

## Ep. 086: Canvas Conversation

<https://prodev.illinoisstate.edu/podcast/2023/ep086.shtml>

Instructors officially adopted Canvas at Illinois State this fall. It replaces ReggieNet, which served students and teachers for more than a decade. As we wrap up the first semester of instruction with Canvas, Jim Gee sits down with Allison Hauser, Alyssa Herman, and Nichol Brown—three colleagues who helped to shepherd faculty members through the process. They discuss the major differences between the platforms, the hidden gems that make teaching easier, and advice for taking your Canvas course sites to the next level in the new year.

### Transcript

JIM: Hi, there. I'm Jim. Let's Talk Teaching.

(Music)

JIM: Welcome to Let's Talk Teaching! A podcast from the Center for Integrated Professional Development here at Illinois State University. I'm Jim Gee. Canvas has been a learning management system used in academia for a couple of decades now, but it's actually new or relatively new here on the campus of Illinois State University. So joining me today, three of my colleagues here at the Center for Integrated Professional Development who have been on the forefront of our support for faculty adopting this new tool for teaching and learning here on campus. Joining me is Nichol Brown. She teaches in the Department of English. She's also our graduate assistant for online education. Hi, Nichol.

NICHOL: Hi everyone, happy to be here.

JIM: And Alyssa Herman was formerly a graduate assistant, she has now joined our staff as an instructional design associate. Hi, Alyssa.

ALYSSA: Hi.

JIM: And Allison Hauser, again, a former graduate assistant during part of the canvas transition. Now, our learning systems coordinator on our staff. Hi.

ALLISON: Hi, everyone.

JIM: So thank you all for joining me. We were talking a little bit before we began about, you know, what did we want to cover in this? And my hope is to get a sense of where we're at, maybe so that if there are faculty members who are listening to this, they realize that they're not alone in some of the challenges or some of the questions that they've had come up. But also, I'm hoping we can kind of draw upon your collective wisdom and your experience in dealing with hundreds upon hundreds of questions about how do I do this, or how do I teach this way, and maybe come up with some top tips as instructors, as we're recording this are now probably looking not only to finish the fall semester, but they have their courses assigned for spring. And they're looking at maybe taking it to the next level vis-à-vis Canvas in the next couple of weeks as they

start to work on spring course prep. So I'm going to open this up to everyone. Here we are in the middle of the semester. Obviously, it was a busy start of the semester. But what are you hearing from instructors now?

ALYSSA: I feel like things have shifted a bit.

JIM: Okay.

ALYSSA: Because the first year we got a lot of - not even the first year, the first what, 6, 8 months? Whatever. We got a lot of questions about like, "What's happening? What am I doing? Like, how do I switch from ReggieNet to Canvas? What is that transition look like?" And recently, it's slowed down a bit. And now we're getting more things like, "Okay, I have my general bearings in Canvas. What do I do now?"

ALLISON: Yeah, we've switched from the general questions about, "What is this? How do I use this tool? What's going on here?" into more specific questions about "I'm running into this issue, or I want to do this particular thing? How do I do that?" So we're definitely moving into hopefully people being more experienced and trying to get into like the nitty gritty of Canvas compared to when we started, it was just what is going on. General overwhelmed. And now we're in trying to make it work for your classroom goals.

NICHOL: Yeah. And I think we're also in some way, almost switching from the comparison to ReggieNet of "I tried to do this in ReggieNet, I can't do it now." It's more, "Okay. I'm in Canvas already." Like you said, building on what we've already established instead of how do I translate something from ReggieNet, I've already done my best to do that. And now I want to continue to flesh it out, and like dig deeper into Canvas.

ALYSSA: Right. I feel like the first semester I heard a lot of, "Okay, I did these things in ReggieNet. This is a little too complex pedagogically for me to try to tackle this first semester. The first semester I'm just going to try to get down the basic things." And now people are ready to start going back to some of their pedagogical practices that they were doing in ReggieNet.

JIM: That's a great point. And that's been my experience, because, and true confessions here, I've been talking to the faculty and staff about Canvas for two years now because of my role as a communicator. But my side job as an instructor, I didn't really open up Canvas and start, you know, getting my course in there. And it wasn't a new course prep. But I didn't really start doing that until early August, maybe. So I was kind of a late entry to it as well, I was familiar enough with it. But I had that exact same attitude that there are certain things that I'm going to do. Fortunately, the class I'm teaching this semester, it is not as media heavy. The class I'm preparing to teach in spring is incredibly media heavy. And there are certain features that I never used in ReggieNet, that are really attractive to me now because I actually kind of understand them better in Canvas. Group - Assigning groups and stuff like that, I think is one of those. So have you found any tools or anything like that, that people have expressed an interest in? Or that they've said that "there's a challenge I have?" And you've been able to say, "Oh, well, Canvas actually does do that."

ALLISON: It depends on how specific your need is. I think that we're sort of at this point where people need to rethink some pedagogical choices. Canvas is a different LMS. It's a different tool. It's a different beast. There are lots of things that you can do that are fantastic in Canvas that are just different than they were in ReggieNet that require you to think about teaching in a different way. So things like how to set up your gradebook. Why are you using weighted categories? That's something I've been talking to instructors a lot about recently is weighted categories. And so in Canvas, they're calculated, from what I understand when it comes to math, they're calculated a little bit differently than they were in ReggieNet. And so I think this is a really great time for instructors to rethink what policies they're using and why. And so rethink "This is how it's going to calculate in Canvas." Is this what you want? Is this helping students?

ALYSSA: Right. And at some point stop making the ReggieNet comparisons. Because they're just not the same.

JIM: Yeah. And that was a message that I think we were trying very hard to get out there for a long time. But you almost have to see it in order to believe it, that it really is not a one-to-one analogy. Not only are the tools named differently, but the tools function differently. And there are some tools that we had in ReggieNet, that don't exist in Canvas. But there are also a lot of tools in Canvas that never existed in ReggieNet. And by the way, for those who are listening to our show, who are not from Illinois State University, ReggieNet is our former learning management system. It's based on Sakai, which is an open-source platform. We had it for about 12 years. And it had a lot of use, you know, we had, I think the last statistics I saw from a couple years ago, even pre-COVID, we had about 98% of all regular sort of catalog courses published in ReggieNet. So they were using it for at least something. So I do want to talk a little bit about - because as Alyssa said, there are people who are going to be trying new things, they're going to be stretching themselves a little bit in Canvas. So these people may be bumping up against some things that others have already bumped up against. And you've heard about them. And so I wanted to kind of explore and see if we could come up with a short little list of what are some things that people should be aware of, maybe if I can suggest starting out how communication works within Canvas, because the inbox, and this is something I had to kind of make peace with, the inbox works differently than the straight email flow that you had the option of doing in ReggieNet.

ALLISON: Yeah, inbox is something that either instructors love it or they hate it, they either want it or they wish they could turn it off. But there's lots of positives about how you can keep all of your messages stored within Canvas. It's more easy to sort and navigate what kind of messages you're looking for. You can sort by class, you can sort by student, it keeps everything really grouped together. You can also view comments students left on submissions through the inbox, which is neat. I think the "message students who" feature -

NICHOL: I literally used that yesterday.

JIM: Yeah. Now what is that?

- NICHOL: So inbox integrates with a bunch of other tools, including the Gradebook, including new analytics, a bunch of different things. And so I just had an assignment due over the weekend. And any students who didn't turn it in, I can say message students who haven't completed it.
- JIM: So it's kind of an if-then sort of proposition?
- NICHOL: Yeah, and you can select different things. Or you can message students who got lower than a certain grade or something like that. And maybe you offer all of them the opportunity to redo it. So anyone who got lower than a 50%, you message them and say, Hey, you can resubmit. And so I had like three or four students who didn't turn in an assignment, I just go straight to Gradebook, click "message students who," and they can all reply directly to me either from their outlook, which will mirror in inbox or directly in inbox. And all of them answered almost immediately, because students also use the app. And so they get notifications right on their phone. I taught last semester in the pilot, and this semester, and predominantly, my students are using the app. And that makes it really easy for them to just immediately reply. And so I get really quick responses when I'm using inbox.
- JIM: And we know from surveys that we did for years with ReggieNet that the number one asked from students is "why can't we have an app for this?" This is where we live now. And this is an audio podcast, but I'm holding up an invisible smartphone. You know, this is where we live now. And so you know, when I have conversations with faculty members talking about why this is a good thing, it's because we're meeting students where they're at, you know? And I've had similar experiences that they're using the app to communicate and whatnot. And yet they also know that their phone is not the best place to do certain things in Canvas. They figured that out as well, I think.
- ALYSSA: But especially for like hybrid and fully online courses, those tools are useful. Having an app, being able to use the inbox, things like that. It connects students in a different way.
- ALLISON: And thinking about other things instructors are bumping up against: Quizzes. Quizzes has been a toughy. I think the biggest issue is that Canvas currently supports two different types of quiz engines that are entirely different with entirely different vocabulary, and guides and ways to do things. So if you are using quizzes, take your time. Start early. They are complex. And so it's classic quizzes versus new quizzes. Classic quizzes is the default, fully integrated Canvas-based quiz version. New quizzes is essentially an external quizzing tool that Canvas is working on adopting. So right now, it's got some improved features. There's new things, there's different things you can do in it, but it is still very much in beta, in development. And so you might encounter more glitches, more things not working out, features that you want to be available that aren't there yet, anything like that happens with new quizzes. So just be a little more patient. As you're building out your quizzes, that's definitely something instructors are struggling with.
- NICHOL: And also be intentional. Evaluate both options. Choose which one makes the most sense with your course. Just because it's newer doesn't necessarily mean better. It's

just different. And it does different things. And so if you're in a class that requires a categorization question, or a stimulus question or a hotspot question, then yeah, sure, use new quizzes. But think critically about what tools you're using.

ALLISON: Well, and that information is not clear. If you are a new instructor and you're making a new quiz, you hit the plus quiz button, and then it'll ask you classic quiz or new quiz. And it gives you very little context on what each of those things entail. And so I think a lot of instructors are just clicking new quiz and then encountering issues that classic quizzes would solve. Because they just don't know. And I don't blame them. And I fully understand like that - it doesn't make sense.

JIM: Well and they're literally creating a new quiz. So part of it is a nomenclature issue, more than anything else. I mean, the conceit is that eventually Instructure which is the company that runs Canvas, will be integrating this in and there will be one quiz platform to rule them all. But that's not going to happen anytime in the foreseeable future.

NICHOL: Yeah, they don't even have a date, I think.

JIM: Yeah, it's - we're probably talking a few years. And that's something that veteran faculty on our campus have encountered, there were times when we had multiple versions of tools that did the same thing. I think, in ReggieNet, it was the discussion forum; We had several running around - different versions of gradebooks and stuff like that. So I think that's great advice, though, to do that. And for people who need support getting started with quizzes or anything else, you can go to our website, which is ProDev, that's [prodev.illinoisstate.edu/canvas](http://prodev.illinoisstate.edu/canvas), or just go to the homepage, and you'll see a big button there. We're here for pedagogical support, we're here for instructional support, if you're having "I can't log into Canvas," or "I'm having a genuine technical issue" it's timing out or something, it's probably better for you to contact the Technology Support Center. And that's also where instructors should be sending their students as well for help with everything from the app to Wi Fi connections and all of that stuff. And that is [help.illinoisstate.edu](http://help.illinoisstate.edu). We'll link to all that in the show page. And of course, it's plastered all over our website everywhere. So is there anything else that folks are kind of bumping up against? Dare I ask: extra credit?

NICHOL: I was just gonna mention extra credit. Because it goes along with what Allison was talking about with the gradebook. That in ReggieNet, you could just check a box that says this is extra credit. But thinking of me as an instructor, I don't know what that does mathematically. I don't know what that does for my gradebook. I just know "Oh, look, it's extra credit now. It has a little plus sign." But I wasn't thinking strategically how that works. And so the issue is, is that a lot of folks expect the same thing: that I can just check a box and say this is extra credit. But Canvas is making you actually think about "how do I want this to be valued in terms of extra credit?" I use points in my gradebook system. So I usually just make an assignment that's worth zero points. And so I know that just gets added on top of however many my total points for the whole semester. And that's what works for me, but we get instructors who ask "How should I do extra credit?" It depends. And that feels like such a cop out answer of like, "well, I can't tell you because it depends on how your Gradebook is setup." And a lot of times,

they don't even really know how their gradebook is set up. Because they've just been doing the same thing for years. And they just - they say, "Oh, well, I do weighting. And I want the extra credit to be in this category." Well, that's more complicated. And so thinking it's not going to be a direct one-to-one, you need to actually start to reevaluate and consider why you're doing what you're doing, why you want to check that extra credit box because there's no longer a box to check. So you need to think about how you want it to actually function.

ALLISON: And it's pretty difficult to make a quiz extra credit. Not easy.

ALYSSA: And part of the difficulty there is extra credit depends on how you have your assignments setup. And so some of the confusion is how assignments integrates with the gradebook. Where in ReggieNet, you could make columns in the gradebook, you could enter things directly into the gradebook, create assignment columns there. In Canvas, you have to create everything through assignments, like you need to be organizing your assignments there. And that's what's actually connecting to your gradebook. So extra credit is really coming from the assignments rather than the Gradebook itself.

JIM: Right. And so especially if instructors are "oh, you know what I want to add a couple points of extra credit to this particular quiz score." That's where things also get to be kind of complicated it sounds like. So there are solutions to this. And we could have a whole other - and maybe we should at some point - have a whole other discussion about the pedagogical implications and uses and myths about extra credit. But I think if you can get away with it, I think the, Nichol, what you're talking about is the most elegant solution, right? You just create a new assignment it just goes to the point total and you kind of go from there.

NICHOL: Which only works if you have a point system, though.

JIM: Well that's true too.

NICHOL: If you're doing weighting, and that's where it gets complicated is that so much of it is deeply dependent on your particular course. We can't give you a blanket answer of "this is how you do it." And that's what we bump up against a lot, because that's what faculty sometimes want. And we wish we could give it to you. But it's so deeply dependent on on you, as the instructor, and how you're setting up your course. And that's not always the answer they want to hear.

ALYSSA: Luckily, Canvas does have an extra credit guide, that gives a lot of different options for extra credit. It is a very long webpage. And there's a lot of information in it, but-

NICHOL: It's a choose your own adventure.

ALYSSA: Yeah, there are extra credit options out there.

ALLISON: And I have been telling instructors use the test student. So if you're ever wondering how the math is working, or if extra credit is working the way you want, the test student is the best bet to figure out if it is. It'll make sure that the math is mathing the way you want it to without affecting a real student or anything like that.

NICHOL: Because unlike in ReggieNet, where a student view was just a view option, test student you can put in grades, you can submit assignments, you can really act as the student and it'll save that data. And so you could make a whole fake gradebook for the entire semester with one test student.

JIM: I'm excited because I also think we're kind of on a threshold starting in the Spring especially. A lot of people who are teaching this fall - are teaching with data that was actually migrated from the old LMS into Canvas. I'm doing that. And as we told people, you know, based on the experience of the pilot program that we went through, the faculty members who did a pilot, which some of you were a part of that, right? That's not necessarily a win-win proposition entirely, that I have found that there are some assignments that were migrated that I pull out of the migrated course and I put into my live course this fall. But there are a lot of other ones I'm just recreating from whole cloth because it's just easier, and it fits those changes that I encounter in Canvas. So my hope is that, as we get towards Spring, and then people in the Spring start planning for the next fall or summer, that we'll be a step beyond that. That the data will already have been Canvas-ized, we'll workshop a better word for that later, but it's already gone through the Canvas process once. We're no longer working with the stuff that was brought in from somewhere else that was translated from a different - literally a different language - in terms of coding and stuff like that. So before we get into talking about maybe some tips you have for people who are planning their courses for Spring, we've talked about what people are bumping up against, are there any little hidden gems that you've seen in Canvas, that you kind of went ooh?

ALYSSA: For me recently, as I've been building out some courses, it's Pages. Put everything in Pages. Stop attaching documents. Because, for example, let's say you have an assignment sheet. It's a word doc. You edit the word doc, you upload it. If you have to edit it again, you have to remove it, edit that word doc, upload again. You can integrate everything into Canvas. You can make pages, you can edit them there, you can build them into modules, I freaking love Pages. It's my favorite tool right now.

JIM: That's great.

NICHOL: Mine is, kind of then, the opposite from you. Because mine's been Files, which is mainly the way I use files, and it's that I have folders. Because before I was uploading everything directly to like Modules or Pages, and then it would just show up under uploaded media and files. But now I have folders for assignment sheets. And so I know exactly where to go when I'm inserting files into pages. And it's so much easier for me to navigate because I know "okay, I'm going to my assignment sheets folder and files and I can just pull it from there," or "these are all my readings" and I organize my readings. And so instead of using Files as just like a storage space that everything gets stored there, I'm using it as a go-to space. And I start there. And that's something we've talked about a lot in workshops is there's so many different directions of which

way you can start. So if you want to start with Modules, and then build out your pages, or you want to build out your assignments first and then put them into modules. And that's just been the most recent thing that's worked for me is starting by uploading all my stuff to Files. It is annoying, because then if I decide to change a file, I have to reupload it. But that's been what's working for me.

ALLISON: Speed Grader.

JIM: That was gonna be mine.

NICHOL: Is that hidden?

ALLISON: No, it's not hidden. But I think that - I think it's hidden for some instructors.

NICHOL: Sometimes people don't know where it is.

ALLISON: I talked to one instructor who was grading discussions by printing them all out -

NICHOL: Oh no!

ALLISON: - in ReggieNet, and then was sort of counting up how many people had and things like that to make sure they were hitting the right requirements. And SpeedGrader you can see them all together, which is really great. And the other thing that's very specific, but I've been really, really about it lately is that you can download all submissions for an assignment, open them up, make edits and comments on them and then bulk upload them all at once. And it will attach as a comment for students.

NICHOL: And it'll automatically be matched to the student. Because it's the same name as what you downloaded.

ALLISON: I teach English classes so I could see - I could - while you can do a lot of the stuff in SpeedGrader, too, leave comments and stuff like that. But if I want to do it in a word doc for whatever reason, I can download them, leave all my comments, save the file again, and then it will automatically attach it once I reupload it to that student's submission.

JIM: That's great.

ALLISON: That's so cool.

NICHOL: Speaking of comments, too: the comment library. A lot of people don't know that you can save comments. And so you can, when you're in SpeedGrader, and you want to do a submission comment, maybe it's the same thing for everyone that, "oh, you know, like you're missing this component," or if you, you know, revise and resubmit, you can save any comment you want. And just click it, you don't have to retype. I used to have a Word document that I would have to copy and paste, it was the worst!

JIM: And that was the advice that we gave people. That was a teaching strategy we shared with people: have a text file or a word document you can just copy and paste out of. So

it's great to hear that Canvas is operationalized some of these and embraced some of these that are evidence based teaching practices, that there's evidence to support that this not only works for students, because you're standardizing the comments, but also, hey, bonus, it's making your life easier, right? There's nothing wrong - there's no shame in teachers making their life a little easier in that. So let's talk quickly, as we wrap up, about Spring and Summer moving forward. I want to slice this a couple of different ways. Spring, okay, so it's our next, for most instructors, there will be some people who are new starting in the Spring, but for most instructors, they will have probably at least had the opportunity to use Canvas for their teaching in the Fall. So what would you recommend that how do they get started? Is there anything that you would encourage them to maybe think about their experience now, maybe stuff that they should reach out to us for a consultation or something like that? And then separately from that, we can talk about Summer, because I want to talk about the fact that there are probably going to be more people who are teaching online, fully online courses, for the first time in Summer, but we can get to that. So your thoughts about tips for Spring or how to get started on Spring?

ALLISON: Use Modules. I think, as we started in the Fall, people were trying to stick with what they knew in ReggieNet. And they opened up a lot of tools like assignments and files and discussions, that Modules better organizes. And so I think if you want to, you can copy your content from your Fall and set it and forget it again, that's one way to go about. But if you have any extra time, rethinking about how you can organize the materials that you're sharing with students to control when they're accessing it, with what other content they're viewing it with all of that organization that comes together in Modules, I think is really important. I think it's really great for student learning, it's really great for students knowing where to go to find things. And so if you're getting started with your Spring class, and you didn't do it in the Fall, give Modules a try.

ALYSSA: Yeah, I would almost say, don't just copy your Fall course into Spring, and try to do it again, because we had our pilot group. But for a lot of faculty, this was their pilot, this was their first time teaching in Canvas. And so you probably need to look at that course, really evaluate what worked for students and what didn't. And then think about redesigning.

ALLISON: And almost every tool has a "copy to" option. So you can - you don't have to start from scratch. But you also don't have to copy over everything all at once. So you can but you can also look at your Spring course and think about what specific things from the Fall you want to pull over. And then if you're like looking at an assignment or a module, if you click those three dots, there should be a "copy to" option. And you can copy that singular thing into your Spring course. So doing it sort of one thing at a time. And being really thoughtful and intentional about what you're adding to your Spring course I think will really set you up for success.

NICHOL: And especially if you did your Fall course from a migration. Try not doing that this time, because what we've noticed with the migration is not only, personally I did a migration to try it and then didn't like it. So I just did it from scratch. And that teaches you so much. To just be in there, in the tools, creating it. And so, and then that way, if you realize, "oh my gosh, this is too hard," You can always, you know, and we get a week

before the semester starts, you've still got your one you taught in Fall, you can use that. But start out by trying to just build it. Because that's how you'll learn the tools. That's how you'll learn the nuances and realize maybe that there are settings that you hadn't tried before that, "wow, this is doing exactly what I've been trying to figure out. But I wasn't in the tool, I wasn't actually doing the thing."

ALYSSA: Sometimes it's harder to reuse something that's broken than to just start over from scratch and build it again. Because I think I've run into a lot of instructors who are really trying to reuse their migrated content or reuse a previous, you know, assignment or quiz or something. And it's like this just isn't working. We need to start over. We need to think about this from a Canvas perspective and not from a ReggieNet perspective and try again.

NICHOL: And not in a lost way where "Oh, we lost all that work. Now we have to start over," but in a way that "this is going to be better in the long run because it's going to work better for me, for my students, and teach me more, like, teach me more about Canvas so that I'm a better and more effective Canvas user for my students."

ALLISON: And the other thing that I would add, which kind of, I think, bridges the "what are instructors bumping against?" "what's a hidden gem?" and "what should you do for the spring?" is use OneDrive. Instructors are bumping against the file storage limit. In ReggieNet we had 10 gigabytes, we had a lot.

JIM: We had a lot, it depends, but there are some people who were able to get more. So yeah, it was quite a lot.

ALLISON: We had a lot more space. When we started the semester, we only had 500 megabytes of space per course. That's been bumped up to 2 gigabytes, which is great. But there are some instructors who still want more. And so one of the things about canvas that's great is that we have a really, I think, pretty solid integration with OneDrive. So you can quickly add things from OneDrive to a module, to a page, you can embed it in that page, you can do all kinds of things with it, which allows for those documents to then be live so that you can update and edit them while they're still embedded in your tools. So you can keep changing things as we go there, so do that in the Spring.

NICHOL: The other hidden gem with storage, since Allison brought up the idea of things saving your storage, is Studio. Which we haven't really talked about, because that's more multimedia, which is, I mean, we work on it, but not the way that Greg and other people in our office do. But Studio has been something that people don't even realize. So for those who don't know Studio is to store videos, you can also make video quizzes, you can edit videos, you can do so much with multimedia in Studio.

ALYSSA: The captioning tool is so good. It's so easy. And actually the automatic captioning is pretty accurate. And the way you can insert, like, little quizzes at certain points in the videos so it's like learning checks, very cool.

NICHOL: And you can also do it when you're, so I've talked to some, like, nursing faculty who do clinical things, where people will record them doing an exam on a fake patient. And you can add comments to the video. Like embed them into the video so that way the

student can rewatch and they can be like, "Oh, I should have done that then." And so it's almost like live feedback. And for people who are using it, they love it. And it's something that not only saves you multimedia storage, because that's not going toward your core storage, but it's also just a really cool tool. And it does a lot of amazing things for you. And I think a lot of people still just don't really know that's a thing.

ALLISON: During the pandemic, I was using zoom. So you record your lecture on Zoom or you, you open zoom and you share your screen. And then you - I opened ReggieNet, and I did it from that. So this means you don't have to go outside of Canvas. You don't have to use Zoom to record your lectures or things like that.

JIM: And it's taking care of all the other things that students need like the captioning and everything else, as long as you're deliberate about that. Well that, to transition to kind of my last question about Summer and people who may be looking at teaching an online course for the first time through Canvas, that sounds actually like the first tip, which is you're going to want to leverage Canvas Studio. And we realize of course that all of this, you know, we're talking about, "oh, this is great. This is great. This is great." We realize that this takes effort on the part of teaching. Good teaching always takes a lot of preparation and especially though when it comes to online teaching because you can't just walk in a day, "Tomorrow is Friday, I'm going to walk in 8am into class, and I'm going to talk about the Toulmin Model of Argumentation. I've been talking about it for 20 years, I can do that lesson in my sleep and in their sleep." But I couldn't do that online without a lot of preparation. So do you have any final thoughts as far as preparing specifically for an online course?

NICHOL: Yeah, we talked a little bit about SpeedGrader. And just - I'm thinking of online course, the idea of just like, more personal, right? Like, how can I feel like I'm a person and so are my students. Submission comments, you can record directly into Canvas and do audio submission comments, and give audio feedback to assignments. Or you can do video feedback. And so I think that could be really cool in an online course. So that way, students are like, "Oh, look, that's my professor, like, that's a real person." And so it's not just writing all the time and reading, I think that could help.

ALYSSA: I think in a fully online course, you have to think a lot more about organization and consistency. And you have to write a lot of things down that you wouldn't normally write down in a fully face-to-face, or even a hybrid course, things that you would be saying in class, you no longer have that space, especially in an asynchronous online course. And so for me, I think the most important thing is thinking about module organization, how are you going to organize not just files, but pages, activities, discussions, quizzes, all of that? How are you going to organize that? And then having strong module overviews and objectives. Your learning objectives need to be much more apparent, and they need to align with the activities that you're putting in your modules.

ALLISON: I think new analytics could also be useful. When you're teaching in person, you can check in with your students easier, you have a more clear grasp of what they've been working on.

JIM: So new analytics is an actual tool in canvas, right?

ALLISON: Yeah. So it's a tool in Canvas. It is, I don't believe, enabled by default. So you'll need to go into settings and enable it. And you'll want to do that before the start of class. Because if you don't enable it, it's not going to start collecting data until it is. So you will enable it and you'll click on it. And then, I think, after 24 hours, it will tell you a lot of statistics about your class. So what's the last thing that your students engaged with. You can sort by student. You can sort by assignment. You can get overviews on grades, grade statistics. You can see recent activity. So you can just get a lot more information about where your students are at that I think is important for judging your pacing and engagement within the course.

JIM: That sounds great. And we've covered a lot of material today, so if you've been furiously scribbling down notes or you're highlighting the transcript that comes along with this podcast, you can just go to our website, which is prodev, [prodev.illinoisstate.edu](http://prodev.illinoisstate.edu). Nichol, Alyssa, Allison, thank you so much.

ALYSSA: Thanks.

ALLISON: Thank you.

NICHOL: Thanks for having us!

JIM: And that's all the time we have for this episode of Let's Talk Teaching. Again, find out more about our pokey little podcast and about our support for Canvas and all of our instructional support, go to [prodev.illinoisstate.edu](http://prodev.illinoisstate.edu). This episode is edited by our graduate assistant Colin Winkelmann. Production support provided by Kim Brucker. For Nichol, for Alyssa, for Allison, and for all my colleagues here at the Center: until we talk again. Happy teaching!