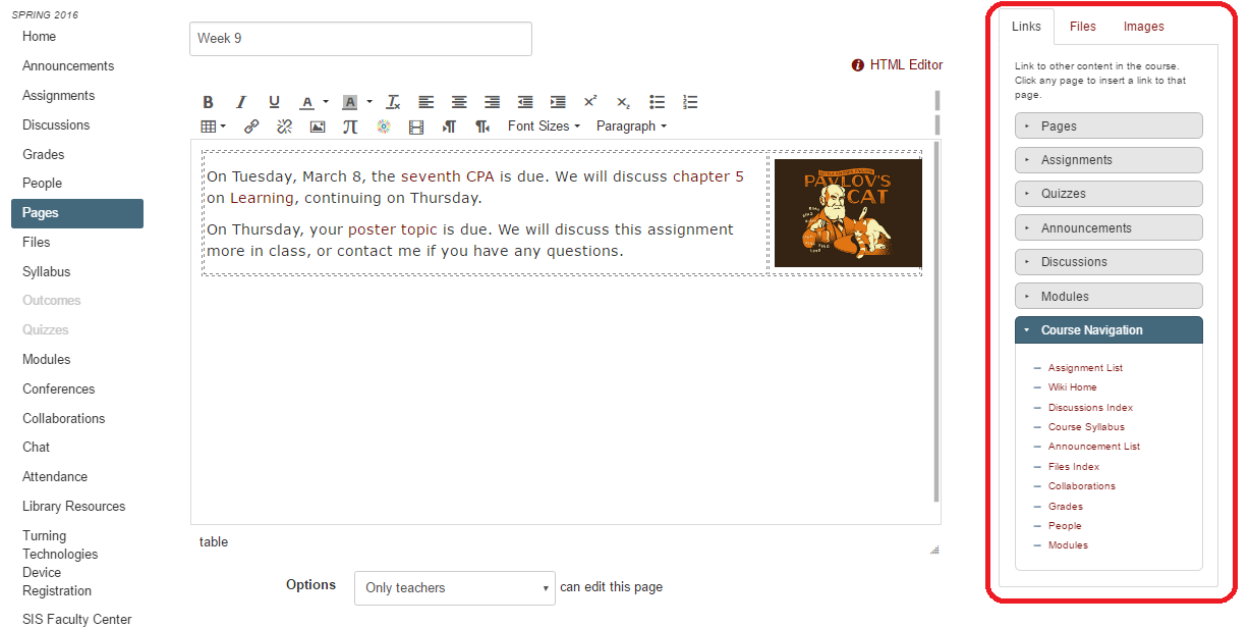


Figure 1: Screen shot of editing in Pages, from Canvas site for General Psychology. The different types of Links, Files, and Images circled in red on the right.

On Tuesday, March 1, the [sixth CPA](#) is due, over [chapter 5](#). We will finish covering [chapter 8](#) on [Human Development](#), and then move on to [chapter 5 on Learning](#). The material from chapter 5 will not be covered until the third exam.

On Thursday, March 3, we will have our second exam, over chapters 2, 3, and 8. Remember that you can bring a 3 x 5 notecard, with writing on both sides, with you to the exam. Also remember that you will be asked to label a neuron, the lobes of the brain, and the eye and ear (see diagram in the list below for practice). Here are the materials to review for the exam:

- [The Brain and Behavior.docx](#)
- [Chapter 2 Review.docx](#)
- [Neuron, Brain Lobes, Eye, and Ear Diagrams.pdf](#)
- [Sensation and Perception.docx](#)
- [Chapter 3 Review.docx](#)
- [Human Development 2016.docx](#)
- [Chapter 8 Review.docx](#)



Figure 2: Sample Home Page during an exam week. Red text indicates links within Canvas to documents and assignments.

On Tuesday, March 8, the **seventh CPA** is due. We will discuss **chapter 5** [📖](#) [🔗](#) on **Learning** [📖](#) [🔗](#), continuing on Thursday.

On Thursday, your **poster topic** is due. We will discuss this assignment more in class, or contact me if you have any questions.



Figure 3: Sample Home Page from the week after an exam.