

## **Tech Tip – How to Connect Your Online Students with Your Course and the Campus**

One issue that has come up a lot recently in distance education is online equity. How can we, as instructors, help online students to feel connected to the subjects we teach and to the college they attend?

Below are some ideas of how to use tools in Canvas to create that sense of connection for your students:

### **Change the Home Page of the Course Frequently throughout the Semester**

Creating several different home pages for a course keeps students interested and allows you to get information about your subject and the college to students in a visually interesting way.

For example, if you teach a science course you can post photos of prominent scientists of all different backgrounds with links to their work. This lets students see that people like them are doing work in your field and may address some racial and ethnic diversity gaps in the textbook you use.

For Black History Month, I posted photos and links to websites about both current and historical prominent African-American women working in a variety of fields. This adds to the course and covers information that is not in the textbook.

### **Using the Home Page to Connect Online Students to the Campus**

According to the two surveys we have done with online students, most students who take online courses are also taking face-to-face courses on campus. While the college does send information about various events to students to their Delta email accounts, many students don't check those accounts frequently. Delta also posts on social media and the campus website about various events on campus but instructors are also in an ideal position to advertise events that are on campus to students.

Putting information about campus events on your Canvas Home Page helps online students feel connected to the campus community. For example, I currently have the Calendar of Events for Women's History Month as my Home Page for my online and face-to-face classes.

You can advertise drama, music and dance productions, library workshops, athletic competitions, speakers on campus, art exhibits, etc. Home Pages let you keep students informed about what is happening on campus but also information about services for students. We will be opening a food pantry on campus this month, for example, and this is information you can pass on to students through your courses. Alex Breitler in our Marketing Department sends out regular announcements and newsletters about what is happening on campus and those could be passed along to students.

### **Refresher Tip: How to Create a Home Page**

Click on **Pages**

At the top right of the screen is this – click on it!



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You get a page creation screen where you can type in the text of the Home Page message you want to send upload images, video segments and links to other sites. **Hit “Save and Publish” button.**

This takes you to your Pages list. On the right hand side of the screen is the “three dot” drop down menu – click on these and hit “Use as Front Page”. The page you’ve selected will now be the Home Page.

Page title ▾	Creation date ▾	Last edit ▾		
Black History Month - Bessie Coleman, Aviation Daredevil!	Feb 18, 2019	Feb 18, 2019 by Lynn Hawley	✓	⋮
Dia De Los Muertos Breakfast, Thursday Nov. 1	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
Elections and Women in Politics!	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
Georgia O'Keefe's Birthday (Nov. 15)	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
Hispanic Heritage Month Events Calendar!	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
Hispanic Heritage Month Starting Sept. 15!	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
Paper Still Due But No Class This WEEK!	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
WASPS Made Officially Military!	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019	✓	⋮
Welcome to HI 27 Spring 2019!	Jan 12, 2019	Jan 12, 2019 by Lynn Hawley	✓	⋮
Women's History Month at Delta! <span>Front Page</span>	Mar 4, 2019	Mar 4, 2019 by Lynn Hawley	✓	⋮

