Speed Grader & Time Saving Tips

00:07–00:30

Andrew Coletti: Hello and welcome back to this episode of The T in Teaching. This episode is focused on a valuable tool embedded inside of canvas Speed Grader. In this episode, instructional designers Jenny McNiven and Rob Erwin ask and answer questions about this tool and how to maximize grading efficiently. Thank you for listening and please enjoy.

00:30–00:31

Jenny Mcniven: Good morning, Rob, how are you today?

00:31–00:33

Rob Irwin: I'm wonderful. How about yourself?

00:33–00:45

Jenny Mcniven: I'm having a great day. I am here ready to talk about Speed grader, which is a really great feature in canvas, and I'm excited for faculty to learn more about it and learn that how they can utilize this tool, because it's really great.

00:45–01:01

Rob Irwin: Excellent. And as we get deeper into this semester, I have a lot of faculty members reaching out to me with questions about keeping up with grading. Can you tell me a little about the canvas tool speed Grader and how professors can leverage it to their advantage?

01:02–01:22

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah, sure. So Speed Grader is a really great tool. It's built right into canvas and we use it for grading any type of graded assignment. So if you have a graded paper, they're turning in graded quizzes, a grade A discussion board. That is the tool that you're going to use within canvas in order to assess what they've done and then apply their grades and feedback.

01:22–01:40

Jenny Mcniven: And it's really great. Speed grader can be set up. So when you're doing the settings for your assignment, the way that you set up your assignment will be reflected in Speed Grader, which is really great to make it a seamless way to go from setting up your assignment to grading your assignment. So if you set your assignment up to be a group assignment, it will.

01:40–01:56

Jenny Mcniven: When you get into Speed Grader, you will see that it is actually set up as a group assignment. And instead of grading individual students, you'll be able to group to grade group by group. So it's reflective of the work that you've already done so that it just makes it easier for you on the other end. Once you get into grading.

01:56–02:02

Rob Irwin: For the group, is it a certain number of people committed or is it pretty much limited list?

02:02–02:21

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah. It's so it has many groups. Does you need to create, you know, if you have 40 students in your classroom and you want to create eight groups, you can do that really easily within canvas on the people tab. And then every single one of those groups will be perfectly inserted into Speed Grader when you open up the assignment that you set up that way.

02:21–02:31

Jenny Mcniven: So everyone who you had put in group one will be included in group one as far as the greatest concern. So when you grade Group one, those are the students who will receive that grade. So it makes it really easy.

02:31–02:31

Rob Irwin: Excellent.

02:32–02:54

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah. And so one of the great things about Speed Grader is how accessible it is from within canvas. You can access it from the gradebook. You can click on a specific student's grade in the gradebook and then Open Speed Grader to view their exact submission for that assignment. If you're looking at an assignment and speed grader, you can also open Speed Grader directly from within that assignment.

02:54–03:16

Jenny Mcniven: So there's a lot of different ways to get to it, making it really easy to get all the features that you need. And then as you are populating grades in Speed Grader, if you enter a grade for a student, it will automatically populate that grade in your grade book for that assignment. So you don't have to do any type of double submission where you enter a grade and speed grader, and then you have to go into the grade book and write their grade down again.

03:16–03:23

Jenny Mcniven: So they're integrated. So that speed grader will automatically apply that grade in the grade book. So you can view it in both places, which is cool.

03:24–03:25

Rob Irwin: Very nice.

03:25–03:46

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah. So in terms of the three main aspects we're going to use B greater â€œspeedgraderâ€ for and canvas. You can look a little bit at the specific details for each one to see how it can help you make your grading really seamless and effortless. So if you're grading discussion boards, if you have it set up as a graded discussion board, you can open speed grader for that assignment, for that discussion board.

03:46–04:07

Jenny Mcniven: And every student, when you click on their name, you can easily cycle through each student. Speed grader will automatically populate everything that that student has contributed to the discussion board. So if they had a main post, it will show you that if they were replying to people's posts, it will show you that. So all of the different threads that they've been interacting with will be aggregated in one place for you.

04:07–04:19

Jenny Mcniven: So you can look at everything that they've done and then easily and quickly say, okay, well, how did they contribute to this assignment? Did it meet the standards for this grade or this grade, and then give them the grade in the feedback right there. So it makes it really nice and easy.

04:19–04:20

Rob Irwin: Very convenient.

04:20–04:42

Jenny Mcniven: It is super convenient. It makes grading quizzes really nice and convenient too. Which is good because I know obviously that's an assessment tool that we use a lot of. So once you're in Speed Grader for a quiz or a test, it will show you the breakdown of every single question for the exam, how the student answered, whether you had said that that was the correct answer or not when you were building the exam out.

04:42–04:59

Jenny Mcniven: if they had essay questions, you can review those and then enter a grade for how you think they did on that question. It also allows you to apply partial credit for questions. But maybe they didn't get right according to the system that you saw. They still deserve to have a point or something like that. Or you can add fudge points.

04:59–05:28

Jenny Mcniven: The quizzes is it's really nice. You can leave feedback question by question. You can really customize how you're leaving feedback for for that quiz and speed grader, which is really great. And then when it comes to regular old assignments, thankfully we have a lot of different options in canvas for how students can submit assignments. So if you have it set up for them to submit a URL or a file upload, you can even set it up in canvas for them to record a video of themselves as their submission for the assignment.

05:28–05:46

Jenny Mcniven: And once you open that assignment and speed grader, whether it was a file or a video recording or a URL, it will show you exactly that in the left hand panel so you can review what they submitted. And then if they have submitted multiple times, you can view each one of their submissions. And you can look at those in canvas for every single student.

05:46–05:54

Jenny Mcniven: It just makes it really, really easy to break things down and make sure that you're seeing everything you need to see when contemplating how to grade something for a student, that's amazing.

05:54–06:02

Rob Irwin: So what other features are available inside the speed Grader that professors can use to grade more effectively and efficiently?

06:02–06:26

Jenny Mcniven: Well, the main one that I'm going to say, and I will probably repeat this several times in this podcast, is rubrics. Rubrics are such an important way for instructors to assess each individual aspect of the assignment, to see how the student has has met those standards. And so when you are building an assignment in canvas, you can attach a rubric that you have designed and you can build out that rubric within canvas.

06:26–06:50

Jenny Mcniven: One very important thing to note when you're building a rubric is that in the settings for the rubric, you can designate whether you want it to be applied to grading or not. And if you click to apply this rubric to grading, then canvas knows to actually add that rubric to Speed Grader, so that when you are looking at an assignment in Speed Grader, it will have the rubric there set up ready for you to go.

06:50–07:14

Jenny Mcniven: And all you have to do on the right hand panel on Speed Grader is open the rubric, look at each different column and decide whether or not they what type of grade they get, and then enter the number grade for each of the categories in the rubric, and it will automatically calculate their grade based on how you've graded them according to the rubric, which makes it so nice and easy and takes a lot of guesswork out of grading.

Jenny Mcniven: So that's one thing super important. Very makes it so much quicker and easier to grade. Another great feature in Speed Grader is the fact that it has a really robust system for annotating assignments. It has a doc viewer that you will have access to if students have submitted a document for you to grade. So say you've had them write a paper and they submit it to canvas.

Jenny Mcniven: When you open speed Grader, you will see their paper on the left side and you have a toolbar on the top. With all of these different annotation tools that you can use to go through their paper and leave feedback directly on it. That they will be able to then see when they're reviewing their work. so the doc viewer is really nice.

Jenny Mcniven: You don't have to like, write out a separate document and then email the doc to the student with your feedback on it. You don't have to print out the paper right? And red pen on the paper, and then give the paper to the student somehow. You can do the entire process from right directly in Speed Grader. And when the student reviews their grades, they will see all of the feedback on that document.

Rob Irwin: There are also, highlight highlighters you can do. Correct. oh yeah.

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah. You've got red, the red pen. You've got the red pen in the in the docs you are for annotation. You've got the highlighter. You can leave comments. they have a lot of different options for how to do that. And speaking of feedback, the next feature in Speed Grader that I think is really great for faculty to utilize is the fact that they have a feedback, this feedback option, so that you can type in feedback for every single student, anytime you're grading them for anything, you can give them fresh.

Jenny Mcniven: You know, feedback that you're coming up with as you're looking at their, at their, submission. But the feedback area also has a couple of different options that can really help, faculty speed things along the be a little bit more efficient with their grading. So, you can actually bank your feedback responses in Speed Grader. You can just go, and you can see there's a little icon around the little feed box, feedback box there.

Jenny Mcniven: You can click to type in some feedback that you want to save as a response that you can easily click and apply to anyone's grade in the future. So you can sort of bank a bunch of sort of more generic responses. If you don't want to take the time to give individualized feedback to every single student, you can have different levels of feedback that you want to give them that aren't, as you know, personalized, but may apply to them.

Jenny Mcniven: So you can just bank those, have them pre-written, and then click that little, feedback, text box to insert them as your feedback to submit for them.

Rob Irwin: It kind of humanizes the interaction with the student in a way that anything else at point points like, you know, some of the things that they might have missed or you might have had correct. And I think I'm sure as appreciative toward them.

Jenny Mcniven: Oh, absolutely. I think it means so much in the relationship building between faculty and students. When they do get feedback on the things that they're submitting, instead of just a grade, you know,

they want to know what you think about their work and how they can improve. And thankfully, canvas has built in a lot of different ways that we can provide that feedback for students.

10:15–10:30

Jenny Mcniven: And, another really fun way that you can leave feedback and Speed Grader is you actually have the ability to leave your student a voice recording or a video recording too. Yeah. So in that same text box, you have these little icons on the top. You can have a look at them and see which one you feel like right doing today.

10:30–10:58

Jenny Mcniven: Do you feel like leaving them a little voice memo? I don't know, sometimes, especially if you're an online instructor and you're seeing your students only ever over zoom, and maybe you don't even really have that type of one on one interaction with them. It can mean a lot for them to just hear your voice, to know that you took the time out, or you were looking at their, at their work to really think about it and that you cared enough to leave them a personalized voice message so they can hear your voice and really make that connection.

10:58–11:03

Rob Irwin: This is amazing how they have all this included in this, great book.

11:03–11:23

Jenny Mcniven: Absolutely. It is. it's a really great tool, one that I think a lot of our faculty do enjoy using and like, hopefully if you aren't using it after hearing this, you'll be trying it out more. All right. So we've talked about Speed Grader a little bit, which has been very exciting. Now what are some final reminders that faculty really should be thinking about when they're grading?

11:24–11:41

Rob Irwin: Yeah, I believe, being transparent with your students is definitely key, especially if you fall behind in grading and just keeping them in the loop that you have to catch up on some of your, papers and quizzes that you have to, yeah. Let's check up on and then also focus on, giving genuine feedback to the students.

11:41–11:53

Rob Irwin: And I think they really appreciate that too, because they work so hard on those assignments and quizzes. Study real hard and, giving that, extra, time to, give that feedback is definitely beneficial.

11:54–12:14

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah. And, you know, the feedback that you get through the grading process and how grading works out with you every term, you can still build upon that to learn how to maybe design your content in your classroom a little bit better, to work for your needs. Like if grading was really laborious for you one term, maybe consider like what were you doing?

12:14–12:34

Jenny Mcniven: Were you not using a rubric when you graded? Were you creating a lot of quizzes that had tons of essay questions which take longer to grade? And how are you setting yourself up for success in that aspect as well? Think about when you're going to be going through that process of grading in the future in Speed Grader, and how you can actually help yourself from the start.

12:34–12:54

Jenny Mcniven: and what type of assignments are you giving? And, maybe rethink the way that you're giving assignments or the type of assignments that you're using. the great thing about Speed Grader is that it allows you to view and access all different types of assignment submissions, so you don't just have to have someone turn in a term paper or take a test.

12:54–13:13

Jenny Mcniven: You can think about a lot of different ways to frame your assessments. And Speed Grader can usually work with pretty much anything that you can think of. Okay, so whether it's a discussion board that asking them to bring something else to the table and have a little bit of a different discussion about the topic rather than just taking a test on it, Speed grader can accommodate that.

13:13–13:44

Jenny Mcniven: And so it can be a really helpful tool in reframing how you're thinking about your assessments, what type of assessments you're giving, and just being really supportive of that because it does allow you, no matter what type of submission or assignment you've given your students and speed grader, you can get through grading easily and quickly. And clearly you have a lot of options for leaving feedback, and that's really just going to streamline your process and, make sure that you have a reliable tool in order to make your grading easier and more efficient.

13:44–13:52

Jenny Mcniven: which is, of course, one of the best things about being a teacher and an educator is when that part becomes easy, you can focus on all of the other stuff that really matters.

13:53–14:04

Rob Irwin: This is sounds really fascinating, and, I can't wait to introduce this to most of my instructors who have been, inquired into it. so. Well, thank you very much.

14:04–14:12

Jenny Mcniven: Yeah. You're welcome. I'm really excited for all of our faculty to dive into Speed Grader and see how they can use it to make their classes run more smoothly this fall.