Oncourse Quick Start Guide: For Students

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This document contains the following how to guides

- Getting Started with Oncourse
- Making Oncourse Your Own
- Assignments: Completing an Assignment
- Messages: Sending, Replying & Organizing
- Resources: Adding & Removing Items

We hope you find the information in the document to be useful.

For more information

For the latest Oncourse information and resources online, see:
http://oncourse.iu.edu/info

There you'll find recent announcements, a getting started guide, short online demonstrations, short "least-you-need-to-know" documents, self-study step-by-step materials, help documentation and more. You'll also find contact information for your campus teaching and learning center.
Getting Started with Oncourse, For Students

This is a quick introduction to Oncourse for students.

Getting There

Any supported browser is the starting point for entry.

1. Open a Web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.
2. Type http://oncourse.iu.edu in the address bar.

Finding Help

On the main Oncourse page there are links to various resources below the banner. See Figure 2.

- Click Training & Support.
  Of particular interest on this page are the links for Oncourse Tips, In-depth Materials, Feature demonstrations (which are 2-4 minute video tutorials) and Least You Need to Know documents.
- To ask for help or make a suggestion, Click Contact Us.

Logging In

You now need to login to Oncourse.

1. In the upper right corner of the screen, Click Login.
2. Enter your username and your passphrase.
3. Click Login.
   Logging in successfully takes you to My Workspace, your personal area in Oncourse.

Exploring Tabs

The sites to which you belong are displayed as tabs across the top of the screen. If you belong to more sites than can be displayed as tabs, the additional sites can be accessed by clicking More Sites. See Figure 3.

1. To enter a specific site, Click a site tab.
2. To return to My Workspace, Click My Workspace.
3. To see additional sites, on the far right, Click More Sites.
Making Oncourse Your Own, For Students

Personalize your Oncourse environment with these steps to modify the look and function of some features

Reorganizing Tab Positions

The number and order of the tabs can be customized so that they are positioned most conveniently for you.

1. Click My Workspace.
2. In the menubar on the left, Click Preferences.
3. Near the top of the screen, Click the Customize Tabs button, if necessary. See Figure 1.

On the Customize Tabs page, sites that are displayed as tabs are listed in the Favorite Sites column on the left. In the middle, the Active Sites column lists the sites that appear when you click the More Sites tab. On the right, the Archived Sites column lists the sites that do not appear in your More Sites tab.

4. Drag and Drop the sites until they appear in the desired order.
5. To save the changes, at the bottom of the screen, Click Update Preferences.

Setting Notification Preferences

You can choose how you receive email notifications of site activity. For Announcements, Resources and Drop Box, and Syllabus items you are choosing how you receive low priority notifications (high priority notifications from these tools are always sent to your email). For the Email Archive and Matrices tools, you are choosing how you receive all notifications.

1. Near the top of the screen, Click the Notifications button.
   The options for each type of notification are:
   • To receive each notification separately.
   • To receive one email per day summarizing the notifications.
   • To not receive a notification.
2. For each type of Notification, Choose the option you desire.
3. When you have set all of your options as desired, at the bottom of the screen, Click Update Preferences.

Adjusting the Time Zone

Select your time zone for tools such as Schedule.

1. At the top of the screen, Click the Time Zone button.
2. In the Time Zone list Find and Select your time zone.
3. To complete your selection, at the bottom of the screen, Click Update Preferences.
Setting Privacy Status

Set your visibility (and communication capability) with others in a site.

1. Near the top, **Click Privacy Status**.
2. To change your privacy status for a particular site, in the “Choose a site” drop-down list, **Select the appropriate site**.

3. **Set your privacy status preference to the appropriate option:**
   - Remain hidden in this site
   - Make me visible in this site
   - Ask me again later

4. **Click Update**.
5. To change your privacy status for all your sites at once, **Select the appropriate option:**
   - Show Me in All Sites
   - Hide Me in All Sites
Assignments: Completing an Assignment

Students can complete an assignment in multiple ways. Always check with the course instructor for the method used in each course. This document shows how to use the Assignments tool.

Viewing the Assignment List in Assignments

The Assignments tool displays a list of assignments the instructor has posted.

1. From the menubar on the left, **Click Assignments**. You will see a list of assignments.

   *Note: On the Assignment List screen, a check box under the Completed column displays a completion status.*

2. To see the details of a particular assignment, under the title of that assignment, **Click View Details and Submit**.

   *Note: If an instructor is accepting late submissions and the assignment is past due, its Due date will be marked by (Late).*

![Figure 1](image)

The screen displays the assignment’s details at the top, as well as any instructions or attachments, as shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 2](image)

3. Optionally, to view an attachment (if available), **Click the attachment name** under Attachments.

Using the Text Box

The instructor may allow you to submit your assignment via a text box. To be sure you don’t lose any work; you should type your response in another application, such as Word and then paste your assignment into the text box.

![Figure 3](image)

1. **Click inside the Submission Text area.**
2. **Click the Paste from Word icon.**
Note: Some browsers will prompt and ask for permission to access to your clipboard; if permission is given your text will be inserted without the dialog box opening.

a. In the Paste dialog box, **Click in the text area**.

b. **Press Ctrl + v** (Mac users press Command + v).

c. **Click OK**.

### Adding Attachments

The instructor may also expect you to submit your assignment by attaching one or more files. You can attach any file for an assignment. You can add any number of attachments, and they can be any combination of local files, web sites, and items stored in Resources.

1. To add an attachment, **Click Add Attachments**.

   You see the Add Attachment form. This allows for three options:
   - **Upload local file** - A file that is on your computer.
   - **URL (link to web site)** – A web address.
   - **Select a resource** – Any item that is stored in Resources – either in this site or another site.

![Add Attachment Form](image.png)

2. If you want to add a file from your computer, at the top of the screen next to Upload local file, **Click Browse**.
   The Choose File to Upload window opens.
   a. **Double-click the file** of your choice.
      A gray bar added to the top of the screen labeled Items to attach shows what has been selected for attachment. You can select multiple items to attach.
   b. To add additional attachments, **Repeat the steps**.

3. If you wish to add web address, **Type the URL** in “URL (link to website)”.
   a. **Click Add**.
      A gray bar added to the top of the screen labeled Items to attach shows what has been selected for attachment.
   b. To add additional web addresses, **Repeat the steps**.

4. If you want to attach a file from Resources, **Navigate to a file in your Resources folder**.
   
   **Note**: To access Resources for other sites, **Click the link for Show other sites**.
c. Click “Attach a copy” to the right of the desired file.  
   A gray bar added to the top of the screen labeled Items to attach shows what has been selected for attachment.

d. To add additional attachments, Repeat the steps.

5. To finish attaching the file(s), Click Continue.

**Saving an Assignment to Submit Later**

You can save your work and choose to submit the assignment later.

1. To save your work, Click Save and Exit. See Figure 5.

![](Figure 5)

You are returned to the Assignments List. The saved assignment has (In Progress) after its title. At this point you can exit Oncourse.

2. When you are ready to continue, to return to the Assignments tool, Click Assignments.

3. To return to the saved assignment, Click View Details and Submit.
   After the title you see “- In Progress” and the date and time the file was last saved.

4. **Edit the assignment submission as needed.**

5. When ready to submit, Follow the steps in Submitting the Assignment below.

**Previewing an Assignment**

You can preview your assignment to see how it will appear to your instructor upon submission.

1. To preview the assignment, Click Preview. See Figure 5.
   You see a preview of your submitted text, and any attachments.

2. If you need make edits to the submission, Click Edit.

3. If you are ready to submit the assignment, Follow the steps in Submitting the Assignment below.

**Submitting an Assignment**

When you are ready to turn your assignment in, you need to submit the assignment.

1. To start to submit the assignment, Click Submit. See Figure 5.

2. To confirm the submission, Click Yes, Continue.
Messages: Sending, Replying & Organizing

The Messages Tool allows participants to read, send and organize messages within a site.

Sending a Message

The Messages tool allows site participants to communicate using internal course mail. A copy may also be sent outside Oncourse to the recipients’ email addresses.

1. From the list of tools to the left, Click Messages.

2. To start to compose a message, near the top of the screen, Click Compose Message.

3. In the To field, Click the recipient’s name or the group name.  
   Note: You can use Ctrl+Click [ Mac: Command+Click ] to select multiple recipients.

4. To send a copy of the message to the recipients’ email addresses, Click the Send Cc checkbox.  
   Note: Instructors or site owners may choose to turn this option off. If you are an Instructor or owner you can turn this feature off under the Settings link on the main Messages screen.

5. In the Subject field, type a subject.

6. Type the message text.

7. If you wish to attach a file to the message, see the section Adding an Attachment below.

8. Click Send.  
   A copy of the message will be saved in your Sent folder in Messages.
Adding an Attachment

Additional resources may be attached to messages. Resources may be attached by uploading a file from your computer, linking to a web site or by attaching a file already stored in this sites or another sites Resources tool.

1. **Verify that you are on the Compose a Message screen.**
2. To add an attachment, **Click Add Attachments.**
   
   You see the Add Attachment form. This allows for three situations:
   
   - **Upload local file** - A file that is on your computer.
   - **URL (link to web site)** – A web address.
   - **Select a resource** – Any item that is stored in Resources – either in this site or another site.

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**Figure 2**

1. If you want to add a file from your computer, at the top of the screen next to Upload local file, **Click Browse.**
   
   The Choose File to Upload window opens.
   
   a. **Navigate to the file on your computer** that you would like to attach.
   
   b. **Double-click the file of your choice.**
   
      A gray bar added to the top of the screen labeled Items to attach shows what has been selected for attachment.
   
      c. To add additional attachments, **Repeat the steps.**

2. If you want to add a web address, **Type or paste the URL** in the “URL (link to website)” field.
   
   a. **Click Add.**
   
      A gray bar added to the top of the screen labeled Items to attach shows what has been selected for attachment.
   
   b. To add additional attachments, **Repeat the steps.**

3. If you want to attach a file from Resources, **Navigate to a file in your Resources folder.**
   
   **Note:** To access Resources for other sites such as My Workspace, **Click the link for Show other sites.**
   
   a. **Click “Attach a copy”** to the right of the desired file.
   
      A gray bar added to the top of the screen labeled “Items to attach” shows what has been selected for attachment.
   
   c. To add additional attachments, **Repeat the steps.**

4. To finish the selection process, **Click Continue.**
   
   You are returned to the Compose a Message screen.

5. To send the message, **Click Send.**
Reading Messages

Messages are held in the Received folder in the Messages tool by default.

1. To open the Received folder, Click the Received link
2. To open a message, Click the message subject link

Replying to Messages

Both above and below a message are buttons that allow the reader to reply to the sender, reply to all recipients of the message, or to forward the message to someone else.

1. Click Reply.
   The message automatically includes the sender as a recipient, but additional recipients can also be added at this point.
2. Proceed as with the Sending a Message section above.

Adding Folders

The Messages tool includes 3 default folders: Received, Sent and Deleted. You can create additional folders to hold messages of a similar topic.

1. At the top of the Messages tool, Click the New Folder link.
2. Type a folder name
3. Click Add.

Moving Messages

You can organize your messages by moving them to folders.

1. If necessary, from the list of tools to the left, Click Messages.
2. Click on the name of the folder where the messages you want to move are located.
3. Click the checkbox(es) for the message or messages you wish to move. See Figure 3.
4. Above the message list, Click Move above the list of messages.
5. Click the radio button for a folder.
6. Click Move Messages.

Deleting Messages

Messages may be removed from any of the folders in the Messages tool. Removed messages are kept in the Deleted folder.

1. From the list of tools to the left, Click Messages, if necessary
2. Click on the name of the folder where the messages you want to delete are located.
3. Click the checkbox(es) for the message or messages. See Figure 3.
4. Click Delete above the list of messages.
Resources: Adding & Removing Items
How to store and organize your files in My Workspace and access files made available to you in other sites

Figure 1

Adding Folders to My Resources
Creating folders to hold files of a similar topic makes items easy to find and makes the tool work more efficiently.
1. In the menubar on left, Click Resources.
2. To the right of the My Workspace folder, Click Add.
3. In the list of items to add, Click Create Folders.
4. In the new folder window, Type a name for the folder.
5. To add other folders, Click Add Another Folder.
6. To complete the addition of the folder(s), at the bottom of the screen, Click Create Folders Now.

Adding Files to My Resources
Storing files in My Resources means that the items are available to you anywhere you can connect to the internet.
1. In My Workspace, Click Resources.
2. To the right of the folder where you want to add a file, Click Add.
3. In the list of items to add, Click Upload Files.
4. Click Browse.
5. Navigate to the file’s location on your computer.
6. To select the file, Double-click on the file.
7. Click Upload Files Now.

Expanding a Zip Archive
If you upload a zip file, you can use Oncourse to expand the content automatically.
1. First, to upload the zip file, Follow steps 1 through 7 in the Adding Files to My Resources section above.
2. Next to the file, Click the Actions drop-down list.
3. Click Expand Zip Archive.
   A folder with the same name as the zip file is added to Resources. Inside the folder are the files that were archived in the zip file.
   Note: If a folder with the same name as the zip file already exists, you will either need to delete the folder or rename and re-upload the zip file.

Compressing a Folder to a Zip Archive
You can also archive a folder to save space or to make it easy to download an entire folder at once.
4. Next to the folder you wish to archive, Click the Actions drop-down list.
5. Click Compress to Zip Archive.
   A zip file with the same name of the folder is added to the site. If you already had a zip file of that name, a “_2” will be appended to the end of the file name, e.g., assignments_2.zip.

Adding a URL to My Resources
Items other than files can be added to Resources. These items include URLs, HTML pages and Text Documents. The process for adding each of these is similar but the exact steps vary.
1. To the right of a folder, Click Add.
2. In the Add drop-down list, Click Add Web Links (URLs).
3. In the Web Address (URL) field, Type the desired URL.
4. In the Website Name field, Type a meaningful name.
5. Click Add Web Links Now.
Retrieving Files from a Site

In order to make changes to a file you first need to download the file. Downloading files is the same whether you are in My Workspace Resources or another site’s Resources.

1. Go to the site where the file was stored.
2. Click a site’s Resources tool.
3. Right-click (Mac: Control-click) the name of a Resource item.
4. Click Save Target As… (in Internet Explorer) or Click Save Link As… (in Firefox).
   
   Note: Once you make changes to the file, remember to upload the new version to Resources as covered in Adding Files above.

Sharing Files in My Resources with Others

Any item stored in the Resources tool has a unique URL. Sharing a file with someone else requires that the file be made publicly accessible and that the file’s URL be provided to the recipient.

1. Find the folder or file you wish to make public.
2. To the right of its name, from the Actions menu, Click Edit Details.

3. Under Availability and Access, Select the “This folder and its contents are publicly viewable” radio button.
4. Next to the item to which you want to link, from the Actions menu, Click Edit Details.
5. Copy the URL.
6. Paste the URL as needed.
   
   If you wish to have a shorter URL than the one you pasted, check the box next to Short URL and it will create a go.iu.edu shortened URL
7. Click Update.