

## Canvas LMS Course Design: Create and Deliver Interactive Online Course on the Canvas Learning Management System : A Book Review

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### Abstract

As online education continues to grow in popularity, instructors are increasingly seeking ways to design effective and engaging online courses. "Canvas LMS Course Design: Create and deliver interactive online courses on the Canvas learning management system, 2nd Edition" by Ryan John is a comprehensive guide to designing online courses using the Canvas learning management system (LMS). The book is an excellent resource for instructors at all levels of experience, providing practical advice and examples to help them design engaging and effective courses that meet the needs of their students. The book focuses on the practical aspects of course design. John provides clear and concise guidance on topics such as multimedia integration, assessment strategies, and student engagement, and provides numerous examples and case studies to illustrate these concepts in action.

**Keywords:** learning management system, e-learning, online learning environment, interactive learning

### Introduction

The importance of LMS as an online teaching aid has gained more attention worldwide since the outbreak of COVID-19 (Cavus et al., 2021). In fact, studies related to students' emotions in online learning have been conducted (Syafiqah Ahmad Termidi & Farhana Jumaat, 2022).

Other studies have also supported the acceptance of LMS in the higher education learning system (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2022). The book "Canvas LMS Course Design: Create and Deliver Interactive Online Courses on the Canvas Learning Management System, 2nd Edition" was written by Ryan John and published in 2021 (John, 2021).

This book is a comprehensive guide on how to produce online learning content using the Canvas LMS. Canvas LMS is a Learning Management System (LMS) platform designed to support online learning processes. It provides an easy and secure place to deliver, manage, and provide access to learning materials and activities for students and teachers.

Canvas LMS has features that allow students and teachers to interact directly and easily online, such as discussion forums, video discussions, online assignment delivery tools, and more. There are several other LMS platforms that have similarities in presenting learning modules to students, but the author chose to produce a comprehensive guidebook using CANVAS LMS because he has been directly

involved for 3 years in introducing CANVAS LMS at Rider University.

### Structure and Content

The book is divided into three sections and consists of eight chapters as follows:

**Table 1. The Structure of Contents**

Sections	Chapters
1. Designing and Creating Your Course	Chapter 1: Getting Started with Canvas Chapter 2: Building Your Canvas Course Chapter 3: Getting Ready to launch Your Course
2. Teaching and Enhancing Your Course	Chapter 4: Teaching Your Canvas Course Chapter 5: Exploring Special Feature Chapter 6: Utilizing and Integrating Apps
3. Practical Ideas and Resources	Chapter 7: Where to Go for Help Chapter 8: Now You're Ready!

It can be observed that this book provides highly detailed and easy-to-follow guidance on how to design and deliver online courses using Canvas LMS. Each step is clearly outlined and accompanied by case examples and images that help readers understand the concepts being discussed.

### Summary of Book Chapters

Here is a chapter-by-chapter summary to provide a more detailed explanation in this book.

*Chapter 1: Getting Started with Canvas.* In this chapter, the initial steps to get started with Canvas is introduced. It covers creating an account, setting up profile, and navigating the Canvas interface. The different components and tools available within Canvas will also be explored.

*Chapter 2: Building Your Canvas Course.* This chapter focuses on the process of creating and organizing course in Canvas. It covers topics such as setting up course settings, creating modules, organizing content, and customizing the course layout. The structure of the course can be learned effectively for optimal student engagement.

*Chapter 3 : Getting Ready to launch Your Course.* This section allows the discovery of how to create engaging content for a Canvas course. The chapter explores various content creation tools within Canvas, such as the rich text editor, file uploads, and embedding multimedia elements. Readers will learn how to incorporate multimedia resources to enhance the learning experience.

*Chapter 4 : Teaching Your Canvas Course .* This chapter provides guidance and strategies to help effectively deliver a particular course content, engage with students, and facilitate a meaningful learning experience such as course navigation, content delivery, discussion and communication, assignments and assessments, and progress tracking.

*Chapter 5 : Exploring Special Feature Engagement.* This chapter aims to broaden your understanding of the capabilities and possibilities that Canvas provides such as Multimedia Integration, Learning Modules, Adaptive Learning, Tools, Virtual Meetings and Web Conferencing integration, Gamification and Interactive Elements.

*Chapter 6 : Utilizing and Integrating Apps.* This chapter equips the readers with the knowledge and skills to expand the functionality and possibilities of a course. It encourages them to explore a wide range of apps available in the App Center and select the ones that best align with their teaching goals and the needs of their students such as marketplace of pre-approved applications that can be integrated into the Canvas course.

*Chapter 7 : Where to Go for Help.* This chapter provides information on various resources and avenues

available to address any issues or concerns that may arise such as Canvas Forum where instructors can share ideas and seek help from other Canvas experts.

*Chapter 8 : Now You're Ready !* Finally, a trainer will be well-prepared to launch your Canvas course and facilitate a positive and engaging learning experience for his students. It consolidates the knowledge and insights gained throughout the book, helping him apply them effectively in practice.

### Advantages of This Book

*Step-by-step guidance:* "Canvas LMS Course Design" excels in providing highly detailed and comprehensive step-by-step guidance for designing online courses using the Canvas Learning Management System. The book meticulously outlines each stage of the course design process, from initial planning to final implementation. This meticulous approach enables readers to navigate the complexities of course design with confidence and clarity.

*Clear explanations:* The author's ability to convey complex concepts and technical aspects related to the Canvas LMS in a clear and understandable manner is a notable strength of the book. The explanations are presented in a concise and straightforward style, ensuring that readers can easily grasp the underlying principles and apply them effectively in their own course design endeavors.

*Practical examples:* The inclusion of practical examples, case studies, and real-life scenarios further enhances the book's effectiveness. These illustrative examples demonstrate how the concepts and strategies discussed can be successfully implemented in real-world contexts. By showcasing concrete applications, readers are provided with practical insights and inspiration for designing their own engaging and interactive online courses.

*Visual aids:* Visual aids, such as diagrams, screenshots, and images, play a crucial role in enhancing the understanding of the Canvas LMS functionalities and course design concepts. The judicious use of visual elements not only reinforces the step-by-step guidance but also provides readers with a visual representation of key concepts, making them easier to comprehend and apply.

*Structured organization:* The book exhibits a well-structured organization, featuring a logical progression of topics. It begins with foundational concepts and gradually builds upon them, introducing more advanced techniques and strategies as the reader progresses. This systematic approach ensures that readers develop a solid understanding of each topic before moving on to more complex aspects of course design.

*Comprehensive coverage:* The book covers a wide range of topics that are pertinent to course design within the

Canvas LMS environment. From instructional strategies to multimedia integration and student engagement techniques, the book leaves no stone unturned in its comprehensive exploration of key elements and considerations in designing effective online courses. This comprehensive coverage equips readers with a holistic understanding of the subject matter and empowers them to create engaging and impactful learning experiences for their students.

By incorporating these advantages, "Canvas LMS Course Design" provides readers with a wealth of knowledge, practical guidance, and inspiration to effectively leverage the Canvas LMS for designing and delivering interactive online courses.

### Areas for Improvement

The book presents several challenges associated with its content, particularly regarding the utilization of the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). These challenges encompass:

1. *Learning Curve*: The use of Canvas LMS can pose a significant learning curve for individuals who lack prior experience with the platform. While the book provides step-by-step guidance, readers may require additional time to fully grasp the functionalities and interface of Canvas.
2. *Customization Limitations*: Despite offering some guidance on course design, the book falls short in addressing the extent of customization options within Canvas LMS. It may not adequately emphasize advanced customization possibilities or complex coding techniques to tailor the appearance and functionality of Canvas to meet individual or institutional requirements.
3. *Technical Issues*: Technology implementation is seldom flawless, and users of Canvas LMS may encounter technical problems while navigating the platform. The book may not sufficiently focus on providing comprehensive troubleshooting guidance for potential technical issues, such as server problems, device compatibility, or internet connectivity.
4. *Platform Updates*: Canvas LMS continuously updates its platform to enhance functionality and security. Since the book's publication date may precede these updates, it may lack the most up-to-date information and features. Consequently, readers should actively stay informed about the latest developments and consult Canvas's current documentation to ensure they are leveraging the newest features and comprehending system changes.
5. *Integration with Third-Party Tools*: The book may not adequately address the integration of Canvas LMS with external tools or web services that can complement its functionality. Readers seeking to integrate external tools like collaboration

platforms, assessment tools, or registration systems may need to seek additional resources for more extensive guidance and insights into these integrations.

To tackle these challenges, readers are advised to take precautions by seeking technical support, engaging with the Canvas user community to share experiences, and augmenting their understanding of Canvas LMS through alternative accessible sources:

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the review of the book "Canvas LMS Course Design: Create and Deliver Interactive Online Course on the Canvas Learning Management System" by Ryan John highlights several key points. The book serves as a comprehensive guide for educators and instructional designers looking to utilize the Canvas LMS for designing online courses. It provides step-by-step instructions and practical advice.

One of the main strengths of the book is its clear and easily understandable writing style, making it accessible for readers to follow and implement the discussed concepts. The author's extensive experience with Canvas LMS is evident, providing valuable insights and best practices throughout the book. The book covers various topics, including instructional strategies, multimedia integration, and techniques for enhancing student engagement.

However, there are areas that could be improved. The book could delve deeper into the analysis and evaluation of certain topics, such as assessment strategies and the integration of multimedia elements. Additionally, a more critical approach to examining assumptions and potential biases within the book would enhance its overall credibility.

Overall, "Canvas LMS Course Design" by Ryan John is a valuable resource for educators and instructional designers seeking guidance on utilizing the Canvas LMS for designing interactive online courses. Its strengths lie in its practicality, clarity, and comprehensive coverage of key topics. While there is room for improvement in terms of depth of analysis and critical evaluation, the book still offers valuable insights and recommendations for designing effective courses within the Canvas LMS.

This book is recommended for educators, instructional designers, and administrators who are new to using Canvas LMS or seeking practical guidance in course design. It serves as a helpful starting point for understanding the capabilities of the platform and implementing effective teaching strategies in an online learning environment. Additionally, experienced Canvas users may find value in the book's insights and best practices for enhancing their course design approaches.

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