

## Canvas Community Help Site Changing

After April 15th, you may notice some changes to the Canvas help pages as Instructure moves it Canvas community site to a new platform. If you have included links to specific help pages on the Canvas site in your syllabus or course you should update those links before June 30th when the old site will be taken down. See: [Canvas-Community-2-0-FAQs](#)

## What are Canvas Term Dates?

Canvas has separate settings for determining when students can participate in a class and when instructors can modify information in a class. Canvas has been setup so that the instructor can determine when a class opens up for student participation but unlike its predecessor canvas automatically moves the student to a read only status at the end of the semester. Instructors can modify a class up to a year after the end of the semester and can copy class materials at any time. For more information see [Canvas Term Dates Best Practices](#)

See how students view a class. [When-can-i-access-my-course](#)

## Editor Comments

The editor in canvas has had a face lift and added some options that include better support for creating tables. Users can now easily add, merge, and split table cells without having to switch to the HTML view. Rows can be added, copied, and pasted anywhere in the table. If you have tried to work with tables in the past you will really appreciate this improvement. Thank you Canvas for listening to our cries for help. See: [how-do-i-insert-a-table](#)

## The Power Points of Video

If you create your own PowerPoints you may be sitting on a video gold mine. Did you know you can turn your PowerPoints into a video using only the PowerPoint program? If you are just starting to think

about adding video to your Canvas site why not start with a program you are already familiar with. It is a great way to get started. Just remember to keep your videos short, 6 minutes or less. Here is a short how to video: [How-to-turn-PowerPoint-into-video](#)

## Beta Environment... Testing, Testing, 1.2.3...

Did you know that your Canvas course is copied to a testing area every three weeks? This copy of your course can come in very handy if you know how to access it. Want to know what your gradebook would look like if you completely changed everything? Do it with impunity in what is called the **Beta Environment**. Altering anything in your course here will have no impact on your live course or students. You can change any course setting, delete or alter any content and no one will ever know.

So how do you get to this secrete hidden copy of your course? Easy just access your course and alter the URL in your browser to include the word "beta".

For example if the URL to your course is:

<https://redwoods.instructure.com/courses/1349>

Insert ".beta" after "https://redwoods":

<https://redwoods.beta.instructure.com/courses/1349>

You will then be prompted to login and presto you are now in a copy of your course in the beta test environment. *Note that the content could be up to 3 weeks old.*

Here is a [video-about-the-beta-environment](#)

## Migration Tip

You do not need to start using canvas all at once. You can start small and gradually work your way towards a more organized, productive and student friendly environment. Migration from MyCR can take time so start thinking about it now. Create a check list of what you want to do and then call or visit your Instructional Technologists for help and advice.