I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving surrounded by family, friends, and a much-needed break from classes for a few days.

Canvas Alignment Project

I want to remind all full-time faculty to ensure your spring courses are prepared for the Canvas alignment requirements. You can review the attached guidelines for support, look through the Canvas Alignment Canvas page you were enrolled in, or reach out to the Center for Academic Innovation for assistance.

Adjunct faculty, you have until the fall 2026 courses for this alignment requirement. If you have questions as you work through the process, please use the same resources and reach out to your department chairs for support.

Telling Our Story

This past week reminded me of the importance of telling our story and celebrating the work happening in our classrooms every day. I had the opportunity to attend an English course after being invited by a student as part of their class assignment. The assignment required students to invite an academic leader to class using a professionally written email. I may have surprised them by actually showing up 🙂. During the session, students presented their research in the form of abstracts and then defended their work through questions from their classmates and from me. I was truly impressed by the quality of their research and by the confidence and clarity with which they explained and defended their findings. It was a powerful reminder of the excellence occurring across our college and the impact of the learning environments you create.

Additionally, I enjoyed conversing with the science students as they detailed their experiments in the SUPER event. You could see the students light up as they discussed their projects and how they envisioned the next steps for both their work and themselves. I appreciated hearing their stories about why they chose this research course and what they hoped to learn from it.

How AI Can Impact Our Storytelling

Like many of us, the English department is grappling with the rapid evolution of generative AI and its growing influence on teaching and learning. I recently had a thoughtful email exchange with Lyndsey Strahan about how quickly these capabilities have shifted. Faculty have not had the luxury of studying and adapting to a stable technology. Instead, they have repeatedly redesigned curriculum as AI moved from fabricating sources, to citing real sources inaccurately, to now generating sources that appear legitimate but do not exist. These shifts have complicated how instructors teach research, reading, and synthesis, and they have increased the challenge of helping students build foundational skills while avoiding AI shortcuts. The pace of change over the past three years has been overwhelming, particularly as these tools become more accessible and increasingly capable of completing academic tasks for students.

These adjustments in teaching and assessment will be part of all our stories, and I would love to learn how others across the college are navigating these changes.

Thank you for all you continue to do for our students as we finish the semester strong!

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LMS STANDARDIZATION FACULTY ESSENTIALS

The goal of standardizing Canvas navigation is to improve the student experience by ensuring a consistent and user-friendly layout across all courses.

HOME PAGE REQUIREMENTS*

✓ Getting started information *(Preferably top left)*

✓ Welcome Message

✓ Instructor Information

✓ Module Quick Links *(online only)*

✓ Proctoring information *(online only)*

*Links may be used to minimize text on homepage.

COURSE MENU ORDER

✓ Home

✓ Modules

✓ Grades

✓ Announcements *(hide if not used)*

✓ Discussions *(hide if not used)*

✓ RegisterBlast *(hide if not used)*

✓ Various buttons as needed per course *(e.g. Textbook, Microsoft Teams, etc.)*

✓ Attendance *(for face-to-face classes only)*

✓ Course Syllabus

✓ Ask the Library

✓ Tutoring

✓ Smart Search

✓ Secure Exam Proctor *(hide if not used)*

✓ Submit Grades to Colleague *(not visible to students but must be enabled for instructor use)*

ADDITIONAL NOTES REGARDING HOME PAGE REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE MENU ORDER:

- The Home Page should be the first thing students see when entering their canvas site.

- All unused items should be hidden.

- If Canvas Discussions are used, *Discussions* must be included in the course menu to allow students easy access for ongoing conversations.

- *Course Syllabus* should be used for presenting the syllabus. Syllabus should be hidden.

- *New Analytics* should be hidden.

- *Assignments* can be used for face-to-face classes, but do not use both *Modules & Assignments.*

- Live online classes need a prominent *Come to Class* link on the Home Page.

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL CANVAS COURSES

1. **Assignments and Assessments:** All assignments and assessments should be posted in the Assignments area of Canvas and set up to appear on the To-Do List. Content should be posted in a timely manner, allowing students sufficient time to complete the work. If an assignment or project would reasonably take two weeks to complete, it should be posted at least two weeks in advance.

   Note: Instructors may still use the Assignments area even if it is hidden from the course menu.

2. **Module Organization:** Modules should be structured in a clear, chronological order that reflects the intended progression of the course.

3. **Getting Started Section:** Include clear guidance on how to access the course content and navigate the course layout to help students get started smoothly.

4. **Instructor Information:** This section should provide your office hours, office location, and virtual meeting access details (if applicable) so students know how to contact you for help and support.

5. **Module Quick Links:** Consider organizing quick links by weeks or units to provide students with easy access to different parts of the course without having to scroll through the full Modules list. You can link directly to individual module items or create a quick-access page for each section of the course.

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