

# Roles and Permissions in Canvas

## Roles and Permissions in Canvas

On this page:

[Overview](#)  
[About the Roles and Permissions](#)  
    [Course Moira Lists](#)  
[Permissions for Each Role](#)  
    [Automatic Status Changes](#)  
        [People](#)  
        [Course Creation/Opening/Closing](#)  
    [Using the Canvas Interface \(Manual Add/Remove\)](#)  
[See Also](#)

## Overview

## About the Roles and Permissions

- **Student** - Students enrolled in the course.  
The students have permission to view course content, engage in course activities (zoom, polls), submit assignments, participate in discussions, view the course roster, and message other members of the course. They cannot view or modify course settings.
- **Pre-Registered Students** - Students who have pre-registered to take the course. They will convert to students or be removed from the course starting on Registration Day depending on their registration status.  
Pre-Registered students have all the same permissions as a student. See above.
- **Listener** - Students enrolled as a listener who will not receive a grade or credit for the course.  
Listener's have all the same permissions as a student. See above.
- **Wait List** - Students who want to take the course, but await space becoming available.  
Wait List members have all the same permissions as a student. See above.
- **Non-Registered Participant** - Members who are taking the course, or portions of it, without being officially registered. This role is recommended for any manually added students or other manually-added participants.  
Non-Registered Participants have all the same permissions as a student. See above.
- **Teacher** - Teachers are course instructors.  
Teachers have all course-level permissions, including the ability to add, edit and delete all content in a course, edit course settings, and manually add individuals with MIT Kerberos IDs.
- **Course Admin**  
For providing the same level of access as Teacher, but isn't teaching.  
Course Admins have all course-level permissions of a teacher, including the ability to add, edit and delete all content in a course, edit course settings, and manually add individuals with MIT Kerberos IDs.
- **TA (Teaching Assistant)** - For teaching assistants.  
By default, TAs have permissions similar to the Teacher role. They have all course-level permissions, including the ability to add, edit and delete all content in a course, edit course settings, and manually add students with an MIT Kerberos ID. They cannot edit other staff roles.
- **Grader** - For graders hired to assist in grading assignments.  
Graders have the ability to view and edit grades for the course or section as assigned.
- **Mentor**  
Not currently in use. Please do not assign.
- **Designer**  
Student Learning Technologists and others who assist setting up the course, writing course materials, and managing content.  
Create course content, discussions, announcements, assignments, quizzes, and other content. They cannot view or modify grades.
- **Observer**

For users who have no official role in the course, but have been given permission to view course content and discussion forums. Observers have limited permissions that allow them to see what is going on in a course without being directly involved in daily course communication.

- **Sloan Roles**

There are additional roles only used by Sloan School. Contact [Sloan Canvas Support](#).

## Course Moira Lists

Some of the roles have corresponding Moira lists that grant the permissions automatically. Roles that are granted the same permissions are combined onto one list.

In the following example, the lists are for course 13.01 in the Fall of 2021.

canvas-2021fa\_13.01-de - Designer  
 canvas-2021fa\_13.01-ob - Observer  
 canvas-2021fa\_13.01-st - Student, listener  
 canvas-2021fa\_13.01-ta - TA, mentor, grader  
 canvas-2021fa\_13.01-te - Teacher, course admin

## Permissions for Each Role
















These are the default permissions for each role. Some roles can be customized to allow or restrict access further.



Role Name	Usage	Announcements	Assignments	Discussions	Messages to Individuals
<b>Student</b>	Automatically Assigned				
<b>Pre-Registered Student</b>	Automatically Assigned				
<b>Waitlist</b>	Manually Added				
<b>Non-Registered Participant</b>	Manually Added				
<b>Listener</b>	Automatically Assigned				
<b>Observer*</b>	Manually Added				

\*When not linked to a student

Role Name	Usage	People	Sections	Assignments, Pages & Files	Grading	Analytics	Announcements & Messages
<b>Teacher</b>	Course Instructor						
<b>Course Admin</b>	Instructor access, but not teaching						

<b>TA</b>	Teaching Assistant						
<b>Designer</b>	Learning Technologist						
<b>Grader</b>	Grading Only				 *		
<b>Mentor</b>	Do Not Use						

\* Except final grade.

## Automatic Status Changes

### People

Moria lists are created for each course so students and other users can be automatically added/deleted from the course as their status changes. Student information is taken from the Registrar's office. Once updates are made to a student's registration by the Registrar's office, their status in Canvas will be updated within 24 hours.

Students are added as pre-registered in Canvas when they pre-register for a class. On Registration Day, those pre-registered students start to be removed from the course or converted to student status depending on if they've decided to take the course or not. Usually within a week, all registered students taking the course should be converted to student status.

As students add/drop a course, a similar process occurs. After students have submitted their add/drop request and it's been approved by the instructors/advisors, students are usually added to the course in Canvas within a few hours. If a student needs access or an instructor wishes to remove their access before their registration status causes an update to occur, see below for how to manually add/remove them.

TAs and others are not automatically synced with any system. When the course is initially created, instructors are automatically given the Teacher role based on the [Instructor Assignment Application](#) and can assign permissions to TAs, designers and others as needed. There is no central system for automatically managing TAs. For assistance, contact the [IS&T Service Desk](#).

### Course Creation/Opening/Closing

By default, courses are created before the beginning of the semester so the instructor and any TAs, designers and others as needed can configure the course, upload material, and prepare for the start of the semester. The courses will be opened up to students once the instructor or admin publishes it.


Students are able to access the content once the start date has arrived (usually shortly before Registration Day) and the course has been published. If an instructor or admin would like students (pre-registered and otherwise) to be able to access course materials earlier than the default start date, they can change the start date of the course to the desired date and publish it.

After the default close date (usually shortly after the end of the semester), the course will convert to a read-only mode and is listed under Past Courses in the course list. If the default close date is not appropriate for a course, for example it extends into another semester, instructors or admins will need to edit the end date.

- [How do I change the start and end dates for a course?](#)

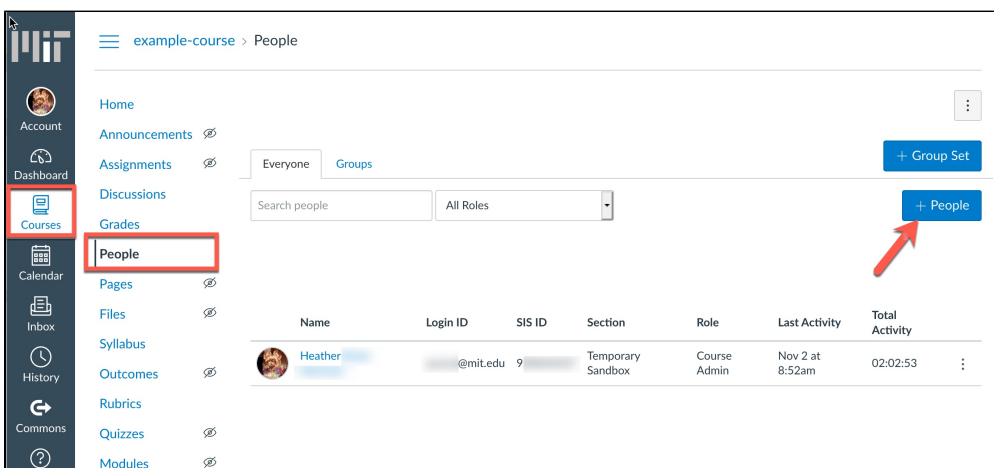
## Using the Canvas Interface (Manual Add/Remove)

So long as they are not added via SIS information, instructors and others with the ability to edit people can manually add/remove them from the course. Users added manually may have their status changed if their registration status causes them to have a different role. For example, a student manually added to the Waitlist who becomes an officially registered student of the class will have their registration updated to being a student automatically.

 All MIT Canvas users must have a Kerberos account. Some cross-registered students, those from Harvard, for example, are provided an automatically-generated Kerberos ID. Others will need to request a [guest account](#). If you're not sure if you have an MIT Kerberos account, contact the [IS&T Service Desk](#).

### Adding users to your course:

1. Login to <https://canvas.mit.edu>.
2. Navigate to your class.
3. In **Course Navigation**, click the **People** link



4. Click the **Add People** button  
*Result:* The "Add People" window appears.

Add People

Add user(s) by  
☒ Email Address ☐ Login ID ☐ SIS ID

Email Addresses (required)

@mit.edu  
@mit.edu

Role

Section

Student

Temporary Sandbox

☐ Can interact with users in their section only

When adding multiple users, use a comma or line break to separate users.

Cancel

Next

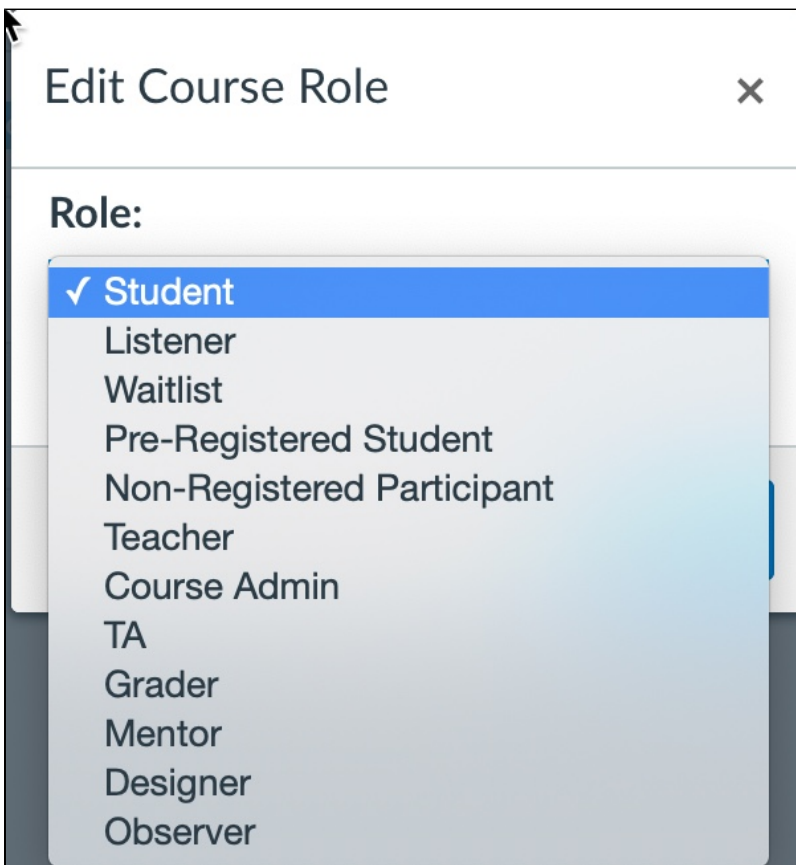
5. Enter the MIT email addresses of the members you wish to add.  
 The user *must* have an MIT Kerberos ID/email address. If they do not, contact the [IS&T Service Desk](#) to request a guest account for the user.
6. Select role type from the "Role" drop-down and add them to a section if desired.  
*Result:* You will be told "The following users are ready to be added to the course" and shown the user details.

7. Click "Add Users"  
*Result:* The users are sent an email inviting them to the course and you can see them in the people list. They will be listed as "Pending" until they accept the invitation.

## Editing User Roles

1. Login to <https://canvas.mit.edu>.
2. Navigate to your class.
3. In **Course Navigation**, click the **People** link

4. Find the user to edit and click the options icon (the three vertical dots).  
*Result:* The options open.
5. Select **Edit Role**  
*Result:* The "Edit Role" Screen opens.



6. Select the new role from the **Role** drop-down menu.
7. Click **Update**  
*Result:* The role has been updated and you will see that change reflected in the people list.

## See Also

- [\[istdraft:Canvas Resources\]](#)
- [Section Management in Canvas](#)
- [MIT Canvas Landing Page](#)