



Merging Course Sections in D2L | When to Merge, and When not to merge

When teaching multiple sections of the same course, some instructors may choose to merge those discrete course sections into one course site in D2L. The benefits of merging can apply to face-to-face enhanced, blended, or fully online courses.

Example: I am teaching BUS 210 001 and BUS 210 002, but I only want one D2L course site for both sections.

Benefits

There are many **benefits** to merging course sections:

- Administrative efficiencies: saving time by maintaining one D2L site therefore, having only one location to post, maintain, and/or correct News Items, Content, Assignments, Quizzes
- Increased Accuracy: maintaining multiple D2L sites increases opportunity for error
- Ensuring consistent delivery across all course sections: all students get the same emails and other course information; assessing assignments/quiz questions is more consistent
- Time savings on administrative tasks can be reallocated to increased student contact hours

Drawbacks

There are some potential **drawbacks** to merging course sections:

- Potential privacy violations related to student personal information if the site is set up incorrectly
- Complex course delivery may require a deeper understanding of how to use D2L functions, such as Conditional Release or Groups

When it's a good idea to merge sections

- You are using D2L in a simple way, such as posting PowerPoints/lecture notes and publishing Grades
- All your course sections have the same date restrictions (e.g., due dates) for Assignments, Quizzes, etc.
- Students from different course sections in one program need to collaborate on assignments or participate in common discussions
- You are a proficient D2L user

When it's better NOT to merge sections

- ❑ You are **new to D2L** and just learning the basics
- ❑ Your course sections are on **different schedules** and have **different date restrictions** (e.g., due dates) for Assignments, Quizzes, etc. Managing this through Conditional Release may add administrative time
- ❑ Your course has **Discussion forums/topics** that require section restrictions (i.e., if you do not want students from different sections participating in the same forum)
- ❑ Your course uses the **Groups tool** for self-enrolling or auto-enrolling students (i.e., you do not want students from different sections enrolling in groups together)
- ❑ There is a risk that one of the merged sections will be assigned to a different instructor and then and the course needs to be “unmerged”

Considerations

- When merged D2L sites are set up and managed correctly, there are minimal issues related to student privacy
- Students cannot see each other's names and activities in the merged D2L site, except for the Discussions tool, and Groups (depending on the set up)
- Within a merged D2L site, instructors can still sort students by section within the Classlist, Grades, Assignments, and Quizzes.

Process

- If you are unsure if merging course sections is right for you, reach out to an [Instructional Designer](#) to help with the decision and with training
- Make a [Course Merge Request](#) to eLearning before you start course development in your live site or work could be lost
- We can merge course sections any time after they appear in your course list, approximately 30 days before the start of classes.