

Teaching With Technology Takeaway Packet

Using AI to Create Feedback Ethically (Any Size Course) | March 17 | UW-Madison / WSB

WHAT IS IN THIS PACKET

- A 10-minute setup workflow for ethical, actionable AI-assisted feedback
- Assignment design options for qualitative, quantitative, and large-enrollment courses
- A reusable thinking rubric template & feedback bank
- Copy/paste prompts you can adapt immediately to generate feedback from your notes
- A step-by-step guide to using Canvas Feedback and Grading with Speedgrader and a sample rubric

Core principle: If we grade outputs, AI can replace thinking. If we grade reasoning, judgment, and interpretation, AI becomes a tool.

Use only UW-approved AI tools, remove student identifiers, and keep the instructor as the evaluator.

Handout 1. Fast, Ethical Feedback Workflow

Goal: Create feedback students can act on without adding hours to your grading life.

Step	What to do	What it sounds like
1	Attach a rubric in Canvas (or Gradescope) that evaluates reasoning, not just correctness.	"What will I look for besides the final answer?"
2	Click rubric levels first. Let the rubric carry most of the feedback load.	"Students should know where they landed before they read my comment."
3	Add one short coaching comment that names the next move.	"Use one data point from Exhibit 4 to support your pricing assumption."
4	If helpful, draft the comment with AI using sanitized text only. Then review and edit.	"Draft concise feedback aligned to these rubric criteria."
5	Paste the final comment, release feedback, and reuse strong comments in your Canvas Comment Library.	"Write once, reuse forever."

<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use only UW-approved AI tools.• Remove names, IDs, and other identifiers before using AI.• Keep the instructor as the evaluator; AI drafts, you decide.• Write feedback that gives a next step, not just a judgment.	<p>DO NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not paste identifiable student information into unapproved tools.• Do not let AI assign grades or replace your rubric judgment.• Do not give vague comments like "be more specific."• Do not create a new workflow for every assignment.
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Quick tip: Students usually need one thing most: a specific next move.

- **Vague:** "Needs more evidence."
- **Clear:** "Use one source from the data table to justify your recommendation" is usable.

Handout 2. Assignment Design Options That Show Thinking

Use this menu to tweak one existing assignment. You do not need to redesign your entire course to get better evidence of student thinking.

Qualitative courses	Quantitative courses	Large-enrollment options
Add a thinking-shift prompt Ask: What changed in your thinking?	Add a sensitivity move Change one variable and explain what happens.	Use one common template Short response boxes beat open-ended chaos.
Surface assumptions Ask: Which assumption most shaped your conclusion?	Justify model choices Which assumption most affects your model, and why?	Grade with a 3- or 4-criterion rubric Fast, fair, consistent.
Force evidence choice Ask: What evidence most challenged your initial position?	Interpret the result Translate the output into practical business meaning.	Require one short reflection line One sentence can reveal a lot of thinking.
Require a rejected alternative Ask: What option did you consider and discard? Why?	Check structural reasoning Explain how the spreadsheet or model is organized.	Use one secure checkpoint Mini oral explanation, timed quiz, or short follow-up prompt.

Option A	Option B	Option C
What changed in your thinking? Best for essays, cases, discussion posts, reflections.	One sensitivity shift + interpretation Best for Excel, finance, actuarial, analytics, operations.	One next-step revision note Best when you want fast feedback and a clear path forward.

Handout 3. Thinking Rubric Template & Feedback Bank

Use as-is or adapt. Three to four dimensions is typically enough.

Criterion	Clear, Supported, and Well-Explained	Mostly Clear and Supported	Partially Clear or Supported	Unclear, Unsupported, or Missing
Assumptions & Evidence	Key assumptions are clearly identified and supported with specific evidence.	Assumptions identified with some supporting evidence.	Assumptions present but weakly supported or unclear.	Assumptions missing or unsupported.
Logical Reasoning	Clear, logical connection between evidence and conclusions.	Generally logical with minor gaps.	Some reasoning present but inconsistent.	Little or no logical connection.
Alternative Thinking	Alternatives or changes are tested and impact is clearly explained.	At least one alternative considered with some explanation.	Alternative mentioned but not developed.	No alternative thinking present.
Interpretation & Insight	Results clearly interpreted with meaningful explanation.	Reasonable interpretation with limited depth.	Interpretation is surface-level or unclear.	Results not interpreted or misinterpreted.
QUANT ADD IN:	Clear, Correct, and Complete	Mostly Correct	Partially Correct	Incorrect or Missing
Computation / Technical Accuracy	Calculations, formulas, or model outputs are accurate and correctly applied.	Minor errors that do not significantly affect conclusions.	Multiple errors or inconsistencies.	Major errors or missing work.

How to adapt this rubric:

- For *qualitative* assignments, rename "Alternative thinking" to "Counterargument / perspective-taking" if that fits better.
- For *quantitative* assignments, use "Sensitivity" and define it as changing one variable, one assumption, or one scenario.
- For *large-enrollment* courses, use 3 performance levels instead of 4 to speed grading and improve consistency.

Feedback Bank for the Thinking-Visible Rubric

You may need to adapt these comments for your specific use, but they are a good starting point to develop a feedback library that provides concise, actionable feedback that is aligned to your thinking-visible rubric to speed up grading without losing quality.

1) Assumptions & Evidence

Rating	Feedback Comment
Clear, Supported, and Well-Explained	You clearly identified the key assumptions shaping your response and supported them with relevant evidence. This strengthens the credibility of your analysis. Keep doing this by making the connection between assumption and evidence explicit.
Mostly Clear and Supported	Your main assumptions are present and somewhat supported, but some evidence could be more specific or more fully connected to your point. To strengthen this, identify the most important assumption and support it with a clearer example, data point, or source.
Partially Clear or Supported	Some assumptions are visible, but they are only weakly supported or not fully explained. This makes it harder to follow why you made certain choices. Revise by naming your key assumption directly and adding evidence that shows why it is reasonable.
Unclear, Unsupported, or Missing	The assumptions behind your response are unclear, missing, or unsupported. As a result, the reader cannot tell what your reasoning is built on. Start by identifying the main assumption guiding your answer and support it with one relevant piece of evidence.

2) Logical Reasoning

Rating	Feedback Comment
Clear, Supported, and Well-Explained	Your reasoning is clear and logically connects the evidence to your conclusion. The steps in your thinking are easy to follow, which makes the argument convincing. Keep showing how each major point leads to your conclusion.
Mostly Clear and Supported	Your reasoning is generally sound, but there are a few places where the connection between evidence and conclusion could be stronger. To improve, explain one or two steps in your logic more explicitly so the reader can see how you got there.
Partially Clear or Supported	Some reasoning is present, but parts of the explanation are inconsistent or underdeveloped. This weakens the overall argument. Focus on making the path from evidence to conclusion more visible by explaining why your evidence supports your claim.
Unclear, Unsupported, or Missing	The conclusion is presented, but the reasoning behind it is unclear or incomplete. The reader cannot see how you moved from evidence to conclusion. Revise by breaking your thinking into smaller steps and explaining the logic behind each one.

3) Alternative Thinking

Rating	Feedback Comment
Clear, Supported, and Well-Explained	You meaningfully considered alternatives or tested how a change in assumptions would affect the outcome. This shows strong analytical thinking and strengthens the quality of your conclusion. Continue using this approach to show how robust your reasoning is.
Mostly Clear and Supported	You considered at least one alternative or variation, which adds depth to your work. To make this stronger, explain more clearly how that alternative changes, challenges, or reinforces your conclusion.
Partially Clear or Supported	You mention an alternative or possible change, but it is not explored in enough detail to deepen the analysis. Build this out by showing what would change and why that matters for your conclusion.
Unclear, Unsupported, or Missing	No meaningful alternative perspective, scenario, or sensitivity check is included. This limits the depth of the analysis. Improve this by identifying one plausible alternative or one changed variable and explaining how it would affect the result.

4) Interpretation & Insight

Rating	Feedback Comment
Clear, Supported, and Well-Explained	You do more than report the result; you explain what it means and why it matters. This adds depth and shows strong understanding. Keep connecting your findings to broader implications, decisions, or consequences.
Mostly Clear and Supported	Your interpretation is generally accurate and helpful, but it could go further in explaining why the result matters. Strengthen this by adding one sentence about the implications, significance, or practical meaning of your conclusion.
Partially Clear or Supported	Some interpretation is present, but it remains surface-level or unclear. The reader sees the result more than its meaning. Improve this by explaining what the result suggests and why it matters in context.
Unclear, Unsupported, or Missing	The response restates results without interpreting them, or the interpretation is inaccurate. This limits evidence of understanding. Revise by explaining what the result means in practice, not just what the result is.

5) Computation / Technical Accuracy

Use this one if you add the quant/technical criterion.

Rating	Feedback Comment
Clear, Correct, and Complete	Your calculations, formulas, or model outputs are accurate and correctly applied. This provides a strong technical foundation for your conclusion. Keep pairing this accuracy with clear interpretation of the results.
Mostly Correct	Your work is mostly accurate, with only minor errors that do not significantly change the overall conclusion. Review the calculation or setup carefully to correct small mistakes and improve precision.
Partially Correct	Some parts of the technical work are correct, but multiple errors or inconsistencies affect the reliability of the result. Recheck your formulas, calculations, or setup step by step to identify where the process went off track.
Incorrect or Missing	Major technical errors or missing work make the result unreliable or impossible to evaluate. Start by revisiting the required method, formula, or setup, then rebuild the solution carefully from the beginning.

Shorter Versions for Large Enrollment

If you want a **faster, more reusable comment bank** for big courses, here are shorter versions.

Assumptions & Evidence

- **High:** Key assumptions are clearly identified and well supported by evidence.
- **Mid-high:** Main assumptions are present, but support could be more specific.
- **Mid-low:** Assumptions are only partly clear or weakly supported.
- **Low:** Assumptions are unclear, unsupported, or missing.

Logical Reasoning

- **High:** Reasoning clearly connects evidence to conclusions.
- **Mid-high:** Reasoning is mostly sound, with a few gaps.
- **Mid-low:** Reasoning is uneven or only partly developed.
- **Low:** Conclusion is not clearly supported by reasoning.

Alternative Thinking

- **High:** Alternatives or changed assumptions are meaningfully considered.
- **Mid-high:** At least one alternative is noted and somewhat explained.
- **Mid-low:** An alternative is mentioned but not explored.
- **Low:** No meaningful alternative or sensitivity thinking is present.

Interpretation & Insight

- **High:** Results are clearly interpreted and connected to meaning.
- **Mid-high:** Interpretation is reasonable but could go deeper.
- **Mid-low:** Interpretation is surface-level or unclear.
- **Low:** Results are restated without interpretation.

Computation / Technical Accuracy

- **High:** Work is accurate and correctly applied.
- **Mid-high:** Mostly accurate with minor errors.
- **Mid-low:** Multiple errors affect reliability.
- **Low:** Major errors or missing work.

Handout 4. AI Prompt Templates for Actionable Feedback [\[LINK TO THIS DOC\]](#)

Use these only with UW-approved tools and sanitized text. Paste in the rubric criteria, a short excerpt or summary, and your own shorthand notes.

Prompt 1. Draft concise rubric-aligned feedback

Draft concise feedback aligned with these rubric criteria.

Rubric criteria:

[paste criteria]

Student work excerpt or summary:

[paste sanitized excerpt]

My notes:

[paste shorthand notes]

Write:

1. one sentence naming a strength
2. one sentence naming the main improvement area
3. one concrete next step

Keep the total under 120 words.

Prompt 2. Turn vague feedback into actionable feedback

Rewrite this feedback so the student knows exactly what to do to improve their work.

Current feedback:

[paste]

Constraints:

- keep it under 60 words
- make the next step specific
- use plain language
- keep the tone respectful and direct

Prompt 3. Draft feedback for a quantitative assignment

Draft feedback for a quantitative assignment.

Focus on:

- assumption choice
- alternative or scenario thinking
- interpretation of the result

Rubric criteria:

[paste criteria]

My notes:

[paste shorthand notes]

Write one strength and one specific revision step in 80-120 words.

Prompt 4. Draft feedback for a qualitative assignment

Draft feedback for a qualitative assignment.

Focus on:

- assumptions
- evidence
- reasoning
- what changed in the student's thinking

Rubric criteria:

[paste criteria]

My notes:

[paste shorthand notes]

Write one strength and one next-step revision move in 80-120 words.

Prompt 5. Create reusable comment-library language

Turn these shorthand notes into 5 reusable feedback comments I can save in a comment library.

Notes:

[paste]

Requirements:

- each comment should be 1-2 sentences
- each comment should name a specific next move
- avoid generic phrases like "be more clear" or "add detail"

Review checklist before you paste feedback

- Is the feedback tied to your rubric?
- Does it name one clear next move?
- Would a student know what to revise after reading it?
- Does it sound like you, not like a sentient compliance toaster?

Handout 5. Canvas Feedback Workflow: Add a Rubric and Grade with SpeedGrader

For consistent grading, clear feedback, faster turnaround, and less “why did I write that same sentence 87 times?” you can use this workflow and the step-by-step instructions that follow:

Attach rubric → grade with rubric in SpeedGrader → add one actionable comment → reuse common comments with Comment Library

Add a Rubric

Step 1R: Open the assignment

In Canvas, go to your course, open **Assignments**, and click the assignment you want to grade.

Step 2R: Add the rubric

At the bottom of the assignment page, click **+ Rubric**. You can either build a new rubric or use **Find a Rubric** to pull in one you already created in this course or another course where you are an instructor.

Step 3R: Build or import your criteria

Add the criteria you want students to be evaluated on. For a “thinking-visible” rubric, that might include:

- Assumptions & Evidence
- Logical Reasoning
- Alternative Thinking
- Interpretation / Insight

If you already have a rubric in another course, importing it is faster than rebuilding it from scratch.

Step 4R: Turn on rubric grading

Before you save, check **Use this rubric for assignment grading**. If you want the rubric to calculate the assignment score in SpeedGrader, this box needs to be selected before you start grading.

Step 5R: Decide whether to use ratings or free-form comments

You have two main options:

- **Ratings:** click performance levels in the rubric for fast, consistent grading.
- **Free-form comments:** type custom comments directly into rubric rows instead of using preset ratings.

Canvas supports both, but free-form comments must be enabled when you add the rubric.

Step 6R: Save the rubric

Click **Create Rubric** or **Update Rubric**. Your assignment is now ready to grade with the rubric in SpeedGrader.

Grade with SpeedGrader

Step 1S: Open SpeedGrader

From the assignment page, open **SpeedGrader**. If the rubric is attached, Canvas lets you assess it directly while viewing each student submission.

Step 2S: Score the rubric

Use the rubric to click the level that best matches the student's work for each criterion. If you turned on rubric grading, those selections can calculate the assignment score automatically.

Step 3S: Add one short coaching comment

After using the rubric, add a short comment that tells the student what to do next.

Instead of: "Needs stronger evidence."

Use: "Add one specific data point from Exhibit 4 to support your pricing assumption."

That is the sweet spot: **rubric for consistency, comment for the next step.**

Step 4S: Reuse comments with Comment Library

In SpeedGrader, Canvas supports a **Comment Library** so you can save reusable comments and insert them when grading. That can save a ridiculous amount of time in any course with repeated feedback patterns.

Step 5S: Move to the next student

Advance through submissions in SpeedGrader and repeat the same workflow: **rubric first, coaching comment second**. That keeps grading faster, fairer, and more actionable.