

Canvas Features and Possible Pedagogical Applications

We provide a short list and description of the various Canvas features and a few examples of how they could be used in your course. Please note this is not an exhaustive list of how these tools could be leveraged, we invite you to contribute your own ideas!

Canvas Feature	Default Usage	Extended Usage (a few examples)
Modules (option for breakout session)	Organize files into different groups.	<p>Organize everything from your course that students must access chronologically, thematically, by section, or in combinations of these different categories.</p> <p>Include Pages, Quizzes, direct links to Collaborations, external URLs, Discussions, and Assignments depending on the class session or week or grading area.</p> <p>Offer a clear roadmap for the course, especially one that unlocks gradually for a self-paced learning experience.</p> <p>Use “text headers” under each module to further divide content in an intuitive way (e.g. separate “readings” from “lecture,” etc.)</p> <p>Can be made into the Home/Front page of the course so that students immediately find the course skeleton, especially if modules are revealed over time.</p>
Pages (option for breakout session)	Put a bunch of text on a static page.	<p>Create an asynchronous lesson plan complete with linked materials (Files, Course Videos, Assignments, Discussions, etc.) that lives in a given Module.</p> <p>Outline the expectations for the week, deadlines for different course components and where to find them.</p> <p>Document shared study resources and update these over time as a collaborative wikipedia-esque space with LMS integrations like Youtube and Khan Academy.</p> <p>Can be used to make a Home/Front page for the course with an engaging image, class pitch, and any kind of welcome message from the instructor.</p>
Quizzes (option for	Facilitate a for-credit written quiz.	Identify common problem areas for your students to send a message about and/or focus part of an upcoming class session or office hours to review.

breakout session)		<p>Design a get-to-know-you survey to understand your students' goals, technical capabilities, and concerns for the course.</p> <p>Use as a reflection survey after assignments and projects.</p> <p>Share multiple practice quizzes that allow students to prepare for high-stakes exams and identify areas that they need to improve upon.</p> <p>Create multiple low-stakes homework assignments that allow students to practice what they learned with immediate feedback and a chance to retry for additional credit.</p> <p>Gather non-anonymized input or feedback on a course issue.</p>
Collaborations (option for breakout session)	Share a google doc for logistical purposes like a sign-up sheet.	<p>Design structured in-class synchronous or asynchronous activities that encourage students to write or share images related to the course content.</p> <p>Create opportunities for students to close-read a given piece of text using the Comment function in a Google doc and start reply threads to discuss text.</p> <p>Enable students to write responses and respond to each other in a shared space.</p> <p>Provide a template document that scaffolds the process and final product of an individual or group project for your students.</p> <p>Provide an ongoing way to track student progress on their work by checking in.</p>
Discussions (option for breakout session)	Create a discussion forum to ask questions about this week's material.	<p>Create a variety of asynchronous activities (e.g. reading response, debate, personal connections) that require student interactions and engagement around course content.</p> <p>Enable students to introduce themselves, welcome each other, and connect to one another to form study groups based on availability and time zone.</p> <p>Provide an opportunity for instructor Q&A and sharing course issues/questions.</p> <p>Set up a back-up space for students to respond to and engage with each other or you if they have tech issues that prevent them joining a Zoom class session.</p>
Assignments	Allow students to turn in their homework like	Submit works-in-progress whether it be a poster, a photo of a work of art, a paper

(option for breakout session)	an essay.	<p>draft, etc. and receive additional feedback using the Peer Review functionality.</p> <p>Speed up and standardize your own grading of open-ended assignments or allow for peer assessment using the pre-established Rubric functionality.</p> <p>Create metacognitive learning tasks of elevated importance such as exam wrappers, peer assessments on group tasks, and self-reflections on projects.</p> <p>As an alternative to discussion, when you want your students to submit a text response to a prompt while maintaining privacy between students.</p>
Announcements	Send updates/news by email and Canvas notification as needed.	<p>Schedule regular weekly announcements with upcoming assignments or synchronous obligation reminders and signposts that connect weekly topics to overall course goals.</p> <p>Send regular wrap-up emails that share collective feedback on patterns in student assessments, major lessons learned, and any changes.</p>
People	Look at the names of members of the course and their different roles.	<p>Create ongoing groups for check-ins and social support given remote learning.</p> <p>Set up group assignments and a submission mechanism for group projects and team-based learning assessments.</p> <p>In conjunction with the Roster Photos tab, make an effort to familiarize yourself with the names, pronouns, pronunciations, and faces of all of your students.</p>
Grades	Record students' grades and calculate their final grade.	<p>Send targeted (and early) messages when students miss assignments or score lowly on an assessment as a direct intervention.</p> <p>Enable students to project their final grade and map out their upcoming assessments and the credit they need to achieve their goals.</p>