

Instructure Canvas Demo Days

This document contains a collection of questions asked during the two day demos. The time stamp is the approximate time the question was asked. Some answers have content added to them that was said at a different time.

April 4, 2012

Q: Is it integrated in a way that when an instructor creates an assignment it will show in the student's 'To Do' list? (14:25)

A: Yes, and as a student completes items in the list they will be removed from the list.

Q: Is the 'Recent Activity' ordered chronology? (17:00)

A: Yes, chronology based off the last participation. (The last item that experienced a change will appear at the top.) You can access the items through the course but this is the area where you see everything that is going on.

Q: If a student logs in they might not need to go to the courses' sites? (18:00)

A: Yes that is possible.

Q: Length of the landing page ('Recent Activity' list)? (18:24)

A: It's a couple of weeks, it doesn't get overwhelming. Maybe a couple of screens.

Q: Is the calendar automatically populated or is it a separate thing? (18:55)

A: That calendar is across all courses. You see all the courses at once but have the option of what course you want to view at that time. The calendar is populated by any items that are given a due date. In the calendar you are able to change the due date of an item by dragging and dropping, students do not have this ability. (21:07) When you change a due date it updates it in the syllabus and the student is sent a notification detailing the change.

Q: Is the calendar exportable to a format such as iCal? (20:28)

A: Yes, there is a calendar feed that you can subscribe to from various email clients including phones. Students are given a personal calendar in Canvas.

Q: Are items that are unavailable shown on the calendar? (21:56)

A: Yes, they are able to see when an assignment is due but unable to see any details about the assignment.

Q: Can you create events or assignments from the calendar that include more than just a title? (22:38)

A: Yes, you can create an event or assignment by clicking on the day you want it due. A window pops up allowing you to enter in specific data. You can view the full details, edit or delete an assignment by clicking on the title of the assignment in the calendar.

Q: Is there a way to change notification preferences by role or course? (27:35)

A: It is not currently available but it is being discussed.

Q: Are Facebook notifications public? (29:15)

A: We have them install a Facebook app and have a private message system. Notifications are not public.

Q: Can the students turn off the notifications? (34:36)

A: Yes, but they cannot opt of one them.

Q: Because updates are implemented every two weeks, are there notifications sent to faculty and the institution about updates to the system that may impact courses currently going on? (41:18)

A: The changes that are made do not have a large noticeable impact on the user.

Q: How are third party product integration? (43:36)

A: Third party tools are integrated through an API. This allows changes to be made to canvas but have no impact on third party products.

Q: In the two week cycle are you introducing just bug fixes or also new features? (45:35)

A: There are release notes available before the changes go live, documentation is updated. Release are put onto the beta server. Larger changes are given a longer time before they go live to allow for training. Some changes are released in parallel allow users to switch back and forth from the new and old version.

Q: Can you show a course? (49:52)

A: See recording.

Q: Can students upload video a discussion? (59:43)

A: Yes, you can upload the video as a file or use the built in tool to record media from their web camera.

Q: What are the system requirements to use video capture? (1:01:53)

A: Flash must be installed to use video capture. Flash is not required to view files. Once a file is uploaded it will be converted to different file types to allow users to view the video on different devices without issue. The web camera recording is limited to 10 minutes.

Q: Are there any practical limits on the quota or how much content you can put in a course? (1:04:53)

A: Instructure does not set limits but the school can set limits and this can be done per course.

Q: How does the file respiratory deal with files like a website created from Dreamweaver? (1:08:19)

A: It will work just like a website.

Q: What does what “completely accessible to students with disabilities” mean? (1:12:26)

A: It works with screen readers and sister technologies, have a gold cert national federation for the blind. We Use technologies to assist screen readers to make it easier for them to interpret the site, and the site is completely accessible via the keyboard.

Q: Does Canvas have the ability to allow a student to access publisher content and tools from the course without having to login again? (1:18:34)

Q: Yes, and accommodate for specific texts and have the ability to write back to the grade book.

Q: When you click on the rubric where does that data go? (1:27:35)

A: It can calculate the grade for the assignment or just be used to assess the student and not be counted in the score. When a student goes to view their grade they see what was selected in the rubric. The rubric items that have a sun icon can have reports run against them to access the student or the goal.

Q: Can comments in an assignment have multiple back and fourths? (1:29:35)

A: Yes.

Q: Can reports be run at different levels? (1:29:23)

A: Yes, for example they can be run at the department level, college level.

Q: For accreditation purposes can users be authorized to view different reports?

A: Yes, this would be done using role permissions.

Q: Are specific learning outcomes typically aligned with a subset or or a select few of courses? (1:36:56)

A: The larger view report is given but the option is given to drill down into specific sections. The report can also be exported to spreadsheet software and analyzed further.

Q: Is the gradebook exportable and is there an offline mode? (1:39:20)

A: Yes, it can be export as a .csv and be imported back to the gradebook. Depending on what is done to the uploaded file questions are asked to ensure the correct action is being taken.

Q: What changes can be reverted in the gradebook? How far can you go back in the changes? (1:41:25)

A: Any change and be reverted no matter how small. The grade history is not deleted.

Q: I have multiple sections of the same course that are in one spreadsheet. If I upload that entire spreadsheet to one section will it know what students are in that section and only upload their data? (1:42:11)

A: You do not have to make any changes to the file. When you upload you will be made aware of the issue and asked what should be done.

Q: Is there any plagiarism detection in Canvas? (1:43:34)

A: Yes, it is done through Turnitin. (Please note that Safe Assign is owned by Blackboard and

can only be used in Blackboard or Blackboard owned learning management systems.)

Q: Can you turn off the options for students to do 'what if' grades? (1:51:50)

A: No, but you can have Canvas not calculate a total. You can also not set up a grading schema or not show a total.

Q: Are the courses menu buttons on the left editable? (152:00)

A: You can not change the name but you can reorder and hide them.

Q: 1:54:00 Details about course copy.

A: See recording.

Q: When you import a Blackboard course that had different menu items what happens to the Canvas course? (2:04:54)

A: The menus are not changed. content = page subfolder = sub page Pages are similar to wikis, you would have a main page and the sub folders would become links on that page.

Q: 2:07:22 Details about groups.

A: See recording.

Q: Is there a bird's eye view of the groups in a course? (2:09:33)

A: Canvas has reports of activities that extend into groups and courses. There is a general course activity feed, you can see if and what students have connected (i.e. Facebook), there are reports on each student's interaction between the instructor, a specific students access report. There is not currently a report specifically based off groups, but the data is accessible by the institution.

Q: What are the most requested features in Canvas? (2:14:39)

A: Go to <http://help.instructure.com/forums/337215-feature-requests> for the most up to date feature requests.

Q: What do you have for mobile devices?

A: Canvas can be used though the browser on the mobile device, the video recorder can not be used on iOS devices. There are apps for the iPad, iPhone/iTouch, and a speed grader app for the iPad. These apps are free and the institution does not have to pay for the apps to work with their site. A version for Android is in the works.

Q: How is selective release per student handled?

A: Right now it is performed and access based. If you want one student to see an item you will need to create a group that only they are in. For quizzes if one or group of students(s) needs more attempts or more time for a quiz this can be done for that student(s).

Q: Is there anything in Canvas that deals with student verification? (2:30:00)

A: There are third party tools that can be integrated with Canvas. For a quiz you can set up an

essay question and have the students use the video recorder for their response.

Q: Is there a password options for quizzes? (2:32:35)

A: Yes, lockdown browser also works with Canvas.

Q: Can you grade discussions and wikis?

A: Yes

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Q: Do you have plans to create a instructor specific app besides the Speed Grader? (17:52)

A: In the long term we are planning to extend mobile apps.

Q: Can the branding be changed? (19:11)

A: Yes, the branding can be changed specific to your institution.

Q: Does the faculty view look different from the student view? (25:15)

A: The view do not vary with the exception of instructor specific abilities, i.e. add items, change due dates.

Q: Does the activity feed include other student activities? (23:38)

A: Yes, for example private messages, student questions to class at large, and assignments instructors has graded and given back to the student. Anything that deals with something specific with a student only that student and the instructor see on the feed.

Q: Can you set what type of items you see in the activity feed? (23:38)

A: No, it shows you everything that is new and you can dismiss it on the activity feed page.

Q: If you're in a lot of courses will the activity feed become overwhelming? (24:00)

A: It does not become overwhelming but more useful. Important items such as 'TODO', 'Upcoming' and 'Recent Feedback' are also in their own sections in the right column. Each course has its own activity feed. You can dismiss items from the general activity feed but they will still show up on the course specific feed, they can also be dismissed here.

Q: How are instructional designers handled in Canvas? (26:22)

A: They are given a role where they have access to the course but are not actually enrolled.

Q: Can you be different roles across different courses, i.e. student in one and instructor in another? (27:05)

A: Yes.

Q: If you're a course a designer in a course will you profile picture appear in the activity stream? (29:17)

A: Profile pictures only appear in the activity stream when you do something personal, for

example if you update a quiz it will not appear but if you respond to a discussion board message it will.

Q: Can you have instruction specific roles? (30:50)

A: Yes.

Q: Have you looked at different metrics if the users are engaged in the activity stream or are they going in the specific course areas to access the content? (30:55)

A: We have looked at that data but have not made it public.

Q: Is there an easy way to resize things? (37:34)

A: If you add a large picture once you save it Canvas adjusts it based on the area where you are at. We are looking at more features when adding images.

Q: There are different styles of uploading media embed packages Is there a difference in how Canvas treats files uploaded as packages, media in a Powerpoint file, versus directly uploading the media? (40:11)

A: Either one will work in Canvas. You are able to view some files directly in Canvas. If the file was a Powerpoint file with media you would not see all the features by view the file in Canvas you would need to download it.

Q: Could you tell us what accessibility features are in Canvas? (53:34)

A: Canvas is built on modern web technologies and uses symantec markup, HTML 5, Cascading Style Sheets, we stay away from tables. Canvas complies with Section 508, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and technologies that allows Canvas to give information to screen readers. It is possible for content for instructors to add content that does not work with screen readers.

Q: Does a faculty member have control over how the headings in the text editor work? The headings used caused more space between lines then I would like.(54:20)

A: Yes, but you would have to use the HTML editor. To single space in the text editor press 'shift+return'.

Q: What email is used for google docs when someone shares one with you? (1:03:00)

A: Your primary is used unless you have set up an account that has google docs then that is used.

Q: If you link your google account with Canvas do I see all my documents?

A: Yes and no. The google docs interface in Canvas is like a selection screen, you actually edit the documents in google docs. When you go to submit an assignment and go to select a document from google docs you see all your files.

Q: When a student uses google docs to submit an assignment is the file copied over or just referred to? (01:05:30)

A: Both, when a student submits a google doc, and other types of online content, a 'snapshot' of the document is saved so it can not be changed later.

Q: Are the notification preferences global, role specific, or course specific? (1:07:17)

A: The preferences are for all courses.

Q: Is there authentication for ebooks?

A: Yes, single sign on or through LTI.

Q: Is there a default for the notifications?

A: Yes.

Q: Does making a discussion board gradable create the assignment? Does make an assignment a discussion board create the discussion board? (1:13:56)

A: Yes for both.

Q: Are there plans to make the pages feature a gradable assignment? (1:14:27)

A: You can make the only way they submit be a URL.

Q: Is there anything that would prevent the instructor from viewing a URL? (1:28:00)

A: If there were permissions on the URL preventing them from viewing the site.

Q: How does peer review work? (1:28:50)

A: When you set up an assignment you select 'Require Peer Reviews'. You can manually assign or do it automatically. It will appear in their 'TODO' list. When they go to review they will have it appear in the speed grader and be able to use the rubric if one was set up.

Q: Is there a way in the calendar to notify/show students there is a room change? (1:31:00)

A: There is not a directly to put room information into a calendar item. You can include the room information in the calendar item detail and a notification will be sent about the content change. You can also make an announcement.

Q: Does Elluminate work well with Canvas? (1:32:14)

A: Yes, there is also a similar product included in Canvas.

Q: How does course copy affect the calendar? (1:33:30)

A: When you go to course copy you can put in the start and end date of the course, item dates will be modified to fit the new dates. You can also change the submission dates. For example items that were due on Tuesday are now due on Wednesday, this can be done as many times as needed.

Q: Does the calendar know the dates of university holidays? (1:36:00)

A: The calendar does not know this.

Q: Can you include video in quiz questions? (1:40:30)

A: Yes, through the rich text editor.

Q: Can tables be included in text questions? (1:40:45)

A: Yes, you can paste or use the tool in the rich text editor.

Q: Can organizations have the same tools as courses? (1:41:00)

A: Yes, this can be done at no extra charge.

Q: What is the process of something starting as a suggestion to becoming a feature in Canvas? (1:43:00)

A: You can use the help button to suggest a feature. If the feature receives enough votes from other users to be bumped to the top it is then brought into list of possible features. We plan what exactly needs to be done, this is guided from user feedback on the forums, and then start development. It is tested and made available to the users who had input on the suggestion, if it passes both groups it is put into production. New features and bug fixes are released every two weeks.

Q: Can Flash content be embedded? (1:53:00)

A: Yes, but users will not be able to view the content unless their device can play Flash.

Q: What training materials are available to faculty? (1:54:13)

A: There are help buttons on most pages to assist you on the page you are on. There are step by step guides with screenshots, and videos.

Q: Can you discuss roles, hierarchy and how they relate to outcomes? (1:58:10)

A: See recording.