

## DIGITAL INSTRUCTION BASICS

As classes shift to distance instruction, we can all now leverage the work that has taken place over the last few years through the Quality Assurance Checklist procedure. Implementing some very basic cosmetic, communication, and technological function standards (already in place in Southern's INET courses) could significantly ease the transition to online for all students, better ensuring their success as they navigate the entirety of their class schedules in Blackboard.

### NAVIGATION LAYOUT

Deploy your instructional content as you feel best. However, please leave the default navigation links intact. Providing all students with this small level of predictability will go a long, long way in easing stress and letting them focus on finding and completing their assignments.

#### COURSE HOME

This area is reserved for course syllabus, schedule/guide and textbook information. It is also pre-populated with important institutional announcements. Be sure to remove any duplicated items.

#### MEET YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Add contact information for yourself in the "Instructor Profile" placeholder. Also be sure the email link is available to students. Be sure to remove any duplicated items.

#### INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Add instructional content below the Student Tools & Resources navigation section. DL can assist in adding a new sub header and in creating the type of content areas you would like. Most instructors use weekly, chapter, or unit styles.

#### COMMUNICATION

There are two types of course-wide communications online students at Southern have come to expect.

#### COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Post announcements to the course often! These are easily accessible to all. The Announcements page is the default landing page of all courses. With a click of a button, course announcements are also emailed to all students.

#### "ASK YOUR INSTRUCTOR" DISCUSSION FORUM

Balance instructor-initiated class communications with a place where students can initiate contact with you and their classmates. The "Ask Your Instructor" forum provides a place for *operational* questions and keeps such conversations from cluttering up and distracting from content-related discussions. Create an "Ask Your Instructor" or similarly titled forum and **REMEMBER TO SUBSCRIBE**. Once subscribed, you will receive an email alert whenever there is a new student question.

#### DUE DATES

As you add graded student tasks to your courses, whether they be discussion forums, assignment submissions or quizzes & tests, please don't forget to associate an accurate due date to their respective Grade Center columns. Due dates can be added in a variety of ways but are **critical** to the proper functioning of several Blackboard student success and retention tools.

