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AVLN Tips for Teaching Online Newsletter

Digital Natives and Immigrants?


In This Issue

- Digital Natives and Immigrants?
- Check out Canvas LMS
- Tech Tips from ProfHacker

Other Tools

Update your profile so we can send you more specific resources.
Forward this email to a friend.
Check out Canvas LMS

Have you seen the new open-source Canvas LMS? Interesting features include:

- Integration with text messaging and Facebook
- Speed grader
- Calendar integrates with Outlook etc.
- Rubric creation

Take a look and see what you think!

Tech Tips from ProfHacker

- Calibre, a free and open-source program, which allows users to manage their e-book libraries
- Using Microsoft OneNote for research
- Lecture capture tools... recording your talking habits

Have a tip or resource to share?

Just reply and we’ll share it in the next newsletter and give you credit!
Get to know Canvas
The simple, open LMS from Instructure

- Clean, intuitive interface
- Comprehensive feature set
- Modern technology

Dive deeper into Instructure Canvas

Clean, intuitive interface
See how our easy-to-use interface has helped teachers and administrators save dozens of hours of time by using Instructure Canvas in their classes and institutions. Because Instructure Canvas is intuitive and uncomplicated, students and teachers require less training to utilize it effectively, and find it far more enjoyable to use.

Comprehensive feature set
Canvas rolls all the best LMS features into one complete package. What you may think of as extras, we consider to be essentials, so it's all included in the Canvas LMS. These are features like integrated multimedia, ePortfolios, web conferencing and learning outcomes, to name a few.

Modern technology
Technology moves fast. Instructure Canvas makes sure you move faster. The Canvas Cloud model ensures that you’ll have instant access to the best tools available and won’t get stuck waiting for your LMS to catch up.

“Canvas will change the way teachers think about teaching and students approach to learning.”
—Frank Abrahams, Rider University
Key Features

**SpeedGrader ™**
The fastest way to blaze through assignment grading. This feature alone saves hours of time.

**Rich Content Editor**
Canvas' content editor allows you to easily embed videos, audio and photos from the web into your course.

**Online Testing**
Create quizzes from scratch or a bank of questions using a wide variety of question types and quiz options.

**Assignment Submission**
Allow assignments in a variety of ways: webpages, Word docs, videos, audio or even slide shows.

**Learning Outcomes**
Make accreditation easy. Set, track, and optimize your pedagogy with our simple learning outcomes feature.

**Communication Preferences**
Get your Notifications via email, Facebook or text message.

**Assignment Submission**
Get your Notifications via email, Facebook or text message.

**Integrated Calendar**
Calendar events automatically populate into a single calendar — subscribe to it with Google Calendar, iCal or Outlook.

**Flexible Pedagogy**
Canvas supports a variety of teaching styles and new web technologies.

**Groups**
Ad-hoc group creation allows users to form groups for clubs, teams, or interest groups beyond the classroom.

**Chat / Video**
Built-in video and live chat give an extra dimension to the learning experience.

**Rubrics**
Easy-to-use rubrics make assignment and grading crystal-clear and promote efficient learning.

**Groups**
Ad-hoc group creation allows users to form groups for clubs, teams, or interest groups beyond the classroom.

**Reporting**
Monitor course and student activity with our real-time reporting.

**Canvas CV**
Recommended for:
Institutions with expert IT staff, data center, staff to support users, capability to update and maintain environment including any optional 3rd party integrated systems.

License Type:
Open Source AGPL

Support Options:
Community Support

**Canvas Onsite**
Recommended for:
Institutions with expert IT staff, data center resources, that require mission-critical support, optional professional services and require mobile capabilities (iPad, iPhone, Android).

License Type:
Commercial

Support Options:
Canvas Professional Services
Instructure Basic Support
Instructure Plus Support
Instructure Premium Support

**Canvas Cloud**
Recommended for:
Institutions with minimal IT staff and/or require the highest level of reliability and peak time scalability and require mobile capabilities (iPad, iPhone, Android).

License Type:
Service Subscription

Support Options:
Instructure Basic Support
Instructure Plus Support
Instructure Premium Support

How can Instructure Canvas help me?

I am an Administrator

I am a Teacher

I am an IT / Systems

I am a Student
I was one of the evaluating faculty for your competitors: Blackboard, D2L and Moodle. You guys are decades ahead of all of them.

–Kelly Fadel
Associate Professor
Utah State University

Canvas helps students and faculty feel more connected by building relationships in ways that other LMSs haven't provided...

–Ben Neiswender
Division of New Learning
Westminster College

See Canvas in action.
Get a hands-on look at how Instructure Canvas really works.

Canvas LMS by Instructure. Learning management system made simple.

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Projects are temporary. You can’t consider a project to be that thing that you’re going to do every day for the rest of your career. Instead,...
Several of us at ProfHacker use Evernote (exhibit a, exhibit b, exhibit c), the popular external-brain software. It lets you put all a satisfyingly wide array of information all in one place, and makes it searchable, without a great deal of fuss. And in those earlier posts, we’ve talked a bit about it the iPhone/iPod app for Evernote, which, theoretically, is a big part of its appeal: use the camera, the microphone, or the keyboard to take notes in whatever format you find most appealing. There’s a new version of the app out, and while in general we don’t intend to go version-chasing every time a smartphone app updates, there are some interesting changes this time that are worth mentioning.

Although I use Evernote heavily, the iPhone app has never really worked for me. I love the desktop app, for the ease with which it lets me clip and sort information (this really helps with...

Read More

March 2, 2011, 3:05 pm

Leaving Jonathan Edwards Behind
By Jason B. Jones

Something strange happened in class recently. Because I have papers electronically submitted to a Dropbox, I ask students to use a basic naming convention. Instead of getting 20 files named “paper1.docx,” I can tell at a glance what’s going on. As is often the case, with the first paper, only a few students bothered with the convention. I told my class that papers that followed the naming convention would be returned expeditiously; papers that didn’t needed to be resubmitted if the students wanted them back. By the next class, none of the affected students had re-submitted their papers yet.

So far, not so strange. It’s early in the semester; it’s a freshman-level class—nothing unusual. What was different is that, instead of raving about it, I just reminded the students of the situation, and moved on with the class. A similar situation happened in another class, when students...

Read More

March 2, 2011, 11:00 am

Open Thread Wednesday!
By George Williams

Each Wednesday, ProfHacker hosts an open thread discussion. Sometimes a specific topic is announced, and sometimes the discussion is completely open. Please remember to abide by our commenting and community guidelines. Thanks!

Hey, it’s Wednesday! I think you know what that means. It’s time for an open thread!

What’s on your mind?

Do you need advice or feedback about something related to life and work in higher ed?
Do you have advice or feedback to share about something related to life and work in higher ed?

What would you like to see covered at ProfHacker?

Do you have any suggestions for Open Thread topics in 2011?

Do you have any interesting, ProfHacker-y links to share?

Let us hear from you in the comments!

Electronic Portfolios for Student Learning?
By Amy Cavender

Many ProfHacker readers maintain a professional web presence, and some academics have even used a web site for presenting their materials for consideration for tenure and/or promotion (see, for example, Kathleen Fitzpatrick's and Cheryl Ball's work). Electronic portfolios can be an excellent way to present one's work.

What about e-portfolios for students, though? At the end of January I was fortunate to attend the E-Portfolio Forum held at the end of the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges and Universities. The Forum focused on the use of e-portfolios for student learning and assessment.

Because sessions were held concurrently, I really can't give a full overview of the day. What follows instead are some questions that I came away with as someone with an interest in the potential for the use of e-portfolios, both for individual courses and across campus.

* How ...

Going Paperless in the Classroom
By Mark Sample

Last week I highlighted a few of the ways I've gone paperless at conferences. Continuing on that theme, I want to share a few tips for going paperless in the classroom. Or at least for using less paper in the classroom.

Course Documents

When it comes to syllabi and assignments, it's a simple matter to distribute these documents to students electronically. Because I use class blogs as the central platform for all of my courses, I simply incorporate these documents directly into the structure of the blog. But it's also just as easy to distribute them to students as PDFs (through email or Blackboard, for example).

Note that you should check with your institution before you stop distributing paper copies of your syllabus to your students. Up until last year I was required by my university to have paper copies of the syllabus at the beginning of the semester. That rule has changed now, a...
As almost anyone who knows me will attest, I use a timer for all kinds of activities to keep me focused, to help me get started on a project, or to chip away at a potentially overwhelming task. I use timers when I teach, when I lift weights, and when I’m getting ready in the morning. I use a timer to keep on track when I’m doing something that could easily expand beyond the time I have allotted (like talking on the phone) or to help me do something in a more efficient manner (like washing dishes).

I primarily use a Polder timer that allows me to choose from a beep, a vibration, or a flashing light (or any combination of the three). Unfortunately, they no longer make the model I have, but this one by General Tools looks very similar. Most cell phones also have timer and/or stopwatch functions, although in some cases these can be cumbersome to access and alter the settings.

Online...

March 1, 2011, 8:00 am

Teaching Carnival 4.7

By Prof. Hacker

March’s Teaching Carnival is from Nate Kreuter, an Assistant Professor of English at Western Carolina University. Nate blogs at 3 x 3 in Cullowhee. You can email him at nathankreuter [AT] gmail [DOT]com.

ProfHacker has become the permanent home of the Teaching Carnival, so each month you can return for a snapshot of the most recent thoughts on teaching in college and university classrooms. You can find previous carnivals on Teaching Carnival’s home page.

Admonitions to students, incisive questions, a tomato basil soup recipe, and even a Dear John letter. This month’s Teaching Carnival covers a little bit of everything. With the Wisconsin protests on the minds of many teachers, not to mention the even more serious protests ongoing in the Middle East, February was a month that seemed to invite manifestos, and a number of educational gauntlets, so to speak, are thrown...

February 28, 2011, 3:00 pm

“What’s for Lunch?” Boxes and Bags Edition!

By Billie Hara

When we first started publishing ProfHacker, we had a weekly, “What’s for Lunch?” column. In
this column, we would suggest food products that we could bring to work with us, foods that would help us stay productive and healthy. We started in September of 2009, and each week we would publish articles on salads, soups, smoothies, slow cookers, having leftover dinner for lunch, foods that are versatile for many types of dishes, and ways to carry that food around with us.

From time to time, as your interests dictate, we'll revisit these topics because clearly, food is an important ProfHacker subject. We all have to eat.

Today, we revisit boxes and bags to contain lunch. A basic tenet of bringing a lunch to work is what to use to carry that food. Paper bags work, as do those plastic bags we sometimes get from the grocery stores. If you wanted to go a little fancier, there...
Calibre Revisited

February 4, 2011, 8:00 am
By Erin E. Templeton

In a previous ProfHacker post, Amy introduced Calibre, a free and open-source program, which allows users to manage their e-book libraries. As Amy pointed out, Calibre allows you to convert content from various internet sources such as Project Gutenberg into the appropriate format for your e-reader, whether it is a Kindle, a Nook, a Sony, or something else.

One of my favorite features of Calibre its ability to download content from various news sources and RSS feeds. Basically, this program not only allows you to convert an e-book formatted for one proprietary device to another, but it will also grab material from an incredible number of web-based news sources and download it to your e-reader free of charge. For example, you might opt to download the Wall Street Journal, the Economist, The New Yorker, The Huffington Post, The Onion, or even the Yakima Herald-Republic. There are more than 300 options to choose from in English, and these are complimented by additional offering in languages other than English including Chinese, Japanese, Czech, German, French and many others (and additional sources in English from countries outside of the United States).

This feature can be terrific if you have a daily commute to work but don’t want to have to manage a newspaper, or if you’d like to load up your e-reader with current news to read on an airplane. Another benefit of the news feature is that users can schedule a regular download of their favorite feeds. There is just one catch: you need to keep the program running for the schedule feature to work. If you close Calibre, the scheduling feature is de-activated. Assuming that you keep the program open on your computer, however, you could schedule caliber to download a daily edition of the Washington Post to your computer.

When Calibre has fetched your favorite news, all you need to do is connect your e-reader to your computer. The program detects the e-reader and automatically downloads new content to the device.

Once the news content is on your e-reader, it will show up in the table of contents along with all of your other content. Selecting the New York Review of Books will bring up the first article in the publication, but readers also have the option of selecting the table of contents for the feed and then choosing the articles that interest them.

Finally, if there is a news source that you would like to have included, there are easy instructions on how to create a “recipe” for adding it to the Calibre repertoire as long as the source has an RSS feed. In fact, I was able to create a custom recipe for ProfHacker in just a few minutes.

For the more tech-savvy among us, the user guide also includes more complicated instructions for creating more sophisticated recipes that can customize the feeds in different ways. Be warned, however, that these instructions involve tapping into the recipe framework and getting your hands dirty with coding (Calibre recipes use Python).

In short, if you have an e-reader (or a SmartPhone with an e-reader app) and haven’t tried Calibre, it’s worth checking out.

[Creative-Commons licensed image from Flickr user cdsessums]

This entry was posted in Productivity, Software and tagged ebooks, kindle, nook, rss. Bookmark the permalink.
Microsoft OneNote Goes Mobile

February 2, 2011, 8:00 am
By Prof. Hacker

[This is a guest post by David Whidden, a doctoral candidate in systematic theology at Southern Methodist University. -- @jbj]

Regular readers of Profhacker know that one of the blog’s favorite note taking and organizing applications is Evernote, which has the advantage of being free, cloud based, and available on multiple mobile platforms. (See Shawn Miller’s in-depth writeup, and Kathleen Fitzpatrick’s follow-up.) Microsoft recently announced that they have made an iPhone app for their note taking software, OneNote, and for the moment they are offering it for free. In light of this announcement, I thought I’d do two things in this post — show how I use OneNote for my research and briefly review the new iPhone app.

OneNote has been around for eight years now, is widely disseminated through Microsoft Office, and is a robust note taking application. If your campus uses Microsoft products, as mine does, and if you have a PC, chances are you have it on your office computer. Students can buy the entire Office suite for just $80, which is an incredible deal, especially since most of them will end up in Microsoft environments after graduation and they will benefit from being familiar with its software.

Personally, I have been using OneNote since I began my doctoral work five years ago, to keep organized all of my class notes, lectures, and research. The recent release of OneNote in Office 2010 maintains continuity with past versions, while adding one major benefit of cloud computing through Microsoft’s Windows Live Skydrive, which means I can keep copies of all my research backed up and that I can make changes on any computer, regardless of whether it has OneNote loaded on it.

Let’s look at how I use it to organize my dissertation research, which is on the 13th century theologian, Thomas Aquinas, and the role that illumination plays in his theology. Aquinas left us over 8 million words and 7,000+ references to light and illumination, which left me with the challenge of how to track all of that information without getting overwhelmed and without letting important references slip through the cracks, especially when a reference could be used in more than one place.

Across the top you can see that the first two sections I’ve created are one for Aquinas’s primary texts and one for secondary texts by other authors. The section on Aquinas’ primary texts are further broken down (on the right hand side), by particular works or sections of his larger works. Each reference gets entered with a location and (most importantly) a tag. The tags, represented by the blue 1 and the yellow 2 on location ST I.1.1 ad 2 (ST = Summa Theologiae), represent chapters where the reference might be useful, but the references themselves are entered in the order in which they appear, which allows me to review the overall scope of the argument.
These tags come in handy when you run a tag summary report, which takes all of your tags and collates them. In this next screenshot you can see that the reference ST I.1.1 ad 2 appears next to one from ST I.105.3 ad 2. All of my references for this particular chapter now appear in the same place, so I can cut and paste them into an outline, look for common themes and threads, and make sure that I haven’t neglected something important. That same reference to ST I.1.1 ad 2 will also appear with references for chapter 1. The ability to put a reference in multiple places really helps me keep a lot of information—my notes run some 90 pages—organized, searchable, and available.

The release of the iPhone app two weeks ago brings OneNote closer to Evernote in its availability on mobile platforms. Right now it is only available for the iPhone, but I would not be surprised if they come out with an Android app soon. As you can see from this screenshot, the iPhone app presents the same folders as I have on my home computer. One can create a new note, add a picture, or edit a current note which will then sync with your home computer.

Here's a screenshot of one of my secondary texts:
Since this is the first version of the iPhone app, there are some things that it does not yet do, but that I expect Microsoft will address in future versions. Right now, there is no support for tables, so if you work in a field that uses lots of tables, what you do on your computer will not show up on your phone. Custom tags also do not show up on the iPhone app, though any tag summary reports do appear. There is also no support yet for audio files or for custom drawings.

Nevertheless, by releasing this app, Microsoft has begun to close the gap on some of Evernote’s advantages. In this initial version, Microsoft has given those of us who regularly use OneNote a highly functional notetaking app that I expect will improve as they develop it.

Are you a OneNote user? What do you like about it? How might an iPhone app help you use OneNote more productively?

*Lead image is a Microsoft-provided screenshot from iTunes. All other images are screenshots by David Whidden.*

This entry was posted in Productivity, Reviews, Software and tagged microsoft, note taking. Bookmark the [permalink](http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/microsoft-onenote-goes-mobile/30321).
Consider using a smartphone or other handheld device with a microphone to do the recording. The new iPhone 4 and third-generation iPod Touch has a built-in microphone, and I’ve written before about how you can upgrade a second-generation iPod Touch for recording capabilities with an inexpensive add-on microphone and free software.

Record yourself in different contexts. For example, if you anticipate having a phone interview, set up recordings, as heard from a second phone, of yourself talking through a landline phone and a mobile phone. Chances are, you’ll hear that mobile phone interviews are usually of less than admirable sound quality than those using landlines. Having been on both sides of hiring (as separately the applicant and the committee member), I can assure you it’s usually well worth pursuing a landline location to take that important call, even if you have to arrange driving 15 miles to a friend’s house to use her phone while she feeds her toddler and infant lunch in the next room (speaking from experience.) Record yourself speaking both directly into the phone and via the speakerphone. The results are likely very different. You might also try recording yourself giving a traditional lecture. Speech patterns change in context, so your phone voice might be very different than your classroom voice.

Listen carefully for distracting speech patterns. Do you constantly end your sentences with increasing pitch, even if you aren’t asking a question? Do your sentences run together? Do you sniff a lot? Do you have a very odd awkward laugh? Be as critical of yourself as possible.

Ask for a second opinion. Find someone who can be brutally honest with you and has your best interests in mind. Give them the recording, which will be easy to do since you now have a digital file of your speaking. Ask them to give you their true assessment of your talking habits. A second opinion can be especially critical if you have any hint of a regional accent, which is likely undetectable to your own ears.

Finally, truly endeavor to take the assessment seriously. Your speech habits really matter to your audience and affect how you are perceived.
Continuous improvement is not just a catchphrase for business and industry. It's important for academia — even in something as simple as the way we talk. What has your experience been with awkward speech habits, either your own or someone who you wish had corrected themselves? Do you know of situations where speech habits made the difference, perhaps in a hire or a teaching evaluation? What advice do you wish someone had given you about your speech habits? Let us know in the comments.

[Opening image "His Master's Voice" is in the public domain.]

This entry was posted in Profession and tagged audio. Bookmark the permalink.

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