Faculty: Set Course Format (Dates vs. Topics)

Hart Wilson - 2025-12-02 - Comments (0) - Faculty

By default, our course shells are set up with the weekly format. You may also organize your Moodle courses by topics. Choosing your course format is handled in the **Settings** menu linked at the top of your main course page. Whichever format you use, you can customize the section titles to suit your needs.

Choose Format

Open the **Settings** menu and expand the **Course format** options area, just beneath the course description. From the pull-down menu, choose "Custom sections" or “Collapsed Topics.” With custom sections (what used to be topics), the weekly section titles will be replaced by “New section” al the way down the page. Collapsed topics add a colored band to the section titles. If you choose collapsed topics and change the colors of the bands, check in with your friends at CATL to ensure that the colors meet accessibility standards for contrast. Scroll to the bottom of the page and **Save changes**.

Course Start and End Dates

Course shells are created with 11 sections. Course start and end dates are preset, with the course start date established in Banner and the end date set by the course end date plus several days to allow for end-of-term grading. Courses are considered “in progress” between the course start and end dates.

Generally, you will not need to update the term dates for your courses, although Fall terms that open on Wednesday may require an adjustment (look for instructions in your email), and we strongly recommend leaving the course end dates as set. If you change the end date, the course will be classified as “past” and will not appear in student course lists as a current course in progress, resulting in general confusion and mild panic.

Pre-Term Sections

You may want to include sections in your course in addition to the standard 11 to provide pre-course or ongoing course materials. To do so, you can add sections at the bottom of the page, but you'll want to update the course start date so that the main course section titles align with the weeks of the term.

To adjust the course start date, open the **Settings** menu and locate the field in the **General** settings area at the top of the page labeled **Course start date** and use the pull-down menus to set a new start date a week (or two, if needed) prior to the actual start of term. Scroll to the bottom of the page and **Save changes**.

Learn more about term dates.

Customize Your Section Titles

To rename sections, with editing turned on, click on the Edit week/topic name icon in the summary area. Type in the new name and hit **Enter** to save your changes.



Reduce Scrolling

You can also reduce scrolling in your course by setting up your course to display one section per page. Contact the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning for assistance.