Delivering Course via Canvas LMS

This is the first part in a series of Canvas LMS tutorials. It contains the most important information you need to know to deliver your course via Canvas LMS. Setting up the course in Canvas once will save you time in the long term, as you can use it as a template for all subsequent courses.

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Latest version of this part: http://files.skoltech.ru/data/edu/guides/canvas/canvas-tutorial-01.pdf

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Contents of this part:

Other parts in the series:

Setting up Grading Scheme   will save your time on submission grades to Education office

# 1   What is Canvas LMS?

Canvas LMS is an online platform for course delivery. It was developed by a company called "Instructure" in 2011, and released as open source in 2012. The company sells cloud hosting for Canvas instances. Skoltech's instance is located at:
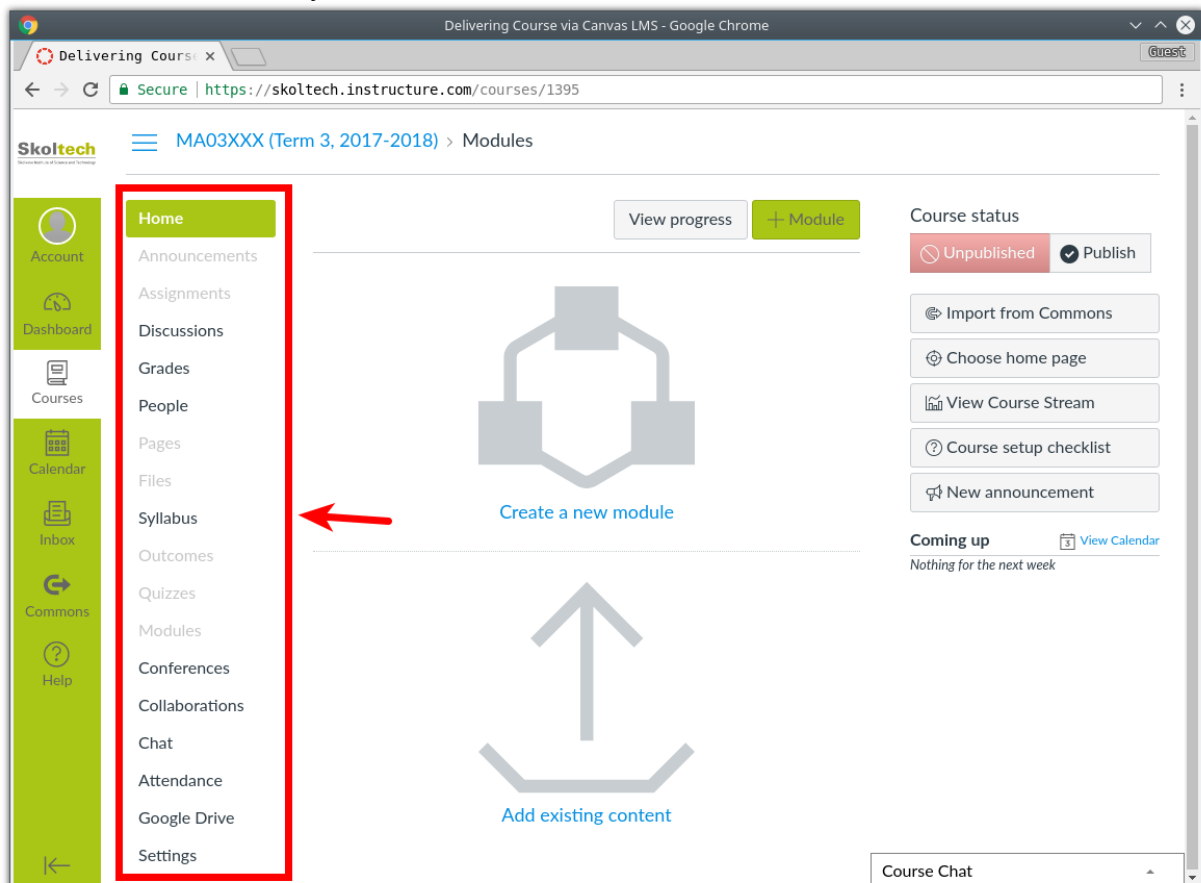
http://skoltech.instructure.com — login to Skoltech's instance of Canvas LMS

2 Dashboard

Screenshot 1. Your dashboard: list of courses you are enrolled to. Either as instructor or a student.
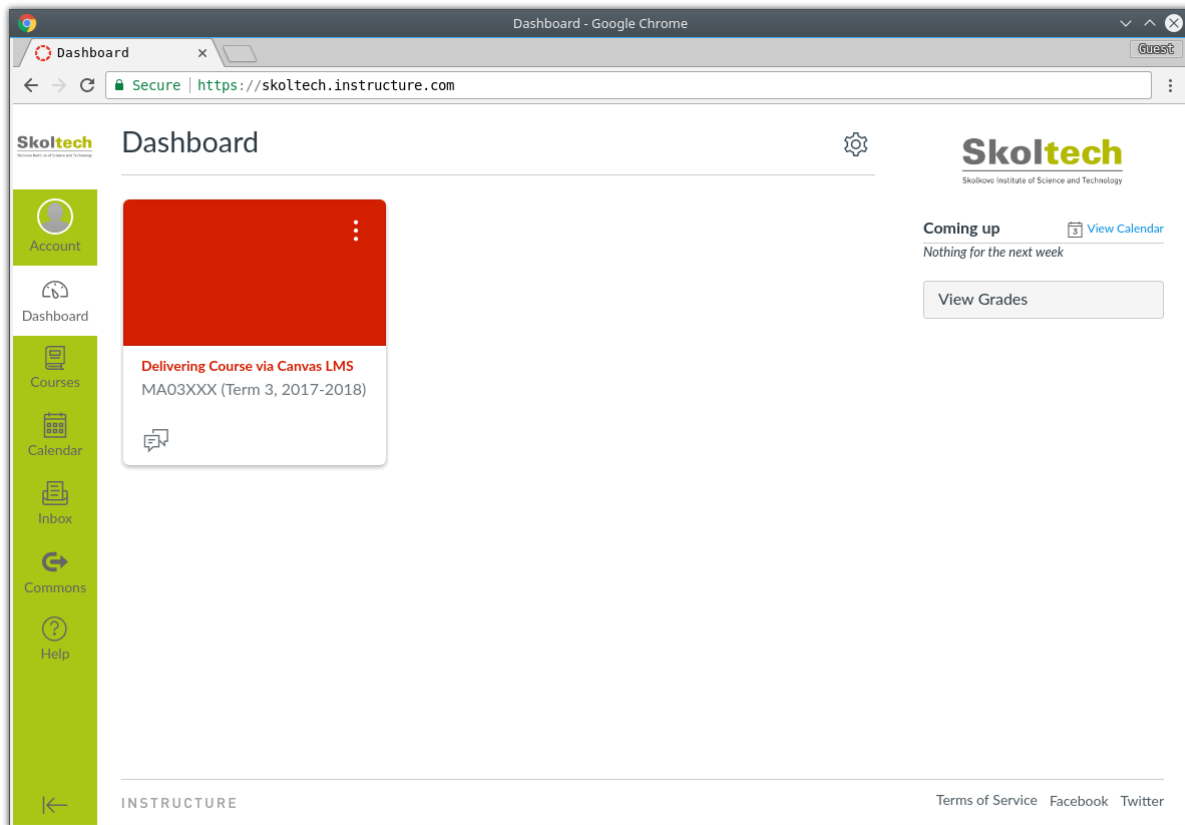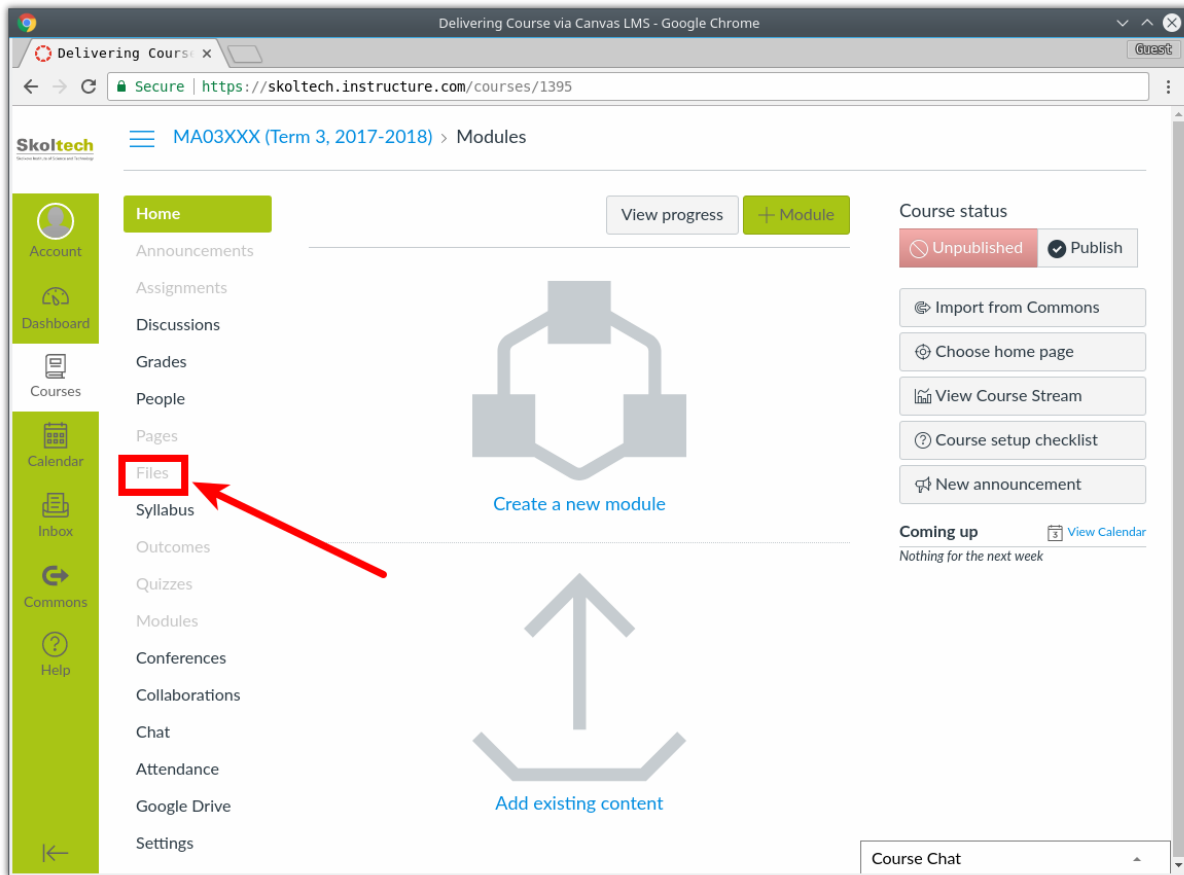

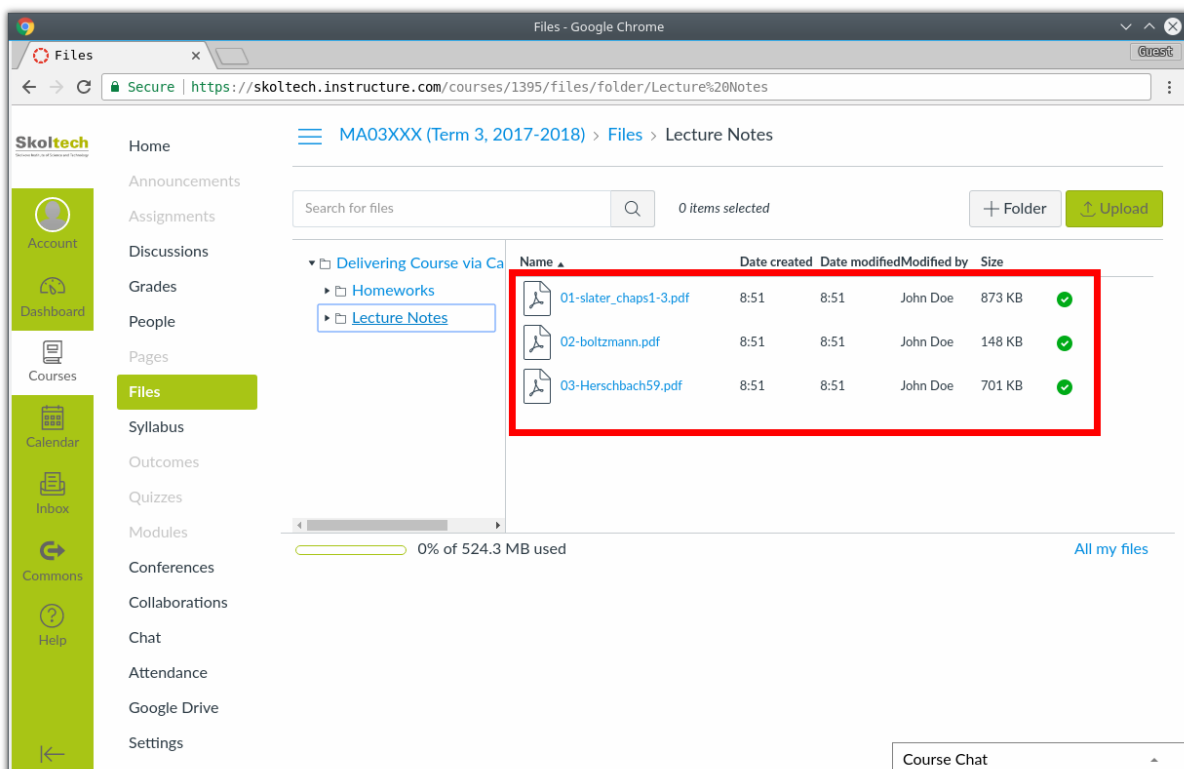*Screenshot 2. Contents of Canvas course.*

3 Upload files

Screenshot 3. In an empty course "Files" are greyed out because there are no files. But we can go there and add some.


Screenshot 4. You can create folders via "+ Folder" button, and upload files by drag-and-drop to the read area. ("Upload" button works too)
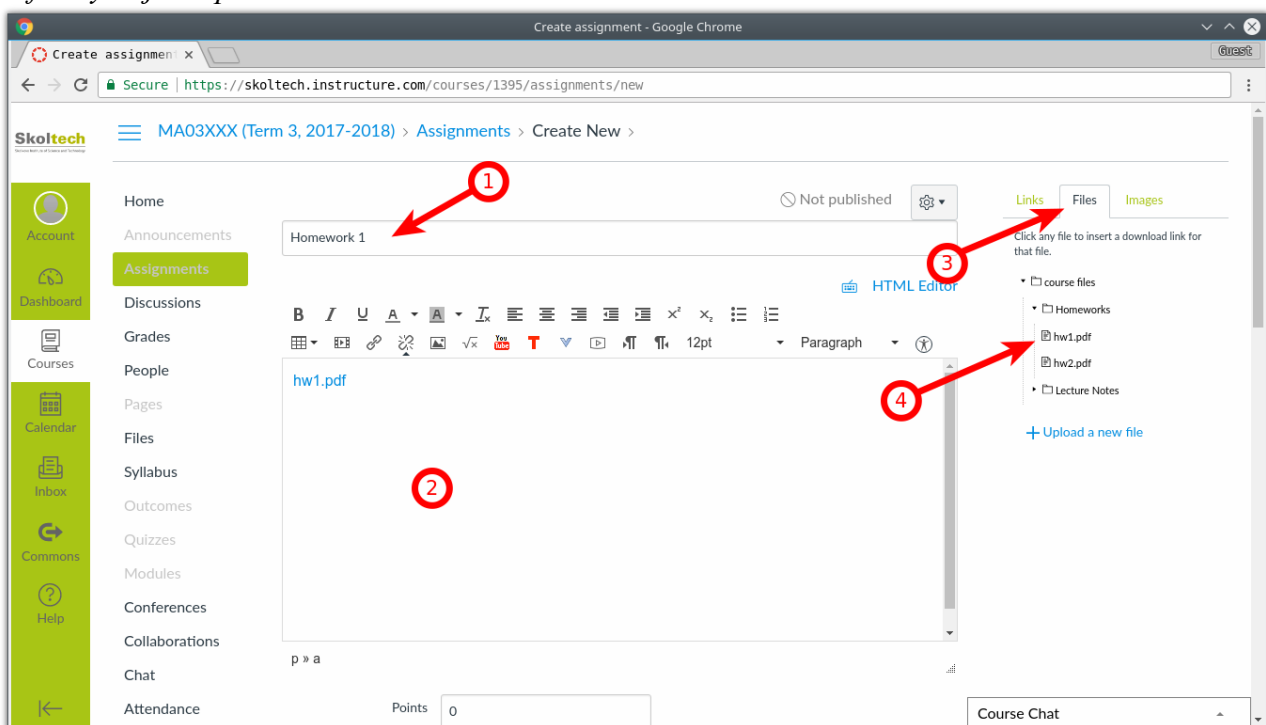
4 Create assignments

Screenshot 5. Canvas assumes you want to split assignments into groups. By default there's one group: "Assignments" which is shown in red box. You can create new assignments by pressing on "+ Assignment" (or by pressing "+" in a given group).
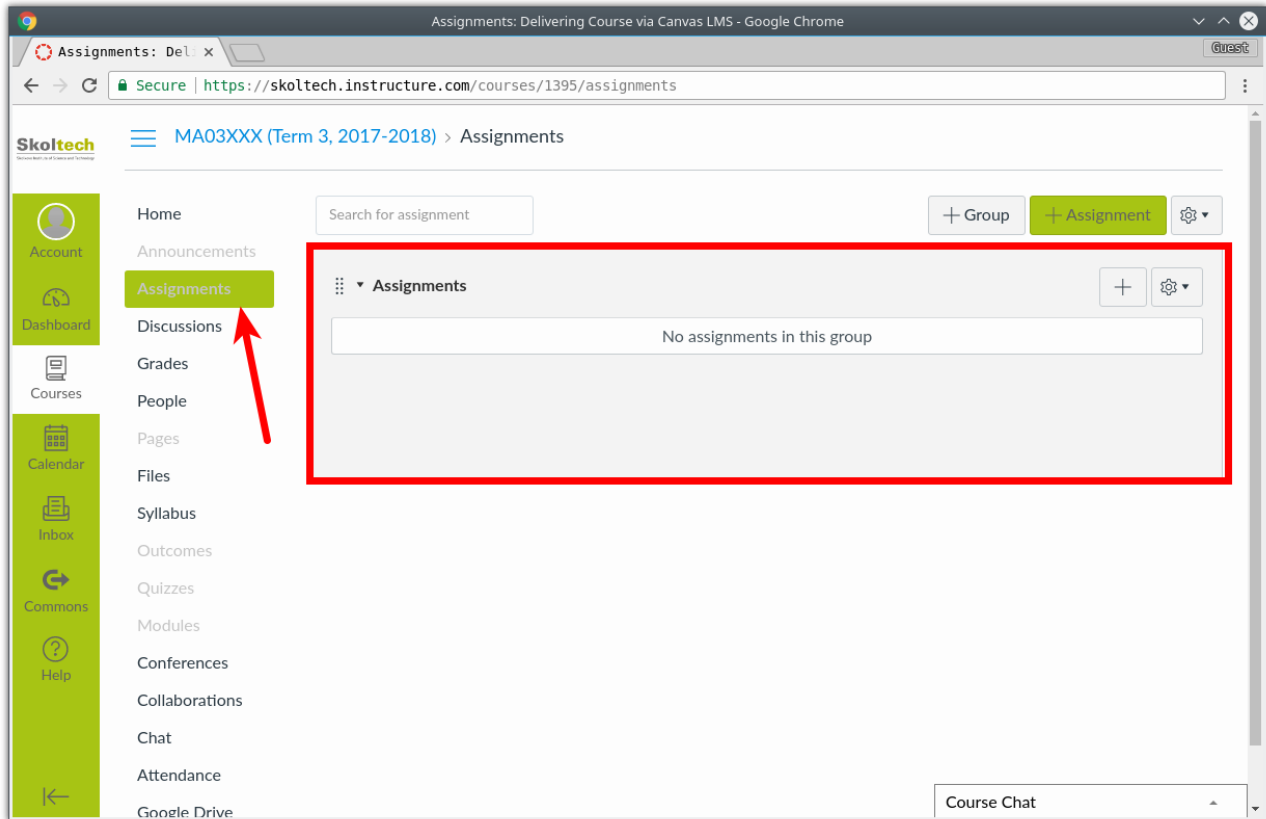
Screenshot 6. Give assignment a title ①. While the caret is on assignment text area ②, you can link to files you just uploaded via ③ and ④.

Screenshot 7. Set the maximum number of points (Grade) for the assignment. You might request a text entry or a file upload (②).

Screenshot 8. Finally, set the due date and publish the assignment.

4.1   Set up plagiarism check

Student submissions can be passed through an automatic similarity check engine, called TurnitIn. For this you have to configure assignment:

*Screenshot 10: Configure assignment to pass submissions throught the TurnitIn plugin, which searches text for citations.*

More detailed information can be found on the TurnitIn site or in the video format on youtube.

5   Set syllabus as a course start page

All activities of the course are automatically included on the syllabus page. Syllabus page also provides a text box to greet the students (we will get to it in a moment). You might want to set syllabus page as a start page of the course, which is called "Home" in canvas. Currently the home page is a "Modules" page:

Screenshot 11. By default "Home" link to "Modules". But we can set it to a list to something else.
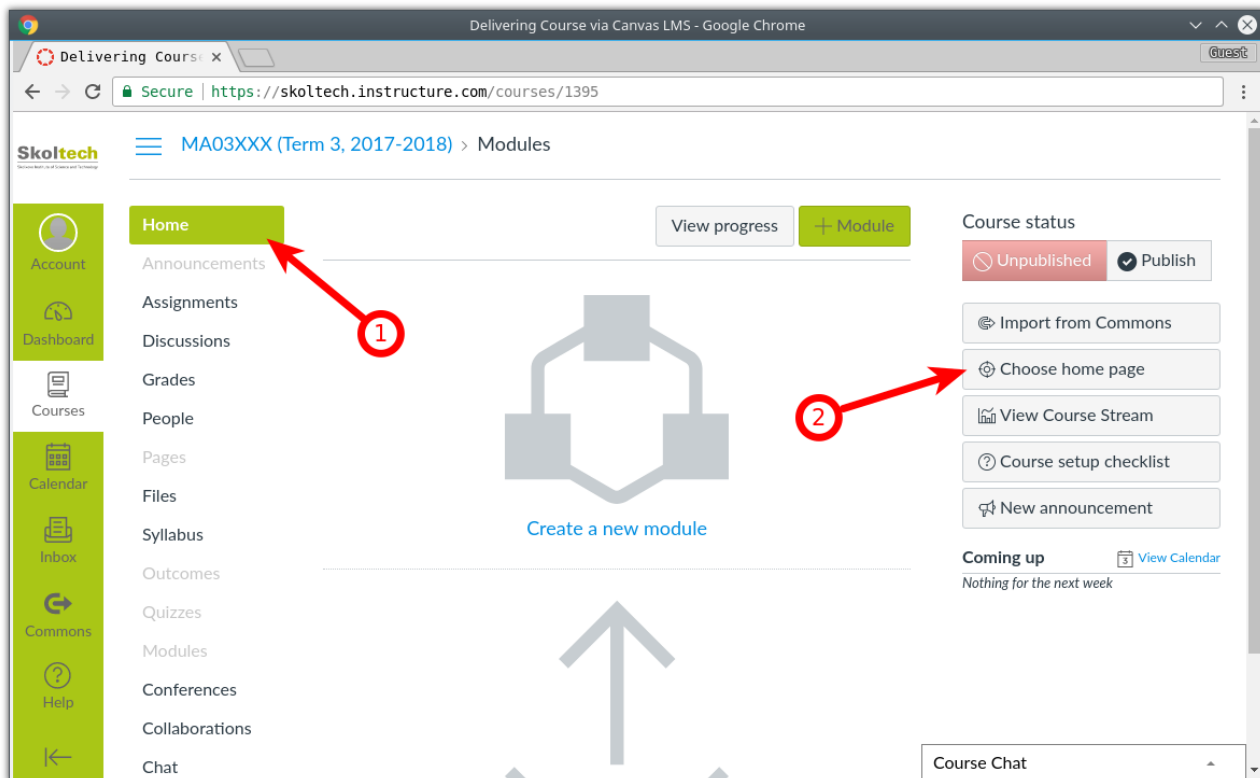
Screenshot 12. For example we will set "Syllabus" to be a start page of the course.
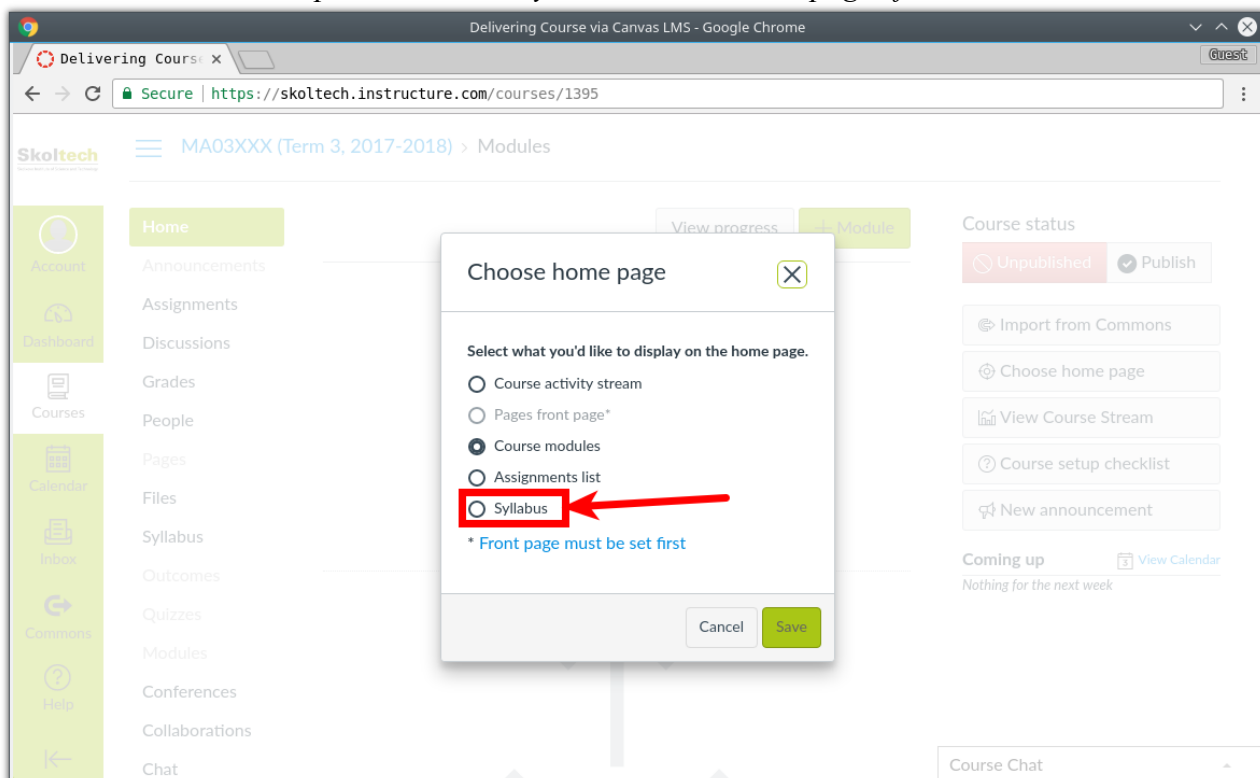
Screenshot 13. "Home" page now redirects to syllabus page. All activities of the course automatically appear in the syllabus (lower red box). We might also edit the greeting (②, upper red box).

6   Create events

Screenshot 14. In Canvas interface calendar belongs to a person, not to a course. Course events are created via calendar.

Screenshot 15. While in Calendar, press on any day to add an event to that day. "Edit event" widget adds event to your personal calendar by default. Where as you want to choose course calendar (①) instead.
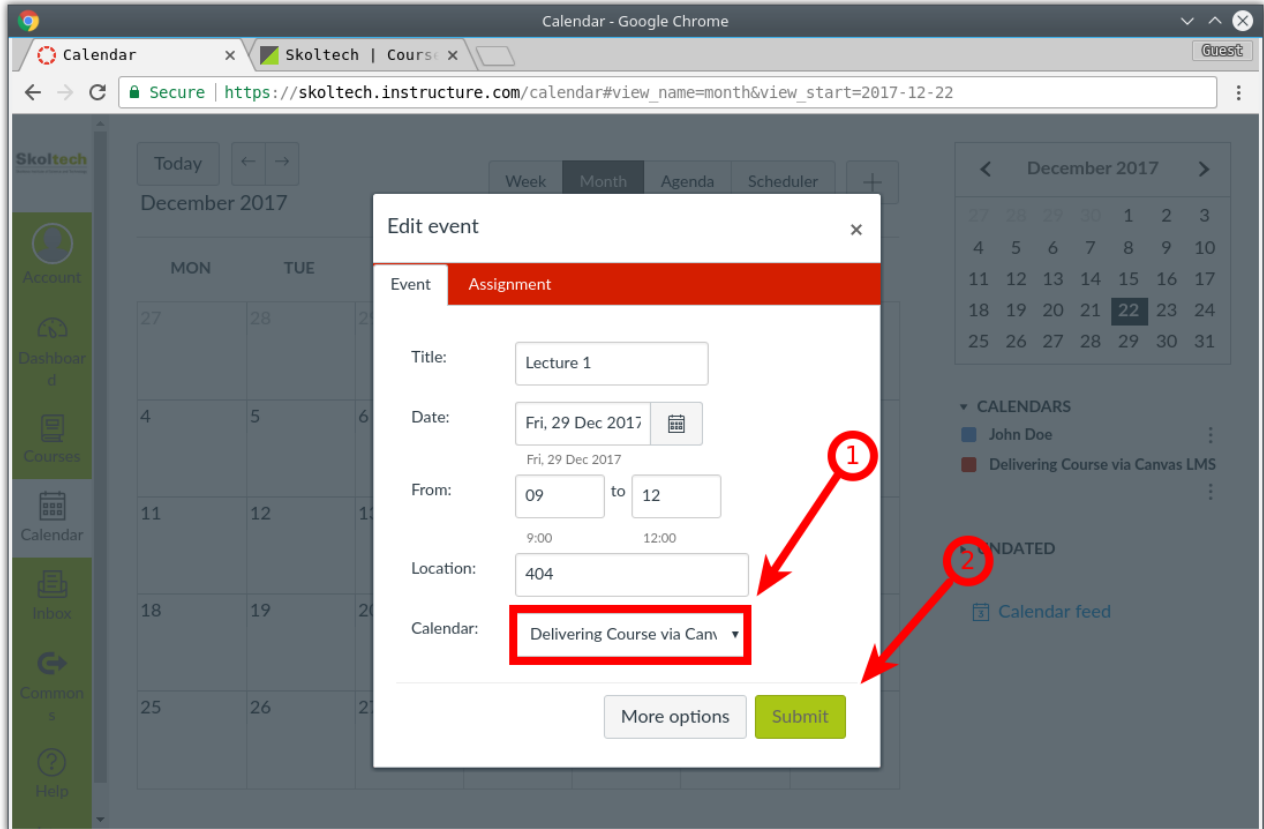
Screenshot 16. Go back to course.
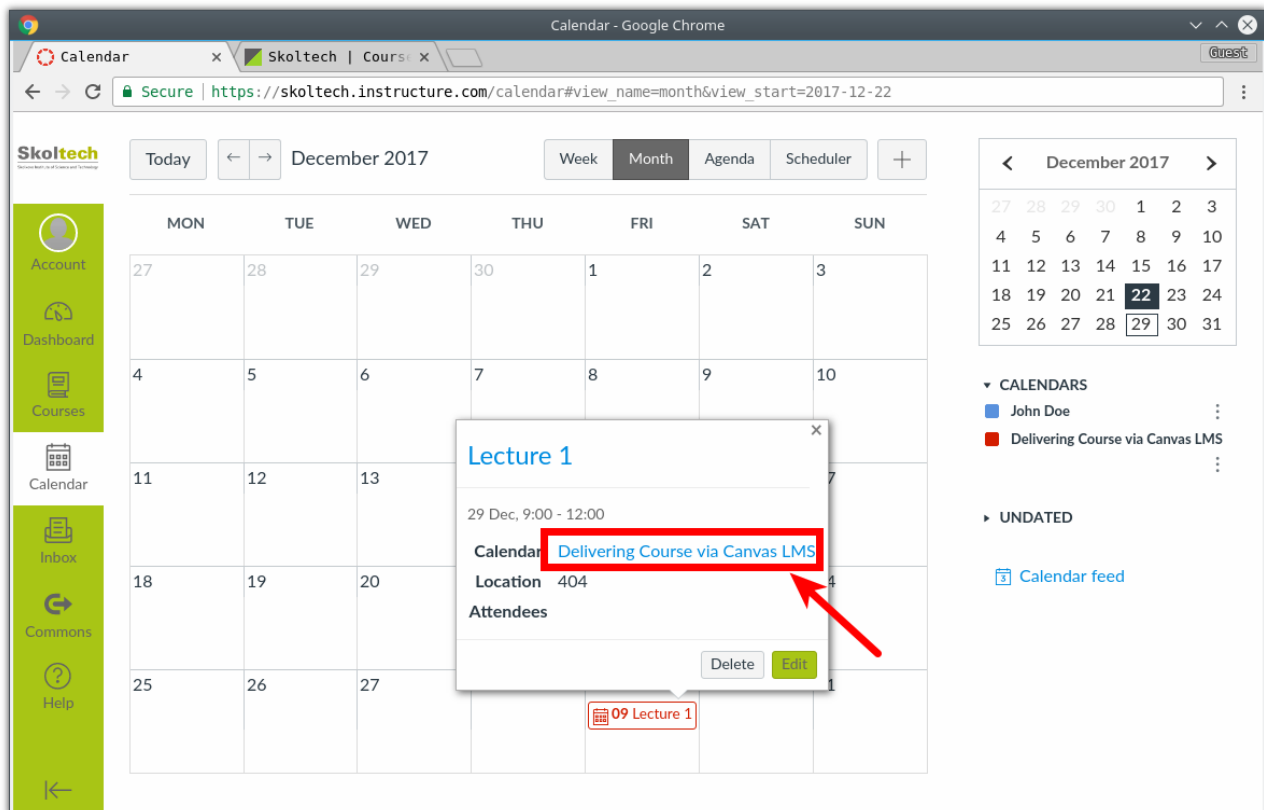
Screenshot 17. Lecture is added to course syllabus automatically.

7 Check if everything is in place

Before we publish the course, let's check how our course appears to the student.

Screenshot 18. Student view is found under settings.

Screenshot 19. We check that all activities appear in syllabus (all activities are published).

8 Publish the course

Screenshot 20. Finally, push the publish button. After this students will to see your course in their dashboards. You can see the list of students enrolled to your course under "People".