

# Navigating a Moodle 2 Course

## What is in a Moodle 2 Course?

Northwest College has upgraded Moodle to a new version called Moodle 2 that has many new features for students and faculty. Currently, it is in a test environment. Beginning this semester, we are piloting 5 courses and since you are reading this, you are in a course that is piloting Moodle 2. The purpose for piloting is to *test* all of its features and functionality before it gets rolled out to the entire campus. This also gives us an opportunity to work out any technical issues and to help decide which new features are best. As a student, you may find yourself using both versions of Moodle; this one and our current version 1.9. You will probably experience features in Moodle 2 that you won't experience in version 1.9. We will do our very best to keep any confusion to between the two versions to a minimum. If you have any questions or problems, please feel free to contact Northwest College *Instructional Technology* by calling 307.754.6063 or by email at [moodle@nwc.edu](mailto:moodle@nwc.edu)

**Moodle:** Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment is a free and open-source e-learning software platform, also known as a Course Management System, Learning Management System, or Virtual Learning Environment. Moodle is a course management system designed to create quality online courses. Moodle has many resources and activities to aid in flexibility and diversification of learning. Learn how to navigate, view, and find help in a Moodle 2 course.

## What is the center column?

The screenshot shows a Moodle 2 course page for "PHTO 1540 Beginning Digital Photography". The page is divided into several sections:

- Navigation and Settings:** Located on the left side, it includes "People" (Participants), "Section links" (a calendar view for weeks 1-17), "Online users" (Scott Horton, last 5 minutes), "Activities" (Advanced Forums, Assignments, Feedback, Forums, Glossaries, Quizzes, Resources), and "Activity stream" (no messages).
- Central Content Area:** The main focus, containing a banner for "PHTO 1540 Beginning Digital Photography" with an image of a person on a skateboard. Below the banner is a "Welcome!" message from instructor Scott Horton. A "Start Here" section lists resources: "Getting Started With This Online Class", "Video Introduction", and "Are You Ready to Learn Online". A "Course Syllabus" section includes "Course Syllabus Spring 2013". A "Beginning Resources For This Course" section lists "Moodle, Computer Use & Technical Support Offered" and "Internet Course Readiness for Your Computer". An "Important!" note explains how to prepare a computer for online use. A final "Important!" note explains how to edit a Moodle profile.
- Messages:** Located on the right side, it shows "No messages waiting Messages".
- Quickmail:** Located on the right side, it includes "Compose New Email", "Signatures", "View Drafts", "View History", and "Alternate Emails".
- Upcoming events:** Located on the right side, it includes "Start Online Learner Survey" (Wednesday, January 16, 12:05 AM), "Assignment Tasks For Week 1" (Monday, January 21, 11:55 PM), and "ASSIGNMENT 2.1: Writing a Description in Your Personal Profile" (Saturday, January 26, 11:55 PM).

Course Activities can be found in the center column of most courses. Scroll up and down the page, to see links to Activities.

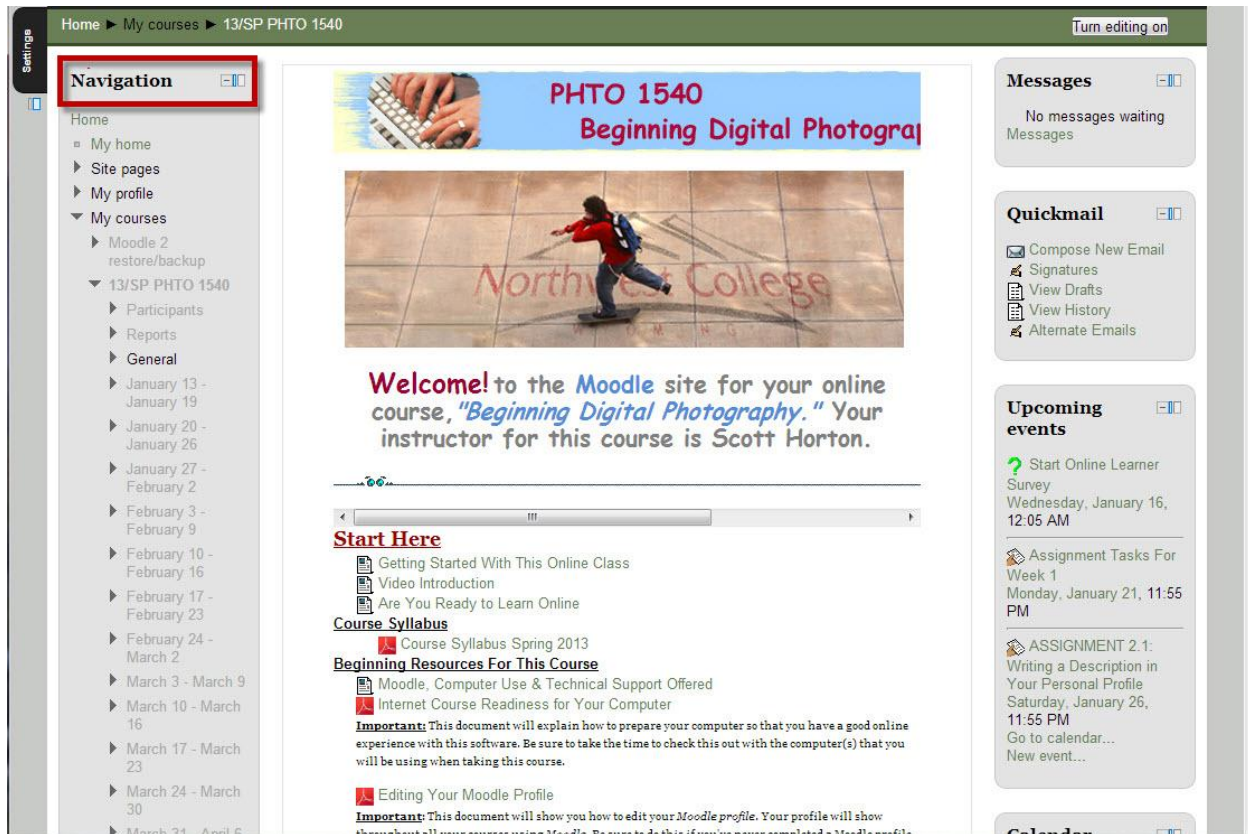
Instructors can add multimedia and text to the course page in order to articulate or express ideas.

Often, course Activities are grouped into topics or weekly sections. In the example above, **"Start Here"** is the first topic. One can expect different activities within different topic areas.

## What elements are in the right and left columns?

The side columns provide spaces for Blocks, which are essentially widgets providing some kind of specialized function. For example, the Calendar block if used, provides quick access to upcoming activities. The Messages block will show if your instructor or a fellow classmate has sent you a message. The People block provides access to participants in the course. Instructors can choose from over 20 Blocks and design courses with multiple Blocks or just a small collection of them.

## What is Block docking?

The image shows a Moodle course page for 'PHTO 1540 Beginning Digital Photography'. On the left, a 'Navigation' block is docked, showing a tree view of the course structure. The main content area features a banner for the course, a welcome message, and several resource links. On the right, there are three utility blocks: 'Messages', 'Quickmail', and 'Upcoming events'. A 'Turn editing on' button is visible in the top right corner.

Every user can choose to dock any Block by clicking the icon labeled "Move this to the dock" when hovering your mouse cursor over the icon located in the upper right corner of the block. This consolidates the blocks to an accessible dock on the left.

For example, the Settings block is docked in the image above that shows a black tab in the upper left side of the page. To see the information contained within a docked Block, simply toggle over it and a menu will appear. The Settings block above is displaying the Block content for a student user while the cursor is over it.

You can remove a Block from the dock at any time. In the image above, to take the Settings block back off the dock, click on the same icon now labeled "Undock this item." To undock all blocks at once, click on the blue icon just below the last docked tab on the left side of the page.

## How to navigate with breadcrumbs



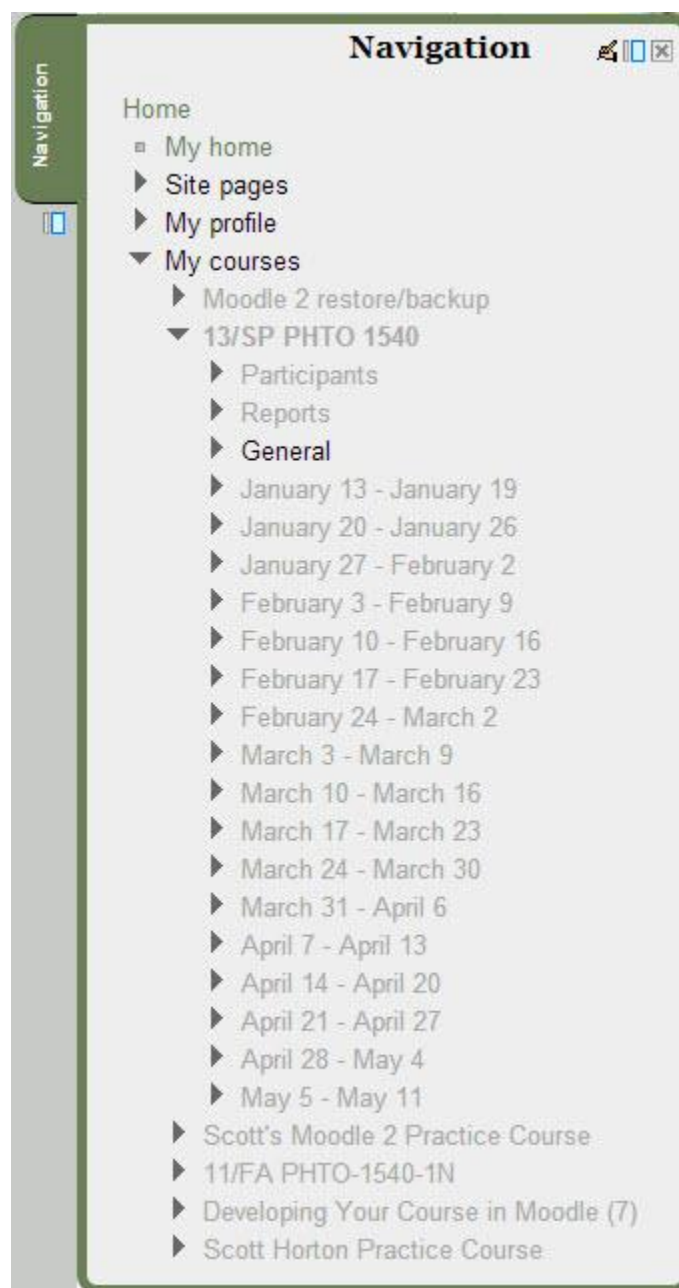
Home > My courses > 13/SP PHTO 1540 > General > Getting Started With This Online Class

A navigation bar near the top of the page provides clarity about where in the course you may be at any given time. It contains links that will leave a trail of hyperlinks starting at

the site level and moving deeper into the course. When the course name is clicked it will return the user to the front page of the course.

In this example, if "Home" is clicked on the user will be returned to the front page of the site that shows a list of "My courses" that the user is enrolled in. If "13/SP PHTO 1540" is clicked on the user will be sent to the course page. This bar that is illustrated is called breadcrumbs because by clicking on previous links it will return users to previous pages.

## How do I navigate my course using the Navigation block?

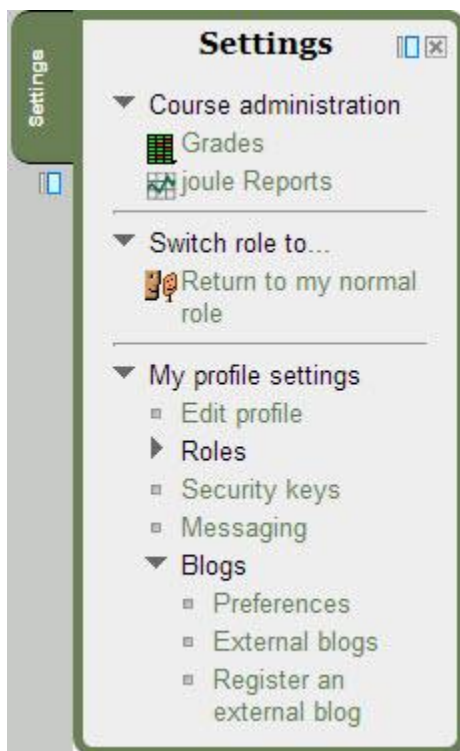




The Navigation block (shown above) provide easy access to **view** various sections of the Moodle site and includes:

- **My home** - a personalized home page displaying links to the courses a user is associated with and activity information (such as unread forum posts and upcoming assignments)
- **Site pages** - links to site pages and resources from the front page of Moodle
- **My profile** - quick links allowing a user to view their profile, forums posts, blogs and messages as well as manage their private files
- **My courses** - lists (by course shortname) and links to courses the user is associated with. Click the course's shortname to view the front page of the course or use the arrows to navigate quickly to a specific section, resource or activity.

## What is the Settings block?



The Settings block provides you with easy access to **change** various settings of a Moodle site. This block shows contextual settings (the settings for a forum when you are viewing it as an editing user) as well as settings for anything else you have permissions for. All users have access to edit their profile and message settings from this block as well as their Blog preferences.

Note that when clicking on the “Messaging” link found when expanding “My profiles,” this is where you can configure your notification methods for any incoming messages. Some of the more common notifications are configured for you but you may wish to add some others for your personal preference.