



Title:	CANVAS
Distributor:	Contact Information: 6330 South 3000 East, Suite 700 Salt Lake City, UT 84121 info@canvaslms.com Tel: 800.203.6755 Target Audience: K-12 and Higher Education
Platform:	Windows XP SP3 and newer (Windows XP is not recommended since it is no longer supported by Microsoft) Mac OSX 10.6 and newer Linux – Chrome OS
Minimum hardware requirements	Use a computer 5 years old or newer when possible 1GB of RAM 2GHz processor

CANVAS where professionalism and growth meet

Overview

CANVAS is **PRO ‘US’**.

- **P** stands for promotes communication
- **R** stands for reliability
- **O** stands for organization
- **U** stands for user friendly
- **S** stands for saves time

CANVAS is a Learning Management System that is used to administer and deliver courses online by schools and colleges. It allows educational institutes to hold classes online, thus saving time and effort. It acts as a bridge between instructors and students and allows for communication outside the boundaries of a classroom setting.

I have been using CANVAS for less than four months, but despite this short time, I have come to realize how effective it is in creating an environment that brings teachers and students together and nurtures communication.

Previously, at my place of work, Blackboard was used and teachers and students alike say that it is not as user friendly nor as useful as CANVAS is. The latter platform is available for a two-week free trial with ready-made content. As for pricing, schools/colleges pay an implementation fee and then a yearly subscription fee based on the number of users.

Having used CANVAS as a teacher and a student, I can attest to its reliability for both. It has many effective features that make teaching and learning an exciting experience. Unfortunately, I did not use them all but I would describe my experience with the ones I tried as rewarding.

CANVAS supports all modern web-browsers but I have noticed that it works best with Firefox. CANVAS is easily accessed since it supports several systems such as iPhones and

Android smart phones and tablets. By downloading CANVAS on mobile devices, teachers/students can have access to their work and classrooms anytime anywhere.

Just as is the case when using a program for the first time, I was worried about encountering problems while using CANVAS, but soon found that it is very much self-explanatory and user friendly. I did not need to receive any training nor ask for help.

CANVAS is very easy to navigate. Starting with the Home page, you find links to the most commonly used features. It aims to make the teaching and learning experience a successful one in many respects.

CANVAS helps users be organized. As a teacher and someone who has a very busy lifestyle, I may tend to forget that I have assignments to correct, especially if those assignments are turned in after the deadline but with SpeedGrader, this is unlikely to happen as CANVAS posts a reminder. The calendar is a great tool that allows users to stay organized. I can immediately notice what work is due because of the different colors that I can assign to different courses. A third great feature to keep users on top of their work is that they can sign up for a daily report of notifications to be sent to their emails.

CANVAS creates a classroom environment and promotes successful interaction. It is true that students and teachers are not physically present in a classroom, but they can continuously communicate using many superb features. Just as in a real classroom, teachers can share files, videos and PowerPoint presentations with their students. In addition, students can post notes and collaborate on projects together through the use of Google Docs. They can also form groups and have their private discussions. This is very convenient considering that they might access the work at different timings. When correcting assignments, teachers can give detailed feedback by either attaching a comment or by inserting comments inside the student's work to give specific instructions. This way the students are very clear about what the teacher expects them to do. One feature that I highly value is the BigBlueButton which personalizes the teaching experience since students and teachers can see each other. They can also share files and use some annotation tools to discuss things. Teachers can record the session for those who cannot attend or for future reference. They can humanize the learning experience by sending video announcements to students.

CANVAS helps save valuable time. Besides having access to it through mobile devices, teachers do not have to worry about grading quizzes and exams since these can be automatically graded by CANVAS and the results are posted on the grade book. Teachers are able to reach all students and share materials with them either through announcements or through a general email list where they can simply select the course title. Moreover, CANVAS gives teachers important information about students' performance; with the click of a button, teachers can gain insight into the course analytics in general and learn how individual students are engaging in their studies.

Despite its prominent qualities, CANVAS has its shortcomings. One problem has to do with the fact that users can not follow any formatting styles when typing their assignments. This problem is solved by giving the option of file uploading. A second problem is that when uploading files, it does not indicate that there could be a problem with the file size. Instead, the user has to be aware of what file sizes can go through. A third downside relates to grading. Using SpeedGrader, teachers can enter the students' grades and write personal comments, but there were instances when I noticed that these did not automatically show in the Grade book and I had to re-do the work.

CANVAS is not perfect but its remarkable features have allowed for immense advancements in the field of education.

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