

Improving Instructor-to-Student Interaction using D2L Brightspace Tools

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Short Course design and theory

The *Improving Instructor-to-Student Interaction using D2L Brightspace Tools* short course is designed to allow participants to navigate through the course at their own pace. The course is online and asynchronous. The course focuses on introducing and re-introducing the use of specific D2L Brightspace features and tools (including Classlist, Email, Intelligent Agents, and private Discussions) to improve instructor-to-student interactions in an online course.

The course **content** provides the learning objectives, course schedule and expectations, facilitator contact information, and course structure (modules).

For each **content module**, participants are provided learning materials (reading assignments, videos, articles) in which they apply their learning in the required assigned activities. To complete an activity,

participants demonstrate their learning by selecting from one or more scenarios, or by choosing their own scenario. In the **assignment folder**, participants upload screenshots, documents, and/or relevant information related to how they would complete the scenario. As a reflection activity, participants may discuss workflows and effective practices with their peers in a **discussion topic**. The discussion is open to all participants, and is optional to complete.

In its entirety, the short course could be completed within **6-9 hours**, each module taking 2-3 hours of work per week.

Theory

The short course only contains **due dates** on assigned activities. There are no other start, due, or end dates that participants would see in their interactions with the course materials. Instead, learning materials and activities are fully available to participants from the start of the class. In this way, it allows the participant to explore how students can interact with course materials at any time and at their own pace.

With this course structure, we've found a few advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages:

- Participants can navigate through the course at their own pace
- Participants see all content, course materials, and assigned activities at the start of the course

Disadvantages:

- Participants may feel overwhelmed by content; everything is available at once
- Participants may not be motivated to complete learning materials without having due dates

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Import course package

The *Improving Instructor-to-Student Interaction using D2L Brightspace Tools* course zip package can be imported into a D2L Brightspace course. The majority of course materials and activities can be imported. However, related materials (such as release conditions and intelligent agents) are not exportable from D2L Brightspace. The following lists outline (1) items that can be imported from the course package, and (2) items that would be recreated within the destination course.

Course materials contained in the course package

- Content modules/topics (54 items)
- Course files (116 items)
- Discussion forums/topics (11 items)
- Assignments (3 items)
- Grade categories/items (6 items)
- Announcements (4 items)
- Course appearance (course image and banner setting)

Course materials that would be recreated in the destination course

- Grade scheme (1 course scheme)
- Groups (1 category)
- Intelligent Agents (4 items)
- Awards (1 item)
- Release Conditions (7 items)

The remaining sections of this document detail the recreation of items within the destination course. These include the grade scheme, groups, intelligent agents, course awards, and release conditions.

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Grade scheme

In the gradebook, we created the following course grade scheme and used it as the default grade scheme.

Name: Complete, Incomplete, Not Completed

Short Name: C/IC/NC

Ranges:

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Not Completed | 0% Start | Red color | 69% assigned value |
| 2. Incomplete | 70% start | Yellow color | 90% assigned value |
| 3. Complete | 91% start | Green color | 100% assigned value |

Edit - Complete, Incomplete, Not Completed

General

Name *

Short Name

Ranges

| # | Symbol* | Start %* | Color | Assigned Value % | Remove |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | <input type="text" value="Not Completed"/> | <input type="text" value="0"/> | <input type="text" value="Red"/> | <input type="text" value="69"/> | |
| 2 | <input type="text" value="Incomplete"/> | <input type="text" value="70"/> | <input type="text" value="Yellow"/> | <input type="text" value="90"/> | |
| 3 | <input type="text" value="Complete"/> | <input type="text" value="91"/> | <input type="text" value="Green"/> | <input type="text" value="100"/> | |

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Groups

There is one group category, named *Conversation with facilitators*, in the course. The group category enrollment type is 'single user, member-specific groups' and associated with the 'Conversation with facilitators (private discussion)' discussion topic.

Category Setup

Enrollment Type

Single user, member-specific groups

Restrict Enrollments To *

No restrictions

Additional Options

▼ Collapse additional options

Create Workspace

☐ Set up lockers ?

☐ Set up assignments ?

File submission ▼

Existing Workspace

Discussions

[Conversation with facilitators \(private discussion\)](#)

The group discussion is a required element of the course. The discussion is associated with the 'Private Discussions' grade item in the gradebook.

Assignment: Private Discussions ▼

| Topic | Threads |
|---|---------|
| <p>Conversation with facilitators (private discussion) ▼</p> <p>🔒 Unlocked: Monday, January 20, 2020 12:00 AM CST - Monday, February 10, 2020 12:00 AM CST.</p> <p>👤 Group/section restrictions. 🔑 Includes assessment.</p> <p>In this module, we learned why and how to use Private Discussions to communicate with students.</p> <p>In this private discussion, you have the option to discuss with your facilitators one-on-one.</p> <p>Do you want to take your course to the next level? Are you interested in more communication-related workflows? Let your facilitators know! This is the place to ask for advice.</p> | |

| Enter Grades | Manage Grades | Schemes | Setup Wizard | Settings | Help |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------|--------------|-------------|------|
| New | More Actions | | | | |
| Bulk Edit | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Grade Item | Type | Association | Max. Points | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Required Assignments | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Classlist and Email | Numeric | Assignments | 1 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Intelligent Agents | Numeric | Assignments | 1 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Personalized Announcements | Numeric | Assignments | 1 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Required Discussion | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Private Discussion | Numeric | Discussions | 1 | |

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Intelligent Agents

In the course, there are four intelligent agents:

- “Welcome email”
- “User achieved Award Certificate of Completion”
- “Posted at least once to ‘Introductions’ discussion topic”
- “No course access for 4 days”

| Agent List | | | | | Settings |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------|
| New | More Actions | | | | |
| View: All agents | | | | | Apply |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Enable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Disable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Delete |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agent | Results of Last Run | Last Run Date | Next Run Date | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No course access for 4 days | | - | - | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Posted at least once to 'Introductions' discussion topic | | - | - | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | User achieved Award Certificate of Completion | | - | - | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Welcome email | | - | - | |

“Welcome email”

The “welcome email” IA is sent to users after the participants have been enrolled in the class.

The screenshot shows the 'Edit Agent' page for an Intelligent Agent named 'Welcome email'. The page has a breadcrumb trail 'Intelligent Agents > Welcome email'. Below the title, there is a text input field for 'Agent Name' containing 'Welcome email'. A link 'Edit Description' is visible. Under the 'Status' section, the checkbox 'Agent is enabled' is checked. The 'Criteria' section is titled '1. Criteria' and contains a sub-section 'Role in Classlist' with two radio button options: 'All users visible in the Classlist' and 'Users with specific roles:'. The 'Users with specific roles' option is selected, and a checkbox for 'Student' is checked below it.

The IA’s criteria is a release condition: Enrolled in current org unit as the role Student. The IA’s repetition is ‘Take action only the first time the agent’s criteria are satisfied for the user’. This ensures that participants are only sent the IA email once within the course.

The screenshot shows the 'Release Conditions' and 'Actions' sections of the Intelligent Agent configuration. The 'Release Conditions' section has three buttons: 'Attach Existing', 'Create and Attach', and 'Remove All Conditions'. Below these, a dropdown menu shows 'All conditions must be met'. A condition is listed: 'Enrolled in current org unit as the role: Student' with a close icon. The 'Actions' section is titled '2. Actions' and contains a sub-section 'Repetition' with two radio button options: 'Take action only the first time the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user' (selected) and 'Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user'. A link 'Which Action Repetition setting should I use?' is at the bottom.

The IA’s email is sent TO {InitiatingUser} with the subject line ‘Welcome to {OrgUnitName} in {OrgName}!’

Send an Email

☒ Send an email when the criteria are satisfied

Name that the emails come from: MnSite - System Site

Reply-To address for responses: noreply-brightspace@minnstate.edu

[How can I change the default From and Reply settings?](#)

To: *

Cc:

Bcc:


[What special email addresses can I use?](#)

Subject: *

[What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?](#)

The IA's email message uses the {OrgUnitName} replace string and a quicklink to the course's 'Getting Started' content module.

Message:



Welcome to {OrgUnitName} in the MnSite D2L Brightspace site. We're so glad that you're here!

In the next three weeks, we will review and discuss the following:


- Classlist and Email,
- Intelligent Agents,
- Personalized Announcements, and
- Private Discussions.

You will be able to explore these options within your own course, practice various scenarios, and decide which strategies are best suited to your needs.

This is a short course, so jump in right away. Start by selecting **Materials...Content** from the course navigation bar, and review the material in the [Getting Started](#) module.

See you in the online class!

Note: You can reply to this intelligent agent email to contact your facilitators.



Once all participants have been enrolled in the course, you may manually run the intelligent agent to send the welcome message immediately to participants. Otherwise, you can set a schedule to run the IA on a daily basis; when a new participant is enrolled in the course, the IA is set to the user the following day.

3. Scheduling

☒ Use Schedule

Schedule: Evaluated every 1 day(s)

Next Run Date: No schedule defined

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Posted at least 1 day(s) before | <input type="button" value="Run Now"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | User achieved A grade | <input type="button" value="Delete"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Welcome email | <input type="button" value="v"/> |

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“Posted at least once to ‘Introductions’ discussion topic”

The “Posted at least once to ‘introductions’ discussion topic” IA is sent to participants when they have posted a thread or replied to a thread in the Introductions discussion topic.

Agent Name: *

Posted at least once to 'Introductions' discussion topic

Edit Description

Status:
☒ Agent is enabled

1. Criteria

Role in Classlist

☐ All users **visible** in the Classlist
☒ Users with specific roles:

☒ Student

The IA’s criteria is a release condition: Adds 1 threads or replies to ‘Introductions’ discussion topic. The IA’s repetition is ‘Take action only the first time the agent’s criteria are satisfied for the user’. This ensures that participants are only sent the IA email once within the course.

Release Conditions

Attach Existing
Create and Attach
Remove All Conditions

To access this item, users must satisfy

All conditions must be met

Adds 1 threads or replies to discussion topic: Introductions/Introductions

2. Actions

Repetition

☒ Take action only the first time the agent’s criteria are satisfied for a user
☐ Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent’s criteria are satisfied for a user

[Which Action Repetition setting should I use?](#)

The IA’s email is sent TO {InitiatingUser} with the subject line: {InitiatingUserFirstName}, you've posted to a discussion within {OrgUnitName}

Send an Email

☒ Send an email when the criteria are satisfied

Name that the emails come from: MnSite - System Site

Reply-To address for responses: noreply-brightspace@minnstate.edu

[How can I change the default From and Reply settings?](#)

To: *

Cc:

Bcc:

[What special email addresses can I use?](#)

Subject: *

[What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?](#)

The IA's email message uses the {InitiatingUserFirstName} replace string and a quicklink to the course's 'Introductions' discussion topic.

Message:

Hi {InitiatingUserFirstName},

We noticed that you had posted in the [Introductions](#) topic in Discussions in {OrgUnitName} within the shared [MnSite D2L Brightspace](#) site. Well done! We appreciated hearing about your background and experience with online learning, as well as your enthusiasm for the course topic.

Let us know how we can best assist you to succeed in this course.

Note: This is an example of using an Intelligent Agent to acknowledge and reward students for posting to a discussion topic using the release condition criteria.

- Discussions
- Posts authored in topic
- Select a topic
- Enter the number of posts
- Select what counts (a) threads only, or (b) threads and replies.

The IA is run on a schedule and checks once daily throughout the course.

3. Scheduling

☒ Use Schedule

Schedule: Evaluated every 1 day(s) starting

Next Run Date: No schedule defined

Update Schedule

[What does an agent's Schedule determine?](#)

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“No course access for 4 days”

The “No course access for 4 days” IA is sent to participants if they have not access the course within the past four days.

Edit Agent

Agent Name: *

No course access for 4 days

[Edit Description](#)

Status:

☒ Agent is enabled

1. Criteria

Role in Classlist

☐ All users visible in the Classlist

☒ Users with specific roles:

☒ Student

[Save and Close](#) [Save](#) [Cancel](#)

The IA’s criteria is Course Activity: “User has not accessed course for at least 4 days”. The IA’s repetition is ‘Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent’s criteria are satisfied for the user’. This ensures that participants are only sent the IA email once within the course.

Course Activity

☒ Take action when the following course activity criteria are satisfied:

☒ User has not accessed course for at least day(s)

☐ User has accessed course during the past day(s)

Release Conditions

[Attach Existing](#) [Create and Attach](#) [Remove All Conditions](#)

There are no conditions attached to this item.

2. Actions

Repetition

☐ Take action only the first time the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

☒ Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

The IA’s email is sent TO {InitiatingUser} with the subject line ‘{OrgUnitName} Course Activity, {InitiatingUserFirstName} {InitiatingUserLastName}’

Send an Email

☒ Send an email when the criteria are satisfied

Name that the emails come from: MnSite - System Site

Reply-To address for responses: noreply-brightspace@minnstate.edu

[How can I change the default From and Reply settings?](#)

To: *

Cc:

Bcc:

[What special email addresses can I use?](#)

Subject: *

[What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?](#)

The IA's email message uses the {InitiatingUserFirstName} and {OrgUnitName} replace strings, along with a quicklink to the course homepage.

Message:

Hi {InitiatingUserFirstName},

We noticed that you have not logged into {OrgUnitName} for 4 days. It is important to login to the short course, {OrgName}, and keep up with course activities to be successful in this class, especially since it is only three weeks long. The course is available within the shared [MnSite D2L Brightspace](#) site; log in to the site using your StarID credentials.

Please let us know if we can assist you to help you succeed. We know that taking online classes can be challenging, and we are here to help. You can reply to this intelligent agent email to contact your facilitators.

Note: This is an example of using an Intelligent Agent to keep track of online student attendance and to track Failure for Non-attendance (financial aid violations).

The IA is run on a schedule and checks every four days throughout the course.

3. Scheduling

☒ Use Schedule

Schedule: Evaluated every 4 day(s) starting

Next Run Date: No schedule defined

[Update Schedule](#)

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"User achieved Award Certificate of Completion"

The "User achieved Award Certificate of Completion" IA is sent to a participant if the user has achieved 91% or greater on the final grade, and the final grade has been released to the user.

Edit Agent

Agent Name: *

User achieved Award Certificate of Completion

▶ [Edit Description](#)

Status:

☒ Agent is enabled

1. Criteria

Role in Classlist


☐ All users **visible** in the Classlist

☒ Users with specific roles:

☒ Student

The IA's criteria is Course Activity: "User achieved Award Certificate of Completion". The IA's repetition is 'Take action only the first time the agent's criteria are satisfied for the user'. This ensures that participants are only sent the IA email once within the course.

Release Conditions

[Attach Existing](#) [Create and Attach](#)  [Remove All Conditions](#)

To access this item, users must satisfy

All conditions must be met ▼

Final grade: released and receives greater than or equal to 91 % ✕

2. Actions

Repetition

☒ Take action only the first time the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

☐ Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

The IA's email is sent TO {InitiatingUser} with the subject line: '{InitiatingUserFirstName}, you've achieved a course certificate in {OrgUnitName}'

Send an Email

☒ Send an email when the criteria are satisfied

Name that the emails come from: MnSite - System Site

Reply-To address for responses: noreply-brightspace@minnstate.edu

[How can I change the default From and Reply settings?](#)

To: *

Cc:

Bcc:

[What special email addresses can I use?](#)

Subject: *

The IA's email message uses the {InitiatingUserFirstName} and {OrgUnitName} replace strings, along with a quicklink to the course homepage.

Message:

Hi {InitiatingUserFirstName},

Thank you for participating in the {OrgUnitName} course! You now have a completion certificate available to you when you [visit the course in D2L Brightspace](#). You can find the certificate by going to **Assessments > Awards** in the course navigation bar.

1. Click on the **Assessments** menu in the course navbar, and then select **Awards**.
2. On the **My Awards** screen, click on the **Certificate of Completion** link.
3. Scroll down to the bottom of the 'Certificate of Completion' pop-up window, and then click the **Generate Certificate** button.
4. Once your internet browser prompt you, either open the certificate in Adobe Acrobat or save it to your device.

Thanks again for joining us.

The IA is run on a schedule and checks once a day throughout the course.

3. Scheduling

☒ Use Schedule

Schedule: Evaluated every 1 day(s)

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Awards

In the course, there is one course certificate awarded to participants upon their successfully completion of all required course elements. The certificate is released to the user when they meet all conditions and received 91% or greater on the four (4) grade items.

Certificates

Course Certificate: Improving Instructor-to-Student Interaction using D2L Brightspace Tools

Credits


☐ Award hidden until earned

Release Conditions

Create
All conditions must be met

1. Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Classlist and Email ✕
2. Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Intelligent Agents ✕
3. Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Personalized Announcements ✕
4. Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Private Discussion ✕

Save
Cancel



Edit Award

The award is restricted to the course and never expires.

Edit Award - Course Certificate: Improving Instructor-to-Student Interaction using D2L Brightspace Tools

Name *

Description *

Award Type Certificate

Select the type of award you want to create. Certificates are similar to badges and additionally include a PDF printout of the actual certification upon award.

Availability

☐ Make this award available to all of my courses.
☒ Make this award available to other award creators and their courses.
☒ Restrict award to TEMPLATE Improving Instructor-to-Student Interaction using D2L Brightspace Tools and its child org units.

As the award creator, you will always have access to your awards for use in other courses. The settings above will allow others to easily reuse your awards in their courses if you choose to allow it.

Expiry

☒ Never

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Release Conditions

In the course, we used seven (7) release conditions. Four (4) release conditions were associated with the [course award](#), and the remaining release conditions were individually associated with three (3) [intelligent agents](#).

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Grades |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Classlist and Email |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Intelligent Agents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Personalized Announcements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Receives greater than or equal to 91 % on grade item: Private Discussion |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Discussions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adds 1 threads or replies to discussion topic: Introductions/Introductions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Classlist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enrolled in current org unit as the role: Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Grades |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Final grade: released and receives greater than or equal to 91 % |

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