Week 1 Readiness

These quick tips and suggestions help reduce the barrage of student emails and issues during week one. They also work to keep students aware and engaged with your online course.

MyMHCC  When? Now (like NOW before you get too busy):

1. Navigate to the MyMHCC homepage of your online course and delete everything except for a single custom content portlet. Add a message with link to BB Login. Good idea to include your course log-in/admin drop policy here, outside of Blackboard.

Blackboard  Access your course shell(s) and ensure you’re editing the term-dated shell. A better way to edit course pages on Mac or PC is to use Blackboard Drive. If you prefer sticking with old WebDav, here are WebDAV Instructions.

1. Update your Course List Remove Old Courses.
2. Set Permissions for your files.
3. Update your syllabus and first week or two of lesson content.
4. Hide course tools you don’t use. Course Menu/Course Tools/Hide-Show Toggles
5. If you still have Dashboard in the course menu, delete and replace with Calendar. Course Menu/+ tool link/select from drop down.
6. Set up rules in the Retention Center—Suggestions for week 1 are tight login or multiple activity rules.  
   a. Control Panel/Evaluation/Retention Center (or click on your name at top left of screen, up/down arrow icon)  
   b. Select Course/Details/Customize, then create or edit existing rules.  
   c. Be sure you add rules to Risk Table.

In Student Preview —Learn how to configure Student Preview.

1. Read your syllabus, marking pages reviewed (or completing tasks that release content). Click all your syllabus links to see that they open in new tabs. Make sure your first lesson releases depending on your release criteria. Check for broken links, obsolete info or incorrect due dates. If you have quizzes, activities or assignments, follow links to confirm they open and work.
2. Check your Calendar to confirm visible due dates. Edit due dates using Date Management.
3. Edit your notification settings so you get announcements, due date, etc. Change Notification Settings.
4. Click on My Grades to see what students see there. Edit/cleanup Grade Center as needed. Grade Center 911

Blackboard  When? Friday (before week 1)

1. Edit and update your welcome message in the discussion board. Here’s your chance to show how engaged you are! Editing the post resets the date and removes “from anonymous”.
2. Delete all old forum posts. Quick way—delete the forum and recreate it (remember to say “yes” to delete the grade column). Long way—enter the forum, check box at the top left to select all posts, delete.  
   *** You may decide you want to save some posts for reference or examples. Quick way—create a duplicate forum and hide the old one with useful posts. If the old forum was graded, be sure you go to forum settings and remove points.
3. Set SoS Forum so members can subscribe. Forum action link/edit/#3 Allow members to subscribe/Submit. Then subscribe to the SOS forum (for wk1 and 2 at least). Enter Forum/Subscribe. No SoS forum? Make one.
4. Group management. Check Group tools for point values. If you use group discussions, clear all old posts in these areas. Quick way: delete forums (as explained #2 above). Quicker way: delete groups and start over.  
   **When deleting course tools with points, always delete any associated grade columns when prompted.
**Blackboard**  **When? Monday/Tuesday Week 1:**

1. Email Students.
   Students’ Saints emails come to BB from CX, and this is the default email for all college communication. If students don't access or check their Saints email, they will be terribly disadvantaged. Email students and ask them to confirm they got your message. You are welcome to edit and share these instructions for [Accessing Saints Email](#).

**Blackboard**  **When? Wednesday/Thursday/Friday Week 1:**

1. Use Retention Center Rules to notify non-participating students. Go to RC/Choose Course/Details/click Risk Bar/click Rule if more than one/Notify Try to personalize this message.

2. Attendance and Participation reports. Drop no shows, and contact students who appear on your Risk Table. Remember, according to federal LDA rules, simply posting an introduction does not constitute academic work and participation. Students must post or submit bona fide coursework. Last day to drop with refund is first Sunday of the term (check email for dates and reminders). Be sure your first week of academic work is due before Sunday so you can confirm participation in your course.

3. Contact waitlisted students and confirm they’re ready to jump in with both feet. Keep in mind adding students very late (after Friday week 1) doesn’t do you or them any favors.

**MyMHCC**  **When? Sunday before Week 2**

1. Submit your first-week attendance by Sunday midnight (10 week courses)

**Blackboard**  **When? Monday Week 2:**

1. Before re-adding desperate, dropped no-shows, take a moment and check student transcripts. A previous term of failed online courses might indicate a questionable situation.