CANVAS
BY INSTRUCTURE

YOUR GUIDE TO CHOOSING A LEARNING MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

Six Key Considerations

Your Guide to Choosing a Learning Management Platform

It takes thoughtful deliberation and evaluation to choose a scalable learning management platform that will meet your institution's needs today and for years to come.

Ensuring that a prospective platform aligns with institutional goals, technology infrastructure, and the requirements of an entire learning community—from faculty and administrators to traditional and non-traditional learners alike—will increase the likelihood of a successful implementation. It will also ultimately elevate teaching and learning.

On the other hand, a hastily chosen learning management platform may inhibit adoption, fragment users, restrict further integration, and diminish your return on investment.

Ultimately, the platform should deliver an open, extensible learning ecosystem that allows schools to build the digital learning environment that solves the unique challenges they face.

Here are six considerations when evaluating the right solution for your institution's student, faculty, administrative, and technology needs.

6 Key Considerations When Choosing a Learning Management Platform

- Does the learning management platform facilitate engaging, dynamic learning experiences that meet the needs of diverse educators and learners?

- Is the platform scalable to address changes in enrollment, staffing, funding, tech developments, and priorities over time?

- Does it meet your requirements for security and reliability?

- Can it increase your institutions' ability to use data and insight for better learning?

- Can you test performance and capabilities?

- How will you move from your old system to your new learning management platform?

1

Does the learning management platform facilitate engaging, dynamic learning experiences that meet the needs of diverse educators and learners?

Choosing a learning management platform that meets the needs of a diverse learning community requires knowledge of student and faculty experience with current or past systems and an understanding of their expectations for a new platform.

The evaluation team should seek input from users of the legacy platform, as well as those slated to use the new platform. Fear of change can be a barrier to adopting new technology, and making stakeholders feel heard can help mitigate that fear. A simple survey can collect feedback about what has worked, what hasn't, and what each user group hopes to accomplish with the new platform.

In addition to helping the evaluation team develop criteria for appraising a new platform, survey responses may also cover insight about why current platforms have been rejected by users or have not met institutional needs. This information will help higher education institutions identify factors that may be critical in creating an environment of support and leading to the adoption of a new platform.

Just as importantly, the evaluation team needs to know what students and faculty expect from their overall higher education experience and consider ways to align those needs to the system of choice. Understanding what helps students engage and succeed is an important first step.

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Canvas Catalog allows us to offer over 100 modularized, skills-based courses that provide students with the opportunity to upskill and gain access to in-demand industries in our service area.

DR. JOSH DUPLANTIS
Dean of Workforce Development,
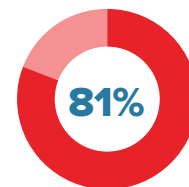**Coastal Alabama Community College**

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7,687

We asked 7,687 current students, administrators, and faculty from higher education institutions across 18 countries to identify measurements of student success and factors for engagement. Working with Hanover Research, we published our 2021 global benchmark study on the State of Student Success and Engagement.

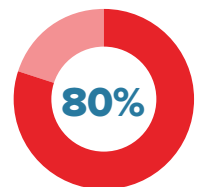**When it came to measuring student success, the top factors that respondents found important included:**
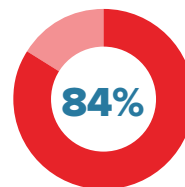
84%	81%	80%
Work/Career readiness	**Skill competency**	**Holistic development**

Key evaluation questions

- **What devices do students and faculty use to access course ware?**

- **What's the ratio of fully online, blended, and physical classroom courses?**

- **When and where do they prefer to teach and learn?**

- **What teaching tools and methodologies do they prefer?**

- **How do the tools support student and faculty engagement, and peer-to-peer student engagement?**

- **How do the tools support and report on student, faculty, and administration goals and objectives?**

- **How does the platform support options that help drive flexibility in coursework and participation to meet the needs of diverse learning?**

Why Canvas LMS?

Canvas LMS streamlines interaction and builds strong relationships between teachers and students, whether in the physical, blended or fully online classroom. In addition to supporting the most active community in education—our Canvas community, which has more than 1 million members—we've developed a suite of offerings to engage with and support Canvas customers throughout their journeys.

Robust capabilities help institutions meet the needs of diverse learners. Canvas Catalog, for example, offers a simple, modern, and effective way to promote your courses and push students to reskill and upskill as needed.

2

Is the platform scalable to address changes in enrollment, staffing, funding, tech developments, and priorities over time?

When evaluating a new learning management platform, technology leaders and the evaluation team should review their existing strategic plan that accounts for known factors. They should work with department leaders to discuss how unforeseen circumstances, such as dramatic changes in enrollment, staffing, or funding, may shift platform priorities. It's also important that they consider students across all socioeconomic backgrounds.

Additionally, evaluators should consider how external developments, such as new apps, websites, tech initiatives, and teaching methods will integrate with a prospective learning management platform. That includes the ability to support engagement initiatives to drive greater inclusion and adapt to unforeseen circumstances, such as the global pandemic. Being able to support seamless and convenient self-service capabilities is also important for today's faculty and students.

> "What we have with this learning management system is an opportunity to do the things that we've believed in for the 125 years of this institution, and not just do them in the physical space, but now in the virtual one as well."

DR. ROLIN MOE
Director of Academic Innovation,
Seattle Pacific University

Socioeconomic factors greatly impact student engagement. Access to technology, including a learning management platform, is a critical enabler for students across the globe, according to our 2021 global benchmark study.

Academic factors that drive student success

- **quality of faculty** — 93%
- **technology availability** — 92%
- **engaging content/instruction** — 92%
- **hands-on instruction** — 91%
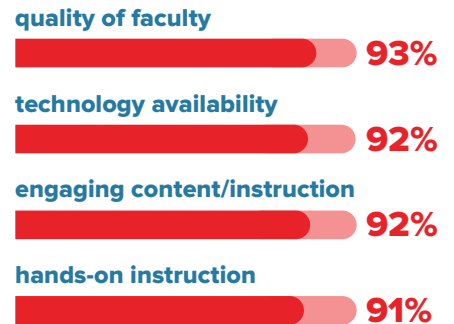
Socioeconomic factors that drive success

- **access to the internet** — 92%
- **access to learning resources** — 91%
- **access to technology devices** — 90%
- **psychological well-being** — 90%
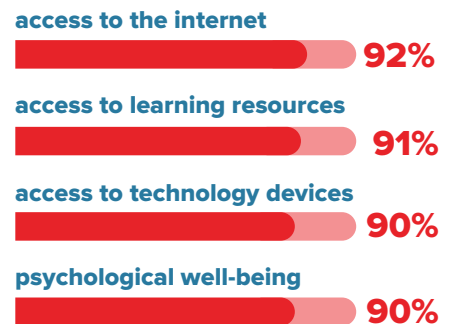
Key evaluation questions

- **Does the platform provide an open application program interface (API) to support interactions and interconnections with third-party tools?**

- **Is the vendor certified with industry common standards such as LTI Advantage to maintain system interoperability and extensibility?**

- **Can it deliver seamless, convenient, and easy self-service capabilities?**

- **Can the system help drive and support equal access initiatives?**

- **Can the system adapt quickly to accommodate urgent changes in teaching and learning? For example, when a public health emergency or natural disaster disrupts daily living?**

Why Canvas LMS?

As a commercial open-source platform, Canvas provides an openness that allows administrators and faculty to innovate and customize courses using Learning Tool Interoperability (LTI) standards, while still giving students a seamless and engaging experience. Beyond just customization, you get a true partner to support you through transitions. That includes everything from moving courses online to making essential security updates to integrating product updates, all without having to take your system offline. Canvas by Instructure has one of the most active communities in education, giving you a personal learning network at your fingertips. While, compliance with the latest LTI standards ensures deep integrations with all of your learning tools.

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Your Guide to Choosing a Learning Management Platform: 6 Key Considerations

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Does it meet your requirements for security and reliability?

If faculty and students perceive that the platform is unreliable, adoption may suffer. If they fear outages, slow response times, or the loss of critical data, they're less likely to trust and use the platform to store information, deliver key exams, or manage assignment submissions.

A platform evaluation team should focus both on a platform vendor's hosting method and the level of uptime guaranteed by the service-level agreement. An uptime guarantee of 99.99 percent, with few to no exceptions for maintenance or service pack installations, is possible. This guarantee instills confidence in a learning management platform and empowers more teachers and students to engage with the technology.

Security should also be top of mind. Examine a vendor's preventative and detective mechanisms, as well as their overall processes, controls, and tools. What risk mitigation is in place to help ensure your data, people, systems, operations, and products are protected.

> "We decided to go to a cloud-based LMS, and Amazon Web Services is a big deal. Previously when we had problems, our downtimes extended into hours, even a whole day. Response time went out the window. That doesn't happen with Canvas.

JEFF MEIER
Center for Teaching and Learning,
UNC Charlotte

Why Canvas LMS?

Canvas was born in the cloud. We've been native SaaS from the start and have stayed true to our promise of delivering 99.99% uptime.

Key evaluation questions

- **Can the vendor provide evidence of uptime?**

- **Do they report this publicly?**

- **Will they connect you with other customers to hear their unfiltered, first-hand experiences?**

- **What are the processes around maintenance outages and downtime for upgrades?**

- **Does the vendor work with a third party to conduct regular security audits and to ensure the safety of your institution's data?**

4

Can it increase your institutions' ability to use data and insight for better learning?

It's important to choose a platform that supports the data-enabled decision-making needs of your institution today and as those needs evolve. Whether it's empowering teachers with real-time course analytics or building robust dashboards to report on the health of individual departments or the organization as a whole, data is key to the success of your students and organization.

Choosing a platform that gives you robust access to data will allow you to combine multiple data sets from systems across your institution to deliver deeper and more powerful insights. This focus on openness can have far-reaching benefits and is often overlooked in the decision-making process until it's too late.

For example, being able to swiftly identify students who may be struggling and linking them to services that can help them is highly important, especially in a remote learning environment. Student performance data should be readily accessible.

> We'd been doing everything by hand and piecing things together. Canvas gave us an easy way to ensure we were covering all outcomes, without using a lot of other software products we don't need.

MICHAEL WHITE
Dean of Applied Management,
Dunwoody College of Technology

In our 2021 global study, many administrators reported that they provide student academic support, grants for economically disadvantaged students, career development services, and educational technology resources. Oftentimes, however, students aren't aware that these services are available to them or don't know how they can help.

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Key evaluation questions

- Are the dashboards and reporting features easy to use and do they offer the information your administration and faculty need?

- Is it easy to export your data in order to leverage third-party analytics tools that support the importing of data from multiple sources/systems?

- Do you have access to standard out-of-the-box reports as well as visualizations and the raw data needed to develop truly insightful analytics that you can link back to institutional goals?

- And particularly those relating to student success and engagement?

Why Canvas LMS?

While some learning technologies limit your access to your campus's own data, Canvas delivers powerful course-level analytics and ensures the most robust access to data of any learning management provider. Canvas Data provides institutions with access to key data points from their Canvas instance in a format optimized for query and analysis.

Using Canvas Data, institutions can easily and quickly build reporting and dashboarding around the usage of Canvas at their institution, conduct research into institutional and instructional effectiveness, and more. Canvas Data is provided at no cost for all customers, and includes daily exports delivered via flat files and an API. Canvas Data works seamlessly with the most commonly adopted Business Intelligence (BI) tools.

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Can you test performance and capabilities?

A vendor's "sandbox" environment provides a virtual reality where schools and districts can put a learning management platform to the test. In addition to validating functionality based on formal criteria, technology leaders can request sandbox access for the entire learning community, enabling hands-on experience through facilitated group workshops or individual user sessions.

This allows administrators, students, and faculty to walk through day-to-day platform activities and simulate real-world scenarios specific to their roles. Workshop facilitators can guide users through specific workflows and features to highlight what's unique about the platform. The evaluation team can document user experiences by asking users to rate features and usability based on what's most important to them. The team can then delve into specific ways the platform can be used to support flexibility and collaboration across students, faculty, and the administration of individual campuses throughout the institution.
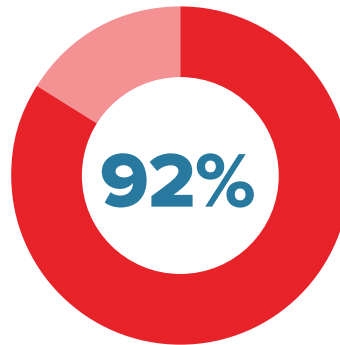
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> We wanted to create consistency across all 23 colleges while still allowing for creativity and academic freedom, and we could do that with Canvas.
>
> **PAGE DURHAM**
> **Instructional Designer,**
> **Virginia Community College System**
>
> "

92%

Engaging content and instruction were cited as major factors driving student success according to 92% of respondents in our 2021 global study.

> "I can't say enough about the support Canvas provides. Before Canvas, it could be a week or so before we got a response. Now we always hear back within 24 hours."

LESLIE MARSHALL
Associate Dean, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Mohawk College

Key evaluation questions

- How easy is it to stand up the sandbox environment?

- Can the vendor demonstrate—in the actual system—how the platform meets your defined requirements?

- Do users like the features and capabilities?

- Do they find them easy to use across devices?

- What don't they like about it? Can the vendor help solve that?

- What support is available to help teachers create engaging courses and content to help students succeed?

- Can the vendor demonstrate the tools that support flexibility and collaboration in coursework?

Why Canvas LMS?

When you select Canvas LMS, you're not only selecting the most open and easy to-use learning technology on the market, you're also selecting Instructure, a trusted partner that has delivered over 6,000 successful implementations globally.

Ready to work with you every step of the way, Canvas offers more support for your learning technology rollout and user adoption strategy than any other provider. We've helped thousands of schools and can customize our services to help you reach your goals. With our in-house experts, you'll have the support you need to set your strategy in motion, launch your LMS initiative, engage students and faculty, and innovate where it matters most.

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How will you move from your old system to your new LMS?

If selecting a new learning management platform requires you to start from the ground up with your educational content, then you're essentially starting from scratch. Ensure that the partner you choose has a proven track record of migrating content from your legacy system to their platform.
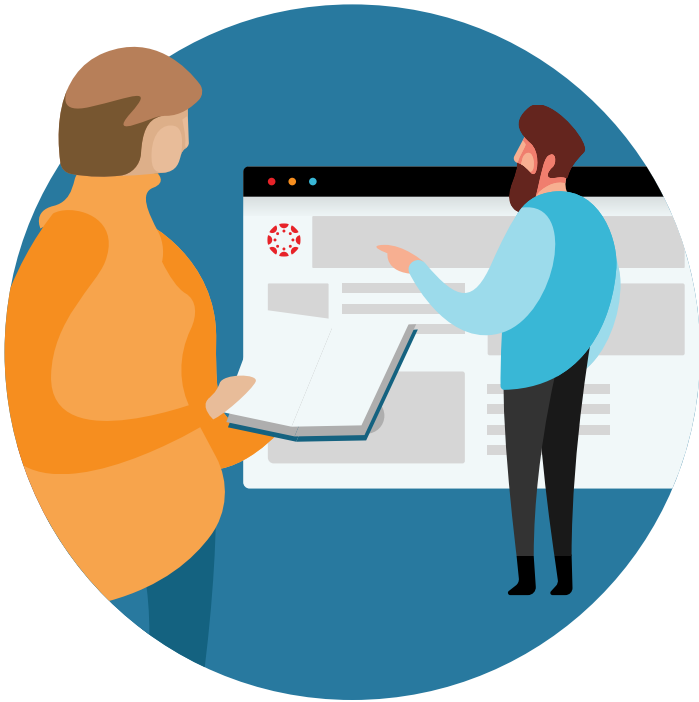
Key evaluation questions

- What are your migration paths and are they proven?

- Ask to speak with customers similar in size and institutional specialty.

- What services are available to support migration to make your transition as seamless as possible?

- What support is available to encourage platform adoption on a wide scale?

Why Canvas LMS?

As the #1 learning management platform, we've completed thousands of migrations from legacy LMS tools—more than any other learning management provider. We offer different options to support the varying needs of our customers. Bulk Migration solves an institution's need to quickly and efficiently move content from a legacy system into Canvas. Our proprietary migration software is compatible with many other LMS platforms and will process extremely large courses, as well as a high volume of course imports in a short amount of time.

White Glove Migration solves an institution's need to quickly and efficiently move content from a legacy system into Canvas. Course materials will be recreated when needed to better align with the features available in Canvas. The White Glove treatment aims to provide ready-to-use course content that saves time for both faculty and administrators. Thousands of customers have transitioned using our services. In short, we have a proven track record of ensuring success.

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> While facing successive challenges, CityU has been thinking out of the box and, with the support of our faculty, is providing our students with the best possible options. Our online learning platform ensures that learning effectiveness continues as scheduled and in an engaging way.
>
> "
>
> **PROFESSOR WAY KUO**
> **University President,**
> **City University, Hong Kong**

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The Instructure Learning Platform.
Simple. Engaging. Open. Reliable.

How does it all come together? When you consider the entire educational ecosystem, a platform approach is key to achieving meaningful, long-term results.

Welcome to the Instructure Learning Platform. The Instructure Learning Platform is designed to deliver teaching, learning and student success through an open, extensible learning ecosystem. This powerful set of highly integrated learning products gives institutions all the functionality they need and none that they don't. And through open APIs and adherence to LTI standards, Canvas provides easy integration with a network of 400+ education technology partners to support your digital campus today and well into the future.

We invite you to learn more about Canvas LMS or request a demo.

CANVAS
LMS

This fully SaaS learning environment streamlines interaction and builds strong relationships between teachers and students, whether in the physical, blended, or fully online classroom. Many of the world's leading educators use Canvas as it seamlessly and securely integrates with their student information systems (SIS) and campus technology ecosystems. Districts and systems use Canvas to provide access to guaranteed, high-quality learning materials across all subjects, ensuring learners equitable access within every class. Canvas explains what needs to be done and how to do it. And learners can access the learning materials through their personalized Canvas dashboard.
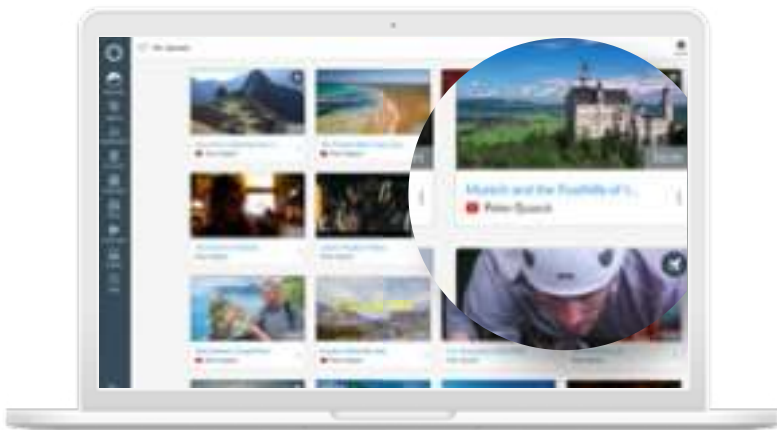
CANVAS
Studio

This next-generation video learning platform turns one-way, passive video into inclusive, engaging, and productive virtual classroom discussions. Canvas Studio provides a robust set of tools for creating and delivering novel interactive digital learning experiences. It enables content creation, in-video discussions, embedded quizzes, and more. The end result is a media platform that drives interaction and participation—not just indi erent consumption.

CANVAS
Catalog

It's a simple, modern, and e ective way to promote your course offerings in a custom-branded storefront for your institution. Canvas Catalog can generate broad community awareness of your paid, free, and non-degree programs, as well as professional-development courses. It's easy for students, administrators and teachers to use, and it works with most payment systems.

INSTRUCTURE

Powering the World's Smartest Classrooms.

Instructure is an education technology company dedicated to helping everyone learn together. We amplify the power of teaching and elevate the learning process, leading to improved student outcomes. Today, Instructure supports more than 30 million educators and learners at more than 6,000 organizations around the world.

The Instructure Learning Platform makes learning more personal and student success more equitable by delivering the solutions you need to support, enrich, and connect every aspect of teaching and learning. The Instructure Learning Platform for higher education includes:

Canvas by Instructure: bringing together Canvas LMS, video engagement with Canvas Studio, a branded course catalog system by Canvas Catalog, and student badging and e-portfolios with Canvas Student Pathways.

Impact by Instructure: helping teachers and students adopt educational technology to promote deeper engagement with learning while guaranteeing the campus edtech ecosystem is utilized to its fullest potential.

Learn more at **https://www.instructure.com/higher-education.**