

Creating Courses with Moodle: 2. What's in a Course Shell

iits.haverford.edu/documents/creating-courses-with-moodle-shells/

Each academic course will automatically get a course shell; if there are multiple sections of a course, that course will get an addition shell for the **combined sections**. Each of those course shells have a number of components to help you and your students communicate with each other and take advantage of library resources.

NOTE: You can use Moodle for your committee or organization—just **request a shell** for your group.

Main content area

The large block in the center of your page (item #1 in the illustration above) will house your course content. This is where you will put readings, assignments, quizzes, etc. Notice that the main area is broken up into sections. The top section is for your course name (a), syllabus, news/course announcements, and other general information. Later sections are broken into course units or course weeks.

All academic courses are created with the following content:

- **Course name and header section (a)** — Top section has course name. You can also add your name, office hours, etc.
- **Instructions for setting up your Moodle site (b)**— Read these instructions as a quick references on how to set up your course. These instructions are not visible to students.

- *(PLEASE READ) – Dear Professor: (c)* — This is a letter from the Committee on Plagiarism Education, suggesting ways that you can convey your own message regarding academic integrity in general and/or in your course. This letter is not visible to students.
- *A Note from Your Professor on Academic Integrity at Haverford: (c)* — This is a note to students from the Committee on Plagiarism Education. The Dear Professor letter explains how you can customize this to meet your needs.
- *News forum (d)* — Use the *News forum* to post course announcements such as due dates, room changes, distinguished visitors, or other timely, important information. Items posted to the *News forum* are emailed to students and archived in the latest news block on the upper left (item #6).
- *Topic/Week sections (e)* — Use the *topic/week* (week option not visible in illustration) sections to organize course content. You can add or remove topics/weeks as needed.

Beneath this top section you see a number of topics. These will be explained further in [Course Design And Settings](#).

Course Blocks

There are a number of *course blocks* surrounding your main content area.

- *Accessibility (#2)* — The *accessibility* block allows you and your students to adjust text size and color as desired. Changes made using this block do not effect your students' view of the course.
- *Navigation (#3)* — This block is available throughout Moodle. Options within these blocks are context sensitive; the options you see within the menus may change depending upon what you are doing at any time. For more information this block see our [Quick Guide to Using Moodle](#).
- *Quickmail (#4)* — The Quickmail block lets you easily email your students.
- *Administration (#5)* — Use this block to set up your course, access the grade book, see student reports—including the [roster report for student photos](#), and perform other course administration tasks.
- *People (#6)* — The *People* block gives you a photo roster of your class.
- *News (#7)* — In the News block, you will see announcements that place in the News forum. As mentioned above, these announcements are also emailed to your students.
- *Library Resources and Citation Resources (#8)* — The library included discipline specific reference and citation information.
- *Calendar (#9)* —The calendar will automatically highlight due dates of any Moodle activity. You can also add your own items to this calendar.
- *Recent Activity (#10)* — See what has changed since your last course access.

Make your own modifications

All Haverford Moodle pages start with this layout, but you can customize or change this layout to meet your own course needs. Move onto to the next section—[Course Design And Settings](#)—for suggestions on how to structure your site effectively—before [Adding Course Content](#).