



Alliant International University

Center for

Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

February 5, 2024

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) monthly newsletter provides information about events sponsored by the CTE as well as around the university and beyond. We also highlight resources available to Alliant faculty on the CTE site and elsewhere.

Dalia Ducker

Center for Teaching Excellence Upcoming Events



Webinars from the Online Learning Team

February 15, 2024, 12:00-1:00 PM Pacific Time

Art and Science of the Prompt is a 60-minute online workshop that teaches how to craft effective prompts for GenAI tools. The workshop requires active participation from attendees, as they will be asked to write, share, and discuss their own prompts throughout the session. Participants will learn the principles and techniques of prompt engineering, practice with different GenAI tools and domains, and evaluate the quality and reliability of the outputs generated.

March 21, 2024, 12:00-1:00 PM Pacific Time

A Guide to the Essential Canvas Features and Functions You Might Be Missing is a 60-minute online webinar suitable for anyone who wants to improve their skills with Canvas. Participants will discover and explore some of the hidden and advanced features and functions of Canvas that can enhance the learning experience and outcomes for instructors and students. They will also have the opportunity to ask questions and share feedback with the webinar facilitator and other participants.

Center for Teaching Excellence On Demand Events



GenAI Garage is a 90-minute online workshop for beginners who have a desire but little experience exploring and tinkering with Generative AI tools. Through a hands-on approach, participants will learn by doing while discovering the potential and limitations of Generative AI, creating content using various tools, and sharing insights and feedback with others.

Webinar link - [GenAI Garage Webinar](#)

Resources from the Department of Online Teaching



SpeedGrader in Canvas: Personalizing Feedback While Saving Time
Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

Instructor Request

Hello Online Learning Team,

Thank you for your time and attention to my question, as I value your expertise.

How can I provide personalized feedback to students via Canvas? I miss the old

days when I could write comments or highlight strengths and weaknesses on paper assignments with a few strokes of a pen. I want to do something similar online, but I also have a lot of students and a lot of work to grade, so I need to be efficient and effective.

Do you have any tips or best practices for grading online student work in Canvas? I would love to hear from you and learn from your experience.

*Warmly,
Professor Grady Quick*

Online Learning Team's Reply

Giving feedback is an essential part of the learning process, helping students improve their performance, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and feel more connected to instructors and peers. Canvas provides [SpeedGrader](#) to facilitate this and may put an end to any lamentations about using pen and paper that some may have, as it not only replicates but enhances all the functionalities associated with manual grading – and then some.

Overview of SpeedGrader

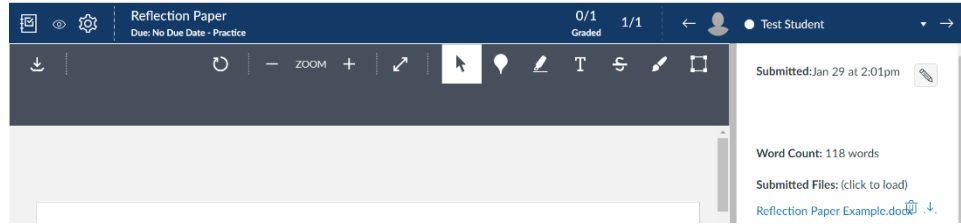
[SpeedGrader](#) is a tool that enables instructors to view, grade, and comment on student submissions in one place. It can be accessed from the Gradebook, the Assignments page, or the Quizzes page. SpeedGrader offers several advantages over other grading methods.

- **View student submissions in various formats**, PDF, Word, PowerPoint, audio, video, etc., without downloading or opening them in another application.
- **Use annotation tools** to highlight, strikethrough, underline, or add comments directly on student submissions. This can mimic the experience of writing comments on paper assignments with a pen.
- **Utilize rubrics** to grade based on predefined criteria and levels of performance, including comments for each criterion or the overall submission.
- **Provide feedback through text, audio, or video comments**, with audio and video being particularly useful for conveying tone, emotion, and nuance.
- **Employ keyboard shortcuts** for efficient navigation between submissions, toggling rubrics, and saving grades.





Using SpeedGrader



When ready to use SpeedGrader, it can be accessed through the:








- **Assignments page**: Click on the assignment name and then on SpeedGrader in the Related Items sidebar.
- **Quizzes page**: Click on the quiz name and then on SpeedGrader in the Related Items sidebar.
- **Discussions page**: Click on the graded discussion name, then select SpeedGrader from the Options icon.
- **Gradebook**: Click on the cell of the student and assignment to grade, then click on the SpeedGrader icon in the cell header.



Across the top of the page in the blue area, instructors can:

-  **Gradebook:** Return to the Gradebook.
-  **Post Grades:** Choose to hide or post grades.
-  **Settings:** Explore SpeedGrader options including sorting the student list, hiding student names while grading and reviewing Keyboard Shortcuts.
- [Reflection Paper] Title of assignment:** Click on the assignment title to return to assignment directions and submission area.
-  **Arrows:** Use right and left arrows to move to the previous or next student.
- [Test Student] Student Names:** Access a drop-down menu listing all students in course.


In the gray area at the top of the page, icons allow instructors to download , rotate  or Zoom in + and out - on the document. The following annotation symbols are also available for feedback.

-  **Selection:** Choose text or information in document.
-  **Point annotation:** Place on document to point at information related to written comment.
-  **Highlight annotation:** Click on icon and select color to use to highlight information.
-  **Freetext annotation:** Add comments anywhere in the document.
-  **Strikethrough annotation:** Cross out information in the document.
-  **Free draw annotation:** Choose a color and line size to draw anywhere in document.
-  **Area Annotation:** Draw a box around a specific area of the document.

To delete an annotation, right click on the area to delete, click on the trash can that appears, and choose OK to confirm the deletion.

Helpful Features in the Sliding Panel



Grades are entered in the sliding panel on the right side. If a rubric has been included for the assignment, it will be available here. Click the appropriate rating for each grading criterion. To enter a comment about the rating, click on the speech bubble  in the cell with the point total. When finished entering information for the rubric, click Save.

At the bottom of the sliding panel, an overall assignment comment area is located. Instructors usually type comments here, but it is also possible to use the media recorder for audio or video feedback (1). This option creates feedback that may be more engaging and accessible for students, enabling the instructor to elaborate more than in written feedback. Using Speech Recognition (available when using the Google Chrome Browser) can also speed up feedback.

Additionally, if sharing the same information frequently, consider using the the Comment library (2), where comments can be stored and inserted into the assignment comments box. This feature saves time by reusing common feedback while allowing customization.

Limitations and Challenges of SpeedGrader

While SpeedGrader helps instructors save time and provide personalized feedback, some limitations and challenges exist:

- Does not support group assignments or peer reviews. Instructors must use other tools or methods for grading these types of assignments.
- Does not allow instructors to edit or delete comments once posted. Careful consideration is needed before submitting feedback.
- Does not allow instructors to view student submissions side by side or compare them with previous submissions. Instructors may want to suggest students use track changes in Microsoft Word.

As these tools continually evolve, updates, help, and support will be provided. Please feel free to contact us at OnlineLearningStaff@alliant.edu for assistance and to share your experiences. Thank you for your dedication to student learning.

Teaching Tips



Assignment Prompts

Assignment prompts provide students with the information they need to complete an assignment successfully; they provide students with clear understanding of the assignment and directions for completing it. Well written assignment prompts create a common understanding of the assignment, so all students can be held to the same standard. They ensure that students' work is assessed on the content they have learned, rather than on their reading skills or past writing experiences. Information to include in an effective assignment prompt includes the following:

1. **Purpose and rationale/justification link the assignments to the goals of the course. They also** explain how this specific assignment is related to a learning objective of the course; that is, they tell students what they will learn by doing it and why it is important. The prompt might also provide the specific **learning objectives for the assignment.**
2. **Tasks/steps/process** outlines what students are supposed to do to complete the assignment. The phrase that explains the writing task

will commonly contain an action verb, such as “discuss,” “analyze,” or “explore.” Strong assignment prompts not only identify a clear task, but also provide suggestions for how students might begin to accomplish the task (e.g., how to start, where to look, how to ask for help). Sometimes, prompts include a list of questions that are either suggestions for brainstorming or questions that you need to address in your essay.

3. **Intended audience** tells students for whom to write the assignment (e.g., undergraduates with no psychology background, a potential funder who knows a great deal about start-ups, or a school principal who is interested in adopting a program for teaching with generative AI).
4. **Details about format provides information on the specifics of the document to be turned in. This might include the following:** (a) length (how many words/pages); (b) citation style (e.g., APA); (c) font type and size; (d) Margin settings; (e) title sheets; and (f) special instructions about appearance.
5. **Rubric and grading criteria** communicate clear expectations about dimensions to be evaluated (e.g., content, clarity, originality, logic, organization, or grammar). This section might also indicate the assignment’s point value or percentage of the course grade. Models or samples of exemplary work might also be provided.
6. **Submission guidelines** tell students how and when to submit their work. For example, should the assignment be handed in as a hard copy, emailed to the instructor, or uploaded to Canvas? When, exactly, is it due (e.g., by the beginning of the last class or by next Tuesday at 5:00pm?)

Other Resources



More GenAI Resources

[Wonder Tools](#) is another substack that provides information on GenAI tools and tips for their use. Wonder Tools is curated by Jeremy Caplan, Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY. It aims to help readers discover useful sites and apps. Recent examples of posts include:

- [Create catchy videos](#)
- [How ChatGPT changed my approach to learning](#)
- [How to make the most of ChatGPT in 2024](#)
- [Make your own Chat GPT bot](#)
- [The best free way to make a survey](#)

Call for Chapter Proposals



From Dr. Mindith R. Rjmat:

Book Title: Pedagogies of Care: Compassion, Inquiry, and Reflection in Education

**Editor: Dr. Mindith R. Rahmat, PsyD
(Antioch College, Alliant International University)**

**Co-editor: Dr. Amy Osborne, PhD
(Antioch College)**

<https://www.igi-global.com/publish/call-for-papers/call-details/7149>

Proposal Submission Deadline: 2/24/2024

This book, aimed at professors, teachers, school administrators, education professionals, and policymakers, will be a comprehensive exploration of innovative and compassionate teaching practices designed to create more inclusive, supportive, and engaging learning environments. We invite both theoretical and practical insights, as well as case studies and empirical research, that showcase innovative approaches to pedagogies of care.

Recommended Topics include • Trauma-informed Pedagogies • Culturally Responsive Pedagogies • Compassionate Pedagogies • Restorative Justice Pedagogies • Mindfulness and Self-care Pedagogies • Social-emotional Integrated Pedagogies • Holistic Pedagogies • Engaged Pedagogies • Upgrading and Alternative Assessment Pedagogies • Universal Design for Learning Pedagogies • Cooperative/Collaborative Pedagogies • Growth Mindset Pedagogies • Empathy-focused Pedagogies • Experiential Pedagogies • Critical Pedagogies • Reflective Practice Pedagogies • Metacognitive Pedagogies • Well-being Pedagogies

Those interested are invited to submit on or before February 24, 2024, a chapter proposal of 1,000 to 2,000 words clearly explaining the mission of their proposed chapter. Full chapters are expected to be submitted by April 6, 2024, and all interested authors must consult the guidelines for manuscript submissions at <https://www.igi-global.com/publish/contributor-resources/before-you-write/> prior to submission. All submitted chapters will be reviewed on a double-blind review basis. For additional information regarding the publisher, please visit <https://www.igi-global.com>. publication is anticipated to be released in 2025.

Faculty Success and Well-Being



Courses in Pedagogy

This podcast, *Dead Ideas in Teaching and Learning!*, involve a discussion with Drs. Benjamin Rifkin, Rebecca Natow, Nicholas Salter, and Shayla Shorter about their article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* titled [Why Doctoral Programs Should Require Courses on Pedagogy](#) (March 16, 2023). “Drs. Rifkin, Natow, Salter, and Shorter make the case for paying far more attention to developing teaching skills in doctoral programs. They share research they conducted to examine the ‘disconnect between what we are trained to do in graduate school and what we are expected to do in the college classroom,’ and offer four next steps to better prepare Ph.Ds. to teach.” [Teaching Development in Higher Education](#)