Distance Education Unit Digest — EdTech Quick Tips and Teaching with Technology

deu.support@usask.ca
https://sites.usask.ca/edtech

Photo by Steve Johnson from Pexels

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Redirect Tool in Canvas

DEU often uses platforms like WordPress, Pressbooks and other content management systems for building learning technology functions beyond the capabilities of a standard LMS. We tend to think of the LMS as a central learning hub where students can branch out from to access pockets of content across the world wide web. However, once unleashed into the vast sea of the internet students can, at times, lose focus and be set adrift. It would be nice if we could "wrap" these outside websites, news channels, homework systems etc. inside of Canvas in order to keep students within the walls of the LMS and on task. The **Redirect Tool** does just that, and we'll show you how.

Read more about using the Redirect Tool in Canvas

Writing Mathematical Expressions in Canvas Using LaTeX

A **Feb. 20th update to Canvas** should be of interest to anybody involved in courses that use **mathematical or chemical expressions, equations, and formulae**. The update will allow Canvas users to use **LaTeX** markup language basically anywhere they can input text, and know that their mathematical symbols will appear in a predictable way.

Find out more about writing Mathematical Expressions in Canvas using LaTeX

Hidden Gems – Multimedia Presentations with Microsoft Sway

Microsoft Sway is a web-based digital storytelling platform that enables instructors and students to create visually appealing, presentations, interactive reports, and newsletters. What makes it unique is that you can use it to combine text and media to create a presentable website quickly and easily. You can pull content locally from your computer, or from internet sources such as Bing, Flickr, OneDrive, and YouTube. This platform is designed to be easy to use and to create a storyline. Templates and functions are accessible and shareable, and the presentations are responsive, playing beautifully on any device.

Find out more about using Microsoft Sway in your classes

Formative feedback with Bluepulse

Bluepulse is a "continuous listening platform" integrated into Canvas that allows you to check-in with your students throughout the term for a variety of feedback. More than just a survey tool, bluepulse allows for quick pulse checks on a smaller, more casual scale. Check-in at the start of group assignments, after a mid-term exam, or before a synchronous meet-up to gauge the direction of conversation making announcements more of a two way street. These quick pieces of feedback can help you shape your online teaching and better meet the needs of your students throughout the term,

helping them get the support and instruction they need to be successful in your course through better discourse.

To enable bluepulse in your Canvas course simply navigate to the Settings in your Course Navigation Menu and select the Navigation tab at the top. From here find **Bluepulse Feedback** in the optional integrations and drag it into place in the course navigation menu where you want to see it.

Save the changes at the bottom of your screen and return to your homepage. You should now see the Bluepulse option in your main menu and you can start creating formative feedback questions with a variety of tools.

Cascadia Open Education Summit

Cascadia Open Education Summit 2021 is an event offered by BCcampus; California State University, Office of the Chancellor; Open Oregon Educational Resources; and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

From BCcampus:

"This **free** digital conference explores innovation, research, and best practices in open education around the theme of "Regional influence. Global impact." We are featuring a keynote speaker from each of our four represented regions to celebrate the achievements in open education made here on the West Coast. Attendees will have the opportunity to connect virtually with new and old colleagues, watch live and pre-recorded presentations, and learn about homegrown open education projects that could go on to change the world." **April 27–29, 2021**

For more information, visit the event website: **https://cascadia.bccampus.ca/**

DEU support and contact information

The **Distance Education Unit** (DEU) works with departments, colleges, and schools to develop high-quality, engaging, and innovative online classes for diverse learners. As part of your long-term online strategy, we offer a full range of administrative supports for online class delivery both on and off campus.

DEU offers a wide range of support services in Development and Delivery:

- **Instructional Design for Distance and Online Course Developments** as well as,
- Administrative **Support for Distance and Online Class Delivery**

Our Instructional Design Team is always happy to share our experiences designing online learning activities and using learning technologies effectively in online or blended classrooms and even across an entire program. Our staff can help you with questions about,

- Full online course development support
- Customized program development templates
- Learning design strategies for a unified online program
- Hybrid, multi-access and blended learning designs
- Open textbook and OER developments
- H5P and other interactive learning design

- ePortfolios and implementation
- Assessments and exam strategies for online learning
- Academic Integrity online
- Copyright clearances, acquisitions and OER licensing
- Ensuring accessibility standards are being addressed
- Ed tech support before and during delivery
- Course quality reviews and recommendations
- Resource curation and dissemination
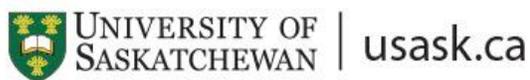- Non-credit learning design

And much more. Contact us at **deu.support@usask.ca** to discuss your course or project.

Visit **https://sites.usask.ca/edtech/** for more helpful tips and tutorials as well as information on our support services and contact information.

If you wish to be added to the DEUD mailing list, please send your **NSID** to **deu.support@usask.ca**

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We acknowledge that the University of Saskatchewan's main campus is situated on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.