

# Canvas for Language Learning

This document describes how to use various features on Canvas in a way that meets the pedagogical challenges posed by language learning.

## Formatting Course Content

The Rich Text Editor in Canvas allows you to easily format material in a way that makes it easy for students to work with. This is particularly important if you are putting a lot of content up on your course site, or linking a lot of language material drawn from the internet.



1. **Tables:** tables can be useful for displaying grammar and vocabulary. You can either paste tables into the Canvas site from elsewhere (from Word, from other Internet sites, etc.) or create a new table by clicking on the table icon. Here is an example of a Page that displays grammar in a table:

### Adjective Endings

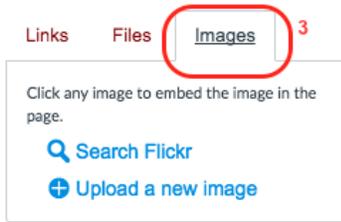
Adjective Endings when there is NO article

	M	N	F	Pl
Nominative	-er	-es	-e	-e
Accusative	-en	-es	-e	-e
Dative	-em	-em	-er	-en

 More info: See “How do I insert a table using the Rich Content Editor?”  
<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1841>

2. **Links to outside content:** provide links to outside language resources on the internet. To create a link, highlight the text, press the Link Icon, and, when prompted, paste in the URL of the site.
3. **Images:** There are 2 ways you can add images:
  - i. Selecting “Images” from the menu to the right of the Rich Text Editor (see image below). This menu allows you to insert image files already uploaded to the course site, to upload new images, and to insert images found on Flickr.

 More info: See “How do I create a hyperlink in the Rich Content Editor?”  
<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1859>



- ii. You can also including images found anywhere on the internet by entering in the URL of the image after clicking on the image icon in the Rich Text Editor (see image at the top of the page).

**Tip:** Particularly in the first and second years of second language learning, images are useful in getting students to produce language. Canvas makes it very easy to use the course site as a repository for images and a forum for talk about images, say on a Discussion Board.

## Audio/Visual Integration

Canvas streamlines the process of recording and integrating audio/visual files. It is extremely easy for both instructors and students to record themselves on the course site and to post these recordings to the site:

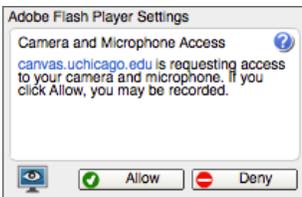
1. Click on the film icon on the Rich Text Editor toolbar:



2. If you are recording new media, select the Camera or the Microphone button:



3. Allow canvas.uchicago.edu to access your camera and microphone:



4. Follow the on-screen instructions to record, save, and upload the media file.

**Tip:** Audio/visual material can be added whenever you have the option to enter content via the Rich Text Editor (see screenshot below). This means you can include media files in Assignments, Pages, Quizzes, Discussions and Announcements.

**More info:** For more details, see “How do I record audio using the Rich Content Editor?” <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1870> and “How do I record a video using the Rich Content Editor?” <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1869>.

## Sample Uses

Here are a number of ways you can take advantage of the streamlined audio/visual integration that Canvas offers :

1. Assignment Instructions: For listening or viewing exercises, the instructor can post the media clip directly into the Assignment or the Page that explains the assignment and lists the questions the student should answer.
2. Quiz Instructions: Instructors can integrate Audio and Visual Files into quizzes. In *Quiz Instructions*, post the media file(s) you want your

students to listen to when they are taking the quiz. If you only have one question per audio file, you can post the audio file directly into the quiz question when editing the question.

3. Pronunciation Guide: On a Page which contains an attached reading assignment, the instructor can post an audio clip in which the passage is read aloud to provide students with a reference for pronunciation.
4. Discussion: Students and instructors alike can post Audio/Visual files to Discussions. This allows students to respond to one another with video responses in the target language.
5. Media Assignment: Instructors can create Assignments that require Audio or Visual Submission. When creating an Assignment select: *Submission Type: Online > Online Entry Options > Media Recordings*. The Assignment will prompt Students to *Record/Upload Media*.
6. Audio/Video Feedback: Instructors can provide audio or video feedback to student assignment submissions using Canvas's Speedgrader. In Speedgrader, under *Assignment Comment* on the right, click the video button to record your audio or video comments.

### Assignment Comments

## Linking Course Content

Language classes often present an organizational challenge for both instructors and students, on account of the many small assignments and the variety of instructional material and assignment types. Canvas makes it extremely easy for the instructor to embed links to other sections of the course site, thus aiding students in finding the required material.

To embed a link to a location on the course site:

1. When you are in the Rich Text Editor, highlight the selection of text you want to link.
2. Under *Insert Content into the Page > Links* to the right of the Rich Text Editor, click on the course material you want to link to.

### Insert Content into the Page

**Tip:** It is recommended to put all course material in one place so that students know where to find it. Usually that best central place for a course is Modules. Within Modules, one can then have Items such as Pages or Assignments that contain links to various other material that is needed for these Pages or Assignments. The point is to compliment the strategy of linking course content with the strategy of having a single starting place from which to arrive at the desired course content.

**Tip:** If the course has a lot of grammar, the instructor can make a page that lists in summary all of the grammar topics covered in the class. The Instructor can then link this Summary Page to various others Pages in the course that explain the particular grammar concepts.

## Language Setting of your Course Site

You can set the language of your course site to any of a number of major foreign languages. All of the build-in text on your course site (i.e. navigation tabs, menu options, etc.) will be in the target language. Go to: *Settings > Language* and select your language from the menu of options.

## Advanced Features

1. **Popups:** This is an advanced possibility for those with some knowledge of HTML. You can use the HTML editor in Canvas to format vocabulary words such that a definition appears when the user hovers the mouse over the word. To do this, switch to the *HTML Editor* by clicking the *Rich Text Editor* link and insert the code snippet below where appropriate and change the italicized text (highlighted) to your content:

```
<a class="ui-tooltip" title="Your definition"><span style="cursor: help;">Your word</span></a>
```

For example, to provide the definition for the word “Erleichterung”, you will use the follow code snippet:

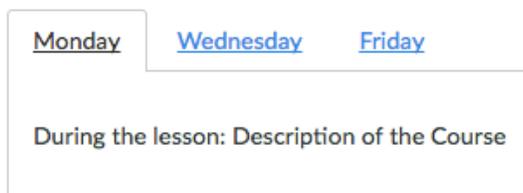
```
<a class="ui-tooltip" title="relief"><span style="cursor: help;">Erleichterung</span></a>
```

This is the result:



2. **Tabbed Layout:** Create a menu of linked tabs that allows students to easily click through and access the multiple assignments that occur each week:

### Week 1



Other menu possibilities include togglable sections or an accordion.

3. **Assistance:** If you are interested in these features or any other features, set up an individual appointment with us at: <https://academictech.uchicago.edu/about>.

 More info: Canvas also has online discussion forums in which instructors discuss their experience with various Canvas features: <http://community.canvaslms.com>. For example, there is a message board on this site entitled “Teaching Language in Canvas” from which some of the ideas here are borrowed.