

MODULE ORGANIZATION

When creating modules, here are some things you'll need to consider.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT!

The first click/homepage counts. Think about how a student will feel coming into your course. Will they be welcomed? Is it obvious where they can find information? Do they have a place to start?

DRAW STUDENTS IN

- **MAKE YOUR PAGES 'USER-FRIENDLY'**. Think about when you are in the face-to-face class and passing out papers/introducing an activity. Do you just start right in? No, usually you have a transition to ease the students into what they are doing. In online instruction this is even more critical. Try not to just put up a page with a link to a file, discussion or multimedia element. Give a 2-3 sentence explanation for what they will interact with (read, see, hear) and why this is important. Let students know what they've learned and what is coming up in each page. Your pages are like a mini-dialogue with your students – you are opening them up to the content of your course so that they can respond through interactive activities.
- **THINK ABOUT THE 'LOOK-FEEL' OF YOUR PAGES IN YOUR MODULES.** The **style drop-down** menu on the right hand of the page editor lets you create a PARAGRAPH or HEADING. HEADING 2 and HEADING 3 are useful



elements to help you break up your pages **and** make your courses easier to navigate for screenreaders

(assistive technology).

- **INCORPORATE YOUR LINKS TO FILES AND MULTIMEDIA WITHIN A PAGE.** Having too many stand-alone files without any explanation can be overwhelming for the overall student experience. Also make certain that you give your files names that are easy to understand like CHAPTER 1 VIDEO TRANSCRIPT.

COPY EDIT

We expect our students to go over their own writing, use spell and grammar check. You need to do the same thing. Remember **this course you are developing is a professional product!** On this note – when writing/typing (particularly for the web) we only use 1 space after a period at the end of the sentence.

USE PARALLEL STRUCTURE

This means that you have the same name throughout for different things. If your first project is called PROJECT 1, make certain that whenever you refer to it, you call it PROJECT 1.

CREATE A MODULE FLOW

Do you have the same general pattern each week? This is really important in online classes. A sample general pattern:

- **UNIT OVERVIEW:** Weekly objectives and preferably a captioned weekly video welcome message.
- **CONTENT PAGE(S):** Weekly content created using the **Pages (or Assignments)** tools in CANVAS. Individual PowerPoints and URLs need to be incorporated into pages with text explaining their purpose.
- **INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY:** Weekly discussion assignment; pair/group work; collaboration.
- **PROJECT WORK:** A short page, discussion or assignment meant to scaffold – support any larger projects you are doing.
- **WEEKLY WRITING ASSIGNMENT:** Additional short summary writing or reflections; can also be used to support larger projects.
- **CONTENT REVIEW AND LOOKING AHEAD:** A review of weekly objectives, list of resources and description of upcoming week's content.

CHECK OUT A SAMPLE MODULE

The screenshot shows a Canvas LMS course page for 'Unit 2: Social Interaction'. The page is organized into several sections, with red brackets on the left side grouping items into categories:

- Unit Overview:** Includes 'Culture & Socialization Overview' (must view the page).
- Content Pages:** Includes 'Course Content & SoftChalk Lessons', 'Culture SoftChalk Lesson' (Feb 1, 2015, 7 pts), and 'Socialization SoftChalk Lesson' (Feb 1, 2015, 10 pts).
- Interactive Activity:** Includes 'Culture Video: Are We "A Society of Consumers?"' (Feb 1, 2015, 10 pts).
- Project Work:** Includes 'Project 1 Preparation' (Feb 1, 2015, 5 pts).
- Content Review:** Includes 'Culture & Socialization Review' (must view the page) and 'What You Learned Chapters 3 & 4' (must view the page).

Other items on the page include 'Discussion', 'Weekly Writing Assignment', and 'Socialization Nature vs Nurture' (Feb 1, 2015, 12 pts). The page also shows prerequisites for 'Unit 1: Introduction-Theory-Methods' and a note to 'Will unlock Jan 26, 2015 at 9am'.