



## *OLTD 504 - Reflection on my Canvas Build*

This course, OLTD 504, is designed to help us see Learning Management Systems as tools that may help us build courses that help our students learn the best way possible, using tools efficiently and presenting the material in a concise and clear manner, while at the same time providing support, moderation and assessment to my students. While I am familiar with Learning Management Systems(LMS), and have been using them as a student since I started on my post-bac degree, I had never actually had the opportunity or the reason to build a course on one. I had built tutorials on Weebly, but that was as far as my practical experience went in terms of educating through the web. On OLTD 504, we had the opportunity to experiment with building a course on a LMS of our choice. I selected to explore Canvas as my LMS, and had the opportunity to learn, problem-solve and figure out how to put an aesthetically pleasing, functional full course online for the first time.

I was so impressed by the powerhouse that Canvas is, and the multitude of options it provides an educator. You can organize your course in a way that is intuitive, beautiful, organized and clear; even for the novice teacher, it is difficult to make it cluttered as the interface is so very clean. They offer sections for assignments, ways to divide your course by modules, discussions, a well-designed gradebook with multiple options, and many more areas that kept me busy exploring and testing things out. In the end, I believe I created a course that is well designed, easy on the eyes, with a clear message and simple to navigate. Canvas provided me with a one-stop solution that provided me with such a great experience, I would gladly forgive its shortcomings and use it to develop courses in the future. The only negative aspects are the visual constraints... I would like more freedom to create a prettier, friendlier site for my young students. I also felt that in terms of building a community, it still felt very "far away" -- even if I make the course pretty and well organized, I would still feel the need to meet with my students using a different face-to-face tool, such as Zoom, which is my favourite as it allows for the whole

classroom to see each other at the same time. You can then see not only faces, but also get hints based on body language, making the experience very similar to classroom interactions.

Learning about Canvas and having this experience of building a course really opened my eyes to what is out there for educators. I found that I really enjoy creating courses, which is not surprising since I got totally hooked on creating tutorials for a while. Because Canvas has predetermined empty areas for every aspect of your course, I found myself feeling excited at the completion of every section, like someone who is playing a fun game and just beat a new level. I have always loved all sorts of games, and I guess you have to be a gamer to understand!

I want to provide my students the same level of excitement I felt when creating the course. On an actual course, I would do many things differently, such as adding many videos and screencasts to ensure more interactivity between myself and my students, and many more interesting activities that require students to use multimedia to create content and interact with me, such as sketching and sending me photos or video demos made by students. I would also add samples of work made by previous students, besides the rubric, to each assignment.

My conclusion to this assignment is that I like it and I want more. More opportunities to create courses, more chances to design websites, more exposure to new programs and tools, more, more, more! That probably qualifies me as a hungry tech nut -- or a lifelong learner, which has a nicer ring to it. I hope to help my students develop an excitement for the subjects I teach even if we never meet face to face; we are currently living in a world that allows for so many educational options, it is a very exciting time to be a teacher. I really appreciate everything I have been learning on OLTD and can't wait to see what else comes down the pipe.