

Getting started with

slack

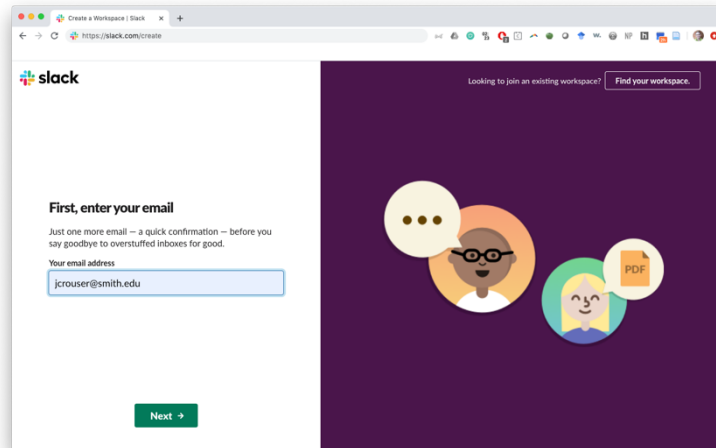
for (a)synchronous course-based communication

a primer by [R. Jordan Crouser](#), Assistant Professor of Computer Science at Smith College

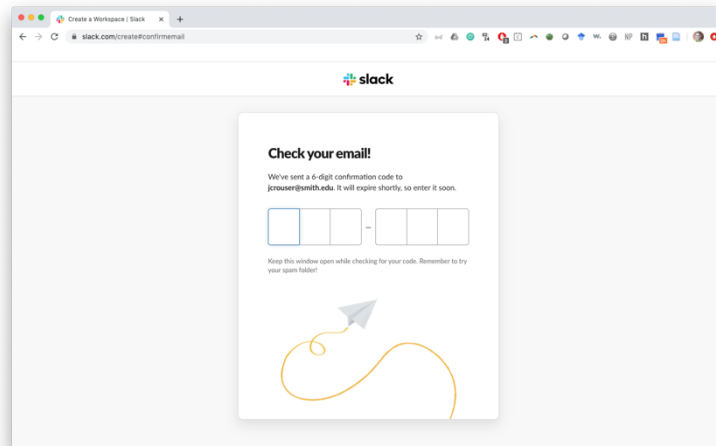
Step 1: Create Team

Navigate your browser to
www.slack.com/create
to create your Slack team.

You'll begin by entering your
email address.



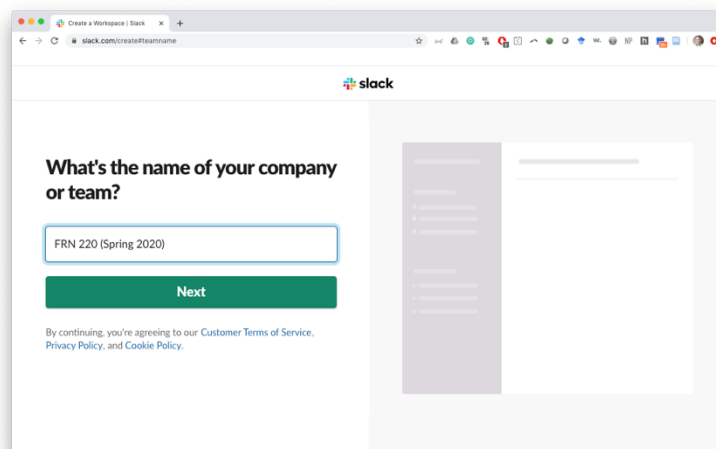
Slack will email you a
6-digit verification code,
which you'll enter into the
Slack web page:



Step 2: Enter Details

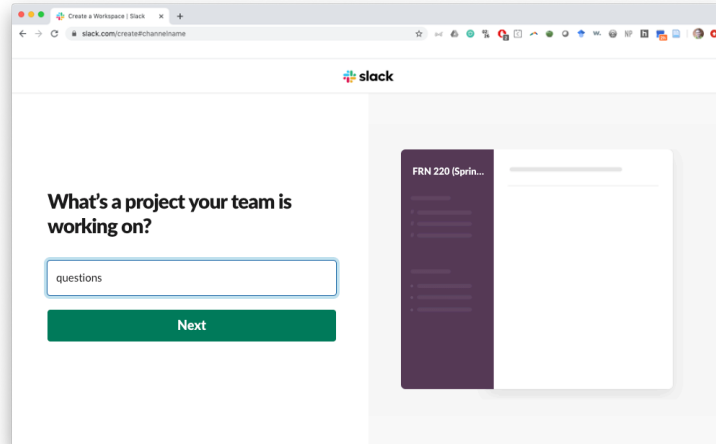
Enter a name
for your Slack team.

Recommendation:
Use something your students will
recognize, such as the
course number
followed by the **semester / year** in
parentheses.



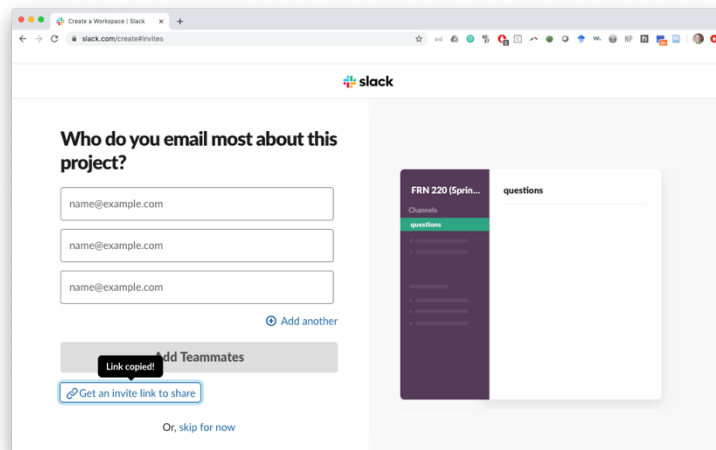
On the next page, you'll create your first **channel** (how Slack organizes conversations).

Recommendation:
Add a channel called **questions** where students can ask questions related to the material.



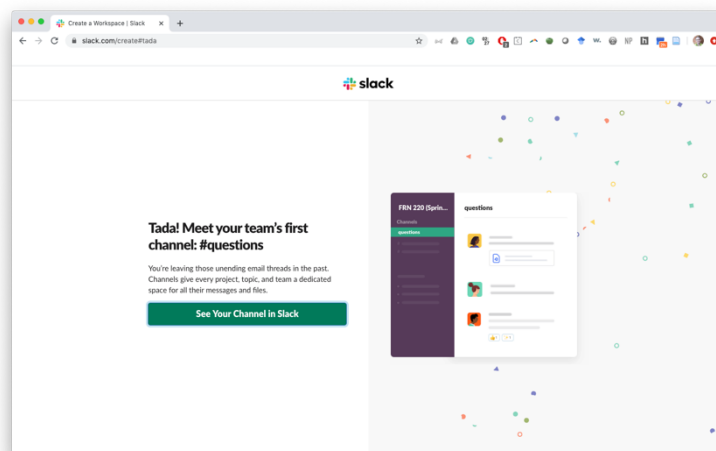
Step 3: Invite People
On the next page, invite people to the team by entering email addresses.

Recommendation:
For larger classes, click:
[Get an invite link to share](#) which you can send to your class mailing list or post to your course management tool. This saves you a bit of typing.



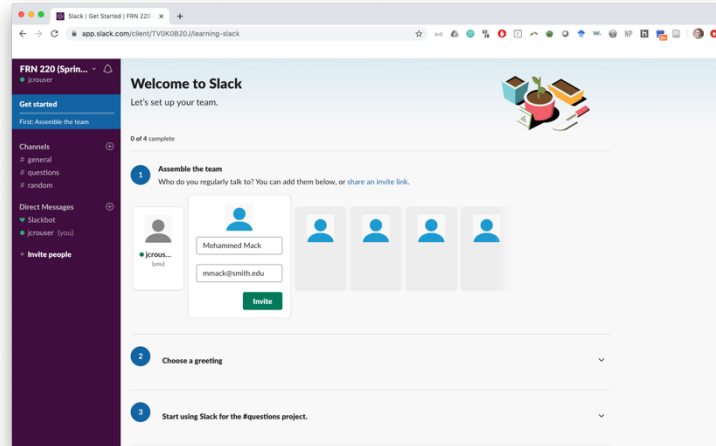
Step 4: Explore
You'll then be invited to view the new channel you've just created in Slack.

Click the **green button** to check it out.



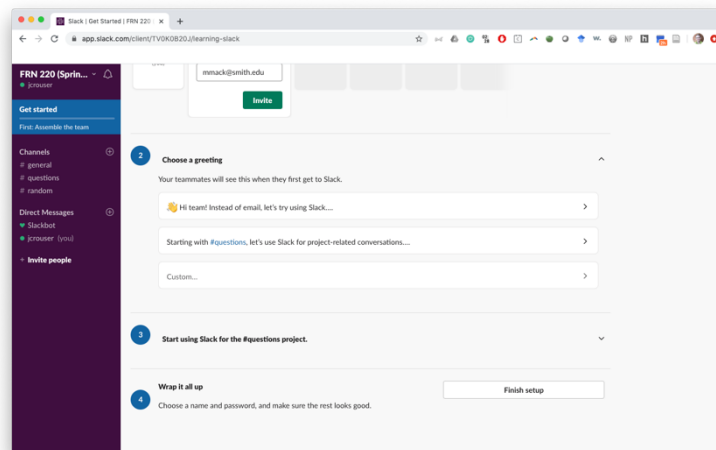
This is the **interface** for your new Slack team.

There is a **guided tour** (“Getting started”) to help you set up a few more details, starting with another opportunity to invite students. If you’ve already copied the invite link, you can skip this step.



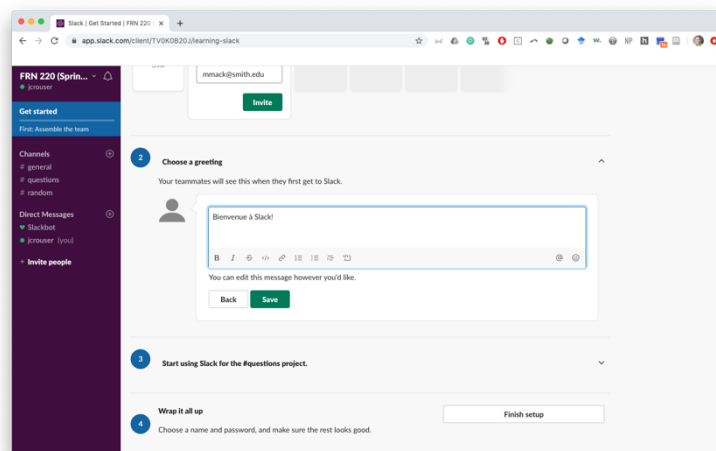
You may wish to add a **greeting** that students will see when they first join.

You can select one of the default greetings, or select “custom” to write your own.



Here is an example of a **custom greeting**.

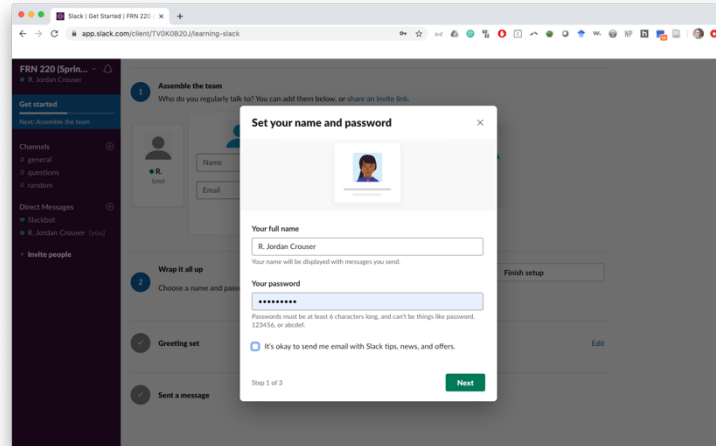
(Don’t worry, diacritics work just fine in Slack!)



Step 5: Final Details

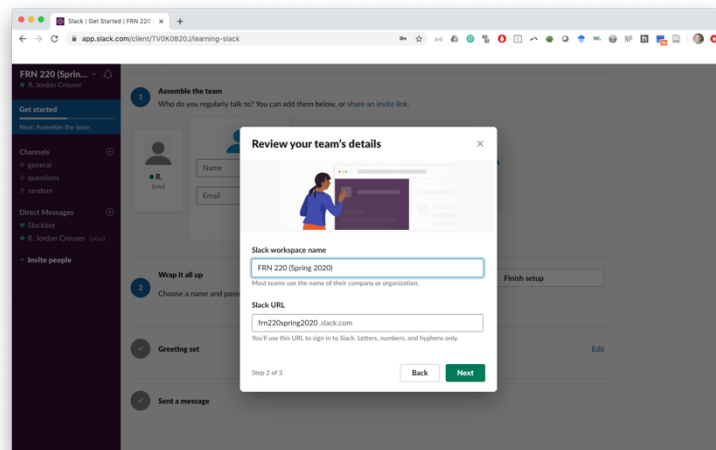
Click the “Finish Setup” button under the section labeled *Wrap it all up* to complete your profile.

You’ll first be prompted to enter your name, and to select a password (these are for **your login only**).

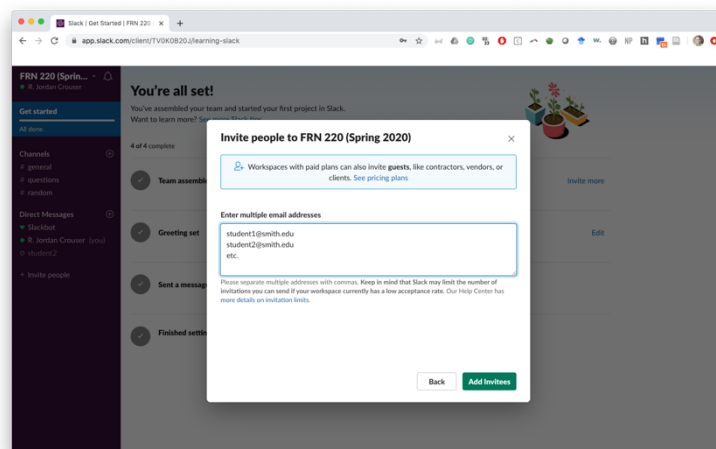
A screenshot of the Slack 'Set your name and password' dialog box. The dialog is titled 'Set your name and password' and has a close button (X) in the top right corner. It contains two input fields: 'Your full name' with the text 'R. Jordan Crouser' and 'Your password' with a masked password '*****'. Below the password field is a checkbox labeled 'It's okay to send me email with Slack tips, news, and offers.' which is checked. At the bottom left, it says 'Step 1 of 3'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Next' button. The background shows the Slack interface with the 'Wrap it all up' section highlighted.

Check to make sure the **workspace name** and **web address** look good.

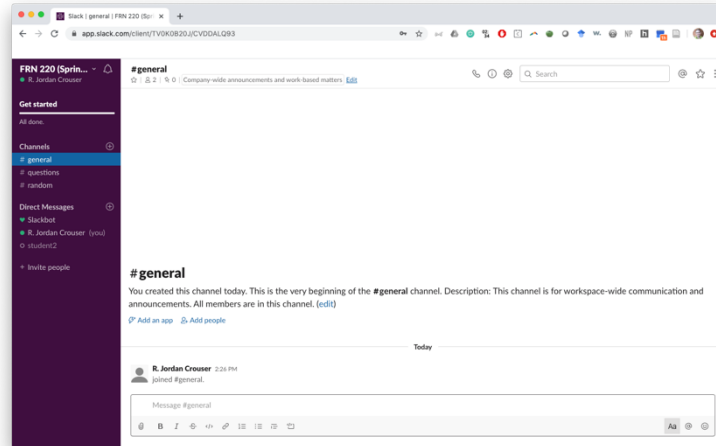
If you want to make a change, you can edit what’s in the text box.

A screenshot of the Slack 'Review your team's details' dialog box. The dialog is titled 'Review your team's details' and has a close button (X) in the top right corner. It contains two input fields: 'Slack workspace name' with the text 'FRN 220 (Spring 2020)' and 'Slack URL' with the text 'frn220spring2020.slack.com'. Below the URL field is a note: 'You'll use this URL to sign in to Slack. Letters, numbers, and hyphens only.' At the bottom left, it says 'Step 2 of 3'. At the bottom right, there are 'Back' and 'Next' buttons. The background shows the Slack interface with the 'Wrap it all up' section highlighted.

If you prefer to invite individual participants rather than posting a link, you can enter in a list of email addresses, one per line.

A screenshot of the Slack 'Invite people to FRN 220 (Spring 2020)' dialog box. The dialog is titled 'Invite people to FRN 220 (Spring 2020)' and has a close button (X) in the top right corner. It contains a text area with the email addresses 'student1@unh.edu' and 'student2@unh.edu' entered, followed by 'etc.'. Below the text area is a note: 'Please separate multiple addresses with commas. Keep in mind that Slack may limit the number of invitations you can send if your workspace currently has a low acceptance rate. Our Help Center has more details on invitation limits.' At the bottom right, there are 'Back' and 'Add Invites' buttons. The background shows the Slack interface with the 'Team assembly' section highlighted.

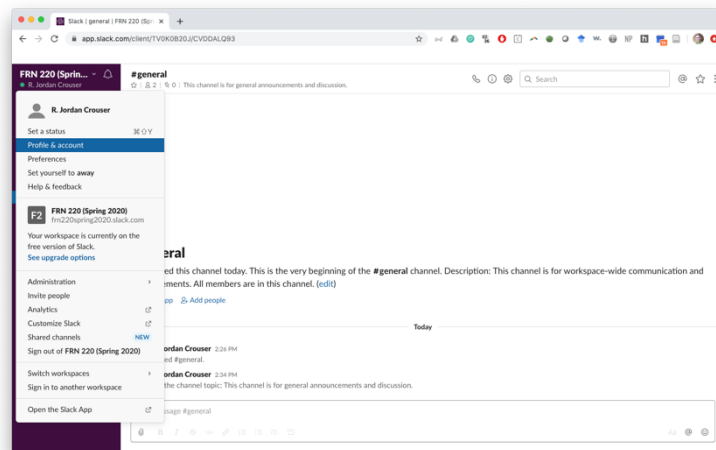
Voilà!
You have created your first
Slack team.



Step 6: Complete Profile (optional, but recommended)

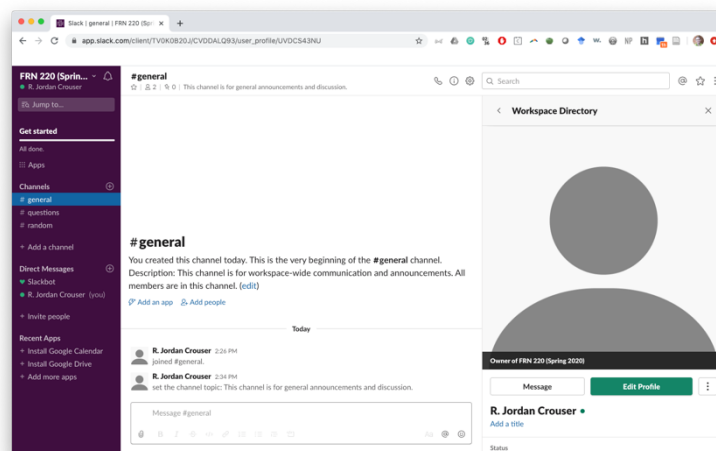
Clicking on the **team name** in
the upper left-hand corner
of the window opens a
dropdown containing more
options for administering
your team.

Select **Profile & account**.



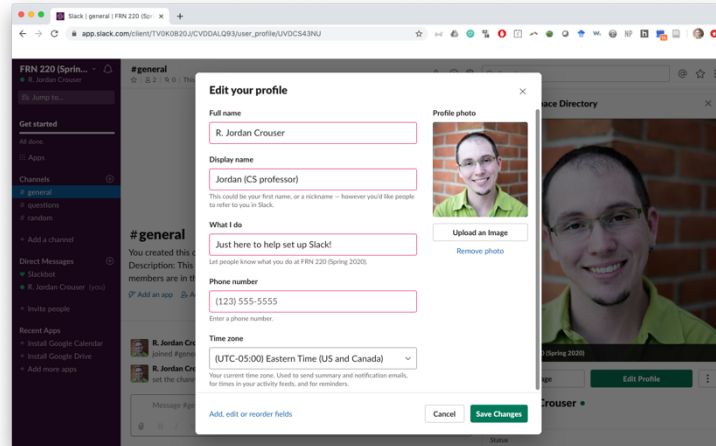
Your **profile** will open in a
new pane on the righthand
side of the window.

Click the **green button**
to edit it.



In the window that pops up, you'll be able to:

- Upload a photo
- Enter your display name (Recommendation: put what your students usually call you, and put your role in parentheses. This is especially helpful if you have TAs.)
- Select your time zone.

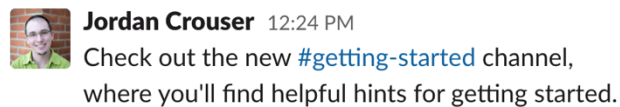


And that's it! You're ready to start using Slack as an alternative mode of communication with your class.

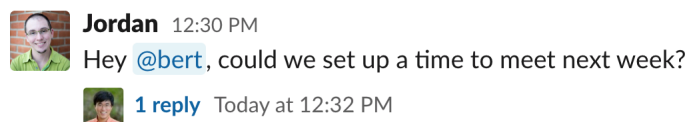
A few additional tips:

- To help you and your students stay organized, create **one Slack workspace per class** rather than combining multiple classes into a single workspace.
- Use **channels** (denoted in Slack by a #) to further organize the conversations within each class. For example, in addition to the **#questions** channel we set up in the previous walkthrough, you might want to add channels for:
 - discussions about the **#final-project**
 - sharing thoughts about a particular **#guest-lecture**
 - a place where students can ask for **#tech-support**

Channels should organize the overall course communication into “conversations” that make sense in the context of your course. *Just remember:* participants are not automatically added to new channels. If you create a new channel in an existing Slack team, you may want to let people know about it by sending a message to **#general** and including the name of the new channel, like this:



- You can direct messages to specific people by including **@<username>** in your message, like this:



If you're making an announcement that should go to everyone in the **#general** channel, use **@everyone**. If you're talking to everyone subscribed to a specific channel, you can use **@channel**.