Getting Started with aPlus+ Attendance in Canvas (Instructors)

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This article describes aPlus+ Attendance for Wharton faculty use. Students should see Getting started with aPlus+ in Canvas (Students).

aPlus+ Attendance is a Canvas-integrated attendance-tracking tool that enables teaching teams to manage student check-ins and track attendance. From an instructor standpoint, the check-ins can be administered manually using custom statuses, or you can allow students to sign in using a specific alphanumeric or QR code within a specified timeframe.

This article includes a basic aPlus+ Attendance overview, plus configuration and usage instructions. For details on using aPlus+ in your class sessions, see our Using aPlus+ in the Classroom (Instructors) article.

Before You Start

You will need:

- Access to Canvas
- Instructor role in the Wharton course that will use aPlus+ Attendance

For help with either of these, contact your Wharton Computing representative.

Please Note: aPlus+ Attendance is NOT completely accessible for low-vision students due to the way the numeric code is displayed. If you use this code, we recommend contacting your Wharton Computing representative to discuss alternate solutions.

aPlus+ Attendance Overview

aPlus+ Attendance provides the following benefits:

- **Rolling Code Check-in**: Makes it extremely difficult to check in from outside the classroom by allowing you to project a code from your Canvas site during class.
- **Direct Attendance Management**: Allows you to manage the attendance schedule (called a timetable), update records, and access reporting tools from your course's aPlus+ Attendance tab.
- **Easier Reporting**: Enables you to analyze attendance data from one tab and access via multiple views (e.g. number of absences per student, type of absences, and many more options).
- **Integration with Canvas Gradebook**: Includes an aggregated attendance score automatically in your gradebook based on your attendance policies.
- **No More Absence Notifications**: Provides a single place for students and faculty to review their attendance records. Instead of reviewing an email, you can review the record itself and make changes, such as updates to

absence requests.

Configuring aPlus+ Attendance for your Course

Configuring aPlus+ Attendance can be done by any teaching team member with the role of Teacher or TA by following these 3 steps:

Unhide the aPlus+ Attendance tab
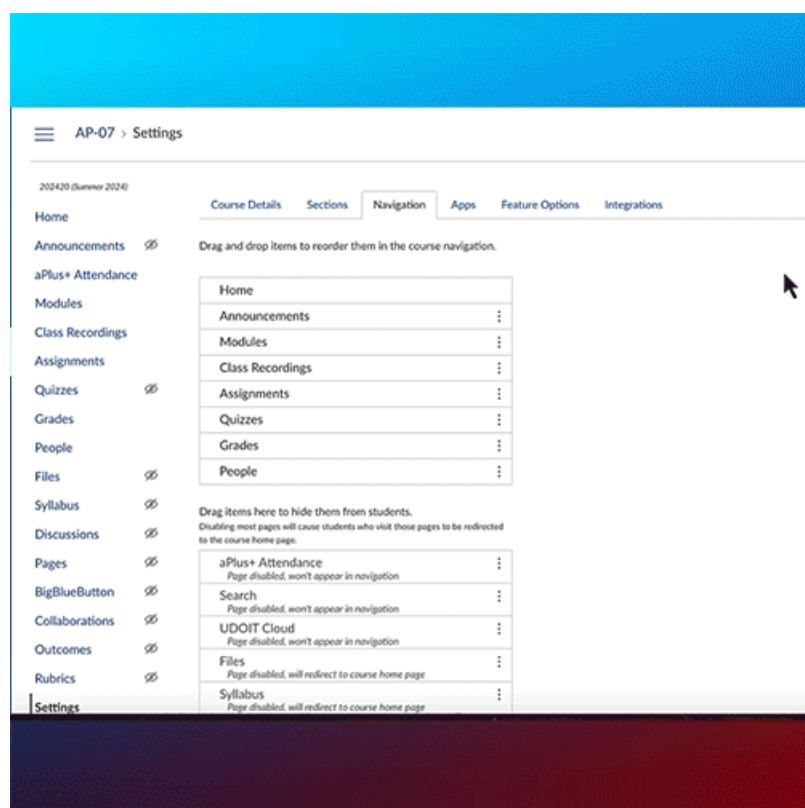
1. Log into Canvas and select the course that will be using the aPlus+ Attendance tab.
2. Select the **Settings tab** from your course sidebar navigation.
3. Click on the **Navigation tab**.
4. Drag **aPlus+ Attendance** from the hidden section to your course navigation.
5. Drop **aPlus+ Attendanc**e in the tab order. The other visible tabs will move out of the way as you place it.
6. Scroll down and click the blue **Save button**.
7. aPlus+ should be on your course navigation sidebar where you placed it. To hide it/move it just repeat the above steps.

Authorize Account (First-Time Use Only)

As the instructor, **you must click on the aPlus+ Attendance tab before students first try to access aPlus+**. If students attempt to access it before you take this step to initiate the application, they will receive an error message. Clicking on the tab just once before a new semester will enable student access.

To authorize aPlus+ Attendance:

1. Log into Canvas and go to the course you're interested in authorizing aPlus+ Attendance.

2. Click on **aPlus+ Attendance** in the course navigation sidebar.
3. The first time you access the tool, you will be prompted to authorize access to your account:
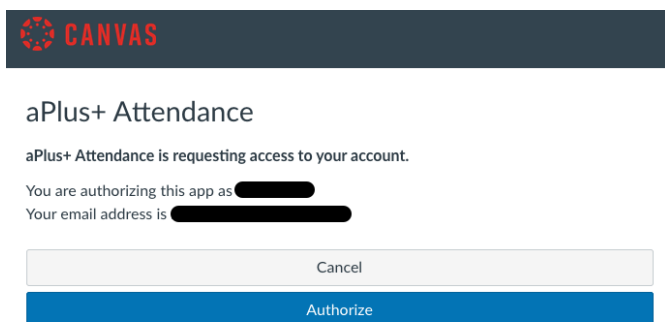

4. Click the blue **Authorize button**.
5. aPlus+ Attendance will load the Attendance Setup landing page (see the next section).

Set Up Attendance

After you click the Authorize button, or when you click the aPlus+ tab after authorizing the first time, you arrive at the Attendance Setup landing page. To set up attendance for this class:

1. Check the **Import attendance sessions from your information systems box** and then choose a session weighting. The recommended weighting is "Equal sessions (1 point)," this section of the article explains weighting.
2. Click the blue **Apply** button to save your changes.
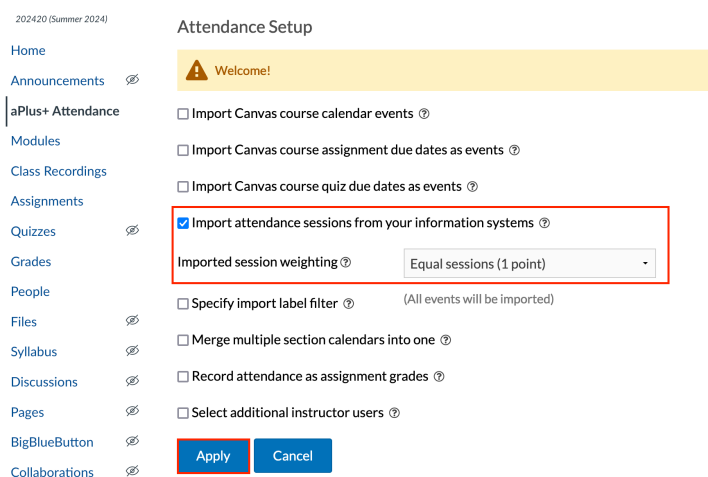
You will now see the sessions populate on the course timetable, as shown in the screenshot below. This import should add all of your class meetings to your session timetables. The next section discusses some additional import options that you can use to add more/different entries to your timetable associated with other aspects of your course.

Make sure that the **Sessions** tab is selected and you have selected **a section showing your class start time** (e.g. 1:45pmMGMT1110-001-Fall2024) to see the sessions populate on the timetable.

If class start times are not available after you click the Sections drop-down selection menu, please contact a Wharton Computing representative for assistance.

Additional Import Options

Typically, the attendance sessions will be imported from our information systems as detailed above; however, it is possible to import from course-calendar events, assignments, or even quizzes. This section details those options and why you might want to use them.

> If you plan to use aPlus+ Attendance in a Blueprint course, please contact the Courseware Team at courseware@wharton.upenn.edu.

The additional import options are:

Navigating aPlus+ Attendance

Once the Attendance Setup step is complete, you will be brought back to the main aPlus+ timetable. You can toggle among the different course timetables via a dropdown menu.

For example, if a course has multiple sections, there will likely be a different timetable for each section, as shown below:

Students Tab

The Students tab is the most common choice for viewing and managing *recent* attendance. You have the option to show an attendance-taking timeframe of up to 12 months, and you'll notice that this drills down to the specific session days and the status of each student for that session.

Sessions

Sessions view allows you to manage your timetable information:

Reports

By selecting the 'Reports' link in the top menu of the aPlus+ tab, you can immediately see attendance reports for your course.

Reports can be exported to .csv or Excel by clicking the **icon highlighted in red** at the top right of the data table:

Codes

Once your sessions are configured and populated on the timetable(s) for any upcoming sessions, you can project either a QR or alphanumerical code that students must scan or enter in the aPlus+ attendance app to check in for class that day.

Canvas Sync & History

If changes are made to the timetable or anywhere else within the aPlus+ application (and also within Canvas, if, for example, grades and assignments are synced with the app), these changes can be synced to ensure everything is up to date:

Absence Requests

Students can use aPlus+ Attendance to request absences for days they will be unable to attend class. As the instructor, you'll need to ensure that you have your sessions appropriately configured on the timetable so that students can request an absence.

Course Action Notices are separate from aPlus+ Attendance absence requests
Penn undergraduate students, including Wharton undergraduates, may report absences using the University's Course Action Notices (CAN) system. Please be aware that graduate students *cannot* use CAN to report absences, and that CAN is not an absence request tool. If teaching a cross-listed graduate/undergraduate course, only your undergraduate students should be directed to use CAN.

Time Factors for aPlus+ Attendance Absence Requests
Students can request an absence using aPlus+ Attendance *two weeks before a particular session* and *up until the end of the term*.

For any other questions related to aPlus+ Attendance that are not addressed in this article, please view the Canvas instructor guide linked here.

Accessibility Concerns

Wharton Computing works to ensure that all digital tools available for students meet current accessibility

standards. Occasionally, especially when using 3rd party vendors, we may recommend using the tools but include suggestions for workarounds that will benefit those who need these provisions.

As mentioned above, aPlus+ Attendance is NOT completely accessible for low-vision students due to the way the numeric code is displayed. If you use this code, we recommend asking one of the teaching team members to read out the numbers during each class.

Questions?

Troubleshooting tip: If you are using Safari and encounter any access issues, please refer to our Using web browsers with Learning Tools article regarding using Safari with Canvas learning tools. If you have trouble in Chrome, try using a different browser, like Firefox.

Please contact your Wharton Computing representative for support if you need more assistance.