

Distance up close

ISSUE NO. 13/14 • JULY/AUGUST 2018

NEWS FROM THE
OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Welcome back, faculty, staff, and students! We hope you had a wonderful summer and are refreshed and ready to dive into the fall term. A new semester means new beginnings, so this issue of *Distance Up Close* can help you prepare for your return to the classroom. Whether you teach online or in-person, you'll likely be using our Canvas LMS and our testing center, so read on for some helpful hints to make your "new beginnings" easier.

Over the summer, I attended Canvas InstructureCon with colleagues, two of whom presented on how Florida State successfully transitioned from Blackboard to Canvas. We were excited to share our experience with faculty from other institutions and talk with them about how they can best approach their LMS migration. We also attended a number of sessions on different elements of educational technology and look forward to implementing what we learned in the days to come.

Speaking of Canvas, you'll want to consider registering for our new round of training sessions, which include on-campus workshops and—for your convenience—noon webinars so you can lunch and learn at your desk! In this issue, you can become acquainted with two useful tools: Collaborations makes it easy for your students to work together on assignments, and Curriculum Builder helps you build reading lists from library resources.

We wish you a productive fall semester, and be sure to let us know how we can assist you in making teaching and learning even better at FSU.

Sincerely,
Robby Fuselier

IN THE NEWS

Tips help faculty prep for fall semester

As instructors prepare for both face-to-face and online courses this fall, ODL offers some beginning-of-the-semester guidance.



The FSU Testing Center provides a secure testing environment for online courses and for courses with classroom environments that are not conducive to testing. If you're a new instructor, you can become familiar with RegisterBlast, our exam appointment registration system, as well as testing center policies that can help students avoid scheduling mishaps and issues with testing. You can find more information on our [RegisterBlast policy](#).

In addition, you can decide which exam materials will be allowed for tests administered at the testing center. For exams requiring calculators, encourage your students to supply their own (when allowed) as testing has a limited number of basic calculators available. You may also want to advise your students to schedule their exams as early as possible to avoid exam slots being filled. Popular time slots, such as those on Thursday and Friday, tend to fill up more quickly.

Within the Canvas learning management system, you may find resources specific to your needs that can benefit your instruction. These include [Kaltura](#) (which lets you create and share an unlimited amount of videos and audio recordings in Canvas), [Turnitin](#) (a plagiarism deterrent service), and [Canvas Conferences](#) aka BigBlueButton (a built-in web-conferencing tool that can be used for virtual lectures, virtual office hours, or anything else that would need synchronous interaction). You can find more information and additional external tools on [Canvas apps](#).

Here are some policy- and tech-related back-to-school reminders:

- Read the [FSU Faculty Handbook](#) for information on processes and procedures.
- Ensure you're aware of the [FERPA guidelines](#) as you collect student information.
- Review how to take [first-day attendance](#) in Canvas.
- Help your students get to know each other by having them [upload a profile picture](#) to their Canvas account.
- Remind your students of their obligations under the [Academic Honor Policy](#).
- See how [open educational resources](#) can help lower textbook costs for your students.
- Register for [Canvas training](#) to learn more about Canvas tools and technologies.
- Remember ODL technical support provides [extended help desk hours](#) the first week of classes.

Introducing rapid-drop scanning services

We've added a rapid-drop scanning box to our scanning service lineup. Starting this fall, you can drop scan jobs in our new, fully secured rapid-drop box located on the first floor of the testing center (UCC-1100), inside the double doors to the left. The new box enables us to retrieve scan jobs more frequently and accept jobs as late as 8 pm Monday–Thursday and until 5 pm on Fridays. (The drop box in the Scholars Commons is still available.)

We have worked with FSU Transportation and Parking to offer additional parking for guests using the rapid-drop service. You are welcome to use any of the three 20-minute loading zones (yellow-lined spaces labeled "Loading Zone") in front of the testing center. You still need a valid FSU parking permit.

For those of you who prefer working with us in person, we're now offering advance appointments to expedite turnaround and ensure quality service for more complex scans jobs. For more information, call 850-645-2730.

ODL shares Canvas migration strategies



ODL faculty shared strategies for Florida State's transition to Canvas during a presentation at InstructureCon in July.

Held in Keystone, Colorado, the conference focused on learning and technology associated with the Canvas learning management system. Instructional development faculty John Crow and instructional technology faculty John Braswell (left to right in photo) presented on the lessons learned during the campus-wide conversion to Canvas.

They discussed the following key points:

- Canvas transition plan
- Use of course templates to maximize quality, accessibility, and universal design
- Variety of training (workshops, webinars, course migration assistance, individual consultations)
- Use of the human resources within ODL (media, publications and marketing, training, HR) to assist with the transition

"The first year of Canvas, we were learning the culture," said Braswell. "The second year, we formulated our plan. In our third year at InstructureCon, we were in a position to present back to the Canvas community."

Crow agreed about the importance of sharing our experience with other institutions. "What made our presentation unique is that most of the past presentations about transitions have been made by small schools. Being a large university, our presentation helped other large schools think about how they would manage their transition."

In addition to Braswell and Crow, ODL Director Robby Fuselier, Customer Service Manager Scott Bickley, and Business Analyst Dewel Lindsey attended the conference.

"I was encouraged to find that FSU has quickly become a model client in both faculty adoption and design sophistication," said Bickley. "We have never been more excited to get involved in the Canvas community and help shape the direction of our LMS."

To [view a video of the presentation](#), visit the InstructureCon archives. You may be asked to register with Canvas to view the complete presentation.

Create reading lists from library resources



OneSearch: Curriculum Builder allows instructors to generate reading lists and provide direct access to resources from FSU Libraries within their Canvas course site. You can search through and select resources from FSU library content, making it easy for students to access the necessary materials they need to succeed in your class.

The tool is also a great way to add videos provided by [Films on Demand](#), where you can choose from thousands of high-quality educational titles in dozens of subject areas.

For more information on installing and using Curriculum Builder in Canvas, [view this video tutorial](#).

New faculty, PIE students get tech briefing

New faculty members and graduate students involved in the Program for Instructional Excellence (PIE) learned about Canvas and teaching with technology at separate orientation sessions in August.

The annual [new faculty orientation](#) provided members with resources related to research, teaching, service, safety, student life, and administration. ODL instructional technology faculty John Braswell discussed Canvas and technology at the afternoon session on August 21.

The annual [PIE TA Orientation/Teaching Conference](#) focused on new graduate student TAs and graduate students interested in teaching. Sessions included teaching policy training requirements, grading best practices, effective student communication, and technology usage. In the August 22 meeting, Braswell provided an overview of Canvas and the associated technologies that support teaching and learning at Florida State.

CANVAS FYI



Fall training

Whether you're new to Canvas or want to refresh your current course site, ODL offers a variety of training sessions to help you learn more about Canvas tools and technologies. On-campus workshops and noon webinars will cover modules, page design, testing and assessment, grading, communication tools, DIY media, and universal design. You can sign up for any of these sessions on our [registration page](#).

If you need assistance with a particular Canvas issue, you can [schedule an appointment](#) for a one-on-one consultation. If you would like to arrange departmental training, contact [John Braswell](#) at 850-645-0469.

Canvas community feedback



Through the Canvas Support Center community feedback list, instructors can vote for feature ideas that will help improve Canvas for the FSU community. Check out our “Vote Up” recommendations for [July](#) and [August](#). To subscribe to the list, visit the [community feedback](#) page.

Spring Snapshot

Here’s a closer look at Spring 2018 activity in Canvas.

Instructor accounts: 2,707

Assignments: 62,683

Student accounts: 37,575

Discussion topics: 51,075

Course sites: 3,994

Uploaded files: 198,152

TOOL TIME

Collaborations

Using the Collaborations tool in Canvas, instructors can create items and assign students to work together on a single item from within a course site. The tool allows students to collaborate on Office 365 (Word, Excel, or PowerPoint) or Google (document, spreadsheet, or presentation) items. You can select individual users or groups as part of a collaboration. Multiple users—including you and your students—can share and edit items in real time and save them to multiple devices. You can use Collaborations to:

- Assign group work or research projects
- Copy and paste notes for group access
- Share agendas for upcoming class meetings

While you can use both Office 365 and Google documents with the Collaborations tool, we recommend Office 365 because access is tied to students’ official FSU webmail and FSUID.

This [video tutorial](#) provides an overview on using Collaborations in your Canvas course. For more information, view our [support article](#).

TECHNOLOGY TIPS

Support articles

Check out the most recent articles from our [Canvas Support Center](#).

- [Canvas quizzes best practices](#)
- [How to opt out of Canvas Conversations](#)
- [How students can review Turnitin results for a submission](#)
- [How instructors can manage Turnitin assignments](#)
- [How to grade Turnitin assignments in SpeedGrader](#)

- [How to correct a Turnitin post-date error](#)
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ODDS & ENDS

FSU's membership in OLC

Florida State University is now an institutional member of the [Online Learning Consortium](#) (OLC), a professional organization dedicated to quality digital learning in higher education. Faculty, staff, and students receive the following benefits of institutional membership:

- Full access to the interactive OLC Quality Scorecard for assessing online programs
- Discounted registrations for OLC Collaborate (regional events), OLC Accelerate, and OLC Innovate (see article below on the call for presentations)
- Special pricing on all OLC workshops, teaching certificates, and mastery programs
- Free webinars on topics related to online higher education
- Early access to research

For information on creating an account affiliated with FSU, visit the [OLC member resources page](#).

OLC Innovate proposal submission



The deadline for submitting a proposal to present at OLC Innovate 2019: Education Reimagined is September 12, 2018. The conference, sponsored by the Online Learning Consortium and MERLOT, will be held April 3–5, 2019, in Denver, Colorado.

The conference theme is “Moving Mountains in Digital, Blended, and Online Learning.” Track themes cover teaching and learning practice, leadership and advocacy, tools and technologies, and research designs and findings. For more information and to submit your proposal, visit the [OLC website](#).

LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

We are eager to receive your feedback on what you would like to see in future issues of the newsletter, so please [send us your suggestions](#) about ways ODL can better serve you.

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