D2L | Brightspace

Brightspace Quick Start Guide for Teachers
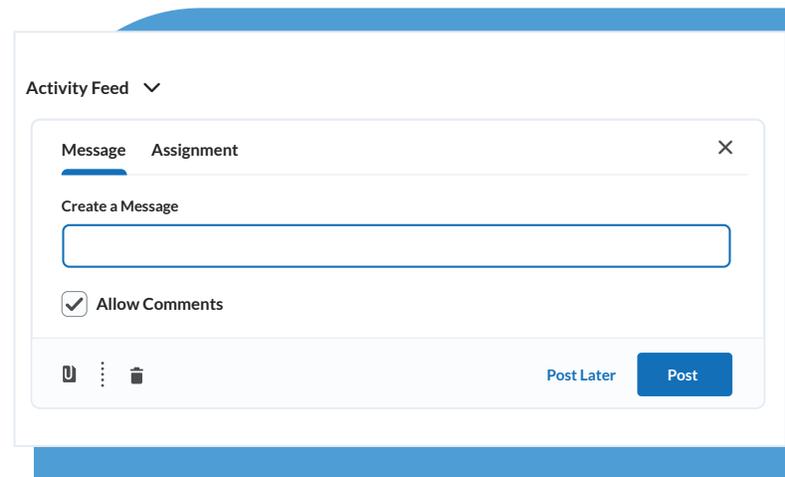
How can I connect with my students?

WRITE AN ACTIVITY FEED POST

The Activity Feed allows for multiple types of communication: teacher-to-student, student-to-teacher, and even peer-to-peer. You can permit students to comment on posts (which you can always edit or delete, if needed), and even to create their own posts. **Develop an engaged online community and promote collaboration** by posting messages and sharing resources with each other at any time!

Speak to your IT Support if you do not see the Activity Feed on your class homepage.

1. From the **Activity Feed** on your class homepage, click **Create a post**.

2. Under the **Create a Message** prompt, enter the written message that you would like your students to read.

3. Check or uncheck **Allow Comments**, depending on your preference for student comments on this message.

4. Optionally, add an attachment or a link by clicking on the **Attach** icon (the paper clip) to quickly share relevant documents.

FIGURE 1: Creating a message in the Activity Feed

5. To share your message with your students right away, click **Post**.

6. To allow your students to post their own messages, from the **Activity Feed** drop-down menu, click **Manage commenting and posting.** Ensure that **Allow all learners to create posts** is selected. Now your students will be able to collaborate and engage in conversations without you having to lift another finger!
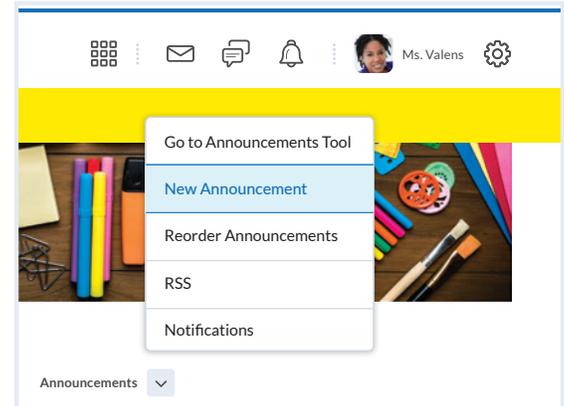
WRITE AN ANNOUNCEMENT

Use Announcements to share important information, updates, or positive messages with your students. **Reduce learner anxiety** by keeping your class in the know at all times, **maintain teacher presence** no matter the distance, and **save yourself time** by streamlining classroom news. Speak to your IT Support if you do not see Announcements on your class homepage.

1. From the **Announcements** menu on your class homepage, click **New Announcement**.

2. Enter an engaging **Headline**, and the written **Content** that you would like your students to read.

3. Optionally, add an attachment by clicking **Add a File** in order to quickly share relevant documents.

4. To post your Announcement to your students right away, click **Publish.**

5. Made a typo? From the **Announcements** menu, this time click **Go to Announcements Tool.** Click on the drop-down menu beside your Announcement, and choose **Edit**. Make the necessary changes, then click **Update!**

FIGURE 2: Announcements context menu

RECORD A VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENT

Recording a Video Announcement, in lieu of written content only, is a fantastic way to **engage your students**, and **heighten the authenticity of your instructor presence** within the online space. Your students will appreciate the extra effort! Speak to your IT Support if you do not see Announcements on your class homepage.

1. From the **Announcements** menu on your class homepage, click **New Announcement.**

2. Enter an engaging **Headline**.

3. In the **Content** text box, click on the **Insert Stuff** icon (the triangle)

4. Click **Add Video Note.** (We recommend using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox for best results!)

FIGURE 3: Insert Stuff icon

5. Say cheese! Click **New Recording** to record your Video Announcement, then **Stop Recording** once you are done.

6. If you are happy with your Video Announcement, click **Next,** add a brief **Title**, then click **Insert**. Otherwise, you are free to re-record, but don't worry too much about making things perfect!

7. To post your Video Announcement to your students right away, click **Publish**.

SEND AN EMAIL

Brightspace includes an internal email tool to **facilitate efficient and centralized communication**. When a student emails you, an orange dot will appear next to the envelope icon at the top of your screen.

To send an email, click on the **Classlist** tool, either from your class navigation bar along the top, or by first navigating to the link called **Course Admin.** Made it to the Classlist?

1. To email your entire class: click on **Email Classlist**

2. To email a select group of students: check off each student's name, then click **Email** at the top of the list

3. To send a private email: click directly on one student's name
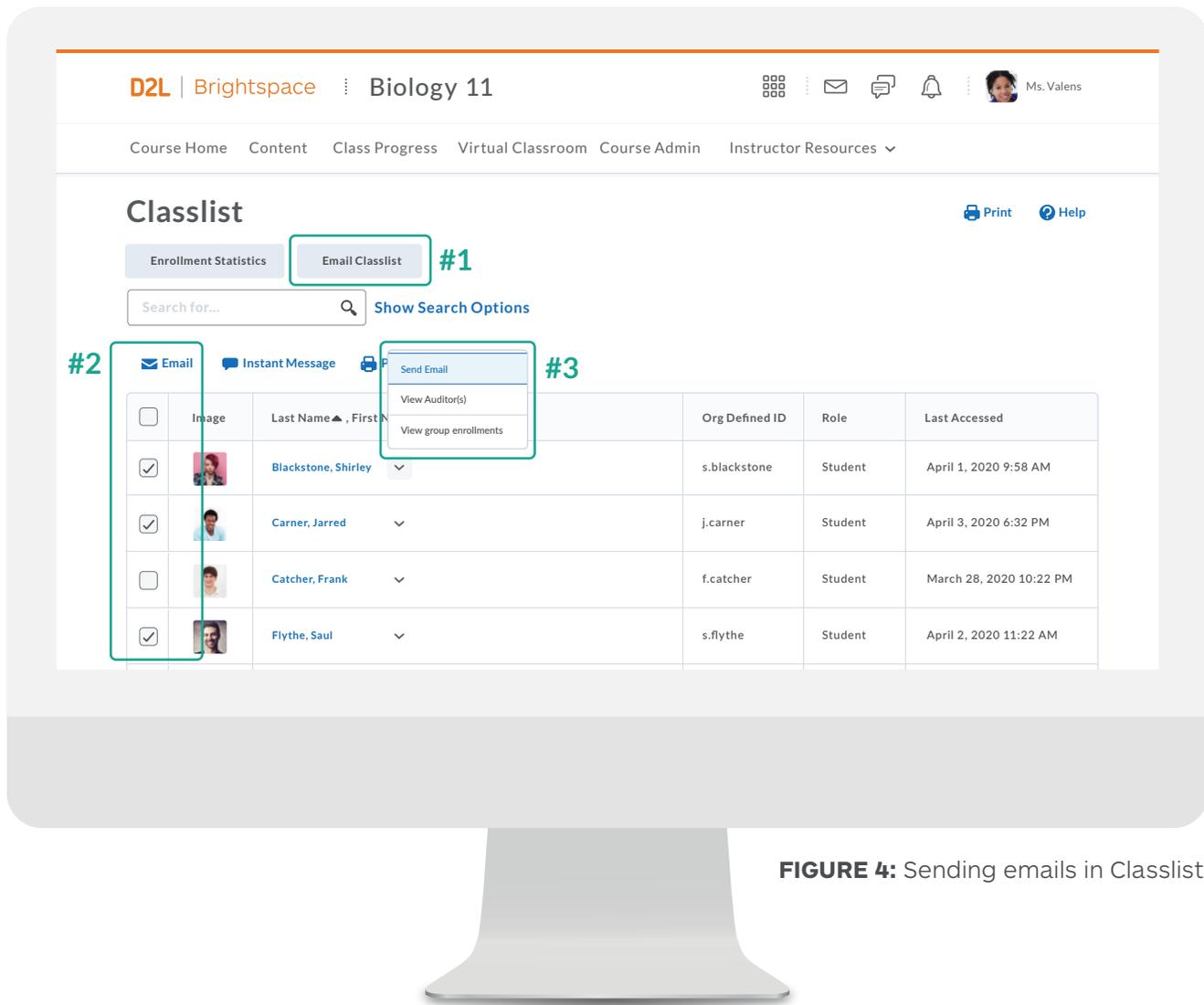
FIGURE 4: Sending emails in Classlist

How do I share learning materials with my students?

SHARE LEARNING MATERIALS

Do you already have some concrete learning materials in mind? You can upload or drag and drop files directly from your device, or add external links to other websites that house relevant resources.

1. On your class navigation bar, click **Content**.

2. From the panel along the left, click **New Unit**, enter a title for your new Unit (this will act as a folder), toggle **Hidden** at the bottom to flip it to **Visible** (it should now show a green checkmark), then click **Save.**

3. Now that we have a Unit to use as a folder, click the blue **Add** button, scroll down, then either drag and drop a file in from your device, or click **Browse** to upload one. Once uploaded, flip **Hidden** to **Visible.**

4. If you don't have the material on your device, you could also add an external link from the same **Add** area: select **Weblink**, add a name and the URL, flip **Hidden** to **Visible**, then click **Save.**

RECORD A VIRTUAL LESSON

1. On your class navigation bar, click **Content**.

2. From the panel along the left, click **New Unit**, enter a title for your new Unit (this will act as a folder), toggle **Hidden** at the bottom to flip it to **Visible** (it should now show a green checkmark), then click **Save**.

    <center>OR</center>

    From the panel along the left, click on an existing Unit to record your Virtual Lesson.

3. Now that we have selected a Unit to use as a folder, click the blue **Add** button, then choose **HTML Document**.

4. Enter an informative **Title**, and optional text that will describe or qualify your Virtual Lesson.

5. In the text box, click the Insert Stuff icon (the four shapes).

FIGURE 5: Insert Stuff button in Lessons

6. Click **Add Video Note**. (We recommend using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox for best results!)

7. Say cheese! Click **New Recording** to record your Virtual Lesson (up to 30 minutes), then **Stop Recording** once you are done.

8. If you are happy with your Virtual Lesson, click **Next**, add a brief **Title**, then click **Insert**. Otherwise, you are free to re-record, but don't worry too much about making things perfect!

9. To post your Virtual Lesson to your students right away, flip **Hidden** to **Visible**, then click **Save**.

How can my students keep track of things?

ENABLE INSTANT NOTIFICATIONS

Let your students know that they can sign up for a daily or weekly email summary of what's been happening in their courses by clicking **Notifications** under their name at the top right of any Brightspace page. They can also select specific aspects of those courses to receive instant text messages (North America) or emails about, so that they never miss an important update!

DOWNLOAD THE PULSE APP

Brightspace Pulse is a mobile app for students that will sync up with your online course! It is the perfect way for today's tech-savvy student to stay connected to your learning community. Simply tell your class to look for **Brightspace Pulse** in the App Store or Google Play, or visit **D2L.com/products/pulse/** for further details.

Check your success!

When you feel ready, confirm successful completion of this guide by trying out the following 3 tasks:

- ☐ Calm learner anxiety – reach out to your students with a friendly written message in either the **Activity Feed** or **Announcements**

- ☐ Share some learning – upload a file into your **Content** area (common examples include: unit plans, reading material, lesson slides, etc.)

- ☐ Show your face – record and post a **Video Announcement** or **Virtual Lecture** (don't worry, you can re-record as many times as you like before your students will see it!)

Congratulations on completing the Brightspace Quick Start Guide for Instructors—it's as easy as 1, 2, 3!