University of North Alabama

2025-26
New Faculty Orientation Guide

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Welcome Message

Welcome to the University of North Alabama! We are excited for you to join the UNA team and to continue the UNA tradition of excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship. This document will serve as an introduction to the various resources and services available to you as faculty at UNA. We encourage new faculty to keep this document close as it is a handy guide when getting accustomed to university policies and processes.

New Faculty Orientation

While this document will help orient you to university resources and services, New Faculty Orientation will also include monthly sessions that provide more information about teaching at UNA, introduce you to various university administrators, and network with colleagues who are also starting at UNA. A formal schedule with session dates, times, and topics will be sent via UNA email within the coming weeks. Please look for this email and add these sessions to your calendar. We look forward to meeting you at our first New Faculty Orientation session! Roar Lions!

UNA Website

The official website for the University of North Alabama is una.edu. On the UNA homepage, you will find links to resources such as Canvas, the UNAPortal, Collier Library, and many others. Faculty are encouraged to save the UNA homepage as a bookmark for easy access.

UNAPortal

The UNAPortal is your primary UNA dashboard. It houses a variety of links and resources related to employee services, teaching and registration, student advising, Banner, financial services, and more. Once your employment paperwork has been processed, we encourage you to log into the UNAPortal. Your login information will be your UNA username and password. Your UNA username is the first part of your UNA email address without the "@una.edu" ending. If you are logging in to the UNAPortal for the first time, your password will be in the following format: **RoarLions!mmddyyyy** where **mmddyyyy** = your eight-digit birthday. After you log into the UNAPortal, you will want to change your password. Read more about the UNAPortal Experience. If you have trouble logging in, please reach out to the Office of Instructional Technology Services via email at helpdesk@una.edu.

Directory Pictures

All incoming faculty will need to schedule an appointment to have directory photos taken in the Enrollment Marketing Studio, located in Room 21 of Cramer Way. Once photos have been taken and processed, they will be added to your UNA directory page.

UNA Mane Card Mobile ID

The UNA Mane Card is your UNA ID that can be used all around campus: at all of our eating establishments, for door access to buildings and dorms, for entrance to special events including ballgames and concerts, and in the library to check out books and make copies. As incoming faculty, you will need to set up your UNA Mane Card Mobile ID or contact the IT Helpdesk at helpdesk@una.edu or call 256-765-4865 or stop by the IT Helpdesk located on the main floor of Collier Library in between the elevators and Café Dalucci.

Parking Permit

All vehicles operated or parked on the UNA campus must be properly registered and display a current UNA permit, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Please follow the New (First-Time) Registrant instructions to register your vehicle and apply for a UNA parking permit. For more information about parking permits and guidelines for where to park on campus, please visit the UNA Office of Parking Services webpage.

Campus Map

The University of North Alabama website contains an online campus map for your use. We encourage new faculty to use this resource to help familiarize yourself with the locations of your office, classes, most convenient parking lots, and other prominent campus locations.

Instructional Technology Services

The Office of Instructional Technology Services (ITS) provides technical support for all hardware (e.g., physical computers/laptops, classroom equipment, etc.) and software (e.g., Microsoft programs, Adobe Acrobat, SPSS, etc.) issues. ITS also provides support with your UNA login credentials (UNA username and password), email, and Canvas login. To learn more about the services ITS offers, please visit their webpage. You can also contact ITS directly via email at helpdesk@una.edu or by phone at 256-765-4865 Monday through Friday (8am to 4:30pm).

Microsoft Office Accounts

All UNA faculty, staff, and students are given a Microsoft Office account at no charge. Your Microsoft account gives you access to programs such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneDrive, and Microsoft Teams. For more information about Microsoft Accounts or how to download these programs, please visit the Microsoft Office Webpage on the UNA ITS website.

Educational Technology Services

The Office of Educational Technology Services (ETS) provides support for the following educational tools: Canvas LMS, Canvas Studio, Simple Syllabus, Microsoft Teams, and Respondus LockDown Browser. ETS also provides assistance with course design and development. To learn more about the support services ETS offers, please visit their webpage. For all Canvas problems, submit a Canvas Support Ticket. For general requests about course design, Canvas, and ed tech, email ets@una.edu. If students are experiencing Canvas issues, ask them to submit a Canvas Support Ticket – *students should not contact ETS via email*.

Canvas LMS

The official learning management system (LMS) of the University of North Alabama is Canvas. All courses (whether taught in-person or online) will receive a Canvas course shell and instructors for those courses will have access to their respective course shells. As course instructors, faculty will be responsible for learning and effectively using the Canvas LMS. For more detailed information about common Canvas usage, please see the Appendix: Course Setup Tasks with Canvas and Related Tools at the end of this document.

The Office of Educational Technology Services (ETS) provides a webpage for common Canvas usage guides and questions.

If faculty, staff, or students experience any difficulties in using Canvas, they are able to submit a Canvas support ticket with ETS. To submit a ticket, please follow these steps:
1. In Canvas, go to the page you are experiencing the problem or issue.
2. In the Canvas menu (purple bar on the far left), click on the "Help" button (near the bottom of the menu).
3. In the pop-up menu that appears, click on the "Report a Problem" option.
4. Provide as much information as you can about the issue such as the full course name and ID of the course you are experiencing the problem in, the full name of the assignment/page/canvas tool where the problem occurred, a description of the problem, and any error messages you may have received. The more information you can provide, the better the ETS team is able to diagnose and troubleshoot the problem.
5. Click the "Submit Ticket" button once you have finished.

Please note that individuals having difficulty logging into Canvas must contact the Office of Instructional Technology Services (ITS) for assistance as this relates to the individual's UNA username and password.

Simple Syllabus

At the start of each semester, all instructors are required to submit their syllabi in Simple Syllabus. Simple Syllabus is a syllabus repository that allows instructors to create, share, and store their UNA syllabi for archival and accreditation purposes. Instructors are able to access Simple Syllabus by clicking on the "Simple Syllabus" option in their Canvas course menu. The Office of Educational Technology Services (ETS) provides a webpage with guides on using Simple Syllabus. If you have any questions or difficulties in accessing or using Simple Syllabus, please contact the ETS team via email (ets@una.edu).

Course Design

For all course-related questions, such as what learning objectives to teach, which materials to prescribe, or what learning activities and assessments to use, please contact the department chair of your program. Some departments have prescribed learning objectives, instructional materials, and/or assessments; others do not. In many cases you will be allowed to select your own course objectives, materials, and resources. Your department chair (and fellow colleagues) are great resources on how your program typically performs and what approaches have been most successful for students. When selecting instructional materials, faculty are encouraged to consider the costs of materials in order to ensure the broadest student access possible. The Collier Library can assist faculty in locating open education resources that are of low to no cost to students.

As additional support, the Office of Educational Technology Services (ETS) does offer assistance in course design. For more information about these services, please visit the ETS webpage or email ETS directly at ets@una.edu.

Collier Library

The University of North Alabama's Collier Library provides faculty with a variety of physical and electronic resources, including course reserves, electronic journals, video databases, and recording equipment. Additionally, Collier librarians can provide assistance with issues pertaining to plagiarism, copyright use, licensing, open education resources, and embedded librarians within individual courses. Faculty are encouraged to take advantage of these resources and services as they are provided at no cost. Please visit the Collier Library website and consider scheduling a meeting with your department's library liaison to learn more about Collier Library's services.

Faculty Resource Website

The University of North Alabama has created a Faculty Resources webpage that contains links to institutional policies, resources, and programs that are beneficial to UNA faculty (some of which were identified in this guide while including many others). New faculty are encouraged to review this webpage, as needed, to help them get acquainted with the resources available to them. It may be a good idea to save this link as a bookmark for future use.

Student Support Services

The University of North Alabama is committed to providing students with a supportive and inclusive learning environment that promotes student success. Many offices and centers are available to students on campus and online:

- University Success Center provides tutoring and houses the Center for Writing Excellence, Math Learning Center, and Advising Services.
- Tutor.com is a resource found with the Canvas LMS that provides students with free tutoring services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Tutor.com offers assistance with a variety of subjects as well as providing writing services.
- Student Counseling Services is available to provide students with a safe and confidential space to discuss mental health and well-being needs.
- The University Case Manager assists students in overcoming barriers to success (including lack of food through The Pantry and financial concerns through Caring for the Pride).

FERPA and Student Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA") is a federal law governing the privacy of educational records. The law, also known as the Buckley Amendment, applies to all educational agencies or institutions that receive funds under any program administered by the US Department of Education. At the University of North Alabama, FERPA rights apply to all students. A student is a person who is or has been in attendance at the institution, regardless of the person's age.

If a student is attending UNA – at any age – the rights under FERPA have transferred to the student. However, in a situation where a student is enrolled in both a high school and UNA, the two schools may exchange information on that student. If the student is under 18, the parents still retain the rights under FERPA at the high school and may inspect and review any records sent by UNA to the high school. Additionally, UNA may disclose personally identifiable information from the student's education records to the

parents, without the consent of the eligible student, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes under the IRS rules.

In cases in which FERPA rights are retained by the student, students may complete a release form authorizing University faculty/officials to speak with any designated individual regarding student educational records. Students may complete a FERPA release by logging into their UNAPortal account.

- Select **ACADEMICS** (left side of the screen all the way at the bottom) and students will see **FERPA**, **Records Release**. Click on Records Release and follow the prompt to add parents, parent, or guardian. Once submitted, their request will be sent to the Office of the Registrar for processing.

More information on FERPA can be found on the Registrar's FERPA webpage. Questions about FERPA and student disclosure should be directed to registrar@una.edu.

Disability and Support Services

The University of North Alabama's Aubrey & Annie Looney Disability Support Services provides support and appropriate accommodations for students with learning, physical, and psychological disabilities. These services include initial determination and application of classroom accommodations, alternative testing program, academic guidance and study skills sessions, assistive technology, and alternate formats. For more information, visit the Aubrey & Annie Looney Disability Support Services website.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University offers reasonable accommodations to students with eligible documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits

one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the population. It is the responsibility of the student to contact [Aubrey & Annie Looney Disability Support Services](#) to initiate the process to develop an accommodation plan. This accommodation plan will not be applied retroactively. Appropriate, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements, but no fundamental or substantial alteration of academic standards will be made. Complete guidelines and requirements for documentation can be found on the [Disablity Documentation webpage](#). For more information and to request accommodations, the student should contact the DSS office at 256-765-4214, email to dss@una.edu, or visit [Aubrey & Annie Looney Disability Support Services](#).

Title IX and Reporting

The University of North Alabama has an expectation of mutual respect. Students, staff, administrators, and faculty are entitled to a working environment and educational environment free of discriminatory harassment. Both the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the State of Alabama regard sexual harassment as a form of sex/gender discrimination and, therefore, as an unlawful discriminatory practice. This includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic and intimate partner violence, stalking, gender-based discrimination, discrimination against pregnant and parenting students, and gender-based bullying and hazing.

Faculty and staff are required by federal law to report any observations of harassment (including online harassment) as well as any notice given by students or colleagues of any of the behaviors noted above.

Retaliation against any person who reports discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. UNA's policies and regulations covering discrimination and harassment may be accessed at www.una.edu/titleix. If you have experienced or observed discrimination or harassment, below are some resources to contact.

Confidential Reporting

If a reporting party would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, the reporting party may speak with:

- Student Counseling Services   256-765-5215
- University Health Services   256-765-4328
- Women's Center   256-765-4380
- North Alabama Crisis Hotline   256-767-1100 (hotline)
- Safe Place (domestic violence)   256-767-6210 (hotline)/256-767-3076 (office)

Formal Reporting

If a reporting party would like the University to investigate an incident, the reporting party may speak with:

- UNA Police   256-765-4357
- Title IX Coordinator   256-765-4223

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The University of North Alabama's Emergency Plan outlines the campus' procedures for managing major emergencies that may threaten the health and safety of the campus community or disrupt its activities. The plan identifies departments and individuals that are directly responsible for emergency response and critical support services, and it provides a management structure for coordinating and deploying resources. At UNA, planning ahead for emergencies is part of normal business planning and campus life; all members of the campus community share a responsibility for preparedness. An emergency can strike anytime or anywhere, and a disaster will affect everyone.

The University of North Alabama Police Department (UPD) supports the overall safety and well-being of the UNA campus. Additional information regarding safety trainings, the Lion Alert notification system (for severe weather and emergency situations), and other safety protocols can be found by visiting the UNA Police Department webpage.

Appendix: Course Setup Tasks with Canvas and Related Tools

The appendix contains some helpful resources and quick guides for common Canvas usage. This is a great resource for those who are new to Canvas or need a quick refresher. For more detailed or troubleshooting assistance, please refer to the Canvas Instructor Guides or request help with ETS by submitting a Canvas Support Ticket.

Quick Start Check for the First Week of Classes

Here are some common "getting started" things to do prior to the first day of class:
- Log into Canvas at una.instructure.com using your UNA username and Password
  - It is also possible to access Canvas by going to the UNA webpage (una.edu) and clicking the "Canvas" option at the top
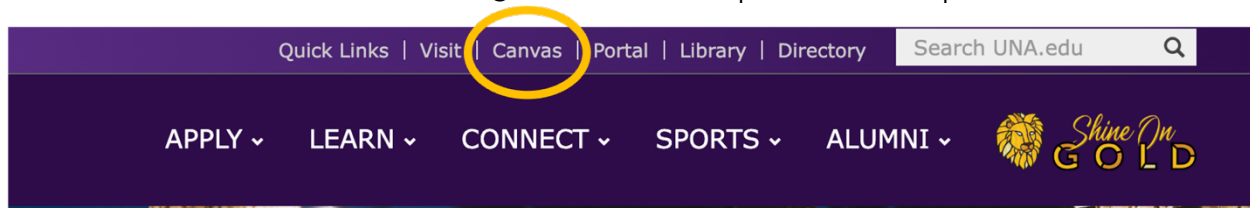
- Create/Upload your Syllabus in Simple Syllabus
- Add Modules and Course Content as needed: Pages, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions
- Check the Grade Posting Policy settings
- Preview your course with Student View to ensure that it looks correct on the students' end
- Make the course available to students by Publishing the course
- Post a welcome announcement using Announcements -or- Send a welcome message to students using Canvas Inbox

> ⚠️ **Common Pitfall: Publishing, Course Dates, and Messaging** ⚠️
>
> Even if the course is published, students may be unable to access it if the course start date has not been reached or if course access is restricted. Always double-check both the publish status and the [course date settings](#).
>
> Additionally, a course must be published *before* students can receive announcements and Canvas Inbox messages.

Getting Started with Canvas

New to Canvas or need a refresher? Here are the primary resources for all things Canvas:

- Canvas also provides a two Canvas apps for use on mobile devices: Canvas Teacher ([iOS](#)/[Android](#)) and Canvas Student ([iOS](#)/[Android](#)).
  - While Canvas does provide mobile apps, instructors are primarily able to create and edit course content through the web version of Canvas.
- The official video conferencing/meeting software of UNA is [Microsoft Teams](#). Microsoft Teams is part of the Office 365 package that all UNA faculty and staff receive.
- For more in-depth guides on Canvas usage, please visit the [Canvas Guides](#) for help:
  - [Canvas Basics](#)
  - [Instructor Getting Started Resources](#)
  - [Instructor Resources](#)
  - [Student Resources](#)
  - [Canvas Studio](#)
  - [Canvas Commons](#) (Learning Objective Repository)
- Set up [your profile](#) and [notification preferences](#)
- [Customize your Dashboard](#) to select which courses appear
- Add [nicknames](#) and [images](#) to your course cards for easier identification

Communicating with Students

Here are some important guides and considerations for when communicating with students:

- Send Course Announcements to broadcast important updates to the class
- Use the Canvas Inbox for direct messaging with students
  - Send messages to individual students or the entire class
  - Use "Send an individual to each recipient" to prevent users from seeing who else is being messaged. This is the equivalent of blind carbon copy (BCC).
  - Preview your course using Student View to confirm visibility

⚠️ Common Pitfall: Canvas Messaging ⚠️
Your course must be published *before* students can receive announcements and Canvas Inbox messages. Canvas messages are plain text only. While you can reply to emails forwarded from Canvas to an external email (such as your UNA email), you can only add attachments within the Canvas Inbox (i.e., you cannot add attachments from Outlook). Attachments made to replies made outside of Canvas Inbox will not be transmitted to Canvas and will not be added to the email thread.

Creating Course Materials

Here are some great resources for creating, editing, and importing content in your course:

- Copy/Import content from other courses
  - You can only import course content from courses you are listed as the instructor. If you need to import content from other courses, please contact your department chair on the proper procedure.

- o *To avoid importing multiple times, please be patient*! Importing is requested through the Canvas system that provides support with all institutions that use Canvas. Depending on the request load and time of year, it can take several minutes to a few hours for the import to finish.
- Adjust assignment due dates in bulk
- Use Modules to organize materials (e.g., pages, assignments, quizzes, discussions, etc.) and external content/links
  - o You can duplicate entire modules or individual items
- Create Pages, Assignments, Discussions, and Quizzes/Exams as needed
  - o Use "No Submission" for offline or external activities
  - o If needed, enable Turnitin to detect plagiarism
  - o Most assignments are assigned to the entire class. However, it is possible to assign items to individual students.
- Hide unused navigation items in the course menu for a cleaner student view
- Decide if you want to use the Attendance Tool (Roll Call) – and if you want attendance to count toward the final grade.
- If you need to share your course with colleagues, export your course and use OneDrive to share it
  - o Use the Direct Share feature to share an individual content item
- Create/Upload your Syllabus in Simple Syllabus

> ⚠️ **Common Pitfall: Canvas Storage and Course Content** ⚠️
>
> Canvas courses have limited storage. Uploading large files such as lecture videos and PowerPoints can quickly hit storage capacity. Instructors are strongly encouraged to share videos through *Canvas Studio* (Module or Page sharing) and all other content through *OneDrive* (also called Office 365) as *these methods do not affect storage*.
>
> **If you are using OneDrive for the first time in Canvas, you will be prompted to log into your Microsoft Account using your UNA credentials to sync your Canvas and Microsoft accounts. You will only need to do this the first time. Once logged in, this feature will be available in all of your Canvas courses.*

Add OneDrive File to Page, Assignment, Discussion, etc.

Assignment Name *

Assignment #1

Office 365 (OneDrive) Button

Edit   View   Insert   Format   Tools   Table

12pt ⌄   Paragraph ⌄ | **B**   *I*   U̲   A ⌄   ✎ ⌄   T² ⌄ | 🔗 ⌄   🖼 ⌄   📄 ⌄ | ⬛   🖥   ⭕   ⚡ ⌄ | ⋮

Instructions

Add OneDrive File to a Module

⋮⋮ ▾ Example Module   ✅ ＋ ⋮

⋮⋮ 📄 Module Content Part 1   ✅ ⋮

(1) In Module Tab, click "+" button in a module

⋮⋮ 💬 Discussion #1
        10 pts   ✅ ⋮

⋮⋮ 📄 Module Content Part 2   ✅ ⋮

⋮⋮ 🚀 Quiz #1
        1 pts   ✅ ⋮

Add Item to Example Module **(2) Select "External Tool" in the dropdown menu**   ✕

Add [External Tool   ⌄] to Example Module

🔗 Select a tool from the list below, or enter a URL for an external tool you already know is configured with Basic LTI to add a link to it to this module.

McGraw Hill Connect
Provides access to McGraw Hill's interactive resources tied to course content and textbooks. This app auto-logs users into MH-Campus from within course material.

MH Campus **(3) Select "Office 365" to find and upload your file**
MH Campus

Office 365   🔍
Allows you to pull in documents from Office 365 to Canvas

OneNote Class Notebook
CNC

Quizzes 2
Quizzes LTI is an LTI Assignment based solution for delivering LMS-based quizzes

RedShelf eBooks
Follett Ebook Provider RedShelf
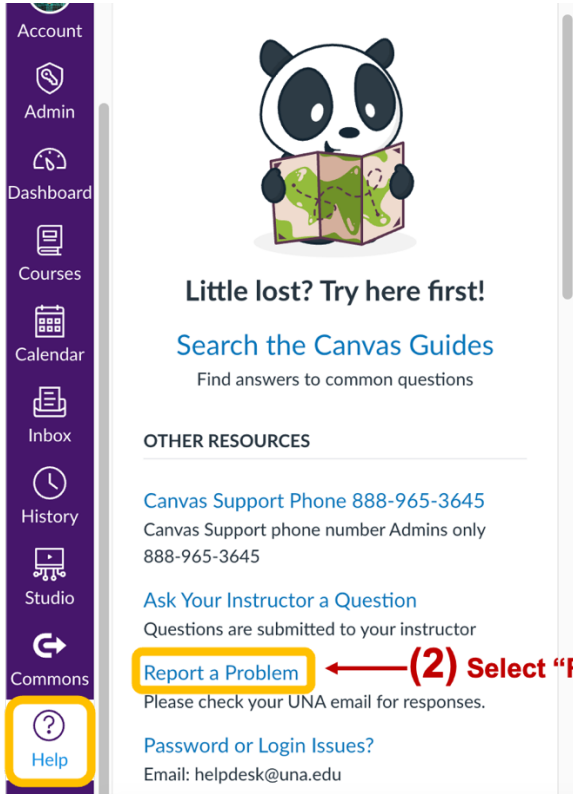
(4) Select "Add Item" when done

URL:

                                                Cancel   [Add Item]

Additionally, Students have a limited amount of personal storage in Canvas. Items such as email attachments, profile pictures, and non-graded discussion uploads all affect a student's personal storage. However, *graded assignments and discussions do not impact student personal storage*. It is strongly encouraged that student uploads be connected to graded activities to avoid students from hitting their storage limit.

Need Additional Help?

The Office of Educational Technology Services (ETS) is available to assist with all questions and concerns regarding the Canvas LMS. If you are experiencing a problem in Canvas, go to the page or location (in Canvas) where you are experiencing the problem and submit a Canvas Support Ticket.

For all other general inquiries and training, please email ETS directly at ets@una.edu.