

## **From Blah to Awe to Rah!**

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### **Suggested tag(s): Pages, Modules, Design, Organization, Usefulness, Navigation, Ease of use**

By the end of this article, users will be able to create a user-friendly, organized, attractive Page with navigational tabs within two hours.

**Audience:** All Audiences using Canvas

**Possible future directions/modifications:** Testing on mobile devices needs to occur to ensure faculty and students can easily access content.

Canvas Pages cannot improve faculty or student performance if they are not seen as useful and user-friendly. Davis (1989) described “perceived usefulness” as a variable connecting a user’s decision to use an application to the user’s belief the application will help her job performance. Even if the user believes an application is useful, she may find the application easy or difficult to use. Davis defines this second variable as “perceived ease of use” and suggests that users are willing to use a difficult-to-use system if they perceive it as useful.

Davis stipulated three main insights:

- (1) People’s computer use can be predicted reasonably well from their intentions.
- (2) Perceived usefulness is a major determinant of people’s intentions to use computers.
- (3) Perceived ease of use is a significant secondary determinant of people’s intentions to use computers.

When using the technology acceptance model (TAM), Arbaugh (2002) found that perceived ease of use was positively associated with satisfaction with the course. Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw (1992, p. 1115) stated “the easier a system is to use, the less effort required to carry out a given task.” By making Canvas Pages easier to use, students can devote their time and attention to course materials instead of searching for materials and information. This ease of use should result in a higher learning satisfaction.

When students navigate to your Canvas page is this what they see? Blah.

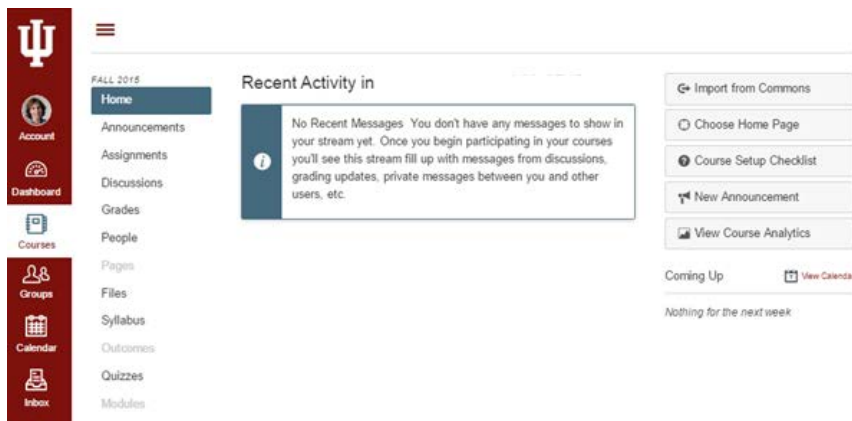


Figure 1: A poor Canvas Page design

Canvas Pages can, however, provide your course with structure and beauty. In Canvas Pages, faculty can create a page designed such as the one in Figure 2: Course Introduction Canvas Page design.

Next, you will want to set your Course Introduction Page as your Front Page so the students see it first when they navigate to your course. To select a Page as your course's Front (home) page, select View All Pages and use the options on the right to set a published page as the Front Page.

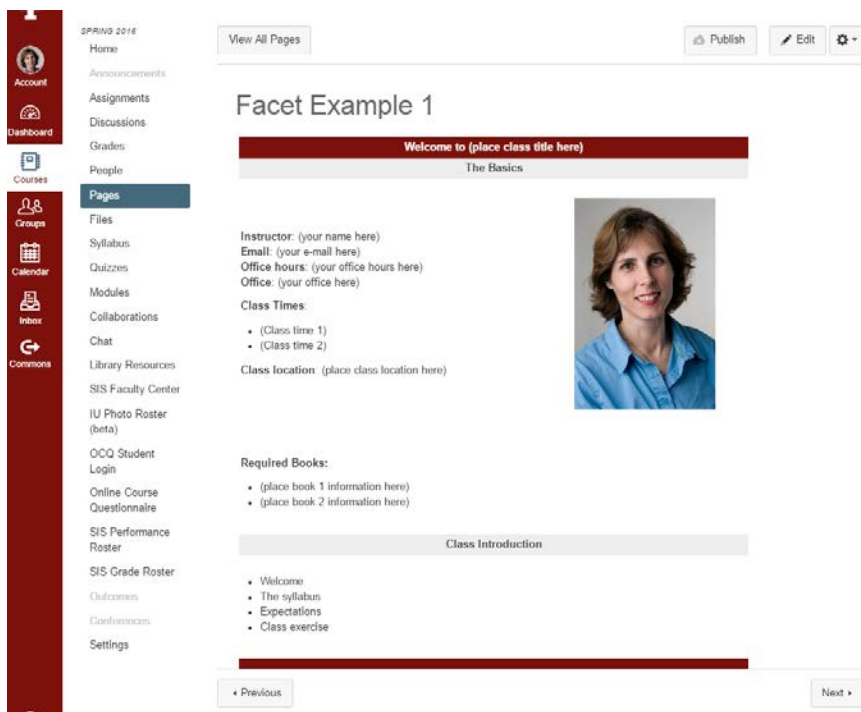


Figure 2: Course Introduction Canvas Page design

While usable, this navigation has more room for improvement to enable users to find the remainder of your course's content. One method to organize content is to create content Pages and organize them in Modules. If you add your Pages to a Module, each Page will show "Previous" and "Next" buttons at the bottom of the screen. This setup does improve usability, but users must continually scroll to the bottom of the Page to see the "Previous" and "Next" buttons.

A second method to improve usability is to add tabs for each Page on your course introduction page. J. Perkins (2016) developed HTML code for adding tabs, accordions, and other interesting actions. The tab code can be used to help improve the navigation in the Canvas Pages.

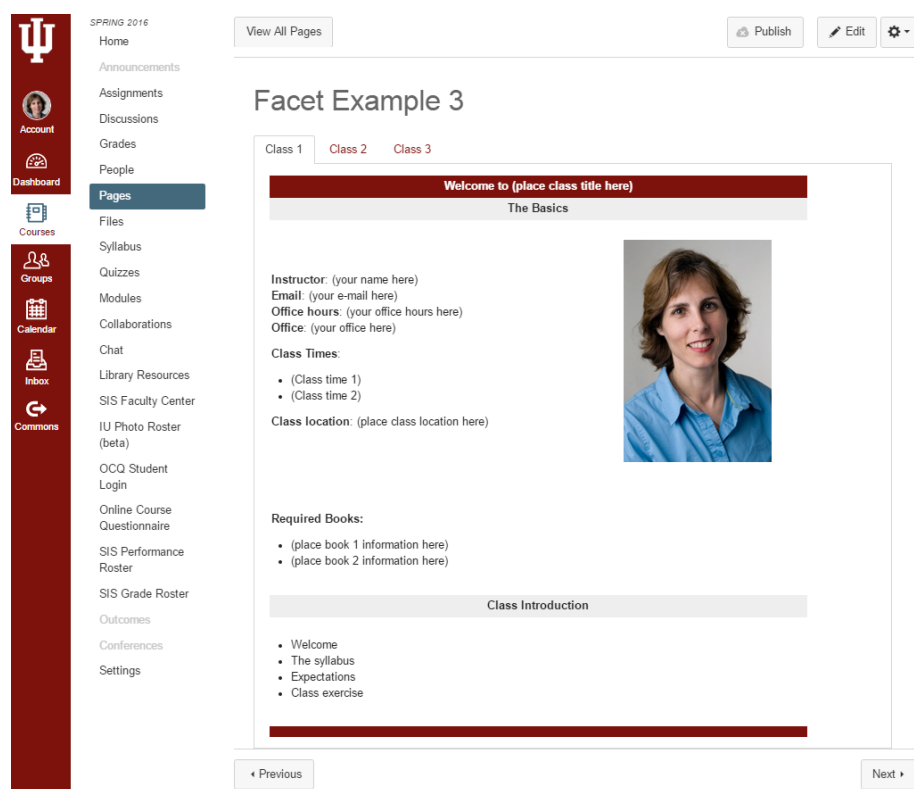


Figure 3: Canvas Page design using tabs

Figure 3 Canvas Page design using tabs displays a screen shot of a course introduction page with tabs for each class day. Students now simply click on a tab to locate the files and information for each class.

## How to Create a Canvas Page with Tabs

**Warning!** You will use the Canvas HTML editor to create your page with tabs. The content that you see in the HTML editor looks very different from the saved view, because it includes HTML tags. As you work on your page, you will save to see what your students see.

1. Go to Pages.
2. In the upper right hand corner, click the + sign to add a new page.
3. Add a title.
4. Click on the HTML editor.
5. Copy and paste the HTML code below into the editor.
6. In the HTML editor, look for the sentence, "PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 1."
7. Carefully delete that sentence. Do not delete the HTML tags. Replace that sentence with your class content. I use a standardized template that matches the Canvas colors.
8. Remember, the Rich Content Editor is not the same as the Saved version.
9. Click Save.



### Canvas Page Example with Tabs – HTML Code

```
<div class="enhanceable_content tabs">
<ul>
<li><a href="#fragment-1"><span>Class 1</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-2"><span>Class 2</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-3"><span>Class 3</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-4"><span>Class 4</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-5"><span>Class 5</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-6"><span>Class 6</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-7"><span>Class 7</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-8"><span>Class 8</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-9"><span>Class 9</span></a></li>
<li><a href="#fragment-10"><span>Class 10</span></a></li>
</ul>
<div id="fragment-1">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 1.</div>
<div id="fragment-2">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 2.</div>
<div id="fragment-3">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 3.</div>
```

```
<div id="fragment-4">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 4.</div>
<div id="fragment-5">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 5.</div>
<div id="fragment-6">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 6.</div>
<div id="fragment-7">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 7.</div>
<div id="fragment-8">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 8.</div>
<div id="fragment-9">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 9.</div>
<div id="fragment-10">PLACE YOUR CLASS CONTENT HERE FOR TAB 10.</div>
</div>
```

### **Hiding a Tab**

To temporarily hide the Class 2 tab, insert: class="hidden"

For example: <li><a class="hidden" href="#fragment-2"><span>Class  
2</span></a></li>

- Arbaugh, J.B. (2002). Managing the on-line classroom: a study of technological and behavioral characteristics of web-based MBA courses. *Journal of High Technology Management Research*, 13, 203–223.
- Davis, F.D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13, 319–340.
- Davis, F.D., Bagozzi, R.P., & Warshaw, P.R. (1989). User acceptance of computer technology: A comparison of two theoretical models. *Management Science*, 35, 982–1003.
- Perkins, J. (2016, July 1). Using JQuery without Custom Javascript. Retrieved from <https://community.canvaslms.com/groups/designers/blog/2015/07/01/using-jquery-without-custom-javascript>.