

Welcome Email

Send a welcome email a few days or a week before the course start date to welcome students to the course, help set expectations, make the syllabus available, and prepare students for the first day and week of the course. Below is an example of a welcome email, along with some tips:

Greetings! You are receiving this email because you are registered for COMM 320, an online course that begins next Monday, February 3. This is my second year teaching the course online, and I really enjoy it. I hope you will too! I know that many students are new to online courses, so I just wanted to send this brief email to give you an idea of what to expect on the first day.

Strike a friendly tone.
Share your enthusiasm
for the course.

On Monday morning, you should receive an email invitation from Canvas (our campus's learning management system) to join the course. Accepting the invitation will lead you to our course site. Please accept the invitation and log on to the course on Monday morning before noon. Email me right away (simply reply to this message) if you have any issues logging on!

Address nervousness
about online courses.

The first module is the course "orientation," which includes information on how to navigate the course site, a detailed explanation of the syllabus (and a syllabus scavenger hunt), and an "introductions" forum. The purpose of the orientation module is to give everyone a chance to get familiar with the course environment, to get your questions answered, and to get to know your new classmates. The orientation module should take you no more than 1–2 hours to complete, and you will have until the end of our first day (Monday, February 3, at midnight) to complete it. Once you are done, you will be ready to jump right into coursework on Tuesday.

Set an early timeline to
preempt issues with
student access to the
course site.

As will be explained in more detail in the syllabus, although this course is online, it is not a self-paced course. There are deadlines each week, but you will be given a few days to complete each task so you can work at the times that are most convenient for you. The intent of this structure is to give each person enough flexibility to do the work when it is most convenient, while still allowing us to progress through the course material together.

Provide information
about what tasks need to
be completed first and by
when and set
expectations for
participation.

If it seems confusing, please do not worry . . . it will become clearer as we dive in. Please feel free to email me by replying to this email if you have any questions or concerns. Otherwise, I will see you on Monday in our online course site.

Tell students how to
reach you and end with a
reassuring note.

Until then!

Dr. Gist

