CANVAS

Canvas is a university learning platform designed primarily for students, with professors and teaching assistants (TAs) serving as secondary users. Students use Canvas to access course-related materials such as documents, modules, the syllabus, and study plans. They also submit assignments, take quizzes, chat with peers, engage in discussions, check grades, and access the course calendar. Professors and TAs use Canvas to publish grades, post assignments, share syllabus and course materials, and communicate with students. This study focuses on the web-based version of Canvas, which features a side navigation menu. The task is to find, review, and submit an assignment on the Canvas application.

User Analysis

Primary User: University Student

Secondary User: Professor / Lecturer / Teaching Assistant

The primary users in this analysis are university students using Canvas to submit assignments. Three students were observed, each with varying levels of familiarity with the application. Two users were experts, while the third was a beginner. All students accessed Canvas via a laptop or computer, highlighting the importance of hardware compatibility for an effective user experience. The age group ranged from 23 to 24, with both Female/Male genders represented.

	University Student – 1	University Student – 2	University Student – 3
Learning Style	Laptop	Laptop	Laptop
Age	23	24	23
Gender	Female	Female	Male
Application Familiarity	Expert	Expert	Beginner

Goals of the users: All users share the common goal of completing assignments efficiently and submitting them on time. They aim to ensure their status on the assignment changes from "in progress" to "Review Feedback".

Observed Behavior: Users familiar with the Canvas website performed tasks more fluidly, while the beginner faced more confusion during the process, requiring extra steps, particularly in navigating the interface.

Environment Analysis

The Canvas web application is used in various environments :
- It can be used in university cafeterias, classrooms, apartments, cafés, or maybe in a car.
- All students required a strong internet connection to complete the process without interruptions.

Common Environments:

University Students 1 and 2: Often completed assignments in quiet spaces like their apartment or library, where they could focus.
University Student 3: Worked in noisier environments like a café, which led to more distractions and slower completion times.

Challenges based on environment:
- In noisy or public environments, students struggled with focus, and tasks took longer to complete.
- Weak or unstable internet connection in environments like cafés delayed uploading processes.

Task Analysis

- **Find, review, and submit assignments on the Canvas web-based application.**

   Trigger : The trigger for this task is Due dates / Nearing Due dates.

   Desired Outcome : The desired outcome is to submit the assignment and ensure that the status changes to "Review Feedback".

   Base Knowledge : Students are expected to know the course name, assignment name, document to be submitted, canvas URL, and corresponding university credentials.

   Required Knowledge : Students are expected to know their university credential, canvas URL, course name, and the assignment document to be submitted.

   Artifacts : Personal laptop or computer and internet connectivity are required to do this task.

Hierarchical Task Analysis - TEXTUAL

1. **Student goes to the Canvas website and clicks on "Log-in".**
2. **The student scrolls down to find the course card.**
   2.1 Check for the registered course in One.iu/correct course name
3. **Click on the small Assignment icon in the course card to navigate to the assignment page directly.**
   3.1 Click on the course title on the card.
   3.2 Click on the "Assignment" hyperlink on the left menu.
4. **Click on the required Assignment name.**

   4.1 Scroll down to find "New attempt" and click on it, complete tasks 5,6,7,8, and 9.

5. **Read/review the assignment.**
6. **Scroll down to find the upload button and click on it.**
7. **Upload the assignment document.**
8. **Click on "Submit Assignment"**
9. **Check if the status changed from "In progress" to "Review Feedback".**

Plan 1 – Do tasks 1, and 2 in that order, if course card not found then do 2.1.

Plan 2 – While on task 3, if the assignment icon is not present, do 3.1 and then 3.2.

Plan 3 - Do Tasks 1,2,3, and 4 in that order, if the assignment is already submitted and needs to make another attempt do 4.1.

Reflection on HTA and User Observations

Overall, the HTA I conducted closely matched the behavior and actions that students face when using the Canvas web application to submit an assignment, but there were some discrepancies:

- **Efficiency in Navigating Canvas**: Expert users used shortcuts like notifications inside the Home page of course, while the HTA assumes students would navigate through the course menu or directly use the assignment icon on the course card.
- **Beginner Struggles**: The beginner student found it harder to complete the task, especially when dealing with lot of information on the home screen and multiple ways to navigate to the assignment. This suggests a need for better guidance in Canvas for first-time users.

In conclusion, while most students follow similar steps to complete the assignment submission, the environment and level of application familiarity heavily influence the process. Tasks are completed more efficiently in quieter, distraction-free spaces, and experienced users can bypass certain steps due to familiarity with the platform.

HTA of University Student – 1,2

1. Student opens the Canvas and log in using their university credentials.

2. Student navigates to the Canvas dashboard, where recent notifications appear, including alerts for upcoming or due assignments (To do).

3. Student identifies the relevant assignment notification.
 3.1 Check if the assignment's due date is near.
 3.2 Ensure it is the correct course and assignment based on the details in the notification (course name and assignment name).

4. Click on the assignment notification to directly access the assignment details page.

5. Review the assignment instructions on the assignment page.
 5.1 If unclear about requirements, scroll to see additional instructions or files provided by the instructor.

6. Scroll down to find the "Submit Assignment" button on the assignment page.

7. Click on "Submit Assignment" and proceed to the upload button.

8. Upload the required document by selecting the file from the student's device.

9. Click "Submit" to finalize the assignment submission.
 9.1 Confirm that the submission was successful by checking the status change to "Review Feedback" on the page.

Plan 1: If no notification for the assignment is found on the home screen, proceed to the course card on the dashboard and manually locate the assignment under "Assignments", then do task 5 onwards.

Plan 2: If the assignment has already been submitted but requires another attempt, look for the "New attempt" button after clicking the assignment notification, then do task 7 onwards.