# Canvas Start/End Dates: What Instructors Need to Know

**What you may not realize:** Left alone, the default settings for your Canvas course likely allow your former students to VIEW content in your course in a read-only state long after the course is over.

**Why you may want to keep reading**. Two scenarios:

1. You need to give *participation access* to students with Incompletes. Jump ahead to read how.
2. You want to allow or prevent access / participation to your course outside of campus default dates.

## TERM OR COURSE?

In 2021, the parent company of Canvas (Instructure) redesigned the "Start/End dates" section under the *Settings --> Course Details* tab and added a new option: **Term.**

## TERM

Canvas introduced a **"Term"** option that has Start and End dates for when students can view and participate in your course.

- Term is the default setting in your course.
- The Term's Start date is not set by OIT. It's empty. It is essentially the day that you publish your course.
- The Term's End date **is** set by OIT and cannot be modified. It will always be the day grades are available to students (i.e,. a day after the term's grade submission deadline).
- <mark>!!! Beware that "End date" still allows students to view your course in a **read-only state** after the course is over.</mark>
- If you do not want these above options, you can switch from **Term** to **Course** (keep reading).

## COURSE

There's also a "Course" option that allows you to specify a Start and End date of your choosing. Why do this?

➔ You want to prevent students from viewing your course in a read-only state after the course concludes.
➔ You need to give participation access to an Incomplete Student

Here's a Canvas help guide that explains the two options in more detail.

## OTHER SETTINGS

As mentioned above, by default students can still view your course in a read-only state after the end of a term.

☐ Restrict students from viewing course before course start date
☐ Restrict students from viewing course after course end date

The above two "Restrict" options will govern students' access to Canvas and override the default options. If you do **not** want students to access your course after the term ends, then you'll need to check the option "Restrict students from viewing course after course end date."

## INCOMPLETE STUDENT ACCESS

### Allowing Access to an Older Canvas Course to a Student with an Incomplete

When a student contacts you about an incomplete from a prior term and you need to allow them *participation access* to that term's Canvas space, follow these steps.

1. Set the Participation to **Course** (if not already true; see above) and specify an End Date of your choosing. ***Note:*** *extending the End date will "re-open" the course for all students. All students may see this course reappear on their Canvas dashboard; however this will disappear after the End Date has passed.*
2. Assign the Incomplete student a different availability/due date for the missing assignments. To do this, click the "+Add" button in the edit area of the assignment. Here's a help article you can refer to about that process..

### Alternate Approach: Add the Incomplete Student to a Newer Version of Your Class

Assuming the same course is offered again with the same assignments, you could instead add the Incomplete Student to your current Canvas course.

➔ If the Incomplete student is needing to make up **many** assignments such that you want them to have an accurate accounting of their new grade, you would want to manually update the gradebook with the grades they previously earned.
➔ However, when you go to WebGrades to submit grades for the entire class at the end of the course, the Incomplete student will not be in the Registrar's List.
➔ Hence, to submit grades for the Incomplete student, you will follow the standard WebGrades procedure for requesting a grade change for this student.