Canvas course site visibility settings

This article describes Canvas visibility settings, which govern who may view your course site, and explains the virtual shopping period.

Changing Visibility Settings

1. Click Settings in the course navigation menu (left side on web, or center-top on mobile).
2. On the Settings > Course Details tab, look for the Visibility drop-down menu:
   ![Visibility drop down with "Course" visibility selected](image)

3. There are three visibility settings:
   - **Course visibility**, the default, limits access to enrolled students as well as to other members of the site (TAs, departmental support staff, informal auditors).
   - **Institution visibility** allows any logged-in PennKey holder who has the link to your course site to view the content, but they cannot interact with or even see students.
   - **Public visibility** allows anyone with the link to your course site to view the content, but they cannot interact with or even see students. Public users cannot submit assignments, nor can they take quizzes or access unpublished materials in Files.
4. To save your change, click Update Course Details.
5. Visibility settings become effective when you publish your site, or immediately if the site is already published.

Virtual Shopping Period

During a Canvas Virtual Shopping Period, students considering an undergraduate or full-time MBA course in the current semester may access Institution-visible courses for that semester using PennInTouch, via a link available on the course listing.

However, their experience with the Canvas view of the course will differ from that of enrolled students:

- Students accessing a course for "shopping" purposes will not appear on the Canvas course roster and they will not be able to participate in the course discussions or submit assignments.
- Students who access a course’s Canvas site while not enrolled in the course will need to ask the instructor for permission to “sit in” on any synchronous class sessions.

After the end of a Virtual Shopping Period, any Institution visibility settings will be automatically changed back to Course (the default). You may request to keep Institution visibility after the period is over.

Questions?

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