Course Materials and Canvas: a quick guide for faculty

There are several options for providing course reserve materials to your students. Whichever option you choose, you should protect yourself and the University from copyright infringement liability by determining that the use of any copyrighted resources qualify as a fair use. Consult Copyright and Scholarship: Reserves and the Classroom for general advice on what you can do as well as what constitutes fair use. Library and Center for Teaching Excellence staff are available to help you with any of these options.

Option 1: Library creates course reserves links for you

Boston College Library Course Reserves can provide online access to faculty-assigned texts, chapters, articles, audio, and video materials for courses within your Canvas course site (a password protected environment).

Submit library reserve requests to the appropriate library. Once the library processes the request you will find a list of your requested readings under “Library Resources” (on the left-hand navigation menu in your Canvas site -- see “Reading List”). You can have your students access the resources through the “Reading List” list within Canvas or through the library catalog “course reserves” tab. Additionally, you may copy a URL from the “Reading List” by selecting the reading, view full text, and copy the URL. The URL may be embedded (hyperlinked) in an assignment, page, or module within Canvas.

Option 2: Do it yourself: Add resources/links within Canvas

If you add links to online materials within your Canvas site, please be sure to follow these best practices:

- Fair use also applies to materials placed in Canvas; Library and CTE staff are available to assist you if you have any questions.
- It is best to always link to materials found on the open Web rather than making a copy.
- When linking to an article in a database consult Linking to Articles from Databases. Note: If available, use Permalinks or add the library proxy to any of the Library’s full text journal articles from the databases (do not place the .pdf files in Canvas).
- Link to, or embed code to a video from YouTube or any of the Library’s film collections.
- Consult the subject librarian in your area for help finding appropriate content
- Consider Designing for Accessibility; for example, caption video, make text screen-readable.

Course materials which may not be made available on course reserves:

- Photocopies/scans of a complete book or of a substantial portion of a copyrighted work.
- Books obtained through Interlibrary Loan.

Course materials which may not be made available online, but may be put on physical course reserves:

- “Consumable” publications such as lab books, exercises, or workbooks.
- Coursepacks produced by the bookstore.