

February 2026

CTE News You Can Use

Searching the CTE Site



The CTE website is searchable. A small magnifying glass icon appears at 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 **evaluation** yields the following results:

- [Interpreting End of Semester Course Evaluations](#)
- [Alternative Grading](#)
- [First Generation Students](#)
- [Writing Teaching Statements](#)
- [Alternatives to High Stakes Assessments](#)
- [Peer Review by Students](#)
- [Collaborative Learning](#)
- [Ethical Teaching](#)
- [Writing Multiple Choice Questions](#)

Future Events



Chairing Dissertations: How to Successfully Guide Students through the Dissertation Process

By Dr. Rebecca Bokoch
February 13, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 pm PT
[REGISTER](#)

This workshop will focus on how to guide students through the dissertation process and lead them to successful and prompt dissertation completion. The workshop will discuss approaches to different stages of the dissertation, as well as overall strategies. It will cover areas such as choosing dissertation topics, common roadblocks and challenges, dissertation assignments, supervisory approach, and use of timelines and rubrics, as well as other tools and tips. There will be time to ask questions and to share ideas to add to the list of effective dissertation chairing strategies.

Grading for Competence in Online and On Ground Classrooms

By Dr. Rhoda Olkin and Dr. Cynthia Pancer
March 19, 2026, 12 :00 – 1:00 pm PT
[REGISTER](#)

What are grades and homework feedback for? This essential question guides instructors' classroom practices. Two recent books have challenged usual methods of grading: *Grading for Equity* (Flanagan, 2023, 2nd ed.) and *Grading for Growth* (Clark & Talbot, 2023) and sparked a national conversation about best practices. With a focus on graduate education that is competence based, two accomplished

instructors present how they apply the principles of growth-focused grading and feedback methods to online classes (Cindy Pancer, School of Education) and on ground courses (Rhoda Olkin, CSPP). They give brief examples of why changes are necessary, provide concrete examples of changes they have made, and discuss students' reactions to these changes. Time for questions and discussion will be allotted.

GenAI in Practice: Real-World Integration by Alliant Faculty

April 16, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00pm PT
TBA

Explore how Alliant faculty integrate Generative AI into courses and assignments. Gain insights from their successes and challenges, along with practical ideas to engage students and prepare them for future careers. Leave with clear, manageable strategies you can apply to begin integrating AI into your teaching practice.

Past Events Available On Demand

Bytes of Brilliance: Real Faculty. Real Strategies. Real Impact.



Bytes of Brilliance is a video series hosted by Dr. Jeremy Bond, Director of Online Learning, featuring Alliant faculty sharing teaching strategies they use that make a real impact in their courses. Each short episode features an instructor sharing a real-world technique or tool that boosts student engagement and learning.

- [Bytes of Brilliance Featuring Dr. Samantha Guber](#)
- [Bytes of Brilliance Featuring Dr. Donna Block](#)

Resources from the Online Teaching Team



Analyze and Discover: Exploring Student Engagement with Weekly Online Activity Data

By Melissa Vervinck, DET

Last month, we highlighted ways instructors can use Canvas Course Analytics to track student participation. This month we will examine a specific feature of Canvas Course Analytics: the **Weekly Online Activity** tab.

Instructor Request

Dear Online Learning,

I noticed the Weekly Online Activity tab in Course Analytics. Although knowing the average and total page views is useful, what additional recommendations do you have for making the most of this information?

Thanks for all you do!

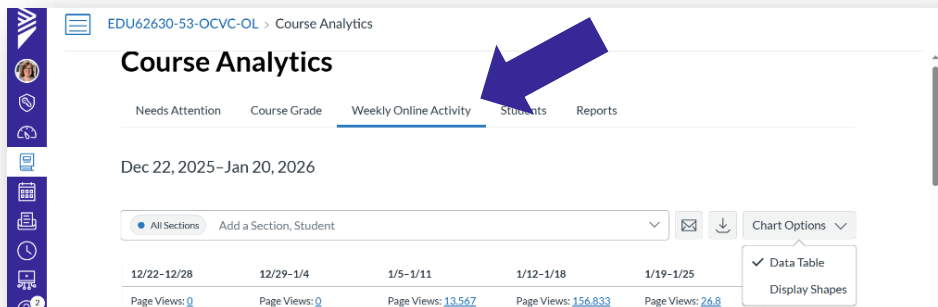
Dr. Ava R. Ridge

Online Learning Team's Reply

That is an excellent question, Dr. Ridge. The **Weekly Online Activity** tab in **Course Analytics** offers a high-level view of how students engage with course material. Let's take a closer look at it, along with a few suggestions for how you can use the data.

Where to Find the Weekly Online Activity Tab

To explore analytics available in Canvas, open Course Analytics from either the right or left menu of your course. This opens a dashboard with five tabs: Needs Attention, Course Grade, Weekly Online Activity, Students, and Reports.



Looking specifically at the **Weekly Online Activity** tab provides a weekly snapshot of how students engage with course content. At the top of the page, a chart displays **page views** and **participation** data for the entire class. Participation reflects tracked actions such as submitting assignments, posting to discussions, or completing other interactive activities.

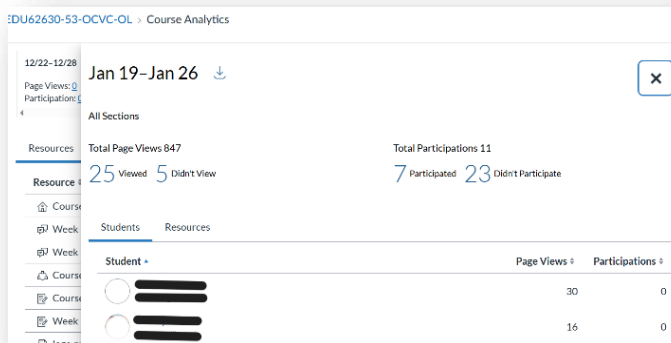
By hovering over any point on the chart, you can view data for a specific week. This visual overview can help identify broad engagement patterns, such as:

- Increase or decrease in activity levels
- Drops in participation at predictable points in the term
- Spikes in activity just before major due dates

While the chart highlights trends rather than individual behavior, it offers a useful starting point for understanding overall course engagement.

Resource-Level Engagement

Below the chart, the tab displays a list of course resources with data for Students, Page Views, and Participation. This view allows instructors to quickly see how many students are accessing items such as announcements, assignments, or instructional pages. By sorting columns, you can easily pinpoint which resources receive the most and least views. For those with low views, it's important to investigate further to understand why students aren't engaging with them. If the resource is essential for learning, consider ways to encourage more student interaction, such as highlighting it in announcements or providing additional context in the course. On the other hand, if a resource consistently has low views and doesn't add value to the course, it may be a good idea to consider removing it altogether.



Accessing More Detailed Data

Switching from the chart view to the Data Table view provides deeper insights. In this format, page views and participation numbers become clickable, opening a panel that shows weekly activity by individual student as well as engagement with specific resources. Instructors can sort this data, compare activity levels, and download it for further review. This level of detail supports more intentional monitoring of student behavior without requiring instructors to track activity manually across multiple course areas.

Making the Most of Weekly Online Activity

Reviewing the collection of data about resources accessible in the **Weekly Online Activity** tab helps instructors time reminders, nudges, and encouragement more effectively. For example, if a key resource receives limited views early in the week, a brief announcement or Canvas Inbox message can direct student attention to it. Because some students may access content through forwarded email or external links, this data works best as a general indicator of engagement, not an exact count. A few other suggestions include:

- **Which resources students use most**, such as frequently viewed pages or high-traffic discussions, and which may need greater visibility.
- **Where students may be missing steps**, especially when items receive many views but little participation, signaling unclear instructions.
- **Opportunities for targeted support**, such as highlighting underused resources like office hours or optional learning supports.

The weekly snapshot concerning Participation allows instructors to identify engagement trends early and respond proactively. Instructors can use this data to:

- **Set engagement benchmarks** by comparing individual student activity to class averages (e.g., typical ranges of page views or participations).
- **Identify students with low activity**, such as minimal page views or participation during a given week and provide timely outreach or guidance.
- **Recognize highly engaged students** who consistently interact with course materials and consider inviting them to share effective study strategies.

These insights allow instructors to strengthen communication and respond proactively.

Thank you to Dr. Ridge for prompting this exploration. We hope this overview clarifies what the Weekly Online Activity tab can reveal and how it can be used to support students more intentionally. If there are other Canvas features you would like us to explore, please let us know!

Teaching Tips



The RISE Model for Providing Feedback

According to its developer, Emily Wray, the RISE model is a structured system for providing positive and productive feedback. [Rise Model](#) It can be used by instructors or peers to provide feedback to students, or students can use it to evaluate their own work. RISE is an acronym for four stages in the feedback process (Reflect, Inquire, Suggest, Elevate). These stages are related to Bloom's taxonomy and involve supportive behaviors that encourage students to improve. Each of the four RISE stages corresponds to levels of cognitive processing in the taxonomy, moving from Remember through Understand, Apply, Analyze, and Evaluate, to Create:

- **Reflect:** At this stage, the evaluator recalls factual information and explains the work in their own words, articulating what stood out and why and pointing out what was done well. According to the

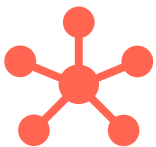
model website, these are some examples of stems to use at this level:

- *The choice to X made me think/feel Y.*
- *I relate/concur/disagree with X because Y.*
- *What affected me most was X because of my perspective as Y.*
- **Inquire:** At this stage, the evaluator seeks greater clarity by asking questions to gain a deeper understanding of the work. According to the model website, these are some examples of stems to use at this level:
 - *Can you further explain X?*
 - *What is the relationship between X and Y?*
 - *How would addressing X with Y impact Z?*
- **Suggest:** At this stage, the evaluator uses specific criteria to appraise the work and introduces concrete ideas or alternative approaches to improve it. According to the model website, these are some examples of stems to use at this level:
 - *Explore tweaking X for Y effect.*
 - *I encourage you to revisit/revise X in order to Y.*
 - *Consider supporting information from X resource.*
- **Elevate:** At this stage, the evaluator encourages the creator to imagine potential beyond the current task, develop new goals, and consider future growth. According to the model website, these are some examples of stems to use at this level:
 - *What if you re-purposed X as Y for Z?*
 - *Next time, consider X before Y to achieve/avoid Z.*
 - *Perhaps expand this in X capacity to further address Y.*

The developer of the model emphasized that the structured nature of the interactions allays anxiety about giving feedback and creates opportunities for providing meaningful feedback with confidence. As a result, the ideas shared are more thoughtful, which can be more helpful to the recipient. [RISE Rubric](#)

See also this CTE webinar recording [Elevating Learning: The RISE Model for Effective Feedback](#)

Other Resources



Faculty Views on AI

[The AI Challenge report](#)

The American Association of Colleges and Universities, in partnership with Elon University's Imagining the Digital Future Center, recently conducted a national survey of 1,057 faculty members, asking questions about the impact of Generative AI tools on their teaching, their students, and the future of higher education. According to their report, *How College Faculty Assess the Present and Future of Higher Education in the Age of AI*, these are the key data takeaways:

- 95% said GenAI's impact will be to increase students' overreliance on AI tools.
- 90% said the use of GenAI will diminish students' critical thinking skills.
- 83% said the use of GenAI will decrease student attention spans.
- 86% said they believe it is likely that Gen AI tools will impact the work and role of those who teach in higher education.
- 79% think the typical teaching model in their department will be affected.
- 78% said cheating on their campus has increased since Gen AI tools have become widely available.

Faculty members disagreed on what constitutes AI cheating among students as well as on the appropriate use of AI in teaching. In fact, about a quarter of respondents said they never use GenAI. Nonetheless, according to the report, "significant numbers acknowledge AI's potential to improve aspects of teaching and learning, including the customization of instruction, efficiency in course preparation, and the quality of

assignments and research support. Moreover, 69 percent of faculty say they now incorporate AI-literacy topics – such as ethics, hallucinations, bias, privacy and transparency – into their courses, demonstrating growing efforts to prepare students for a world in which AI fluency will be essential.”

Shared Resources



Podcasts About New Teaching Resources

[Tea for Teaching](#)

[The Science of Learning Meets AI](#): In the January 14, 2026, episode, Lew Ludwig and Todd Zakrajsek discuss a resource they created to help faculty use AI to efficiently support teaching practices based on the science of learning.

[Supporting Teamwork](#): In the December 31, 2025, episode Tim Franz and Lauren Vicker discuss a resource they developed to help faculty create more effective team assignments.

[Authentic Voice in the Age of AI](#): In the December 24, 2025, episode Anna Mills discusses how AI tools can be used to help students develop their writing skills.

Faculty Well-Being and Success



Podcasts About “Tips & Strategies for Meaningful Productivity and Alignment in Work and Life”

[You’ve Got This](#)

This is a podcast “dedicated to academics and higher education professionals seek self-knowledge, playfully experiment, and live core values with intention.” Recent episodes include Giving Your Brain a Staycation and Giving Yourself Permission.



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