

Competitive Analysis Report

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HCDE 318
16 January 2024

Introduction

The most relevant product related to our project is Canvas, an educational management platform. I chose this product because I use it every day for schoolwork, and peer reviews are built into the platform. Additionally, the critique experience can easily be streamlined through a third-party plugin, which Canvas supports. Furthermore, as designers, critique is critical in the design process to provide different perspectives (Gibbons, 2023). Although Canvas provides a peer editing platform, many shortcomings prevent this from being fruitful.

Effectiveness

One way which Canvas is effective in providing feedback is through the integration of peer reviews on assignment pages (see figure 1). Required critiques are relatively easy to see through modules, and when completed, there is a check icon next to the review. Another way in which Canvas is helpful is by providing a pdf viewer with the ability to annotate on another's work (see figure 2). Pins are used as proximity indicators, and the main commenting area can be used for general or overall comments. There is also an option to reply to specific comments, though the conversation can only be accessed in the document in the assignment page. While critiquing on Canvas has been the norm over the course of my time in university, Canvas has many limitations which negatively impacts the critique process.

Assignments



A6: Portfolio Website

Nov 3, 2023 | 5 pts



Required Peer Review 1

Miya Nakata



Required Peer Review 2

Mia Vong

Figure 1: Required peer edits under a Canvas assignment. Only instructors can set this up.

A3: Resume

Chris Sanders submitted Oct 19, 2023 at 2:24pm

Re-submit Assignment

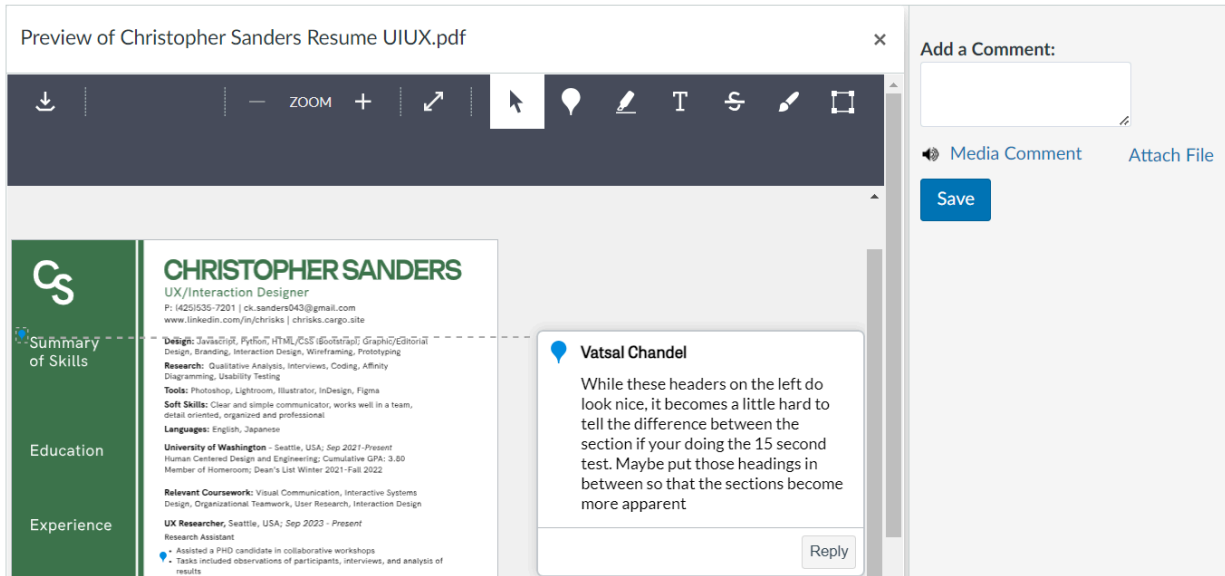


Figure 2: Easy to view pdf and annotation tool.

Shortcomings

Canvas has significant drawbacks which can lead to apathetic attitudes for the critique process. For one, it is expected for only one piece of media to be submitted, meaning that A/B testing is difficult (see figure 2). Additionally, only instructors can set up these critiques relating to specific assignments, and the peer editors are not anonymous (see figure 1). While critique should be a rigorous process, people do not like leaving harsher criticism with their name attached. Possible new directions include a student-driven feedback environment, anonymized names, and fluid interactivity so designs such as prototypes can be annotated or a series of A/B tests can be shown. Another drawback is that the comments get lost in the Canvas interface, and it can be hard to see what advice was given and how to navigate towards it (see figure 3). Comments are populated in the same column, and reading a small wall of text is frustrating. Furthermore, there is no way to increase the size of the text, or to view the comments separately. Greater emphasis on the feedback given would be an easy fix.

A6: Portfolio Website ↕

New Attempt

Due Nov 3, 2023 by 11:59am Points 5 Submitting a website url

For this assignment, you simply need to create a basic personal website for professional purposes. It does not (yet) have to be a super-polished or super-fancy site, but it should be finished and professional. That means good design, layout, organization, and content. Text should be edited for clarity, grammar, and spelling. Navigation should be clear, and the content should be complete.

A typical one might have sections for your resume/CV, samples of your work (course projects, research...), how to contact you, a personal statement, etc.

You can host your site wherever you choose; just submit the URL here. It can be on a UW student server, a free [WordPress.com](#) site, a professional portfolio site like [SquareSpace](#), or anything you choose.

As with other deliverables, this is not your only chance to do this; you will be revising it and resubmitting a new version near the end of the course.

If you need any help formulating or designing or developing your site, feel free to get in touch with me and I will be happy to help.

Please do the assigned peer reviews and for each, comment on these items:

1. Overall site appearance: professional, handsome, appropriate?
2. First impression and access: what is your 10 second and 30 second reaction?
3. Content: statement, projects, résumé, contact, etc.?
4. Site navigation: simple, obvious, easy?

Submission

✓ Submitted!

Nov 1, 2023 at 7:35pm

[Submission Details](#)

[View the Original Page](#)

Grade: Complete (5 pts possible)

Graded Anonymously: no

Assigned Peer Reviews

✓ Miya Nakata

✓ Mia Vong

Comments:

I love the color scheme you have going on here! The creative approach is great. The cursor turns from the dot to a pointer over some pieces, which is interrupting to the experience. The personal project page is awesome but it wasn't very clear to me to click on the posters, I got distracted by all the designs. Last thing, the "Work" button being off to the side made navigating back to the home page with your actual portfolio pieces slightly confusing.
COURTNEY HANSEI CHO, Nov 3, 2023 at 3:03pm
Chris, I can see you spent a lot of time on the design. The site looks very good! Now for the final, you need to work more on the content and functionality.

Figure 3: the feedback given gets lost in the assignment page with no way to increase text size (highlighted).

Accessibility

Canvas, as a widely used product, adheres to accessibility standards as per their website (*What are...*). Additionally, they offer a high degree of customization and support for a variety of screen readers. Canvas also offers their Universal Design Online Content Inspection Tool (UDOIT), which provides an accessibility report with a score by scanning a course (*What are...*).

Although I have never tried any myself, Canvas also supports a variety of third-party plugins which further broadens the scope for accessibility. As for personal experience, the small text shown to the side of the assignment makes it hard to read for almost anyone. Overall, while Canvas is an adequate platform for peer review, much more can be done to improve the critique process to lead to better designs for all.

References*

Gibbons, S. (2023, March 1). *Design critiques: Encourage a positive culture to improve products*. Nielsen Norman Group. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/design-critiques/>

What are the Canvas accessibility standards? (2023, November 18). Instructure Community. <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-Canvas-accessibility-standards/ta-p/1564>

*All images were taken by me from my personal Canvas pages.