



Alliant International University  
Center for  
Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

January 2025

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 News



#### Searching the CTE Site

The CTE website is now searchable. A small magnifying glass icon has been added to the top right-hand corner of every page. It allows users to enter a word or phrase to search for a topic of interest. For example, a search for the word *mentor* yielded the following results.

#### Search Results for *Mentor*

[Mentoring Junior Faculty](#)

[Mentoring Students](#)

[Mentoring & Supervision](#)

[Role of Dissertation Committee Chairperson](#)

[Teaching Excellence](#)

[Cultivating a Sense of Belonging and Building Rapport](#)

[Integrating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion into Course Content and Assignments](#)

### Upcoming Webinars



#### Surviving “Online Discussion Fatigue” and Thriving Again!

[Register Now](#)

Friday, January 24, 2025

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. (PT)

Location: Zoom

By Jeremy Bond and Meredith Villa

#### Are Your Online Discussions Feeling Stale? Refresh, Revive, and Reimagine!

Join us for "**Surviving Online Discussion Fatigue and Thriving Again**", a dynamic training session designed to breathe new life into your online classroom discussions! Here's what you'll gain:

- **Spot the Signs:** Learn to recognize discussion fatigue in both students and you.
- **Break the Mold:** Discover creative formats like debates, storytelling, and multimedia to energize participation.
- **Power Up with Canvas Studio:** Create engaging video discussions, embed quizzes, and unlock actionable insights with analytics.
- **Build Community:** Foster connection and inclusivity while encouraging deeper peer-to-peer interaction.
- **Walk Away Ready:** Hands-on activities ensure you'll leave with tools and strategies you can implement immediately.

Don't let discussion fatigue hold you back—reignite your online discussions and watch your students thrive!

👉 Sign up today and take the first step toward a more engaging online classroom.

## Creating Inclusive Learning Environments with Canvas Accessibility Tools

[Register Now](#)

Friday, February 28, 2025

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. (PT)

Location: Zoom

By Jeremy Bond, Melissa Vervinck, Rhoda Olkin, and Iris Bell

We invite you to join us for an informative and engaging webinar that will explore research highlighting the significance of prioritizing accessibility. This session will cover essential topics to enhance your understanding and effective use of accessibility features in Canvas and Canvas Studio. This session will cover:

- Learn how to make the most of the **accessibility features** available in Canvas and Canvas Studio to create an inclusive learning environment for all students.
- Gain insights from Dr. Rhoda Olkin's **research on the experiences of students with disabilities** at Alliant and learn about the implications for improving accessibility and support in educational settings.
- Meet Iris Bell and discover the valuable services offered by the Office of Accessibility to **support students with disabilities**.

Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your knowledge and skills in creating accessible and inclusive educational experiences.

### Center for Teaching Events On Demand



## Leveraging the Library to Make Your Job Easier and Your Instruction Richer

By Scott Zimmer, JD, Ed.D.

[View the recorded webinar](#)

[View the webinar slides](#)

Participants learned how to incorporate library resources into their courses at every stage of the course life cycle, from course design and development to resource selection, to skill development and evaluation. Need a textbook for a course you are designing? The library can help find ones that allow institutional purchase, so students can use the library eBook instead of buying their own. Looking for a set of articles for students to compare and contrast? The library can help you search for them, provide you with copies, and check permissions to make sure you can use them. Wanting to scaffold students' understanding of plagiarism and APA style, without losing class time? The library has tutorials and quizzes that you can assign to your students. We'll cover these and other strategies you can use to build or improve your course, while not adding to your workload.

## Finding Balance: Integrating AI While Fostering Authentic Student Learning

By Jeremy Bond, D.E.T. & Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

[View the recorded webinar](#)

[View the webinar slides](#)

Explore strategies to strike the right balance between using AI as a tool and fostering authentic student learning. This 60-minute webinar covered designing assessments that encourage original inquiry and problem-solving. It also covered adapting assignments to embrace AI while encouraging students to use skills like creativity, analysis, and reflection, all while promoting ethical AI usage. Participants gained insights into integrating AI

responsibly to support student inquiry while promoting essential critical thinking and lifelong learning skills.

### **Elevating Learning: The RISE Model for Effective Feedback**

By Jeremy Bond, D.E.T. & Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

[View the recorded webinar](#)

[View the webinar slides](#)

[RISE Model](#)

In this webinar, participants explored the RISE Model, developed by Emily Wray, which focuses on providing feedback with the elements of Reflection, Inquiry, Suggestion, and Elevation. The model transforms feedback into a collaborative dialogue, encouraging students to use their skills of self-awareness, critical thinking, and agency. By emphasizing the unique human characteristics that contribute to rich learning experiences, this approach fosters meaningful discussions between students and instructors. By implementing the RISE Model, instructors can create a supportive learning environment that fosters student growth, engagement, and long-term success.

## **Resources from the Department of Online Teaching**

### **Introduction to Canvas Studio**



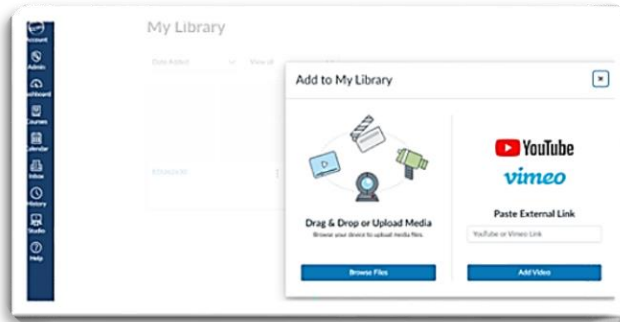
Canvas Studio is now available! It is a media platform designed to enhance the teaching and learning experience within Canvas. By integrating seamlessly with Canvas courses, Canvas Studio allows faculty to easily upload, manage, and share multimedia content, creating a more engaging and interactive environment for students. With features such as video recording, editing, captioning, and quizzing, instructors can enrich their course materials and provide diverse learning opportunities.

#### **Accessing Canvas Studio**



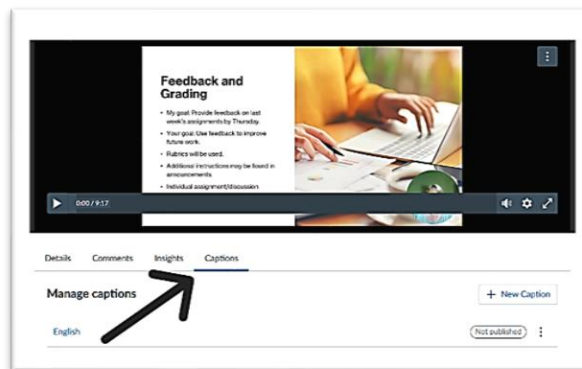
To access Canvas Studio, log in to your Canvas account and go to your course dashboard. Click the Canvas Studio icon in the left global navigation menu to open the interface for uploading, managing, and sharing media content. You can also select "Studio" from the course navigation menu to access it directly within your course. This integration makes it easy to add multimedia to your teaching materials, enhancing the learning experience for students.

## Uploading Videos



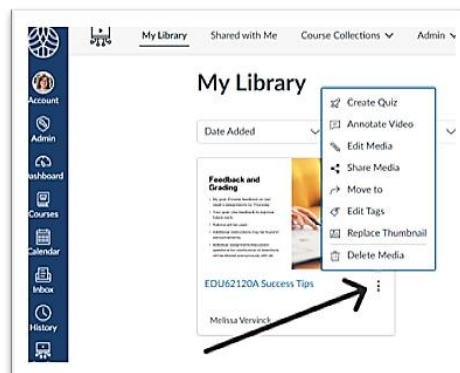
Uploading videos to Canvas Studio is a straightforward process. First, log in to your Canvas account and navigate to the Canvas Studio interface by selecting the Studio icon in the global navigation menu. Once in Canvas Studio, click the "Add" button and choose "Upload Media." You may then drag and drop your video file into the upload area or click to browse and select the file from your computer. Upon selecting the video, it will begin uploading automatically.

## Adding Closed Captions



To ensure your video is ADA compliant, it is advisable to add closed captions. Once the upload is complete, click on the video to open it, then select the "Captions" tab. Here, you can utilize the "Generate" option to create automatic captions, which you can then review and edit for accuracy. Adding closed captions not only makes your content accessible to all students but also enhances comprehension and engagement for all viewers.

## Embedding Quizzes



Embedding quizzes in a video using Canvas Studio is a fantastic way to enhance student engagement and assess understanding in real-time. Here's how:

1. Log in to Canvas and go to Canvas Studio by clicking the Studio icon in the global navigation menu.
2. Select your video from the media library.
3. Click on the ellipsis icon, then "Create Quiz."
4. Choose a title and select additional settings for this video.
5. Play the video, pause where you want a question, click "Add Question," choose the type, enter the question and answers, then save.
6. Repeat to add more questions.
7. Click "Done" to save and publish the quiz.

The quiz will now appear in the video, prompting students as they watch. Review quiz results in the Canvas gradebook, where they are automatically recorded. This interactive feature engages students and provides insights into their learning progress.

### Conclusion

Canvas Studio is an innovative tool which improves the educational experience within Canvas. It provides functionalities such as media uploading, ADA compliance through closed captions, and interactive video quizzing, enabling educators to produce accessible content efficiently. Next month, we will cover more features, including video annotation and timeline discussions. Stay tuned!

For questions or further assistance with Canvas Studio, please refer to [Canvas Studio: Engaging Higer Education](#) and the [Studio Guide](#) (also available via a [link on ITHelp](#)). Also, you can always reach out to Online Learning at [onlinelearningstaff@alliant.edu](mailto:onlinelearningstaff@alliant.edu) with questions.

## Teaching Tips



### Using Low Stakes Assignments to Replace High Stakes Assignments

High-stakes assignments are used to gauge a student's learning at the end of a course or a major portion of a course, involve evaluation of a complete product, and have significant weight on a student's grade. They are summative and require demonstration that a student has mastered the material and has learned key course concepts and skills. Examples include midterm or final exams, term papers, or other major projects.

However, relying on one or two assignments to assess student learning can be problematic. When students' grades are based almost exclusively on a few major assignments, students often feel anxiety and may even become so desperate that they are tempted commit academic integrity violations. An alternative is to assign several low stakes assessments that do not have a major impact of the final course grade.


Low-stakes assignments work best when they generate formative feedback regarding students' progress: where they are in the course, what they are doing well, and where they may need to do to ultimately succeed in the course. Providing students with an indication of their performance while they are taking a course may give students an opportunity to improve their performance prior to receiving a final grade, either on an assignment or in the course.

Examples of low stakes assessments include the following:


- **Breaking major writing assignment into portions.** These include preliminary topic proposal, thesis statement, outline, bibliography, specific sections of final project (e.g., introduction, methods, literature review), and draft of entire paper that can be turned in at intervals throughout the semester.
- **Frequent, short quizzes.** Break the content of a high-stakes exam into more infrequent, low- stakes quizzes.
- **Alternative ways to demonstrate understanding.** These may include short-term

	<p>projects or creative ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge (e.g., creating a poster, infographic, video, blog, or podcast).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Professional presentation.</b> This may be of the kind that would be presented at an academic conference, community group, business, or professional organization and include video, audio, or PowerPoint.</li> <li>• <b>Poster Sessions.</b> Students pick a topic, develop a hypothesis, and perform library research to support or refute their hypothesis and present their research during a poster session for the class.</li> <li>• <b>Annotated anthology or course reader.</b> Students prepare a selection of works they have read during the term as a thematic anthology. They choose the works, write a paragraph introducing to each, as well as an introduction to the anthology.</li> <li>• <b>Annotated portfolio of work throughout the term.</b> Students compile their best or representative work from the term, write a critical introduction to the portfolio and a brief introduction to each piece.</li> <li>• <b>Annotated research bibliography with introduction.</b> Rather than writing a research paper, students compile a bibliography on a problem or question. They must read the works, evaluate their accuracy and helpfulness, and provide an explanatory introduction to the bibliography. Each entry contains an explanatory and/or evaluative paragraph.</li> <li>• <b>Reflective paper.</b> This involves a description and critique of the student's experience that is tied to theory or themes in the course so that it is not only a description of personal feelings.</li> </ul> <p>For more information see <a href="#">Alternatives to High Stakes Assessment</a> on the CTE website.</p>
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**Other Resources**

	<p><b>Podcasts</b></p> <p>Stanford University sponsors several podcasts of interest to faculty, listed as <a href="#">Cool Stanford Podcasts</a>. Examples include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">From Our Neurons to Yours</a> crosses scientific disciplines by asking leading Stanford researchers to explain how new discoveries, treatments and technologies are transforming our relationship with the brain.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Health Compass</a> brings the latest medical research to life through compelling stories that connect with listeners' everyday health experiences, based on interviews with leading experts on crucial health topics</li> <li>• <a href="#">If/Then</a> is a podcast from Stanford Graduate School of Business that examines research findings that can help listeners navigate the complex issues they face in business, leadership, and society.</li> <li>• <a href="#">School's In</a> provides cutting-edge insights and enlightening conversations about topics in education, discussing the complexities of post-pandemic education and the latest research in teaching and learning.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Stanford Legal</a> brings together attorneys, scholars, and experts in a range of fields to discuss timely legal issues and look at the cases, questions, conflicts, and legal stories that affect everyday life.</li> </ul>
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**Shared Resources**

	<p><b>Responding to Challenges in the Classroom</b></p> <p>Instructors occasionally experience unplanned classroom events that present challenges to them and their students. Here are two sites with ideas for what to do when that happens.</p> <p>The University of Minnesota Center for Educational Innovation offers suggestions for <a href="#">What to Do in a Challenging Moment</a> – that is, when a class session does not go as expected and, instead, “goes off the rails.”</p>
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The University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching presents [Strategies for Prevention and Response to Disruptive and Disrespectful Student Behavior](#) in the classroom, “which not only negatively affect the overall environment for students but also contribute to instructors’ stress and discontent.”

For more on these topics see the following pages on the CTE website:

- [Managing Disruptive Student Behavior](#)
- [Facilitating Difficult Dialogues](#)
- [Creating a Positive Class Climate](#)
- [Course Ground Rules](#)

## Faculty Success



In this article in the *Harvard Business Review*, Debra Schifrin described [4 Listening Skills Leaders Need to Master](#). These include (a) listening until the end, (b) listening to summarize, not to solve, (c) listening for both the relationship and the content, and (d) listening for values. For each skill, the author not only introduced the concept but also described how to use it and how it looks in practice. The author contended that “Mastering the art of listening is not just a strategy — it’s a transformative leadership force that elevates interactions into meaningful moments of growth and connection.”

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Rebecca Schuman discussed [How to Procrastinate Productively](#) based on her updates to John Perry’s method, described in [How to Procrastinate and Still Get Things Done](#). He recommended that “you list the onerous tasks before you in order of importance, and then use your reluctance to do things at the top of your list as motivation to finish the ‘less important’ things, which, of course, are also important.” Her revision is that you should aim to complete every project within three months of its original due date. To achieve this goal, she recommended that you (a) set strict limits for yourself and then “cheat” on them, (b) flip the teaching-research script by prioritizing scholarship, (c) embrace multitasking for the small stuff that does not require intense levels of concentration, and (d) lie to yourself by breaking the onerous big projects into smaller easily do-able tasks. The goal is to “reimagine your relationship to your own work in a way that accounts for procrastination rather than attempts to eradicate it in utter futility”.

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