



Tech Tip #2015-02

## **Improve Consistency and Avoid Embarrassment When Grading in Canvas**

Transcript

For the full screencast, see <http://ctle.utah.edu/resources/tech-tips.php>

Hello! Welcome to **Tech Tips for Teachers #2015-02: Improve Consistency and Avoid Embarrassment When Grading in Canvas**. My name is Heather Stone, and I work for the University of Utah Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence, CTLE for short.

This video shows you how to use the Mute/Unmute feature in Canvas to give yourself more control of the assessment process. You can mute assignments until you are finished scoring them so you have time to review for consistency, correct your own mistakes, and finish grading all students' work before any students see scores. You can also use the Mute function to release feedback at times when you will be available online or in-office to answer student questions.

When you are watching this video, the yellow dot will show you where on the screen I am working. You can pause the video anytime if you want to try these steps on your own computer.

You'll notice that I am logged into Canvas and sitting at the home page of the Tech Tips for Teachers course. You can see a notification off to the right that I have some grading to do for a Reflections Essay. I'm going to click on that link, and Canvas will open the SpeedGrader and bring up the first submission that needs to be graded.

I can see that Sally Fields has turned in her Reflections Essay. I intend to grade these Reflections Essay right from within the Speed Grader in Canvas.

I can use this area to make comments, either by typing them in or pushing the Media Comment button and audio or video recording them.

I can click on the View Rubric button to see the criteria I've established for this assignment and assign scores. I can click the comments bubbles in the rubric to leave more specific comments

And I can use the annotations to strike out words or attach comments to specific parts of the essay text itself.

However, BEFORE I do any of those things, I am going to Mute this assignment. See this Mute Assignment link in the upper right corner of the screen? I'm going to click that and it prompts me to make sure I want to Mute. Click to verify. Now you will see that the link in the right corner changes to "Unmute Assignment." This means that my Reflections Essay #1 assignment is now muted. I can enter text in the comment fields, put scores in the rubric, and add annotations using the tools up here. Canvas will save all of my comments, scores, and annotations, but Sally Fields will NOT be able to see them yet.

Before I release my comments to Sally and the other students, I want time to review all the other students' submissions too. Sometimes I find that I grade the first couple submissions much harder than the rest and muting the assignment will allow me to go back and adjust for that after I've read them all. Once in a while, I accidentally enter the wrong student's name in the comment field, especially if I'm cutting a pasting a common comment that I have made to many students. Because my assignment is muted, I can go back through quickly and scan all the comments before students see them to make sure I haven't made any embarrassing mistakes like that.

And today, I really only have time to grade a few of these assignments, so I'll have to come back to this later. Muting the assignment means that I won't be fielding questions from students who already got their scores when I haven't even finished scoring everybody.

But for now, let's pretend that I am ready to release the grades to students. I've double-checked my comments for accuracy, made any adjustments so as to be fair to all students, and reviewed the numerical scores for typos or errors. Now I'll go up to the upper right corner and click the "Unmute Assignment." Students will immediately receive a Canvas message telling them that the assignment is unmuted and scores have been released.

I find that nearly all of my students have set up Canvas to tell them about grades immediately, so within moments after releasing grades, I will sometimes receive comments and questions from students. I don't want students to stew about something too long before they talk to me, so I always make it a point to push the Unmute button when I am going to be available for a couple hours. If you Unmute and then walk away, you could have several frustrated or confused students waiting for you when you finally get back to Canvas.

The Mute/Unmute feature lets you take control of the grading process.

If you have any trouble putting this Tech Tip to work for you, please don't hesitate to contact CTLE or TLT. Here's the contact info:

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Canvas help drop-in hours: M/T 9:00 am – 4:00 pm | Faculty Center (MLIB 1705)