

How do I change the start and end dates for a course?

By default, you and your students can participate in courses within the term start and end dates set by ITS. When a Course is using the Term Dates, it will be locked to all users after the term end date. However, as an instructor, you may need to change the participation start and end dates for your course. Dates can be shorter than or overlap the term dates. For more information, view the interactive [Student Course Visibility and Participation flowchart](#).

“ Use Case: Incomplete Grades

If a student receives an Incomplete, you may need to reopen the course to allow continued access. Canvas locks courses after the term ends unless you change the **Participation** setting to *Course* and set a new **End Date**.

Note: If you cannot change the Participation setting, contact CETL for assistance.

About Course Access

By default, courses will be created with dates for their term. You can set your own dates for access by changing from *Term* to *Course* Participation dates.

Before the start date, students can accept course invitations. Once the course is published, they can then access the course to look at the content, but they cannot fully participate until the start date that is set for the course. During the window from the start to the end date, students can submit assignments, post discussions, upload files, or take part in any other action-based task within a course. After the end date, the course is concluded and placed in a read-only state for all users.

“ **Note:** You may want to leave the *Course* end date blank if you suspect a student may need an incomplete. This keeps the course open indefinitely to let them complete any incomplete work. It also ensures you can grade that work, as you can no longer submit grades after the end date.

Dashboard Considerations

Canvas displays courses on the Dashboard based on their term status and whether the user has favorited any courses:

If no courses are favorited: The Dashboard will automatically show all courses in active terms. This includes credit-bearing courses in current or future terms, as well as things like development shells and organization shells that are assigned to terms with no end date.

If any courses are favorited: The Dashboard will only show those favorited courses. All other courses, even if active, will be hidden unless favorited.

“ **Note:** For users with the Student role, even favorited courses will be removed from the Dashboard after the set end date. This will occur automatically:

- After the Term end date if the course uses Term Participation
- After the Course end date if the instructor switches to Course Participation

Students cannot participate in the course after the end date, so the course is removed from their Dashboard.

“ **Tip:** Faculty should generally avoid favoriting courses unless they need a concluded course to remain visible for reference or follow-up. Favoriting can unintentionally hide active courses if not managed carefully.

Learn more: [Finding and Organizing Courses](#)

Restrict Course Access

If you do not want students to view any content in the course until the course start date, Course Settings also allows you to restrict students from being able to access content. You can also choose to [restrict all course access](#) after the course has concluded.

“ **Notes:**

- If you cannot change what is displayed in the Participation drop-down menu, your institution has restricted instructors from modifying course

availability dates.

- You can only change the course end date when your enrollment is active. Course dates cannot be changed once your enrollment has concluded for the course.

How to Change the Course Dates

Open Settings

Open Settings

In Course Navigation, click the **Settings** link.

Open Course Details

Open Course Details

Click the **Course Details** tab.

View Term Participation Dates

[View Term Participation Dates](#)

When ITS creates courses, they are assigned to use the Term Participation[2]. Courses using Term participation are set to follow the term start and end dates set for your entire institution [3].

If the Term option is selected in the Participation drop-down menu, you can view the term start and end dates [3]. Term dates can only be modified by a Canvas admin. After the end date, the course is locked into a read-only state for both the students and instructors. Any changes to the course dates, for example if a student receives an incomplete for the course, will need to be made before the End date when the course is locked.

To allow a student to continue participating in the course past the end date, or for you to continue grading students' submissions past the end date, the Participation will need to be changed from Term to Course. Once the course is switched to Course Participation, you can set a new End date. If the End date has already passed, instructors will need a Canvas Administrator to change the course dates for them.

“ Notes:

- If the course is assigned to the Default Term and participation dates are set to follow term dates, or if no Course End date is set, students

can participate in the course indefinitely.

- When setting a start and end date for a course, instructors can view local and course time zones set for the course [4] and the local time for the user [5].

Set Course Participation Dates

Set Course Participation Dates

To set different participation start and end dates for your course, click the **Participation** drop-down menu [1] and select the **Course** option [2].

“ **Important:** If you do not see the option to change what is displayed in the Participation drop-down menu [3], your account may not have permission to modify course dates. Contact CETL or the ITS Help Desk for assistance.

“ **Note:** Changing to Term dates will clear any Course dates and restore the official university set Term dates.

Set Start Date

Set Start Date

To select the start date, click the **Start** calendar icon [1]. Then select a new start date for the course [2].

Set End Date

Set End Date

To select the end date, click the **End** calendar icon [1]. Then select a new end date for the course [2].

Set End Date

If your end date time is midnight, a warning message displays notifying you that the date before the set end date will be the last participation day in the course. For instance, if the course were set to end January 13, the last full participation date for the course would be January 12.

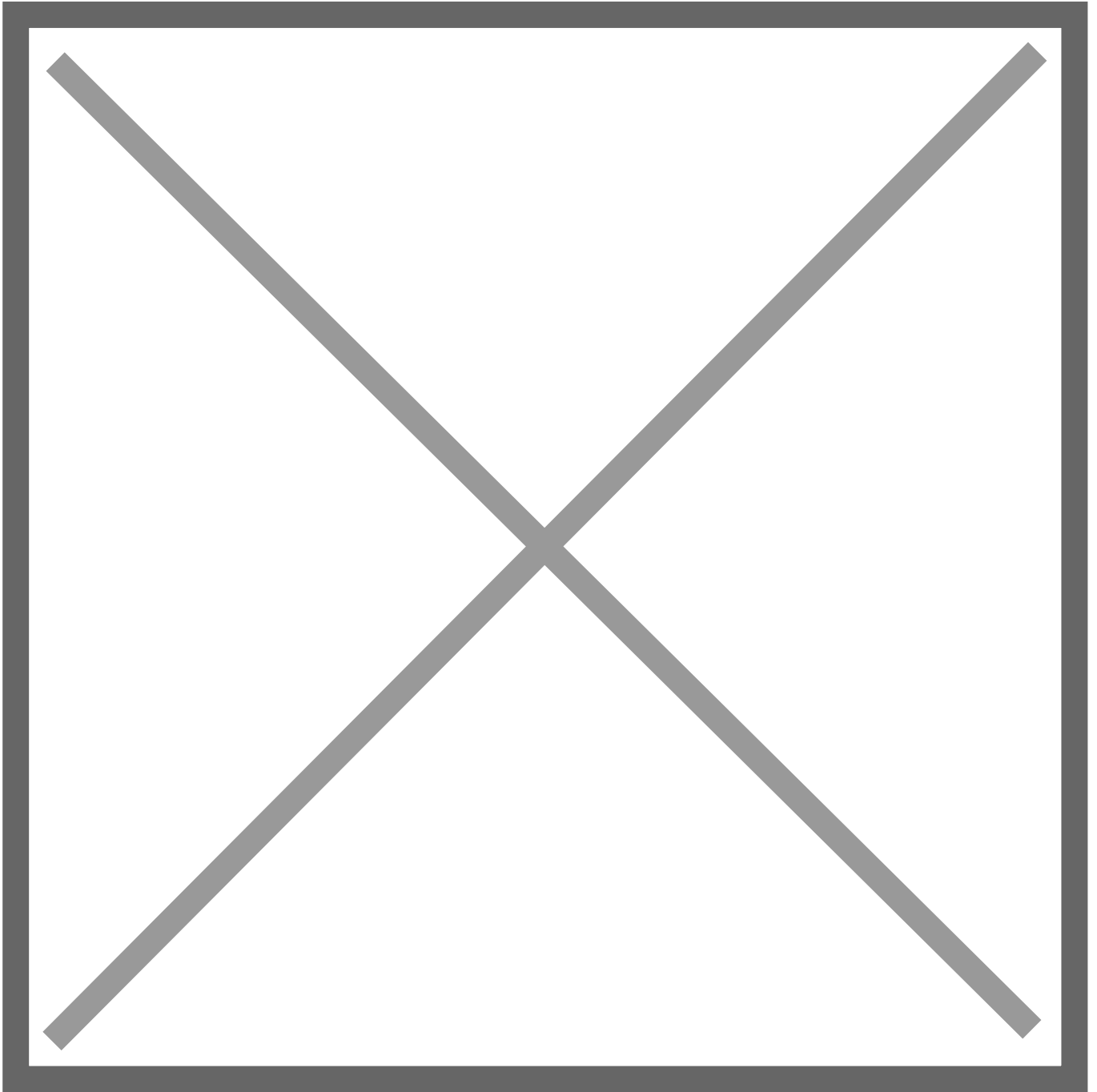
“ **Notes:**

- Students can only participate in the course between the course dates, and the course will be in a read-only state outside the course dates.
- Changing the End date to reopen a course will reopen it for everyone enrolled in the course.
- Course participation dates only affect student and observer roles; all other roles default to term access dates.
- End dates occur at precisely the minute they are set. For example, a course with an end time at 11:59pm will end at 11:59:00.
- Students will not receive notifications for course announcements prior to the course start date.

“ Tip:

To allow only specific students to submit work after the course end date, use the *Assign To* feature in Canvas assignments to set custom availability and due dates for individual students.

By setting Additional Assign To blocks, you can leave the original dates set for Everyone Else. The new blocks will then only provide the new access dates to the students allowed to submit their incomplete work. See the guides for [assigning an assignment to individuals](#) for instructions on how to give an individual different dates from the rest of the class.



If the selected date for the End date occurs before the Start date, a warning message displays.

Restrict Course Access

Restrict Course Access

You may also be able to [change student access settings](#) to allow or restrict students from viewing your course before the start date or after end date. When selected, the course is inaccessible outside course dates. If course dates are blank, students can participate in the course indefinitely.



Note: If you cannot manage the settings to restrict students from viewing course content, your institution has not enabled this feature.

Update Course Details

Update Course Details

Click the **Update Course Details** button.

[Content retrieved from <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-change-the-start-and-end-dates-for-a-course/ta-p/452354>]

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