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# ONBOARDING FOR BRIGHTSPACE/D2L

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**Northeastern**  
ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

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Instructors who review this onboarding document should anticipate spending approximately 5-6 hours, which includes embedded readings and videos.

## 1. You're Hired

Welcome to Northeastern Illinois University! You are reading this document because you are a new faculty member or instructor at our institution and want to learn the basics for getting your course ready to teach. Here are some steps in the process.

### a. Meet with your Department Chair

If you haven't already done so, you should arrange a meeting as soon as possible with your Department Chair. They should be able to acclimate you to your teaching responsibilities and provide you with some background on the course(s) you are assigned to teach.

### b. Receive your Nmail and NETID

Once your hiring paperwork has been processed, the Administrative Information System (AIS) at University Technology Services (UTS) creates an NEIU email (nmail) address and net ID for you through an automated management system. Your Nmail and NETID are required to login to the *NEIUport*, which subsequently allows you to access our Learning Management System, Brightspace/D2L.

If you have not received your login ID, contact University Technology Services (UTS) at [helpdesk@neiu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@neiu.edu)

### c. Access the course syllabus (approximately 1 hour to review)

Starting with the fall 2015 semester, all syllabi are expected to follow college-wide templates, also called Master Course Outlines (MCOs). To find the template for your college, go to: <https://sites.google.com/neiu.edu/ctlresourcehub/the-syllabus> to pick out the appropriate template, and fill in the blanks. It may be easiest to do this by cutting and pasting from an already existing Word document. (Note: You may be asked to sign in with your neiu Net ID and password)

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) makes available a syllabus

template on its learning management system (LMS). However, you will need to contact the CTL to obtain access to this template at the following email address: [ctl@neiu.edu](mailto:ctl@neiu.edu)).

As another option, many of our faculty build their syllabus from the MCO into a Google doc in order to create an Interactive Syllabus for their students. The CTL can support you in thinking through ways to build an interactive syllabus.

Regardless of the way you create your syllabus, be sure to check with your department chair or program coordinator to be sure the learning outcomes, assessment and activities are aligned and comply with the requirements for the course.

#### **d. Learning the Basics of D2L**

There is a course shell located on the Brightspace/D2L learning management system for every course offered at NEIU. Your course(s) is no exception. The Brightspace/D2L is the university's secure virtual platform. Using this platform ensures confidentiality of student data. The site has a variety of features that support instruction. It is also the place where students complete course evaluations at the end of each semester. As mentioned previously, to access that course shell, you must have an Nmail and netID account.

If you have not received these at least 4 days before the beginning of class, contact the CTL ([ctl@neiu.edu](mailto:ctl@neiu.edu)) and our LMS Systems Administrator can set you up with a temporary account and master course shell(s). You will be able to build your course in the master shell, a "sandbox" course without any students enrolled in it, while waiting for your official NEIU credentials. Once you receive your official NEIU credentials, the CTL will assist you in copying your course(s) over from your temporary account into your official courses where your students are registered.

Learning the array of helpful instructional features that Brightspace/D2L offers takes time. However, learning the basics is easy. We recommend you set aside at least one and half hours to do the following:

- i. View the [Brightspace ABCs of Content](#) (approx 45 min)  
Note: If you have trouble viewing this tutorial by clicking on the link, you will need to view it directly from the Brightspace Community. To do this, please follow the [Create a Brightspace Community Account](#)

[instructions](#). These instructions will also explain how to access the Brightspace ABCs of Content (Classic) video.

- ii. Review the [semester quick-start guide](#) (approx 3 min)

## 2. Prior to First Week of Class

Now that you have an overview of the Brightspace/D2L learning management system platform, you can begin preparing your course. The first step is to log in to *NEUport*.

### e. Login to NEUport.

You can access your course on the university-wide internet portal called *NEUport*. The portal gives you access to your e-mail, our learning management system (Brightspace/Desire2Learn), and other services, with single user sign-in.

To log into *NEUport* **for the first time**, you will need your NEIU ID number, which was shared with you from Human Resources (HR). Clicking on <http://neiuport.neiu.edu> will bring you to the *NEUport* login screen.

After the first time you log in, you can login to the *NEUport* by entering your userID (e.g., sdbeyda) and your unique password. You will be prompted on that login screen to change your password.

### f. Login to your course.

To find your course, follow the instructions on the [semester quick-start guide](#).

### g. Upload content.

If you are teaching a course that has been previously taught by another faculty or if you are teaching a different section of a course designed/taught by another faculty member, you may be able to import content from that course into your course. Naturally, you must seek permission from that faculty member and department chair to use it as the basis for your course. In this situation, you can import content from another course. Here are the steps;

- Watch [this brief video](#) to learn how to import course content
- Adjust the due dates associated with the course events and assignments, as needed (approx 1 min)

If you are designing your own course and not importing content from another course, you should plan to upload your content as per the steps shared in the [Brightspace ABCs of Content](#) video.

We also recommend that you reach out to the CTL ([ctl@neiu.edu](mailto:ctl@neiu.edu)) to access a course template to use for the basic design of your course. This design will ensure consistency of every course module.

**h. Additional guidance on content.**

Brightspace/D2L offers additional tutorials on many content topics. To access these videos, you will go to the [Brightspace Community](#).

**i. Prepare your Start Here Orientation module**

Your course template will also include a Start Here Orientation Model to help students navigate your course and get to know you as their instructor. Instructors can import the module to their courses, and they can modify the content in the module depending on their course needs.

The Start Here Orientation Module provides information to help students navigate the D2L site, access a variety of NEIU student resources, become familiar with expectations for academic integrity, among other aspects of the student experience. Instructors are free to hide or keep the D2L tutorials located in this module. However, we recommend at least 2 tutorials remain in the module (1) Setting up Notifications, and (2) How to Navigate D2L.

The following elements are included in this module.

- Introduction to the course
- Welcome video or message from the instructor
- Instructor contact information
- The “Getting to Know You” introductory discussion forum that creates a warm, caring and welcoming learning environment. A sub-module for this activity has been loaded into the Course Introduction Module. The prompt can be tailored to suit your needs.
- Learning outcomes
- Syllabus (be sure to post/upload)
- Technology Readiness Survey
- Academic Integrity tutorial

- Student Resources for D2L: video instructions and 24/7 Technical support services information. (This is where your students will find the “Setting up Notifications” and “How to Navigate D2L” tutorials).
- Student Resources for technology: Zoom and MS Office information.
- NEIU student resources

**j. View class lists.**

To see the list of students enrolled in your course, click on the **Classlist & Email tab** on the top navigation bar in each of your courses. You can [contact your entire class or individual students](#) from the Classlist.

**k. Activate your course.**

Students will not be able to see your course on their D2L site unless you make the course “active.” You may activate your course by following the steps in [this guide](#).

**l. Send a welcome email to students.**

Sending your students a [Welcome Letter](#) or email message using the class list on D2L is helpful. We suggest instructors send this initial greeting at least once per week though the first week or two of the class in order to catch any students who enrolled late.

**m. Where to go if you need additional assistance with D2L.**

If you need support with Brightspace/D2L, you should contact [the 24/7 D2L Support](#) using chat (recommended), phone, or email. If you still require support, then contact the CTL ([ctl@neiu.edu](mailto:ctl@neiu.edu)).

**n. Additional guidance for online learning. (approx 15 min)**

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has prepared recommendations for teaching in the virtual environment. We strongly encourage you to review these helpful suggestions located on the CTL Website in the [Guidance for Online Learning](#).

**3. First Week of Class**

Now that you have the basics set up for your course, you can continue building out your course modules. Faculty find it is helpful to prepare at least two weeks worth of modules at a time. Here are some features to consider:

**o. Create discussions. (approx 10 min)**

Brightspace/D2L has a [discussion](#) feature. Discussions when aligned with course objectives can be a great way to engage students' critical thinking and enable them to interact with course material. Here are some [tips for effective online discussions](#).

Brightspace/D2L offers tutorials to assist you. See Discussions under [Most Popular Topics](#) to view “how to” guides and videos.

**p. Create quizzes. (approx 10 min)**

You may decide to integrate short quizzes into your learning modules. Brief quizzes that appear after portions of your learning activities (e.g., after a reading or portion of a reading, after students view a video, etc.) can provide a way for students to check their understanding as they work through course content. Ideally, quizzes should provide practice, with feedback provided so students can review content they missed. Lengthy quizzes or comprehensive tests are not recommended, especially if used as the only means of assessment.

Brightspace/D2L offers tutorials to assist you. See Quizzes under [Most Popular Topics](#) to view “how to” guides and videos. (approx 15 min)

**q. Set up grade book**

Students want to view their grades as they move through your course, and not just at the end of the semester. In order to do that, you need to set up the grading feature in D2L.

Brightspace/D2L offers tutorials to assist you. See Grades under [Most Popular Topics](#) to view “how to” guides and videos.

**r. Roster verification**

Sometime around the first week or two of classes, you will receive a university email from the Registrar letting you know it is time to verify your class roster. Class lists are available online via *NEIUpport* on the Faculty tab in the Faculty Dashboard channel. Instructions on how to use the Faculty Dashboard can be found in the Faculty Self Service Information channel by clicking on Using the Faculty Dashboard under the heading of New Job Aids.

You should look at the class list and compare it against your Brightspace/D2L course list. To see the list of students enrolled in your



course, click on the **Classlist & Email tab** on the top navigation bar in each of your courses.

**s. Using Google tools to create course content**

As you develop activities for your course content, you may find the Google tools that NEIU offers extremely helpful. Slides, Google Docs, Google Forms all provide the opportunity for collaboration and interaction with your students.

If you have never used these tools, [here is a video](#) that provides a basic framework for how these tools can support your instruction. This video is 1 hour and 25 minutes.

In order to share your Google docs or slides in the Brightspace/D2L course site, please review the [How to share Google Docs/Slides in D2L](#).



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